

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT,
1927-1970 : ELECTION CAMPAIGNS AND PARLIAMENTARY ROLES,
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO T.C. STOTT.



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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Adv.</u>	<u>The Advertiser</u>
CBH	S.A.Cooperative Bulk Handling Ltd.
CLR	Commonwealth Law Reports
CPD	Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates
CPP	Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers
MHA	Member of the House of Assembly
MHR	Member of the House of Representatives
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
MLC	Member of the Legislative Council
MP	Member of Parliament
SAA	S.A. Archives
SAPD	S.A. Parliamentary Debates
SAPP	S.A.Parliamentary Papers
SAR	South Australian Railways
SAWWA	S.A. Wheat and Woolgrowers Association
SLSA	State Library of S.A.
TassPP	Tasmanian Parliamentary Papers
UFG	United Farmers and Graziers
VPD	Victorian Parliamentary Debates

SUMMARY

Independent Members of the South Australian Parliament, 1927-70:
Election Campaigns and Parliamentary Roles, with Special Reference to
T.C. Stott.

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This thesis discusses twenty one members of the South Australian Parliament who, for varying periods of time between 1927 and 1970, were elected and held their seats as Independents. Eighteen were members of the House of Assembly (1) and three went into the Legislative Council. (2) They were the successful candidates out of 187 (3) (11.23%) who sought entry to parliament without the backing of a major political party.

The period of time covered by the thesis commences six years before the election to parliament in 1933 of the most important Independent, T.C.Stott. That starting point was selected because the time and the ensuing years set the background to the events surrounding Stott's election, the controversial quinquennial parliament of 1933-38, and the events of 1938-41 when sufficient Independents were elected to have been able to govern had they wished. 1927 was the first more recent occasion when Independents had been successful: previously Independents (post-federation) had been elected in 1902 and 1905.

I propose to show that an Independent member of parliament can only be elected if one or more of the following criteria are met:

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- (1) D.H.Bardolph:H.Basedow: G.Connor:E.J.Cragie: D.M.S.Davies: H.C.Dunn:
W.Fisk: J.Fletcher: G.W.Illingworth: J.Langdon: J.E.McLeay:
W.Macgillivray : R.L.McKenzie: P.H.Quirke: A.W.Robinson: C.J.D.Smith
T.C.Stott: T.T.Thompson.
 - (2) J. Anderson: E.D.A. Bagot: F.A. Halleday.
 - (3) See appendix E.

1. There must be a significant cause which the Independent identifies with, and it must be of sufficient economic, social or political significance to be a matter of major public interest, apprehension or concern. In other words, the time must be right.
2. The Independent possesses outstanding force of character, and in particular those qualities of personality, resolution, energy and tenacity which contribute to character. Put simply, the candidate must be of a calibre which attracts a personal following.
3. The candidate, although ostensibly independent, has the backing of a significant, publicly recognised and active organisation, led by forceful individuals.
4. The candidate must be prominent and well known in the community in which he seeks election.
5. The candidate pejorates and utilises a strong, traditional, but normally latent emotional community prejudice, for example, sectarianism, as the basis of his campaign.
6. The candidate is favoured by sufficient preferences to win when the vote is split.

It is also possible to show that the candidate must be male, but that aspect is outside the scope of this thesis, partly because between 1927 and 1970 where an Independent was elected, no female contested that particular seat, and their campaigns are not relevant to this work. With few exceptions, women candidates, even if prominent and sound, polled poorly when they did offer themselves for election.(4)

(4) Examples are Sturt 1930, Burnside 1938, Prospect 1938.

I will argue that an Independent Member on his own cannot achieve any worthwhile legislative accomplishment or reform unless certain specific circumstances arise:

1. He alone, or in combination with others, holds the balance of power in the House, and the issue to which efforts are directed is of sufficient public interest that it is assured of acceptance in the Upper House. The classic illustration is the repeal of the Quinquennial Parliament Act.
2. The government adopts the Independent's policy and treats it as a party issue. This happened in relation to wheat stabilisation, and bulk handling of grain legislation.
3. The legislation introduced, or the business brought in by the Independent is trivial, innocuous, and its passage will not reflect adversely on the government. Examples are an Act to require certain bread to be wrapped; an Act to allow certain towns to become cities when their population reaches a specified number.
4. The Independent is used by both government and opposition to introduce unpopular, emotional, and controversial matters, such as salary rises for members of parliament and divorce legislation.

It will be further contended that any attempt to secure parliamentary reform by the election of Independents is a futile exercise because the very criteria of independence, the complex personalities of the individuals who campaign under that banner, (and particularly the influence on them of their own private political leanings), and the external pressures and forces acting on them, combine to prevent unity of action, method or cohesion, and thereby makes impotent the securing of a common objective or plan.

Those very forces which militate against cooperative action in turn create insurmountable constitutional problems which prevent Independents governing, even if sufficient are elected to raise the possibility of them actually exercising real political power from the Ministerial bench, either alone or in a coalition. Under British and Dominion constitutional practice there must be a group which has a recognised leader whom the Governor can commission to form a Ministry. If the group with whom the initiative lies is fragmented, and indecisive in taking any concrete action to test the constitutional position, it forfeits the advantage its numbers give it vis-a-vis the recognised political parties. It will be put that any Independent group carries with it the seeds of its own destruction.

I define an Independent as a free agent who is not depending on the authority of another, not subordinate and not subject to external control or rule: a person who thinks and acts for himself. This essential concept is destroyed the moment any effort is made to organise such individuals into a group. It will be shown that the role of an elected Independent is severely limited: if he possesses ability as a speaker, can research and marshall his facts and present a case, he may be an effective parliamentary critic who can help keep a government on its toes, focus public attention on the weaknesses of the government and criticise all party policies and actions with a freedom not available to orthodox party representatives.

Among the Stott papers is an undated (but fairly recent) account of what he considered to be the role of the Independent member, but he does not tell us much. It points out that the Independent must stand for some cause (in his case, the needs of the wheatgrower,) and when elected, must reject party politics. Although much of the paper is

devoted to puffing his own attributes, the conclusion is that he saw the Independent as a critic of party politics, a revealer of anomalies, and a channel through which the public can make their feelings known about issues which party members would be reluctant to press because the party had first claim on their loyalty.

Until 1941, Stott met all the criteria of independence. Of the other Independents, it will be shown that Basedow, Craigie and Macgillivray also deserved the status, but the others did not. The reasons for these conclusions will be given at the appropriate time.

There are problems of determining the parameters of independence. Bardolph and Thompson, for example, paraded their independent status, criticised caucus rule, but still claimed to be Labor men. In this thesis, analyses are made of the party for whom the Independent votes during divisions. As an indicator of independence, this has a number of shortcomings.

1. Members are not present at all divisions; some poor attendance records are detailed.
2. An Independent's vote is often hard to interpret because in committee, for example, the Premier and Leader of the Opposition not a few times enter the same lobby; sometimes the Independent goes with them, and sometimes not.
3. Independents may not speak on the matter being put to division, and their train of thought cannot be determined.
4. An Independent's stand on motions of confidence in the government puts his position in clearer view, but Independents can support governments for perfectly valid reasons.

5. In looking at a sum of figures which indicate the number of times an Independent supported either party, account must be taken of the nature of the legislation which was the subject of the division. Some Bills, before enactment, are highly controversial and their passage is notable for the large number of divisions. An example of this is the Electoral Act 1929. Basedow and Thompson voted with the Labor Party in many divisions, and these particular votes weight the overall divisional count in a session.
6. In any session there will be runs of division votes for either party, rather than a random distribution. This in turn is governed by the nature of the legislation and the order in which it is introduced.
7. The use of recorded division votes ignores the votes taken on the voices.

Any determination of independence necessarily requires some subjective judgement, but firm conclusions have been made in relation to each Independent, supported by contemporary documentary and other evidence.

Of the eighteen members to be considered, the briefest term in office was three years: the longest, thirty-seven years, was enjoyed by T.C. Stott (1933-70). Stott was an influential member who was able to assist achievement of a great deal for the wheat industry in and out of parliament. His career is much of the fabric on which this thesis is threaded. His story is that of an idealistic, politically astute young man who sets out both through parliament and his impressive administrative responsibilities in the wheat industry, to utilise his

position and influence, with the help of many others, to stabilise wheat prices and introduce new methods of handling grain. It is also the story of an older man who, having accomplished all he set out to do, used the organisations and administrative machinery he had helped to build, to retain political office. The reformer and visionary of earlier years quickly became a hard politician who embraced the most rigid conservative doctrine, and becoming obsessed with his personal contribution and self-importance, searched vainly for recognition. In his last eight years he became as fervent a supporter of the party system and reactionary political philosophy as in his early days he had been a strident opponent. It will be suggested that the prior political associations of Independents determines the particular course of their support for either of the major parties in parliament, if not immediately, definitely in the long term.

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The work has been divided chronologically into five chapters, each commencing at a year distinguished by some event relevant to the overall account.

Chapter I : 1927 - 38

Chapter II : 1938 - 41

Chapter III : 1941 - 50

Chapter IV : 1950 - 62

Chapter V : 1962 - 70

Chapter I deals with the election of eight Independents at four general elections and three by-elections, and their parliamentary careers to the end of the five year parliament 1933-38. Chapter II is confined to a study of the 1938 general election and aftermath when

the then unprecedented total of fifteen Independents were elected to the House of Assembly. It considers the internal and constitutional problems they faced when in a position to hold the balance of power and govern as a coalition if they had been able to make effective use of the opportunity. Chapter II, with a consideration of three elections, embraces the war and post-war years, the decline of the electoral appeal of Independents, and deals with the conclusion, in 1948, to the wheat industry's battle to achieve a stabilisation plan.

Chapter IV finishes in 1962, after covering four general elections, when the LCL government found itself able to continue in office only with the full support of Independents. The establishment of bulk handling of grain (after forty years procrastination) is also dealt with. Chapter V covers the hectic years in more recent memory when Stott, as Speaker, wielded real political power and determined on two occasions which Party took and retained office. Special attention is paid to the thirty-ninth parliament, 1968-70, when Stott found an unprecedented conflict between the role his electors desired him to play, and the parliamentary role he had determined for himself. Having chosen and nurtured carefully the proposed Chowilla dam as a political issue in his electorate, Stott lost control of the direction in which he desired to channel public feeling: unable to resolve the consequent impasse he destroyed a government and himself.

The chapters follow a broad overall plan. Generally, an introduction gives the appropriate electoral and constitutional background (if indicated) and considers briefly the social, economic and political stage at the time of the election. Then follows specific election details, a review of the relevant policies of the main parties and the

principal campaign issues. Details of the successful Independents and their own personal campaigns are dealt with. There is a consideration of the election results, parliamentary activity, role and influence of the Independent members.

Brief biographical notes and campaign details of the successful Legislative Council Independents are given at the appropriate time, but considerations of space have precluded any survey of their parliamentary careers and roles.

In conclusion there is a summary of the electoral and campaign criteria met by the individual successful Independents, which supports my proposal that such criteria are essential preludes to a non-party man gaining a parliamentary seat. The roles of the elected Independents, and particularly their legislative achievements, are reviewed to show that the conditions set out for them to achieve any worthwhile reform are valid, and it is suggested that the South Australian electoral experience with Independent members of parliament, with rare exceptions, has not been such as to indicate that their representation is superior to the type implied by the party system.

To the best of my knowledge and belief
this thesis contains no material which
has been accepted for the award of any
other degree or diploma in any University,
and no material previously published or
written by another person, except when
due reference is made.

Reece Jennings

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis was born in 1973 when, late one night, I was asked to make a house call to the wife of the former Speaker of the House of Assembly, the Hon T.C. Stott. On a subsequent occasion he showed me the memoirs he had been attempting unsuccessfully to have published and, knowing that I had just produced a biography of William Alfred Webb, he asked if I would like to write his biography. Initially it was thought to make his career alone the subject of a thesis. However, on the suggestion of Dr. John Playford and Dr. Ronald Norris, of the Departments of Politics and History respectively, the subject was expanded into the role of all Independent Members of the South Australian Parliament 1927-70. I make a special acknowledgement to these two supervisors for their ready help, guidance and infinite patience.

I have had access to most of Stott's papers which came into my possession after his death, and which I was able to retain despite a legal attempt by the estate to take them from me. In considering the people whom I am going to acknowledge for advice and help, my solicitor Mr. D.F. Stratford, is named first. I also appreciate the actions of Mr. M.W. Bednall, acting on behalf of Mrs. Stott, who, faced with a difficult task on behalf of an old and valued client, did all in his power to cooperate consistent with his duties to the person retaining him. Mrs. Fiona Davis, daughter of the late W. Macgillivray, MP, gave me documents relating to her father.

For granting access to sources, giving advice, interviews and help I thank Mr. Roger Harper and Miss. Valmai Hankel and staff of the

State Library of South Australia; Mr. J. Hoebee and staff of the Newspaper Reading Room; Miss K.B. Landers, former Librarian of the West Torrens City Library, and her staff; Mrs. Phyllis Heath; Mr. N.H.B. Copley; Mrs. N.L. Ralston; Mr. Les Hill; the publisher of the Border Watch; Cr.I.K. Frances; Mr. R.F.McEwin; The Hon.D.N. Brookman; Mr. S.H. Watson, the Parliamentary Librarian; Mrs. Lyn Smith, my secretary when I was mayor of West Torrens. Miss J.M. Ryan, Mr. J. Guscott; the staff of the S.A. Archives; Messrs. J.A. Hanson, M.J. Baker, A.G. Dowd and H.W. Boyce, Town Clerks of Thebarton, Glenelg, Unley and West Torrens respectively. Mrs. Barbara Frances, Mr. Frank Hurren, Master Anthony Hurren and Miss Rosanna Hurren found sources and information for me and did a lot of tedious compilation and cross-indexing; without their help the thesis would have been even further delayed in birth.

Where I am indebted to people not named here, the fact is indicated in the text. Many other individuals have contributed to my overall knowledge, understanding and insight into politics, politicians and personalities, especially the members of parliament, public servants and others I have met and talked with informally in the course of my involvement in local government. The problem with the latter chapters of this thesis has been the need for care in discussing people who are still aware of Stott's part in the period 1962-70. Here feelings run very high and I noted a lot of aggression: I have been careful to respect confidences and have tried to avoid upsetting people who consider they were in the right.

Certain people gave valuable information on the understanding that their names would not be mentioned in any acknowledgement or

reference: two former Hall government cabinet ministers felt that the principles of cabinet responsibility and secrecy were too sacred for there to be any public suggestion that they had been breached. This understandable attitude has placed a few minor constraints on writing about the Chowilla controversy.

In some quarters I met open hostility. In July 1976 I was told by a senior member of the United Farmers and Graziers that (1) any writing about Stott had to be along lines which met the approval of his widow and that organisation, and that they had to 'approve' what was written, or else I would have no access to their records, (2) that all the Stott papers were to be returned to Mrs. Stott and that if I did not cooperate I would get into "very big trouble." In writing this thesis no assistance of any kind has been sought, or was required, from the United Farmers and Graziers, their records or publications. I had regular interviews with Stott on Friday evenings in 1974/75.

INTRODUCTION

The 1927 State elections were contested against a tapestry of serious financial difficulties which had arisen, firstly, because of deteriorating world economic and trade problems, and, secondly, because of the way in which for many years politically expedient solutions had been attempted to overcome the natural disabilities of the State. The pre- and post-depression problems of South Australia were peculiarly severe and contemporary political outlooks generally parochial. Elections were fought on insubstantial promises, vague hyperbole and petty issues more appropriate to a district council. Few recognised that the problems of this State could not be considered in isolation from the general Australian experience which in turn was merely a reflection of universal economic maladjustment in a world becoming more and more tariff-ridden.

The years following the first World War were characterised in many countries by grave financial difficulties, particularly uncontrolled inflation. Great Britain was the chief financial and political influence on Australia. The war wiped out British economic supremacy and left that nation burdened with debts and taxation. Because of this and the inability to master central banking techniques to control currency and credit, the value of the pound sterling steadily depreciated. The Australian currency was bound to sterling and party to all its tribulations. Great Britain in 1925 returned to the gold standard. This broke down quickly because it was too inelastic to provide for debt repayment on the colossal post-war scale. Sterling became a hard currency and production costs rose. Britain was dragged towards depression on a composite banana skin of unemployment, industrial stagnation and unrest, and declining investment. Australia, for whom she was then the predominant trade partner (and who had followed quickly the return to the gold

standard in an effort to maintain parity), was dragged with her.

Australia was not wealthy, was relatively unimportant in international circles, and had only small reserves of gold which could be used to a limited extent to pay debts. Payment had to be made by goods produced, principally wool and wheat. The Australian economy was very dependent for its financial health on sustained exports of primary produce at satisfactory prices. Between 1926 and 1930 there was a world wide avalanche of surplus farm produce. This fact along with the international financial disequilibrium caused a catastrophic drop in prices of staple commodities. The fall in prices for her exports had grave consequences for Australia's ability to pay her creditors and is the main reason for the devastating effect of the depression in this country.

South Australia's exports were substantially the products of agricultural, pastoral, dairying and, to a lesser extent, smelting industries. Wheat, barley and flour were the principal exports. From 1920 South Australia enjoyed increasing revenue from her exports, the value to the State increasing from some ten million pounds in 1920 to eighteen million in 1928. Export prices peaked in 1924/25, and then began a steady decline. The substantial revenue, which had increased annually, accounted in no small way for public and parliamentary enthusiasm for the encouragement of primary industry in every possible manner. But a very important fact was overlooked: the fluctuating prices received for exports from year to year nullified statistics of their real value in relation to actual volume of trade. So far as actual volume of production and volume of South Australian exports per capita were concerned, there was no overall increase between 1920

and 1928. A static yearly volume of exports brought in increasing revenue because of rising prices. When overseas prices collapsed, the State economy did likewise.

TABLE 1: Index numbers of total relative quantity production per inhabitant with corresponding index number of total prices (1)

Year	Index number of total quantity production per inhabitant	Index number of total prices
1909/10	1080	929
1911/12	1000 (base)	1000 (base)
1919/20	811	1866
1927/28	789	1682
1928/29	667	1623

In the early twenties high prices for wheat and wool, reasonable seasonal conditions, heavy annual expenditure of loan money, manipulation of government accounts by the failure to provide depreciation funds, and the irregular capitalisation of interest, created an entirely false climate of economic euphoria. Until the second World War South Australia had an almost exclusively agrarian economy and no secondary industry of any consequence to cushion the effect of the calamitous fall in the value of primary production. The State was little more than a big dry farm which supported a shaky economy only too vulnerable to fickle seasons. All governments had a rock-like belief in rural development and regarded this as the answer to every problem. Virtually any sort of rural development meant bringing about the production of more wheat. Wheat was the cardinal point around which the South Australian economy revolved.

(1) Statistical Register of South Australia, 1929, 1930.

Note: there are striking discrepancies between the index numbers appearing from year to year in the Statistical Register:

This was a circumstance consequential to simple geographical fact because the State lacked the prerequisites for industrialisation. Its sparse, centralised population, scattered settlements, internal and external transport problems, distance from world markets, lack of high quality coal, water and timber, pointed early in its foundation to a pastoral and agricultural future.

Wheat was the ideal commodity basis because its production is not labour intensive, it keeps indefinitely and requires relatively unsophisticated storage facilities. Transport costs are low because it is an ideal freight; it is heavy and non-perishable and can be loaded to the weight capacity of trucks and ships. It does not require expeditious handling like perishables or high class packaged goods. In handling wheat the carrier can achieve minimum tonne/kilometre costs because of ease and economy of haulage. Finally, wheat was a vital exportable substance. The topography, soil and climate of South Australia was ideal for its production. Between 1920 and 1940 wheat represented on average each year fifty seven per cent gross value of South Australian production, and thirty nine percent of all State exports. In 1927 farmers comprised nine per cent of taxpayers and contributed twelve per cent of State income and property tax. Wheat was important in other ways because its carriage and shipment by rail and harbour facilities brought the State substantial revenue.

In 1925 South Australia had some 1790 so-called secondary industry establishments, employing 40,000 people, eighty five per cent being males. Most of the industries depended on primary production or the raw materials from it. Only the motor body industry, which employed intermittently about 3,500 people, could stand aloof from this dependence.

The value of mineral production between the wars only passed the \$1,000,000 mark in 1923. Imposed on the State's insubstantial economic footing was a population which had grown from 250,000 in 1878 to 500,000 in 1920. (The birth rate declined from 37.84 to 24.09 in that period.)

The obsession with rural productivity occupied every ministry. The State coat of arms, granted as late as 1936, contains entirely agricultural symbolism without vestige of industrial innuendo. Agricultural matters dominated Governor's speeches. Agricultural instructors multiplied to ensure farmers had the benefits of scientific progress. At primary schools, agricultural teaching was pursued enthusiastically, and the annual reports of the Minister of Education contain humorous pictorial evidence of the fruits of youthful enthusiasm for feeding pigs, collecting eggs and rotating crops. In 1928 agricultural teaching was extended to high schools. No one escaped the government's repeated belief that the 'chief necessity for the State's prosperity is maximum rural production.' In 1928 the fixation with grain shifted suddenly to sheep. These perverse animals were now to receive all the benefits of being managed 'on modern lines' and this would 'do much towards solving our economic difficulties.' (2)

The problem was that neither science nor the unlimited expenditure of public money could solve the difficulties caused by the complete dependence of primary industry on seasonal conditions. Drought had always been a frightening part of the South Australian climate, and its occurrence had taken a heavy toll on pastures and agriculture with

(2) SAPP 1/1928, p.5, paras 16,17.

accompanying severe economic setback. The drought which began in 1927 did not break until 1930. It could not have come at a worse time.

The serious financial problems caused by the erosion of the economic basis of the State were aggravated by a most important complication. When the international financial rot started in earnest to set in in 1927, Australians had already quite adequately shown their keenness to live beyond their means. Because of currency ties Australia had always enjoyed preferred access to the London money market. All States borrowed profligately and spent funds on developmental projects of dubious validity. Borrowing had always been an essential part of Australian development because from the first capital was required to create new civilised society from an untouched stone age environment. The size of overseas borrowings from the start necessitated that each State had to take responsibility for their raising, and in turn became the main agency of expenditure, determining the direction which all development took.

The control of loan money and policy by the State, in practical terms, has always meant political control and all the evils that that entails. Sensible policies and prudent expenditure tended to be vetoed if electorally unpopular, and money often was spent where the votes were. The future was never more distant than the next election. As in every other State, South Australian voters had all the maddening expectations which they tend to acquire in democracies. Like their counterparts they got invariably the politicians they deserved. In their search for a South Australian utopia they went through fourteen changes in ministry between 1899 and 1930, each having an average life span of a little over two years. This made for neither sound governance nor wise

economic management. The spoils of office went to the party which either promised more, or formed the most opportunistic political alliance. The wonder is that so many public loan works were carried out; the absence of proper control of expenditure is understandable.

On the average, in the ten years prior to 1930, parliaments had spent annually £5,510,600 from borrowed money, mostly on completely unproductive "social" works which gave no return. Each year's orgy of borrowing added an ever-increasing interest burden on the taxpayer. In its second report, the Commonwealth Grants Commission (1935) considered that the prime cause of the South Australian financial sickness was losses on loan policy, and it noted that loan money had been spent on developmental works in marginal areas. (3) Until December 1928 South Australia raised loan moneys on bonds, stock and treasury bills. After that date no further State securities were issued because of the Financial Agreement between Commonwealth and States: the Commonwealth raised all loan moneys on the authority of the Loan Council.

Successive South Australian governments carried out impressive programmes of works with such lack of business sense that government policy by 1930 had effectively bankrupted the State. A small, poor province like South Australia could not afford, on the one hand, extensive and expensive developmental policies, and, on the other, those sacrosanct egalitarian social and economic conditions which all Australians regarded as their inherent right: equitable distribution of wealth,

(3) CPE 148/1934-37 Commonwealth Grants Commission. Second Report
1935 p. 10

education, pensions, high wages and relatively low working hours. Woe betide any government which did not sustain the god 'progress'. It was an implacable deity which demanded taxation and borrowing. The final cost was high: in 1930 South Australia had the highest net losses on public debt charges in all States (more than double the average), and the State had the highest per capita interest, sinking fund and exchange charges on public debts. Between 1913/14 and 1929/30 public debt charges of South Australia increased by 263 per cent; during the same period the population increased by only 32 per cent. In the ten years prior to 1930 State loan expenditure increased 93 per cent; comparable population increase was only 24 per cent. In 1931, The Commonwealth Joint Committee of Public Accounts, inquiring into the wreckage, considered that South Australia's methods of accounting were unsound and thought that the financial situation of the State was 'astounding'. For the ten years 1920/31, South Australia had only a quarter of the revenue enjoyed by New South Wales, but spent more per head of population than that State. (4)

The British Economic Mission, which was in Australia between September 1928 and January 1929, quickly discerned the cardinal error of State developmental policy in committing large sums of money to schemes such as railways, waterworks and land subdivision which could not become self-supporting within a reasonable time.

If they did not do so they involve the State in loss, and to the extent of that loss inflation takes place, the dead weight burden of debt on the State is increased and the rest of the community are, in effect, paying to the persons served by them a subsidy which will be reflected in a general increase in costs of living and production. We are led to the conclusion that the Australian community is suffering heavily from troubles of this kind. (5)

The 1927/30 drought and the depression exposed the grave disadvantage of developmental policies, because all capital expended

(4) See appendix F.

(5) CPP 6/1929 p.6, para 11.

on public works became even more unproductive and the assets which had been provided from borrowed funds deteriorated and there were no funds to allow for either depreciation or replacement.

It is against this background of financial stress, imminent depression and encroaching drought, that we consider the State elections of 1927.

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CHAPTER I

1927 -- 1937

*

Sectarianism, Intellectualism,
Depression and Constitutional
Controversy.

*

The 1927 Elections

and

the 26th Parliament

17 May 1927 - 20 February 1930

*



The South Australian elections 1927-33 inclusive were governed by the Constitution Further Amendment Act 1913 (No.1148) which provided for a House of Assembly of forty six members, and divided the State into nineteen electorates, eleven returning two members each and eight returning three members each.

TABLE 2:Electoralates and number of members returned.

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>No. of members</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>City</u>
Adelaide	3		x
East Torrens	3		x
Sturt	3		x
Alexandra	3	x	
Barossa	3	x	
Burra Burra	3	x	
Murray	3	x	
Wooroora	3	x	
North Adelaide	2		x
Port Adelaide	2		x
West Torrens	2		x
Albert	2	x	
Flinders	2	x	
Newcastle	2	x	
Port Pirie	2	x	
Stanley	2	x	
Victoria	2	x	
Wallaroo	2	x	
Yorke Peninsular	2	x	

The 1927 election was held on 26 March. Nine independents contested eight electorates against thirty three opponents. Two independents were successful. (1)

The election was fought between the Labor Party, and the Liberal Federation combined with the Country Party as the "Liberal Country Pact." The formation of the Pact in South Australia was catalysed by the Bruce-Page agreement prior to the 1925 federal elections that the respective Nationalist and Country parties would jointly fight those

(1) See appendix H.

elections. In 1926 R.L. Butler, leader of the State Liberal Federation, in opposition, negotiated with a Country Party committee which included Malcolm McIntosh, member for Albert and leader of that party, to unite and fight the 1927 election with a common policy. Extensive negotiations were necessary because there was a long history of Country Party antagonism to any kind of political union. (2) (3) Formation of the Pact meant avoidance of three-cornered contests in electorates where Liberal Federation, Country Party and Labor had each sought the vote. (4) The Labor Party naturally preferred to fight elections with its opponents split. Labor's attempts to ridicule the Pact were countered by the Advertiser which on 14 February 1927 formally blessed and approved it. (5) (6)

Premier Hill delivered his policy speech on 24 February 1927, and Butler put his forward the following night. Then, and for many ensuing years, the Advertiser made little attempt to cover an intense conservative bias. It commented that Hill's speech 'may be objected to as containing only a pennyworth of policy to an intolerable deal of historical matter with Labor colour and gloss upon it.' (7) On the other hand Butler's policy was a 'practical, common-sense programme of State development'. McIntosh, as leader of the Country Party, gave what could only be regarded as a policy speech at Waikerie on 28 February. (8)

Butler had the initiative and utilised every opportunity to

(2) Advertiser 12/2/1927:page 19, col.1.

(3) Ib. 16/2/1929:page 19,col.7.

(4) The entry of independent candidates further divided the voting and was an important reason why all parties disliked them.

(5) Ib. 14/2/1927:page 8, col.7 (leader.)

(6) Ib. 17/2/1927:page 12, col.8

(7) Advertiser 25/2/1927:page 12, col.5

(8) Ib. 1/3/1917:page 14, cols.6,7.

hammer away at the deteriorating State economy. Hill provided him with an outstanding issue: the question of an improper suspense account for funding the railway deficit. Under Commissioner W.A. Webb the railway rehabilitation scheme devoured money as fast as it could be handed over. Webb was a man of extraordinary strength of character and personality and had been always more than a match for a succession of weak ministers who held the railway portfolio. By 1927 the railway deficit had grown to the extent that it was a heavy electoral liability. Hill faced the need to hide a million pound deficit from the voting public. Instead of camouflaging the loss from revenue, as authorised by parliament, he tried to fund the amount from a hastily created "Suspense Account." This was a thinly disguised attempt to appropriate money by unconstitutional means, and the validity of Hill's action became the object of intense and able criticism by Butler.

Social issues did not feature prominently in the campaign. Butler promised a tightening up of existing licensing and gaming Acts. Hill made reference to the Saturday afternoon closing of liquor bars. The odd man of the cloth wrote critical letter to editors deploring the lack of interest in 'social welfare.' (9) With the elections there was a simultaneous local option campaign, but the clergy and other interested groups did not become too actively involved in the political fight. The proponents of prohibition and Saturday afternoon closing of hotels inserted low key advertisements urging voters to support candidates who opposed the referendum on these issues. On 18 March 1927 they advised voters that a list of such candidates would be made known.(10) On the Wednesday preceding the election the list was duly published.(11)

(9) Ib. 1/3/1927:page 15, col.2.

(10) Advertiser. 18/3/1927:page 9,cols2,3

(11) Ib 23/3/27:page 12 col.

The Advertiser remarked that the local option campaign, particularly the question of hotel licensing, divided people more strongly than the political campaigns themselves. (12) As to the election itself, it was noted that the campaign had not been distinguished with much vogue in the metropolitan area and more interest had been shown in the country. (13) The Labor Party imported the federal leader, Matthew Charlton, and in the closing stages of the jousting, brought in E.G. Theodore, the former premier of Queensland.

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BAROSSA

There were two independent candidates, Dr.H.Basedow, and A.P. Davies.

Herbert Basedow(1881-1933) JP MA MD ChB PhD BSc FGS MP was one of the most remarkable and erudite men to become a member of parliament. A brief biography has been written by Harmstorf. (14) In 1924 he made his first attempt to enter parliament as Country Party candidate for Barossa. He was defeated, polling 8.19 per cent of the vote, the Labor Party winning two seats (G.Cooke and L.A. Hopkins) and the Liberal Federation one(W.Hague). At a by-election on 22 November 1924 following Hague's death, H.B. Crosby retained the seat for the Liberals: Basedow was not a contestant.

Albert Davies was an engineering trademan employed by the South Australian Railways (15) and resigned his position to contest

(12) Ib. 21/3/1927:page12,col.4 (leader

(13) Ib. 12/3/1927:page12,col.1

(14) Australian Dictionary of Biography Vol.7 1891-1939 pp.202-3

Other sources of biographical information are:

Johns ADF 20:Serle 1:57:AENE 1:445:A604/B8:Cent.Stat.56:D5390 (Misc.): NC3:78; all held in SAA

Transcript of talk given by Ian Mudie on 28/6/1970;"Herbert Basedow-Man of many parts", published by the ABC.

Who's Who in Australia,1927-28

(15) Advertiser: 11/2/1931,P8,col.D

Barossa. At the time he lived at Kingswood, but had been a resident of Gawler. (16) Davies tried hard to present himself as a Labor candidate, (17) albeit unendorsed, (18) but he can only be regarded as an Independent because of his repudiation both by the Labor Party and by Cooke and Hopkins as individual candidates. (19) Four years after the election, when giving evidence on oath for the defence in the celebrated trial of R. v Edwards, Davies maintained that he had stood for Barossa as an unendorsed Labor candidate and not an Independent. (20) His voting percentage, less than one, the events prior to nomination day, and the nature of the campaign indicate that his own view of his candidacy did not coincide with the electorate's. He was de facto an independent. Davies had stood for parliament before and had come into conflict with the Labor Party. (21) (22) (23) His 1927 candidacy irritated them.

On 1 March he was publicly repudiated by F.F.Ward, State secretary, (24) and on 2 March the two endorsed Labor candidates, Cooke and Hopkins, ostentatiously dissociated themselves from him. (25) Davies and Ward continued their mud slinging during the campaign. (26) (27)

There was more basis to Labor annoyance than Davies's repetition in 1927 of his previous actions. There is evidence to suggest that the Labor Party endorsed only two candidates for Barossa in an effort to link the party with Basedow as number three on their ticket. Basedow was a popular figure and was known to have support from

(16) Ib. 5/3/1927, p.15, col.F

(17) Ib. 24/3/1927, p.18, col.D

(18) Ib. 5/3/1927, p.15, col.F

(19) Bunyip: 4/3/1927, p.11, col.D

(20) Advertiser: 11/2/1931, p.8, col.D

(21) Ib. 5/3/1927, p.15, col.F

(22) Hughes and Graham: Voting op.cit., p.79

(23) Advertiser: 2/3/1927, p.14, col.B

(24) Ib. 3/3/1927, p.14, col.B

(25) Ib. 5/3/1927, p.15, col.f.

(26) Ib. 24/3/1927, p.18, cols.D,E

(27) Ib. 29/1/1927, p.14, col.B

Labor voters. (28) At about the time the State election was announced it was rumoured in the Barossa electorate that the Labor Party would not be adverse to pressing for only two of the seats so that Basedow with the third vote would stand a chance of election. (29) Nearly two months before the election Basedow's independence was accepted, but it was assumed that he would be the third man on the Labor ticket, (30) and, it turned out, he was so placed. (31) Finally, the virulent and deceitful Liberal campaign against him is proof enough of this reasoning. (32) (33)

The actions of the Barossa Labor electorate committee are further evidence. Davies held consistently that he had every right to stand as a Labor candidate, (34) and vainly sought endorsement ex post facto. (35) The Barossa committee had received nominations only from Cooke and Hopkins, and resolved unanimously to run only those two candidates: they were the sitting members. The committee was very resistant to running a third. (36) It is reasonable to conclude that Davies, anxious to get into parliament, saw an opportunity when only two Labor candidates were pre-selected for a three member seat, and decided to graft himself onto the campaign a priori.

At the declaration of the 1924 Barossa poll Basedow had said he would stand again. (37) A few months later William Hague died and a by-election became necessary. Basedow nominated as a Country Party candidate but as a result of personal representations from Sir Henry Barwell and Sir David Gordon on 27 October 1924, he withdrew, (38) (39)

(28) Bunyip: 7/1/1927, p. 6, col. E

(29) Ib. 4/2/1927, p. 9, col. A

(30) Ib. 25/3/1927, p. 11, cols. A, B

(31) Advertiser: 21/3/1927, p. 14, col. 4

(32) Ib. 24/3/1927, p. 18, cols. F, G

(33) Bunyip: 1/4/1927, p. 10, cols. B, C, D

(34) Advertiser 24/3/1927, p. 18, col. D

(35) Ib. 5/3/1927, p. 15, col. F

(36) Ibidem

(37) Advertiser: 11/2/1927, p. 15, col. F

(38) Ibidem

(39) Advertiser: 25/2/1927, p. 15, col. H

and H.B. Crosby, who had lost his seat at the general election on 5 April 1924 was returned. The by-election occurred at the time the Nationalists were asking the Country Party in the Federal parliament to consolidate the Bruce-Page pact, and the Liberal Federation was frightened that a State contest involving Country Party and Liberal Federation would 'upset all their calculations.'(40) Barwell and Gordon told Basedow that a State Liberal-Country Pact was being negotiated with the 1927 general election in view, and they promised him their third vote.(41) In July 1925 he was nominated as Country party candidate for Barossa.(42) The Liberal Federation then began a series of attempts to get Basedow completely out of that electorate. He was first asked to stand for the Federal seat of Angas, and when he refused was asked not to stand for Barossa. The Liberal Federation would not entertain his own proposal to nominate for Alexandra or Stanley (liberal strongholds), but naively offered him Newcastle.(43) This was one of the safest Labor seats and his candidacy would have been a waste of time. He was then accused of being the rock on which the anxiously awaited Pact would flounder.(44) This blackmail did not shift him from his resolve to contest Barossa and he told his suppliants that he would stand as a Country Party candidate outside the Pact.(45) (46) He already had made it plain he would stand whether asked to nominate by the Country Party or not.(47) Basedow attracted the spite of the Liberal Federation, particularly those members who

(40) Advertiser: 11/2/1927, p.15, col.E

(41) Ibidem.

(42) Ibidem.

(43) Ibidem.

(44) Ibidem.

(45) Ibidem.

(46) Basedow had no time for Federal or State Pacts. Country News 1/11/1924, p.1

(47) Advertiser: 7/1/1927, p.17, col.G

write to editors hidden under nom-de-plumes, and he was accused of attempting to 'thwart the Liberal Federation and play into the hands of the Labor Party.'(48) His exposures about the promised Liberal Federation support in 1927 brought a strong denial from them,(49) but Basedow was telling the truth and the Liberals were not. It was a sordid episode and the Liberal Federation gave full vent to their vindictiveness.

So the 1927 Barossa Campaign was a contest between two endorsed Labor, three endorsed Liberal-Country Pact, an erstwhile Labor regarded by all as an imposer, and Basedow, whose candidacy was cultivated by Labor and execrated by the Liberal Federation. Basedow's election meeting advertisements made it plain that he was a 'Country Party Candidate Not Included in the Pact.'(50) But he was prima facie an Independent, and he asserted his independence, (51) and on the platform refused repeatedly to speculate as to which party he would support.

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Basedow gave his principal address at Gawler on 16 March to a crowd so large it spilled out of the hall.(52) He dealt with State finances, attacked particularly W.A.Webb and the railways(53) advocated votes for women in the Legislative Council,(54) and discussed cooperative marketing and mining.(55) He made scathing reference to government policy with regards English migrants, opposing the acceptance of those

(48) Ib.:23/2/1927,p.15,col.G

(49) Bunyip:18/2/1927,p.11,col.D

(50) Bunyip:11/3/1927,p.5,col.C

(51) Advertiser:21/3/1927,p.14,col.D

(52) Bunyip:18/3/1927,p.11,col.A

(53) Ib.,p.11,col.B

(54) Ib.,p.11,col.C

(55) Ibidem.

who were 'inefficients and inebriates.' (56) (57) After a reference to the need for a North-South railway, he recounted the tergiversations of the Liberal Federation, and made it plain he was under no obligation to the Labor Party, but thought it extraordinary that they were prepared to trust him. (58) He made no reference to aborigines. His enthusiastic support was characteristic of the reception he received throughout the campaign. The Bunyip thought that he would top the poll because of his personality. (59)

In an electoral pamphlet which is undated, but which most likely refers to the 1924 elections, Basedow listed his principal concerns as the briquetting of brown coal, the systematic search for petroleum, the construction of the north-south railway, fauna and flora protection, medical surveillance and better control of aborigines. As his campaign progressed and its enthusiastic acceptance became clear, commonsense deserted the Liberal Federation and they became more and more frustrated and vituperative. Initially they were content to claim that a vote for him would assist Trades Hall. (60) In the closing stages on the hustings their attacks became personal and bitter. Agents were planted at his meetings to ask rehearsed questions designed to prove that he was a labor supporter. (61) They poured organisers, MPs

(56) Ibidem.

(57) In attacking migrants, Basedow was reflecting public opinion. Post War assisted migration to Australia reached its highest peak in 1926, when total arrivals were 31,260. (CPP 147/29-30-31, v.II p.24). Great pressure was brought to bear by the British government on Australia to accept immigrants. (CPP 45/1929, p.41) Medical examination of migrants was an issue in the 1920's. (CPP 135/23/24, p.4) There was extensive and private disquiet about the types of immigrants, (See, e.g., Loder, J.deV.; Australia: the Lone and Empty Land, in the Empire Review, v.XLIV, pp.332-341.1926) As depression and unemployment worsened the subject became of great political and emotional significance.

(58) Ib, p.11, cols.D.E

(59) Bunyip:4/2/1927, p.9, col.A

(60) Advertiser:21/3/1927, p.14, col.D

(61) Ib.24/3/1927, p.18, cols.F,G

cars and money into the electorate. Basedow stood his ground firmly and never descended to the offensive and untruthful depths which were plumbed by his antagonists; to the most slanderous and disgraceful allegations he replied directly and without malevolence.

F.F. Ward took it upon himself to "explain" Basedow's position, saying that he would support Labor. Basedow, intrigued by the readiness of all his opponents to specify what his voting policy would be if elected replied unequivocally:

I reserve the right to complete independence. I shall be prepared (if elected) to support any Government, irrespective of party, who bring forward sound, honest and progressive legislation. (62)

Sometime during the week before polling, the Liberal Federation distributed two savage circulars in the electorate: "An Open Letter to the Electors of Barossa" and "Latest News!" (63)(64) They made bitter attacks on Basedow, were clearly libellous and seriously and deliberately misrepresented him. "Latest News!" professed to prove that Basedow was 'an accredited socialist candidate.' (65) Reflections were cast on his independence and his integrity. These vicious attacks had been organised from Adelaide. (66) They did nothing to help the Liberal cause, disgusted some supporters, and a few Liberal canvassers refused to touch them. In contrast to that of his opponents, Basedow's campaign was a solitary one. He had no-one to share his platform, no paid canvassers, and he drove his own car. (67) In comparison with his relations with the Liberal Federation, he got on well with Cooke and Hopkins, whom he found cordial and friendly. (68) He had little time

(62) Ib. 21/3/1927, p.14, col.D

(63) Ib. 24/3/1927, p.18, col.F,G

(64) Bunyip :25/3/1927, p.8, cols.B,C

(65) Ib. col.B

(66) Ib. 1/4/1927, p.10, cols.B,C,d

(67) Ib. 25/3/1927, p.8, cols.B,C

(68) Ib. 8/4/1927, p.10, col.B

for Davies, (69) who tried to campaign as a Labor man, (70) and whose only reported policy speech was a non-event.

Basedow topped the poll and was elected. Crosby and Cooke retained their seats. Hopkins was defeated. Davies obtained less than one per cent of the votes cast. (72)

TABLE 3: Barossa election, 1927: Candidates, votes and percentages.

Candidate	Party	Votes	Percentages
Basedow	Ind	5756	18.35
Cooke	Lab	5241	16.71
Crosby	Pact	5152	16.42
Rudall	Pact	5056	16.12
Hopkins	Lab	5014	15.98
Lyons	Pact	4870	15.52
Davies	Ind	282	0.90

Source: Advertiser: 28/3/1927, p.15

Bunyip: 8/4/1917, p.10

Hughes and Graham: Voting, p.85

The poll was declared in the Gawler Institute Hall on 1 April. There were some minor acrimonious exchanges over Basedow's support from the Labor Party. He made it quite plain that he had stood as an Independent, and would remain one. (73) Davies did not attend.

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PORT ADELAIDE

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There was one Independent candidate, T.T.Thompson. Thomas Turner Thompson (1867-1947) was born in Adelaide and was a butcher; his father George, was a clerk and his mother's maiden name was Turner.

(69) Ib. 21/3/1927, p.14, col.D

(70) Advertiser: 24/3/1927, p.18, col.D

(71) Ib. 24/3/1927, p.18, cols.D,E

(72) In 1924 as a Country Party candidate, Basedow secured 2017 votes, a percentage of 8.19.

(73) Bunyip: 8/4/1927, p.10, cols.B.C.D

In 1893 He married Edith Wait: there were four sons and six daughters. He lives in the newspaper reports and other records which cover his two turbulent campaigns in Port Adelaide. The first, for the seat at the 1927 general election: the second, for the same seat at a supplementary poll on 2 July 1927, held after his initial election had been declared invalid by the Court of Disputed Returns.

Thompson was distinguished for having fought two State elections on a purely sectarian basis. Those elections were remarkable for several lamentable reasons. At a time when South Australia needed capable and resolute parliamentary representatives able to master the serious economic and social problems which threatened to overwhelm it, and when the State cried for men with broadness of vision and force of character to provide leadership, Thompson, determined to gain election at any cost, twice ruthlessly divided his electorate with a wedge of religious bigotry and prejudice. He was an arrogant, self-righteous man who piously used the name of God and protestantism to expose to hatred, contempt and ridicule thousands of his fellow citizens who happened to be Catholics. He was stunningly successful. Had he not engineered his own political demise, he may well have continued to sit in parliament for years. Around the turn of the century, perhaps, Thompson's campaigns, vicious and unprincipled as they were, may have seemed less anachronistic because then there was no shortage of voluble Defenders of the Faith, even in outposts of the Empire like South Australia, insulated by distance and philosophy from the wrangles between church and State which were still a vigorous part of the European heritage.

At the time of the 1927 election, Thompson lived at Railway Terrace, Franklin* and was a Justice of the Peace. Previously he had been chairman of the Waterside Workers Association for four years.

* Now incorporated in Cheltenham

Port Adelaide then was a two-member, solid Labor district. F.J. Condon had been elected for the first time in 1924 and had joined J.L. Price who had held the seat since 1915. Price resigned in 1925 to become Agent-General in London, and at the by-election on 20 June 1925 had been succeeded by J.S. Verran. J.F.D.Jonas gained pre-selection for the 1927 contest, along with Condon. Thompson had signed Condon's nomination papers. (74) Nominations for the seat closed on 1 March 1927. It was public knowledge at least by 22 February that Thompson would be a candidate.(75) On 28 February the Port Adelaide branch of the Waterside Workers Federation met and decided to ask Thompson not to nominate.(76) He had committed the ultimate apostasy by opposing properly selected Labor Party candidates, and to render his action more heinous, when a candidate for Senate selection in 1925, had signed the party platform pledge not to do so. Nomination meant his automatic expulsion from the Labor Party.

It appears that Thompson nominated because he was angry at the Labor Party's rigid adherence to pre-selection. He had strong views as to his own ability and believed that he was just as entitled as anyone else to enter parliament, and it was not for a party to say he could not. The Protestant Federation may have been the catalyst, but there is no readily available documentary proof of this. He may have been simply an opportunist who saw possibilities in opposing a newcomer (Jonas). A letter demanding the withdrawal of his nomination was sent to him by the Waterside Workers Federation. Thompson claimed that he received it after nominations had closed.(77) He gave the Federation a blunt reply:

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- (74) Advertiser: 29/3/1927,p.14,cols.G,H
(75) Ib.23/2/1927,p.15,col.G
(76) Ib.2/3/1927,p.14,col.B
(77) Port Adelaide News: 4/3/1927,p.1, cols.B,C

I am not going to withdraw my nomination. I will win the election, and do my best to assist the workers of Port Adelaide who placed me four years their chairman. If, as you say, I am still a member of the Australian Labor Party, what harm am I doing in contesting the election? It will mean that two members of the Labor Party must be elected. (78)

So began the dirtiest political campaign in the history of South Australian elections.

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Thompson was styled an Independent Protestant Labor candidate. He circulated a ticket coupling his name with that of Jonas.(79) It was a cynical move which confused a lot of people. Port Adelaide was a depressed working class area, with overt poverty, illiteracy and unemployment the major pointers to a multitude of social ills which stigmatised the district. The success of Thompson's campaign can be attributed in part to the poor education and working class suspicions throughout the electorate. He had also a large personal following. He claimed his campaign committee comprised 405 members, (80) a figure which suggests exaggeration, but which cannot be checked. After the election the Port Adelaide News commented that 'The remarkable thing about the campaign is the wonderful organising of Mr. Thompson's committee, which he considers was the main factor in his return.' (81) He campaigned vigorously, addressing meetings throughout the area. In a speech at Chicago* on 23 March he dealt with his platform on two fronts; firstly, his general political philosophy, and, secondly, his actual legislative interests. He displayed a schizoid ambivalence towards his own bigotry, advocating a religious freedom and equality which was quite inconsistent with the tenor of the campaign. He had a shot at

(78) Advertiser: 4/3/1927, p.14, col.B

(79) Ib. 21/3/1927, p.14, cols.C,D

(80) Port Adelaide News; 1/4/1927, p.1, col.E

(81) Ib. 1/4/1927, p.4, col.C

* Now Kilburn

'Political Romanism', but left the Pope alone, and he protested hypocritically against sectarianism.

He revealed himself in favour of scripture reading in schools and supported a referendum on Saturday closing of hotels. Lionel Hill was eulogised, W.A. Webb criticised, and he would 'stop the influx of foreigners'. (82) But it was not Thompson's platform perorations which distinguished the campaign: it was the poisonous electoral literature, distributed widely, which divided and antagonised people and stirred hatreds. The Pope became suddenly the arch-enemy of South Australian parliamentary democracy in general, and the electoral district of Port Adelaide in particular. Every vestige of taste, decency and courtesy was discarded by the pamphleteers. When statements were sufficiently misleading or defamatory to have run the risk of libel action if committed to print, they were systematically spread by rumour. Thus the electors learnt that Jonas had become a convert to Roman Catholicism three months before the election in order to get the church vote, (83) and that he tried to get jobs for the despised Maltese.

Condon, who was painted as the Pope's agent in Port Adelaide, was a quiet, decent man who was widely respected for his extensive involvement in local voluntary organisations: he was a conscientious and hard working member. It was a particularly atrocious personal attack on him which eventually annulled the election. A Thompson supporter, John Crawford, in March, published a defamatory caricature which suggested that Condon was a mercenary hypocrite who had used his honorary positions to gain several paid jobs. The photograph of Condon had been obtained from the Port Adelaide News. That paper had remained strictly neutral, although viewing the campaign with distaste, but Crawford's

(82) Thompson was a child of the times, like Basedow. "Foreigners" meant Italians, Greeks and Maltese. Those migrants were subjected to much repugnant, hostile and insulting criticism in press and parliament.

(83) Advertiser: 31/3/1927, p.12, cols. F.G.H

request for a photograph of Condon, ('We only want his head'), disconcerted it, and he was warned that if caricaturing was introduced into the election it would do more harm than good. (84)

As well as slugging it out with Condon, Jonas and the Pope, Thompson conducted a running war with organised Labor. On 23 March the Port Adelaide Waterside Workers Federation advised 'Workers Beware'; as there was a repudiated political traitor in Port Adelaide who was deluding them with rubbish, and urged Thompson's 'extermination'. (85) On 22 March the Seamen's Union publicly rejected him. (86) The Waterside Workers Federation summonsed Thompson to a meeting on 28 March to show cause why he should not be dealt with for having published their letter sent to him on nomination day, asking him to withdraw his nomination. At the same time as this summons was delivered he received a registered letter from them cautioning him against publishing the summons. (87) Thompson immediately gave the press details of both summons and letter and for good measure announced that he already had marked out the seat he was going to occupy in the House. (88) The Protestant Federation supported his campaign with advertisements praying for his 'glorious victory', so that he would 'be the pioneer of a new spirit in South Australian Labor.' (89)

The results of the election were a crushing blow to the Labor Party. Thompson narrowly defeated Condon and, with Jonas, became one of the new members for Port Adelaide. (90) The interest aroused at Port

(84) Port Adelaide News: 17/6/1927, p. 4, col. C

(85) Advertiser: 23/3/1927, p. 19, col. 1

(86) Ib. 23/3/1927, p. 19, col. E

(87) Ib. 25/3/1927, p. 1, col. F

(88) Ibidem.

(89) Ib. 24/3/1927, p. 3, cols. F, G

(90) Voting figures were Jonas, 14512; Thompson, 10560; Condon, 10375.

Adelaide resulted in a poll which approached a record for a State election; voting then was not compulsory, (91) The Advertiser thought Condon's defeat was the greatest surprise of the election and a 'distinct set-back for the Labor Party machine'. (92) It was generally agreed that the sectarian issue had secured Thompson's election. (93) (94) An analysis of booth figures indicates he received substantial support in the Liberal areas. (95) (96) Other factors which contributed to his success were the simultaneous local option polls, (97) and the fact that the president of the Port Adelaide District Trades and Labor Council, A.V. Thompson, had addressed meetings on behalf of Condon and Jonas, and voters may have become confused. (98) The Port Adelaide News shrewdly suggested that additional reasons could have been parliamentary neglect of the area and increased taxation. (99)

The outcome of the election greatly disturbed the major parties and the sectarian campaign disconcerted the more thoughtful. (100) Thompson naively told his declaration audience that 'Now the contest was over' he would know no creed or religion. (101) Life became uncomfortable for him. Jonas made it plain that he would not speak to him and there was no possibility of the two working in unison. The Waterside Workers Federation fined him £5 for publishing the letter re withdrawing his nomination, and expelled him at a charming meeting when the proceedings, it was said, could be heard a considerable distance away. (102)

(103)

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- (91) Ib. 28/3/1927, p. 15, cols. G, H
(92) Ib. 28/3/1927, p. 15, cols. A, B
(93) Ib. 28/3/1927, p. 15, cols. G, H
(94) Ib. 29/3/1927, p. 14, cols. G, H
(95) Ib. 28/3/1927, p. 15, cols. G, H
(96) Port Adelaide News: 1/4/1927, p. 4, cols. C, D
(97) Advertiser: 28/3/1927, p. 15, cols. G, H
(98) Ib. 29/3/1927, p. 14, cols. G, H
(99) Port Adelaide News: 1/4/1927, p. 4, cols. C, D
(100) Port Adelaide News: 1/4/1927, p. 4, cols. C, D
(101) Advertiser: 31/3/1927, p. 12, cols. F, G, H
(102) Port Adelaide News: 22/4/1927, p. 3, col. A
(103) Ib. 13/5/1927, p. 1, cols. C, D

Finally, one dark night, some person or persons visited the Water side Workers new hall in Nile Street Port Adelaide and chiselled ex-president Thompson's name completely off the marble foundation stone.(104)

The culprits were never found.

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After his defeat, Condon on 7 May prosecuted John Crawford, Thompson's campaign secretary and publisher of the very effective but defamatory caricature, for a breach of Section 183 para.3 of the Electoral Code.(105) This Section made it an offence punishable by a fine not exceeding £200 or imprisonment not exceeding one year, of any document which contained untrue defamatory statements which were calculated to influence the vote of any elector. Section 198 set out the vicarious liability of principals for the acts of their agents. The case came before GW.Halcombe, SM, in the Port Adelaide Police Court on 18 May. W.A.Rollison appeared for the complainant and R.H.Finlayson for Crawford. The court house was crowded.(106) It did not take the magistrate long to decide that Crawford's pamphlet was defamatory and untrue.(107) On 24 May after a two day hearing he was found guilty and fined, with costs, a total of £22-10-6d.

Condon then petitioned the Court of Disputed Returns to find that Thompson's election of 26 March should be declared void because of undue influence and illegal practices. Thompson's solicitor at the hearing, S.H.Skipper, claimed Thompson had no prior knowledge of the pamphlet. After hearing the evidence of Condon the Court found unanimously in his favour.(108) An illegal practice had been

(104) Ib. 20/5/1927, p.4, col.D

(105) The Electoral Code 1908 (971 of 1902). Repealed 1929

(106) Port Adelaide News: 20/5/1927, pl, col.A

(107) On 3/6/1927 the Port Adelaide News was unable to recollect such a pamphlet ever having been issued in Port Adelaide, where electioneering had never been genteel. (p.4 col.D)

(108) Apart from the president, the Court consisted of two Liberal and two Labor MHAs. The unanimity of the judgement may have been helped by the fact that both major parties abhorred Thompson's campaign.

committed and the Court was satisfied that the result of the election was likely to be affected thereby. Thompson's election was declared void. (109) Condon, if he so wished, could have pressed for a finding under Section 188 of the Code which would have disqualified Thompson from standing for election for two years, but in a remarkable gesture he declined to do so. Perhaps Condon's action was not quite as magnanimous as it appears: he started proceedings to recover immediately his costs from Thompson and nearly succeeded in having him bankrupted. This would have meant automatic loss of the seat and ineligibility for nomination.

The by-election was set down for 2 July 1927. On 1 June Condon was selected as Labor candidate. The Thompson campaign soon started in earnest. Neither he nor his supporters were the least abashed or contrite, and their behaviour on this occasion was worse than at the general election. They wasted no time in letting it be known that Condon was "no sport" for disputing the election, and that he was a squealer. (110) All the religious bigotry was exhumed and paraded, and Thompson's mentor, the Protestant Federation, sent representatives to address meetings and abuse participants. (111) Electors were apprised that a special mass had been held for Condon; that he had dismissed his tradesmen who were not Catholics, and when he had been a Port Adelaide councillor he would not do any work in a street if there were no Catholics living in it. (112) Soon, 'Rome's armies were invading Port Adelaide' (113) Thompson's campaign

not only meant his introduction of an invidious propaganda aimed at splitting the Port Adelaide people asunder, and forcing them into two religious camps bitterly opposed to each other, with the hope that he may benefit in the voting to take place, but it also means the end of all

(109) Ib. 3/6/1927, p.4, cols E, F

(110) Ib. 3/6/1927, p.4, col. C

(111) Ib. 17/6/1927, p.4, col. D

(112) Ib. 24/6/1927, p.4, col. C

(113) Ib. 1/7/1927, p.4, col. D

party discipline in politics if he is returned under such circumstances. (114)

Under the name of Protestantism, a relentless and bitter campaign was pursued to lead people to believe that Catholics had been trying to gain political power in Port Adelaide, and were obtaining control of the Parliament of South Australia, and that priests were influencing their congregations. (115) (116) There was no trying to disguise the basis of Thompson's effort which was simply an unprincipled and vicious attack on Condon because he happened to be a Catholic. Pamphlets urged workers to 'Get Rome off your backs and clean your party from priestcraft and autocracy. (117) On 28 June the Mayor of Port Adelaide convened a public meeting to allow Thompson and Condon to put their views to the electors. Only Condon turned up. He was restrained in his comments on his opponent's scurrilous behaviour. (118) On 30 June Thompson attended a meeting at Rosewater, but it broke up in disorder before he could be heard. (119) He may not have had much to say because on 3 July when he was asked what his policy was, he replied that he did not need any. (120)

Condon's greatest advocate during the by-election was the Port Adelaide News. Between 3 June and 1 July it published four lengthy editorials in which it deplored and condemned in the strongest terms the whole tenor of Thompson's activities and urged citizens either to vote for Condon or not to vote at all. (121) (122) (123) (124) The News had observed its rarely broken policy of strict neutrality during the March imbroglio and had remained reluctantly silent, but the continued deliberately divisive and repulsive conduct of the Protestant Labor

(114) Ib. 17/6/1927, p.4, col.C

(115) Ib. 24/6/1927, p.4, col.D

(116) Ib. 1/7/1927, p.4, col.D

(117) Ib. 1/7/1927, p.4, col.E

(118) Ib. 1/7/1927, p.6, cols.E.F

(119) Ib. 1/7/1927, p.5, col.E

(120) Ib. 8/7/1927, p.1, col.D

(121) Ib. 5/6/1927, p.4, col. D

(122) Ib. 17/6/1927, p.4, cols.C.D

(123) Ib. 24/6/1927, p.4, cols.C.D

(124) Ib. 1/7/1927, p.4, cols.C,D

Candidate was more than it could stomach without losing editorial respect, and it berated him without pause until polling day. (125)

After four weeks of a campaign characterised by unprecedented bigotry and untruths, the electors went to the polls on Saturday 2 July. Thompson was supremely confident about the result. (126) This was a startling and humiliating disappointment for Labor. Thompson literally crushed Condon with a margin of over 5000 (127) and the champion of Protestantism was re-elected. The Port Adelaide News, having no little difficulty in getting the recent editorial sermons out of its mind, remarked that if Charles Cameron Kingston had been alive and a candidate at Port Adelaide, he would have been given the same treatment by the electors. (128) Such was the general atmosphere in the district. At the declaration of the poll on 5 July a record crowd listened to Thompson's sarcastic references to the Labor Party and its various representatives, (129) and some of the audience felt compelled to voice their own opinions of the successful candidate.

It was generally agreed that Thompson's huge success could be attributed to the sectarian issue and it was remarked that it 'goes to show what a tremendous weapon in politics religious prejudice may be when it is made use of.' (130) Thompson had again split the Labor camp and had received heavy support from the Liberals. In the 'upper class' area of Woodville, he received four times Condon's vote, in Semaphore and Largs, three times more and in Alberton his supporters nearly doubled Condon's. (131) The Labor Party found it particularly

(125) The newspaper had warned Crawford in March when he sought the photo of Condon for his caricature, that if he used it in such a way, their influence would be brought to bear against Thompson.
Port Adelaide News: 8/7/1927, p.1, col.C

(126) Port Adelaide News: 8/7/1927, p.1, col.D

(127) Final figures were Thompson 12586 (62.58%), Condon 7527 (37.42%)

(128) Port Adelaide News: 8/7/1927, p.1, col.E

(129) The Labor Party had imported thirty four speakers into the campaign. They represented the invading Roman army. Most of them were non-conformists.

(130) Port Adelaide News: 8/7/1927, p.4, col.C

(131) Ib. 8/7/1927, p.1, col.E

galling that the by-election attracted a seventy four percent poll; the previous by-election had only induced a poll of thirty seven percent.(132) It was also thought that Thompson had attracted support because he won the seat in the first place, he had been expelled from the Waterside Workers Federation, and his name had been chiselled off the foundation stone of the new hall. No-one considered that the Port Adelaide News editorial attacks on Thompson might have assisted his campaign.

It did not take long for life at the Port to get back to normal. Condon was elected to the Legislative Council in 1928 and remained there representing Central No. 1 for 33 years until his death in 1961. The parliamentary leaders of the three main parties were reported to be organising a conference to arrive at an arrangement to prevent the raising of sectarianism at State elections,(133) and a rather lonely "Tommy" Thompson took his seat in the House of Assembly, after assuring everyone (once again) that he would know no creed during his term in parliament. The irony of the reasoning of Mr.Halcombe SM, who thought it imperative that the 'Purity of election' be upheld, went unnoticed. Mention will be made of Thompson's subsequent electoral career because it shows that when a well-organised bigot is deprived of a strong supporting committee, and does not utilise the sectarian weapon, he has no electoral appeal.

At the 1930 general election Thompson did not re-nominate for his Port Adelaide seat but stood for Legislative Council Central No.1. It was held by T. Gluyas and his old enemy, Condon. Again Thompson campaigned as an Independent Protestant Labor candidate, with the backing of the Protestant Federation, and on a ticket with J.J.G.Luxton. Although polling well (his total of 5525 votes were the second highest) he lost on Condon's preferences. On 24 October 1931 there was a by-election

(132) Ib. 8/7/1927, p.8, col.C

(133) Ib. 22/7/1927, p.8, col.D

for the same seat because of the death of Gluyas, Thompson, now 'out of business', found, when nomination closed, that he was one of six candidates, four being Independents. (134) Usually Upper House elections attracted little attention but this one was an exception because it occurred at a time when Lang's adherents were trying to gain parliamentary power, Hill's Labor Government was battling the Trade Union movement over the Premiers Plan, and a number of reactionary groups in South Australia, particularly the Emergency Committee and the Citizen's League, were becoming involved actively in politics.

Thompson and the three other Independents, at the invitation of E.D.A. Bagot, founder and secretary of the Citizens League, addressed the League and their policies were listened to. The League, which took a very active and influential part in the campaign, gave its first preference to Anderson. (135) Thompson was asked to withdraw his candidacy but refused. He criticised bitterly the League: he had been 'deluded' they were a 'political body' and he found

a collection of disgruntled supporters of the Liberal Federation, men who thought they had a chance of becoming parliamentarians, and men who had been failures all their lives. (136)

He promised an effort to reform them. Although his were the comments of anger and frustration, they were not entirely untrue.

During the campaign little attention was paid to Thompson. He was now quite a different person to the sectarian bigot of the past. Not only did he drop the word 'Protestant' from his appellation, he made religion no part of his campaign, nor were any supporting advertisements inserted by the Protestant Federation. He now had a sound platform which covered a good deal of matter and suggests a partial

(134) The candidates were James Edward Stephens (Official Labor); Douglas Henry Bardolph (Lang Labor); Alderman Joseph Anderson, Leonard George Pilton, Arthur Oscar Reynolds Tapp (Independents.)

(135) Advertiser: 7/10/1931, p. 14, col. E

(136) Ib. 9/10/1931, p. 20, col. G

metamorphosis into a thoughtful politician.(137) For all practical purposes the campaign was simply Anderson versus the rest. He won easily amid much editorial jubilation.(138)(139) Thompson polled only two per cent of the vote.(140) There is irony in this humiliating result because Thompson campaigned as a responsible candidate, eschewing the sectarian and personality issues of old. Would the voters have returned him to parliament twice in 1927 if then he had espoused the quite different issues he emphasised in 1931? When in 1930 he resigned from the House of Assembly to stand for the Legislative Council he terminated voluntarily his brief parliamentary career. Had he remained in the Lower House it is likely that he would have represented Port Adelaide for as long as he chose: the Labor split would almost certainly have seen him returned in 1933. It is intriguing that in 1927 Thompson, the unscrupulous bigot, could receive an overwhelming representative vote of acceptance: in 1931 the same man, now a sensible and careful candidate, could lose his deposit and retire aggrieved and bitter. He faded from public view and when he died in 1947 he was not accorded even a brief obituary.

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Thompson had an unimpressive legislative career. He sat in the House on thirteen days before his seat was declared void, and his only activity during that brief period was to ask a series of questions about Osborn coal gantries.(141) Due to a misunderstanding he was absent from his place when the first division was taken on Hill's address-in-reply amendment. The electors were reminded of this negligence during the by-election campaign.

During the second session he asked 37 questions, irritated Hill, spoke during debate on education and commented briefly during eight

(137) Ib. 23/10/1931, p.19, col.G

(138) Ib. 26/10/1931, p.7, cols, H.I

(139) Ib. 26/10/1931, p.6, cols C,D

(140) Ib. 26/10/1931, p.7, cols.H.I

(141) SAPD 1927 1st Session; pp.57,140

other debates. He complained twice about hardship on the working man in relation to financial matters. (142) (143) He did not have a good grasp of parliamentary procedures and there evidently was no-one prepared to initiate him into the mysteries. He supported the Liberals on a no-confidence motion, and initiated no business.

In the third session he asked 47 questions and on 30 May 1928 moved a motion that the government meet the financial burden falling on the City of Port Adelaide owing to the loss of revenue which followed government acquisition of the wharves. It was seconded pro-forma by A.G. Cameron, supported by Jonas, and read and discharged on 31 October. Apart from this he made seven brief utterances during other debates. During the fourth and final session he asked 56 questions, spoke on the loan estimates, abbatoirs and a pastoral Bill, and commented very briefly on eight other pieces of legislation. On 26 June 1929 he moved for a Royal Commission into the prison system and found a seconder in S.W. Jeffries. Thompson had no altruistic motives here: he was a hard-liner. The motion was negatived on 7 August without a division.

Thompson had no influence on parliament, and he played no constructive role. As he had made it plain before taking his seat that he had no policy because he did not need one it is futile to reflect on his role: he was a successful opportunist. Whatever the demerits of his campaigns and the inadequacy of his parliamentary record, he had as much right as any other citizen to seek election. He had nothing to offer, but in this respect he had peers on both sides of the House, the only difference being that their occupation of a seat was rendered respectable by the ritual of party pre-selection.

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Two principal issues dominate Basedow's three year term: aboriginals and mining. When he took up the cudgels on behalf of the

(142) SAPD 1927 1st Session; pp. 57, 140

(143) Ib. p. 2122

Australian native and spoke out for them in parliament, he had already a world-wide reputation for his consistent, deep and humane interest in their cause. His genuine concern for them was displayed repeatedly. When the Commonwealth government began to construct the Oodnadatta-Alice Springs railway, he quickly raised the matter of the welfare of the aboriginals along the proposed route of the line, (144) and, goaded by his reminders, (145) Executive Council declared the land ten miles each side of the new railway to be a prohibited area for aboriginals or half-castes unless employed. (146) Basedow despaired at such a solution, declared that it was 'aboriginal protection on paper' and was the sort of thing 'largely to be blamed for the hopeless failure of our aboriginal policy in Australia' (147) He offered to the government his services gratis to Ministers in the aboriginal (and geological) departments, (148) but his magnanimity was ignored.

In his time Basedow was regarded as the first champion of the aboriginal cause and there is no doubt that he had a genuine love for them dating from journeys he made amongst them as a child when his father, Martin Basedow, was Protector of Aborigines. The wrongs which white civilisation had subjected them to was an intense intellectual pre-occupation with him and the blame attributable to 'so-called civilisation' as responsible for them becoming at that time a dying race, was something he drew parliament's attention to. (149) He deplored their being driven off reserves to be 'kept in a servitude that is nothing short of slavery', (150) but he early found little sympathy and was accused of making 'alarmist statements.' Perhaps members perceived a

(144) SAPD 1927 1st Session: pp. 55-6

(145) Ib. p. 136

(146) SAPD 1927 Vol. 1, p. 332

(147) Ibidem

(148) Ibidem

(149) Ibidem

(150) Ib. pp. 331-2

paradox in Basedow's attitude: his tolerance and love of the Australian native did not extend to Italians, whom he considered among 'a certain class of immigrants who are not required.' (151) Basedow evidently did not subscribe to the wider views of the universal brotherhood of man.

He saw clearly the humbug and greed of many of his fellows towards the blacks and was persistent in denouncing it. When after a special tour of Central Australia in 1927 some sacred objects from a site near Oodnadatta turned up in the Eastern States, Basedow fumed at and pressed the government to secure their return. He denounced the tour as a nonsensical waste of time with tourists being allowed to rob the sacred belongings of the aboriginal tribes of the interior.' (152) The government obtained reports on his allegations, and both Hansard and the quoted documents make sad reading as an account of greed unrepentant, the sacred churingas were never returned, and the report of the Oodnadatta constable shows the exasperated disinterest of the guardian of the law. (153)

Basedow pressed repeatedly for an official inquiry or Royal Commission into the 'whole of the aboriginal question of this State.' (154) and he wanted an anthropological lectureship established at the University of Adelaide not only to lecture to undergraduates but to interested persons. He recognised the unequalled value of South Australia's anthropological collections and deplored the fact that only in Sydney was there a chair, held by a 'gentleman who...had never seen an Australian aborigine before he came here from the Andaman Islands.' (155) He kept constant watch on any matter which affected aboriginals, pricked ministerial consciences about proposals to resume reserves, (156)

(151) Ib. p. 332

(152) SAPD 1927 Vol. 2 p. 1759

(153) SAPD 1927 Vol. 1 pp. 533, 1049; Vol. 2 p. 1859

(154) SAPD 1927. 2, pp. 1498. 2280-1

(155) Ib. p. 1872

(156) SAPD 1928 Vol. 1, p. 568

sought an official reprimand for an investigator who criticised aboriginal habits,(157) demanded protection for wives and children of natives taken from their land to Adelaide for criminal trials, (158) drew attention to malnutrition and scurvy at the Finke River Mission,(159) and even asked his government to intervene with the Queensland administration to see if reports of ill treatment were true. When reminded that the aboriginals were in another State, Basedow interjected 'They are our natives.'(160) In drawing attention to the lack of competence of European courts trying tribal natives for offences committed inter se he was, as in many other areas, postulating concepts which only came to occupy official attention many years after his death. (161)

Basedow was also as tireless in his efforts on behalf of the mining industry. He had an unrivalled historical knowledge of mining and minerals in South Australia, and the people engaged in that field.(162) He twice sought a Commission into the mining industry,(163) and deplored the decline in South Australian mineral production and general lack of specific mining enterprise. He urged a proper geological survey of South Australia and criticised strongly the government's refusal to make the necessary money available.(164)His strongest criticism was reserved for the chair-bound mines department which had no mines and was administratively moribund. 'The field should be the office of the officers. Geology and mining cannot be conducted in the closed rooms of a Government Department.'(165) When he asked questions designed to find out what the mines department was doing in specific areas, he was

(157) Ib. p.591

(158) SAPD 1929 Vol.1,p.727

(159) SAPD 1928 Vol.2,p.1432

(160) Ib. p.1585

(161) SAPD 1929,Vol.1,p.1151

(162) SAPD 1927 Vol.2 pp 1760-1

(163) SAPD 1927 1st Session:p.137. SAPD 1928 Vol.1 p466.

(164) SAPD 1927 Vol 2,pp 1760-1

(165) Ib. p.1762

out-maneuvred by ministers who had no intention of finding answers. (166) Lack of government energy in mineral exploration appalled him and he described official operations as 'a few hen scratches.' (167) Basedow - a former assistant government geologist - had an unrivalled practical knowledge which made him an embarrassing and unanswerable critic. At one stage his pointedly accurate attacks on the lethargy and plagiarism of the mines department saw him accused of pursuing a policy of victimisation, and he had to defend his stand. (168)

Two specific topics were something of an obsession with him, the need for petroleum search, and the necessity for recognition of the State's brown coal potential. He had 'mixed feelings of pleasure and surprise' (169) when the government brought in a Mining (Prospecting for Oil) Bill to encourage the search for petroleum. He generally praised the measure and some of his constructive criticism was incorporated in the final Act. He showed that he had both a technical and practical knowledge of boring, as well as a keen business sense. His belief that 'we have as much hope of finding oil in South Australia as there is hope in finding it in any other portion of the Commonwealth' was in direct contrast to that of the Director of Mines who thought it 'absurd to look for it.' (170) Basedow recognised that South Australia was 'blessed with brown coal' over about two thirds of its entire surface, yet 'we have accomplished nothing.' He urged the establishment of a briquetting industry, the liquefaction to petroleum, and its use for cheap power. (171) He anticipated Playfor by nineteen years.

He urged copper production and the application of advanced seismological principles in mineral exploration. (172) Very little

(166) SAPD 1927 Vol.2, pp.2065,2092

(167) SAPD 1927 Vol.1 p. 326

(168) SAPD 1928 vol.2 pp 1242, 1393-4

(169) SAPD 1928 Vol.1 p.856

(170) Ib. p859. Vol.2 p.1033

(171) SAPD 1927 Vol 1 p.327

(172) Ib. p.328

escaped his attention: when opal was removed from the official British list of birth-stones he drew the government's attention to the fact, enquiries were initiated through the Agent-General in London and the opal was re-instated.(173)

Basedow was a good parliamentary debater who had the measure of Butler and could put a point forcefully and in style. In his first speech during the special session of the 1927 parliament called because of Hill's handling of the by now notorious railway suspense account, Basedow made the point that Butler's action was theatrical indignation painted 'party political', and that 'the transfer of ordinary expenditure to suspense account is by no means uncommon and often in the best interests of the shareholders.'(174) He hit the nail directly on the head when he observed that the commotion Butler was creating over the railway financial mess came from

an inherited obligation from the last Liberal Administration ...their railways rehabilitation scheme...that colossal monument of Liberalism which will be handed down to posterity by no other name than Barwell's pride and folly.(175)

The criticism defied answer.

Basedow's continual strong criticism of railway rehabilitation is consistent with his hustings utterances on the subject. The only other important railway matter which concerned him was the pre-variation over construction of the long promised North-South railway and the first parliamentary question he asked related to the government's attitude to the building of that line, a scheme of 'national moment.'(176) It was a matter in which he never lost interest, nor allowed the government to forget.(177) In the matter of Butler's disastrous attempts to protect railway revenue by various forms of motor transport control. Basedow made an uncompromising opponent,

(173) Ib. p.205.Vol2 p.1761

(174) SAPD 1927 First Session p.100

(175) Ib. p.101

(176) Ib. p.19

(177) SAPD 1928 Vol.1.pp 391,449,543,595.Vol.2 pp.1009,1230

SAPD 1929 Vol.1 p.132

principally because he saw legislation of that nature as 'a direct attempt to crush private enterprise.' (178)

On questions of health, Basedow had little to say apart from his concern with that of the aborigines. He opposed any attempt by the federal government to take over any responsibility for public health, sought radium for cancer treatment, and urged the need for proper control of venereal disease be faced without 'religious scruples or mock modesty.' (179) He wanted school-children screened for diphtheria with a test which was later to be universal until replaced with immunisation.

In his last year Basedow reserved his most taunting criticism for Butler's Electoral Bill which introduced preferential voting. 'The essence of the Bill is to defeat Independent and third party members,' and it

implanted the true 'kiss of Judas upon the brow of Liberalism. The only interpretation that can now be given is that the Bill is intended to oust anybody but one who belongs to either of the two big political parties. (180)

He moved amendments and fought the Bill all the way, but in vain. Only the proposed referendum on Saturday afternoon closing of liquor bars annoyed him as much. He said that if such a proposal got past the second reading stage he would move an amendment

by which the people will be asked to consider an alternative question, namely, whether it would not be desirable to give the wine-making industry immunity from interference by prohibition agents for a period of at least 25 years. (181)

This was Basedow the student of viticulture, whose electorate embraced the most important grape-growing area in Australia, and whose brother was a successful vigneron, having a sally at the rumour mongers who at each campaign spread the story that he was a supporter of prohibition interests.

(178) SAPD 1927 Vol. pp.1322-7

(179) SAPD 1927 Vol.1 pp.330-1

(180) SAPD 1929 Vol.2 pp.1553-4

(181) Ib. p.1480

It was in the fourth and final session, too, that he moved his first and only parliamentary motion that the 'Song of Australia' should be officially proclaimed as the national song of Australia. After a debate which went over some weeks it was lost in government business and never completed.

There are a number of reasons why Basedow did not leave behind any lasting political achievement. Firstly, the Liberal Party regarded him as an irritating, educated Independent nuisance who had taken one of 'their' seats, and memories of the bitter pre-1927 wrangles died slowly. Secondly, the financial and economic situation of South Australia did not permit either government or private enterprise to institute mineral exploration, so Basedow remained a prophet - a largely forgotten prophet - and the State's great buried wealth waited for future generations to unlock it. Finally, Basedow's principal crusade, for the aboriginals, antagonised his contemporaries, both in parliament and community. His views on that race, at a time when they were regarded as something less than chattels and vermin, crystallised all the unsympathetic critical opposition which is attracted by men whose concepts are years ahead of their time. Few supported his ideas that the aboriginals should be paid a percentage of all money gained from the sale of crown lands: many were shocked when he had black friends in his house. In scientific circles his suggestion that aboriginals and europeans had a common Caucasian stock, and his theory that the black man had inhabited Australia for far longer than one or two thousand years that many anthropologists had supposed, brought conflict and ridicule. But it was in parliament that he did most damage not only to his great cause, but his political prospects, for there, Basedow, a retiring man with few intimate friends, revealed the weakness of a too sensitive nature.

In continually pressing in a relentless, scholarly way for State

recognition of the aboriginal problems which had been created by years of ill-advised administrative interference and blundering, Basedow failed to see that his stand could rile members who lacked his learning but who had seen and experienced at first hand all the features of that race which were deplored by the industrious pioneer Anglo-Australian. When on 1 December 1927 during a discussion of the difficulties of the half-caste, he told the House that the infusion of aboriginal blood into north european settlers was 'from the eugenic stand point all to our advantage,' he angered some members and harmed irreparably his case. There were heated exchanges and Basedow found himself without influential sympathisers. (182) One irate member had 'never listened to such twaddle.' The incident provides a good indication of how an independent can antagonise, and thus destroy his potential for influencing parliament to the good. Basedow remained defiant, but his defiance became tinged with paranoia and he accused his opponents of conspiring against him out of jealousy, and holding him up to ridicule because they did not have his advantages.

It will not prevent me, as long as God gives me breath, from putting up a fight for the unfortunate aborigines in Australia, who... have never had a dog's chance. (183)

Basedow tended to lose his cool under fire and his parliamentary colleagues found that he could be easily ruffled and hurt. They were quick to use his sensitive nature to wound him and more than once when deliberately provoked he did himself less than justice. (184) A man with a thick political hide would have ignored the petty attacks on him, but Basedow wore his heart on his sleeve: he also revealed a particular intolerance of fools. In parliament he found it very difficult to work with other people and he remained at a distance from his colleagues and this alone, apart from his Independent status, ensured that his talents

(182) SAPD 1927, vol. s, pp. 1858-64

(183) SAA Serle 1:57

(184) SAPD 1927, vol 2, p. 1875

and abilities would not have been recognised by parliamentary advancement. (185)

Basedow was defeated at the 1930 election, all three Barossa seats going to Labor, but he was re-elected in 1933. He did not take his seat. At the height of his intellectual power, and with his years of scientific work bearing fruit, he was infected with typhoid and after an illness of several months died suddenly on 4 June 1933. He was fifty two.

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Thompson and Basedow did not make any attempt to work together. Their support for either party varied and followed no pattern. The only time they appear to have consciously voted together to oppose an item on the Loans Estimates, they found themselves alone: Thompson later explained that he had not intended to vote as he did. (186)

TABLE 4: Basedow and Thompson: 1927-30: Analysis of division votes.

Year	Basedow		Thompson	
	Labor	Liberal	Labor	Liberal
1927	23	23	31	31
1928	10	16	25	19
1929	22	33	33	19

Source: SAPD 1927-29

Basedow was a genuine Independent who remained true to his pre-election claims that he would support any sound legislation regardless of party. A Liberal-Country Pact government with an absolute majority of ten could with impunity ignore Independents, and it did

(185) Ib.

p.1863

(186) Ib.

p.1874

The 1930 Elections
and
The 27th Parliament
27 May 1930 - 28 February 1933

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By the end of 1929 the Butler government was in serious financial trouble because of the depression. In 1927 banks began restricting credit, drought arrived and the chill overseas winds began to blow export prices down. In 1928 the State was losing half its natural population increase to other States, unemployment rose sharply and all business began declining.(187) South Australia ceased to borrow overseas in December, 1928, and the Loan Council raised all money on behalf of the Commonwealth. The Bruce-Page government continued to raise large sums overseas. Prime Minister Bruce had made it plain when delivering the Joseph Fisher Lecture in Commerce at the University of Adelaide on 1 July 1927 that it would be unwise for borrowing to cease.(188) He appeared not to recognise that no Australian State had a single reproductive loan work.(189) He saw no alternative to overseas borrowing.(190) The Federal Government relied on it to support the development of the country and had no alternative financial or social policy. Suddenly Australian credit declined in Britain because of the high public debt, persistent Australian trade deficits and the fall in commodity prices; the seemingly bottomless source of funds dried up. These funds had been essential for balancing the horrendous annual interest bill. All states were affected.

A significant proportion of Butler's first ill-fated premiership was dominated by major economic problems. His first big task was to get the Financial Agreement on the statute book. This had been negotiated between the Commonwealth and all States from June 1926. It consisted of three basic parts. Firstly, the Commonwealth took over liability for the capital and interest on the public debt of the State. Second, the Commonwealth contributed to a sinking fund to amortize State capital

(187) Financial Agreement Act no. 5 of 1928

(188) Bruce, Rt. Hon. S. M. The Financial and Economic position of Australia. Hassell, Adelaide 1927. pp. 5, 6

(189) Ib. pp. 12, 13

(190) Ib.: p. 14

indebtedness. Finally the Australian Loan Council was established. Butler signed the agreement on 12 December 1927 and the Financial Agreement Act 1928, ratifying it, was then passed by the Federal parliament. Because of doubts relating to the constitutional validity of the agreement a successful referendum was held on 17 November 1928 to enable the necessary constitutional amendment to be made incorporating the terms of the agreement. Butler was an enthusiastic supporter of the Financial Agreement, and the Adelaide press generally approved of it. In November 1927, when he delivered his budget, the State financial position was very bad and bound to get worse; his enthusiasm for a plan which would help free the State from its horrifying debts is understandable. He was criticised both by Labor and from within his own party. Labor's stand was taken because it objected to the loss of the per capita payments. Liberal resentment focussed around the growing Federal financial power which was an inevitable concomitant of the agreement.

Butler introduced the Financial Agreement Bill in the House of Assembly on 8 December 1927 and it was assented to on 5 January 1928. Neither Basedow nor Thompson got an opportunity to speak on it. Whatever private reservations Butler may have had regarding the Financial Agreement, he was virtually forced to accede to the Commonwealth proposal because his treasury was in a serious state: in September 1927 he had had to make a rush trip to Canberra to effect urgent arrangements to enable South Australia to continue ordinary government functions. While these complex and controversial Federal-State negotiations proceeded, Butler locally was trying hard to diagnose and cure the State's economic ills. On 10 January 1927 the lame Hill cabinet set up a Royal Commission on the Financial Effect of Federation on South Australia. The members comprised Hill, Butler, R.R. Stuckey, E.H. Cornish, and J. Entwistle. It took evidence between 4 and 22 February 1927.

The Royal Commission as such never reported. Its evidence - an

impressive collection of disabilities, real and imagined, which could be used for an assault on the Federal treasury - appears in SAPP 55/1927. Butler revoked its Commission on 22nd August 1927. On 8 April 1927 he appointed a Special Committee on State Finance which comprised W.J.Young, H.G.Darling and J.W.Wainwright. On 13 September 1927, two weeks after revoking the Royal Commission of 10 January, Butler appointed a committee to finalise its work. This committee comprised Stuckey, L.G. Melville and J.Sincock. They reported on 12 December 1927. In the meantime the Special Committee on State Finance had concluded more or less that Federation was to blame for all South Australia's financial ills, and issued a first progress report on 14 October 1927, a Further Report on 19 October 1927, and Supplementary Report on 7 December. Finally awakened to South Australia's loud and repeated cries of fiscal anguish, on 28 July 1928 the Commonwealth appointed a Royal Commission on the Finances of South Australia as affected by Federation. Its members were J. Cook, H.R.Brookes and A.E.Barton. Its unsympathetic Report was issued on 15 March 1929, three days before the Financial Agreement Validation Act 1929 received Royal Assent.

The figures given by South Australia to the Commonwealth Royal Commission show the State in worse financial plight than the official S.A. Blue Books would suggest. Figures provided for Federal consumption show the State debt between 1913 and 1928 increasing by £ 62,076,000 whereas it actually increased £ 60,419,000. State figures also indicate that the public debt increased during the same period by £ 90-14s per head (191)

(191)	Figures extracted from Blue Book		Figures taken from Report of Royal Commission.	
Date.	Public Debt £	Per head £	Public Debt. £	Per head £
1901	24 762 305	69-10-2	26 448 805	73- 6-0
1913	30 193 308	70- 4-0	30 147 883	68-18-5
1919	42 650 206	91- 0-2	42 637 206	91- 0-3
1928	90 612 402	156-16-8	92 223 166	159-12-5

Sources: (1) S.A. Blue Books. (2) SAPP 54/1929; Royal Commission on the Finances of South Australia as Affected by Federation.

The Royal Commission gave short shrift to South Australian contentions that it laboured under disabilities because of Federation, but after drawing some conclusions which show good insight into the State's financial problems, it made several recommendations as to assistance, the most notable being for a grant. (192) Finally, on 17 June 1931 the Commonwealth parliament printed a further report on the Finances of South Australia as affected by Federation, (193) prepared by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts. The establishment of the Commonwealth Grants Commission in 1933 gave South Australia a perennial forum in which to air its poverty and make supplication.

Butler's first budget became known as the "Horror Budget."

To his discomfort it was leaked to the press several days before it was presented. (194) The proposals were put through in a continuous eighteen hour sitting. His opponents never allowed him to forget that he had fought the 1928 election on a platform devoted to attacking high taxation and had accused Labor of adopting the slogan "Spend and Tax." Electoral advertisements had urged voters—who at such times assume the mantle of intelligence — to vote for sane and sound finance. There is much irony in Butler's actions, after winning the election, imposing the highest taxation in the experience of the State. In 1927-28 South Australian taxation per head was £6-9-10d compared with a national average of £5-0-1d. This does not give a real indication of the severity of the tax burden because the taxable capacity of South Australia was 84 per cent of the average for all States. (195) The State had other questionable distinctions. In 1927 it had the highest railway rates in Australia, the highest motor taxation and the highest company taxation. By 1930

(192) Report of the Royal Commission on the Finances of South Australia as Affected by Federation, with appendices. CPP44/1929p.37

(193) Joint Committee of Public Accounts. Report on the Finances of South Australia as Affected by Federation. CPP239/30/31

(194) SAPD 1927 vol.2, pp1429-30

(195) CPD Vol.127, p.961

the State. imposed the highest direct taxation expressed as a percentage of the value of production: 9.27%. (196).

Most of the money collected in taxation went to pay the State's interest bill: the seriousness of the overall financial situation can be appreciated. In 1928-29 the whole of the taxation revenue could not cover even the railway working expenses. A growing problem was the cost of providing relief for the increasing number of unemployed; individuals seeking relief jumped from 7000 in 1927 to 22900 in 1928.

The Liberal Federation had some purely political problems, too. The Pact had come to an agonising end soon after the euphoria of 1927. Differences of opinion over cabinet appointments, proportional representation, party amalgamation and specific legislation arose quickly and by March 1928 the Country Party, ably led by A.G. Cameron, was going its own way. (197) The Butler government was swept along by forces it refused to understand and could not control. It was by no means alone. Every government in Australia, like governments all over the world, faced the same problems and were powerless to solve them. Their principal political misfortune was that they happened to hold office in such tenebrous times.

Apart from the disastrous financial morass, the government had incurred great unpopularity with its attempts to control motor transport with a series of controversial Acts designed to protect the railways. It antagonised country interests by raising railway freight rates, and the Country News left its readers in no doubt of its opinion of Butler. Headlines like 'Laying it on with a Trowel' (25/10/1929) and 'Butler's Balaklava Balderdash -Boasting, Blundering, Bluff and Bunkum' (14/3/1930) pointed to a certain editorial bias. Ecclesiastical disapprobation knew neither financial crisis nor political expedience, and the Prohibition League of South Australia sniped at Butler because the Liberal Federation had deleted from its platform the vital plank of Saturday afternoon

(196) Joint Committee of Public Accounts: Cpp239/1920-30-31, pp. 9, 10

(197) Herbert, E.A., A History of the Country Party in South Australia.

Unp. thesis, 1965, U of A, p. 58.

closing of hotels.

In times of real personal hardship even staunchly held political views are wont to pale and wane. Like governments everywhere the Butler administration suffered an overwhelming defeat at the polls in 1930, and it was the Labor Party's misfortune to take South Australia into the worst of the depression. Hill, who in 1927 had been ignominiously trounced for doing what his predecessors had done for years - 'adjust' the railway books - was re-elected to inherit the worst financial and economic mess the State had been in since Governor Gawler's bills were dishonoured in London in 1840.

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Ninety five Assembly candidates contested forty two seats. There were no contests in Newcastle and Port Pirie (four seats altogether). Fifteen Independents stood in eight electorates against thirty opponents, (see appendix I). One was successful. Pursuant to the Electoral Act 1929 this was the first election where preferential voting operated. Some claimed that this had been introduced to prevent the return of Independents. (198)

The demise of the Pact meant the re-entry of the Country Party, and that body fielded candidates in six electorates. Only in Flinders were they faced with Independents. Any doubt as to the existence of the Pact were dispelled quickly by A.G.Cameron who attacked the Liberals during the new year period, (199) and devoted part of his policy speech at Kapunda on 5 March to more criticism of them. (200) An uneasy Advertiser noted that the Communist Party was organising to contest seats, (201) and also thought that the Economy Party whose plank was a reduction in the number of State members, might enter the fray. (202) Nominations closed on 7 March. The Communist Party opened their campaign on 25 February, Butler delivered his policy speech on 27 February, and Hill set out the

(198) Advertiser: 8/3/1930, p.19 cols.E.E

(199) Ib. 1/1/1930, p.7, col.E

(200) Ib. 6/3/1930, p.11, cols.E,F

(201) Ib. 21/1/1930 p.8, col.F

(202) Ib. 29/1/1930, p.14, col.G

Labor case on 6 March. The Advertiser noted that with Mr. Butler

'Liberalism presents a sound constructive policy', (203) but as to Labor 'it is Mr. Hill's naivette rather than his courage which is in evidence if he seriously supposes that he can carry such a policy in South Australia.'

(204) The Liberals imported a "Mr. G.R. Menzies" but realised some days later that they had the initials wrong, and Senator G.F. Pearce.

Labor brought Theodore over again. During the campaign, for the first time, the public met the Political Reform League, formed, it was claimed, because of growing dissatisfaction evident among the citizens of the State in regards to political affairs, and which aimed to protect private enterprise, reduce the number of members of parliament, and reform the Liberal Federation from within. It urged its members to join the Liberal Federation and "endorsed" Liberal candidates. (205)

The main issues as seen by the Advertiser in the campaign were the financial situation, the need to increase production, unemployment, and (an old favorite) the maintenance of law and order. (206) But the railways quickly became synonymous with the financial situation and while the Labor Party made the most of the opportunities provided by a government enterprise visibly dragging the State to bankruptcy after three years of conservative rule, (carefully forgetting that the Gunn-Hill government 1924-27 bore most of the responsibility), it threw up some notable individual antagonists. One of the most forceful was W.J.W. Warne, a former labourer/storeman at the Islington workshops whose Botanic Park anti-Webb orations began on 19 January. (207) Warne levelled very serious allegations at the railway administration, claiming that extravagance, waste and incompetence were rife. His remarks were generally untrue, but he was a forceful and capable speaker and attracted so much attention that

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- (203) Ib. 28/2/1930, p.20, cols.F
(204) Ib. 7/3/1930, p.18, cols.D,E
(205) Ib. 18/2/1930, p.19, cols.G
(206) Ib. 28/2/1930, p.20, col.F (leader)
(207) Ib. 20/1/1930, p.18, col.F

the railways minutely dissected his statements and published two detailed and categorical denials.(208(209)

In the country electorates, the main pre-occupations of the voting public were Saturday closing of hotels, licensing of bookmakers, debt adjustments, wheat pools and guaranteed prices, the reduction of members of parliament and capital punishment.(210)(211) In the later stages of the campaign the Advertiser urged support for Butler, with leaders and articles, and it berated the Labor Party.(212) Finally on the eve of the election, the Protestant Federation inserted a typical sectarian advertisement in favour of its candidates.*(213) Because of the importance of the liquor question in the 1938 elections, the role played in 1930 will be briefly discussed.

When the State was almost insolvent, when unemployment was endemic, the agricultural basis of the economy was in tatters and social disorder an imminent threat, many intelligent, articulate and absolutely sincere people made alcohol an overriding election issue. Like the historic South Australian enthusiasm for imbibing intoxicants, the temperance movement also went back a long way. Although there had been advocates of abstention almost from the time the province was founded, the main organisation, the W.C.T.U., was formed in 1886. 'Throughout Adelaide's social history, there has been a vigorous running fight between the temperance lady and the publican, the wowser and the brewer, the abstainer and the possessor of the famous Australian thirst.'(214) In 1915 under the guise of patriotism they had closed hotels at 6.p.m, and they stayed closed for fifty two years. They took a keen interest in any politician or

(208) Additional Railway Facts. Govt. Printer.Adelaide.1930

(209) Supplement to Additional Railway Facts. Govt.Pr. Adelaide.1930

(210) Advertiser: 28/3/1930

(211) Bunyip: 7/3/1930,p.6,col,C.D

(212) Advertiser: 2/4/1930,p.18,cols.F.G.:p.19,col.D.:3/4/1930 p.14, cols.F.G.:p.15,col.sB

(213) Ib. 4.4.1930,p.8.cols.B.C

(214)Whitelock,D.:Adelaide 1836-1976 U.Q.P.1977 p.217

*T.T.Thompson,J.J.G.Luxton,J.Pedlar,H.G.Butler.

aspirant for office who did not share their views.

Butler sowed the seeds of many future problems when he announced on 27 February that 'The government will give parliament an opportunity next session of deciding whether the closing of hotel liquor bars at 1 o'clock on Saturday afternoon should or should not be referred to the people'. (215) Butler on his own admission had had the policy plank of Saturday afternoon closing removed from the Liberal Federation platform because he thought it was something which should be left to the government. (216) After this announcement the Licensed Victuallers Association decided to oppose any candidates who supported the referendum. (217) Butler had an uncomfortable time during the campaign explaining his stand on the liquor question and some of his meetings were rowdy. (218) It was suggested that he was more concerned with betting than liquor. To the pure, betting was a deadly sin possibly on a par with the consumption of intoxicants. Horse racing (which the social reformers would dearly have liked to, but could not, stamp out) occurred on Saturday afternoons and hotels were well supplied with illegal starting price bookmakers. Whatever stand Butler took, he could not win. The Licensed Victuallers considered he was merely pandering to the prohibition and temperance interests, (219) and advertisements quickly appeared to inform everyone that the best way to do away with gambling on licensed premises was to legalise bookmakers. (220) This worsened the reformist apoplexy.

The Labor Party was ambivalent towards Saturday afternoon closing. Early closing was a party plank. On the one hand the worker in a time of depression did not have (or, perhaps, should not have had) money to spend on drink, but the hotels being opened provided employment. Hill considered that Saturday afternoon closing was not a party matter and

(215) Advertiser: 28/2/1930, p.21, col.B

(216) Ib. 6/3/1930, p.8, col.H

(217) Ibidem.

(218) Ib.: 11/3/1930, p.9 col.C

(219) Ib. 11/3/1930, p.6, cols.F.G.H

(220) Ib. 22/3/1930, p.6, cols.F.G.H.

members could have a conscience vote. (221) As the election campaign progressed, the liquor issue assumed a dominant position which seems ludicrous in view of the very real problems which faced the State, and the recriminations between the different interests became more bitter. Butler accused the Country Party of seeking the aid of the Licensed Victuallers in their campaign. (222) The Victuallers concentrated their efforts in Butler's seat of Wooroora, and he denounced them, (223) suggesting amongst other things that the only reason the hotel interests opposed Saturday afternoon closing was so they could use them for illegal betting. (224) On 29 March (225) and 4 April (226) the Victuallers published large advertisements giving their voting recommendations in all seats.

The temperance interests, operating as the State Campaign Committee, urged support for the referendum and published their own list of candidates. (227) By this time it was noted that the Saturday afternoon closing of hotels had become such a prominent election issue that it overshadowed taxation. (228)

At the 1930 poll many electors arrived at the polling booths thinking that they had to vote for or against a liquor referendum, and were astonished to learn that it was an ordinary State election. In an editorial, the Port Adelaide News noted that 'The suggested Saturday afternoon closing of liquor bars referendum seems to be the cause of the main platform oratory, and it does appear ridiculous that such a topic should dominate the elections'. (229) The chief sponsor of the referendum was S.W. Jeffries, the member for North Adelaide, and he was very active publicly in his support for the Methodist Church. He was not an extremist

(221) Ib. 6/3/1930 p.8, col.H

(222) Ibidem

(223) Ib. 27/3/1930 p.15, col.F

(224) Ib. 4/4/1930, p.8, col.1

(225) Ib. 29/3/1930, p.17

(226) Ib. 4/4/1940, p.13

(227) Ib. 3/4/1930, p.14, cols. A, B, C

(228) Bunyip 21/3/1930, p.9, col.B

(229) Port Adelaide News: 11/4/1930, p.2, col.3

and found the prohibition issue, which was being dragged into Saturday closing, an embarrassment. He was lampooned mercilessly by the liquor interest. (230) Most other members of parliament took sides appropriate to their personal philosophies and political interests, but at least one took no chances at all: the Hon. John Cowan backed both horses and had the distinction of being supported by the prohibitionists and being unopposed by the Licensed Victuallers. (231) It is difficult to determine how effective overall the opposing campaigns were: in the light of the final results they appear to have been irrelevant. However, in Wooroora Butler had a real fight and retained his seat only with Country Party preferences. S.W. Jeffries was defeated. It was claimed that the referendum supporters lost votes and he was used as an example. (232)

It is more likely that Warne, because of his masterly use of the railway financial problems as a dominant and well publicised issue, deserves the credit for the defeat of Jeffries.

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FLINDERS

E.J. Craigie and J.O'Connor opposed two Liberal, two Labor and two Country Party candidates. John O'Connor was an elderly man who had held Flinders for the Labor Party 1924-27. He had lost the seat to the Pact in 1927. He was expelled from the Labor Party because he refused to pay in full the three per cent levy on his parliamentary salary. He had desired to stand for party pre-selection in 1930 but was peeved to find his name omitted from the plebiscite. There were some very nasty arguments and he indicated that he would stand in the Labor interest whether endorsed or not. (233) He advertised himself as a Labor candidate, making no mention of the word "Independent." The Port Lincoln Times correctly designated

(230) Glenelg Guardian: 26/3/1930, p.2, cols. C, D, E

(231) Advertiser: 17/4/1930, p.22, col. E

(232) Port Adelaide News. 11/4/1930, p.2, col. E

(233) Port Lincoln Times: 10/1/1930, p.9, col. C

him as Independent Labor. He held some public meetings and was touted as 'the man who is not afraid of offending any party but is out to put the State on a successful basis.' (234) How, was not made clear. He was not associated with Craigie in any way, and had no organisation to back him.

Edward John Craigie JP (235) was born 5 December 1871 at Moonta, the son of Henry Cameron and Jane Craigie. His father came from Scotland and his mother from Cornwall. He was educated at the Moonta Public School and at the age of 12 went to work as an office boy with a local businessman. Later he became a baker. In 1905 he was elected to the Moonta Council and remained a member until 1911 when he resigned to take up the position of secretary with the Henry George League of South Australia. This remained the principal enthusiastic engrossment of his long life. He shifted to Adelaide, living eventually at Rose Park.

At Moonta he had been involved with the local literary society and was Premier of the Moonta Model Parliament. During his term on the Council he was successful in 1908 in getting the unimproved land values system of rating established. It is not clear what led to Craigie's enthusiastic and persistent embrace of single-tax theory. Adherents to Georgian economic ideas blossomed on the west coast shortly after the first World War, when Samuel Lindsay began spreading the doctrine, and the Flinders Land and Reform League was formed. (236) It was particularly active at Kimba, and most of Craigie's support seems to have been focussed there. His own attachment to the ideas dates at least from his Moonta Council days. Craigie remained secretary of the Henry George League

(234) Port Lincoln Times:10/1/1930,p.9,col.C

(235) Sources of biographical information:

Edgar.S.:in Australian Dictionary of Biography,vol.8,p.134

Who's Who, various years 1935-55

Parliamentary Library

T.C.Stott:personal interviews

Port Lincoln Times 1927-42:all campaign reporting 1924,27.30.33,38.41

People's Advocate 1911-48

(Craigie has left an enormous amount of written material in many newspapers and magazines)

(236) Port Lincoln Times:2/5/1920,p.5,col.C

for thirty seven years until he retired, aged 77, in 1948. He was editor of The People's Advocate, the official organ of the league, for 27 years. He was appointed Trustee of the Henry George Foundation, Australia, in 1927, and represented the League at international conferences in Europe and America. At New York in 1939 he was appointed president of the International Union for Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade.

Craigie was a prolific writer and speaker. In addition to his articles in the People's Advocate he published a number of books and pamphlets on the subjects of land and taxation.(237) For many years he contributed regular articles on political and other topics to local newspapers under the pen name of "Vigilant." His writings indicate a mind which absorbed the whole heritage of western thought. He had once been a member of the ALP but had left the Party because he thought 'They were not true to their principles.' (238) He first stood for parliament in 1910, contesting Wallaroo in the House of Assembly. He described himself as an Independent Democratic Candidate. In his "Manifesto" to the electors he advocated abolition of the Legislative Council, preferential voting, indicated an interest in the River Murray, the Northern Territory and the railways, and pushed his land tax ideas. (239) One of his opponents was the Hon. John Verran. Craigie secured 750 votes (2.83%), 4,840 behind Verran, and came seventh in a field of eight. (240) He was to get a lot of experience contesting elections: he stood for the Federal seat of Adelaide in 1923 and 1924, the Senate in 1919, and he tried unsuccessfully at the House of Assembly elections in 1921 (Burra

(237) These works comprise:

Municipal Justice

Land and Wages

The fallacies of Protection (1928)

Facts about Tariff (1929)

The Rating and Taxing of Land Values in Australia (1929)

Relation of Land to the Labor Question (1934)

The Case for the Single Tax (1934)

Jubilee without Jubilation (1952?)

(238) SAPD 1930 vol.1, p.201

(239) The People's Weekly: 10/2/1910, p.4, cols.F.G.H

(240) The Plain Dealer: 9/4/1920, p.2, cols.D,E

Burra) and 1924 (Flinders.) He also contested seats at Adelaide City Council elections.

Persistence was a marked Craigie attribute; he just never gave up. His unremitting devotion to his single tax theories spanned more than sixty years and his writings and speeches on the subject would fill reams of paper; he was obsessed with it. Many found the prolix iteration of his economic ideas trying, and not a few regarded him as a colossal bore. Much of his writing and his parliamentary speeches have an anaesthetic quality about them. He was a very hard worker, and once told an interviewer that he worked seven days a week because there were only seven days in the week. (241) He had no interests other than his work for the Henry George League. He married in 1912, there were three sons. He died, aged 95 and long out of public view, on 17 January 1966.

Craigie was a most active campaigner, addressing 65 meetings all over Eyre Peninsula, travelling 5000 miles (242) and keeping up a vigorous correspondence in the press. Nominally, he was the candidate of the Flinders Electorate Committee of the Henry George League, (243) and his electoral advertisements were authorised by Mrs. A. Ellis, secretary of Kimba branch. (244) He invariably described himself as the "Single Tax Candidate" (245) In his speeches he would usually deal first with the high cost of government, the need to abolish the Legislative Council, reduce the number of members of parliament, introduce proportional representation and elective ministries. He would then speak in extenso about his taxation proposals, before mentioning matters pertinent to the immediate needs of the district, railways, water conservation and education. (246) (247) He told an audience at Port Lincoln that he was

(241) Port Lincoln Times: 18/4/1930, p.13, col.E

(242) Ib. 18/4/1930, p.13, col.E

(243) Advertiser 18/3/1930 p.18, col.D

(244) Port Lincoln Times: 21/2/1930, p.8, col.A

(245) Ib. 14/3/1930, p.2, col.B

(246) Ibidem.

(247) Advertiser: 18/3/1930, p.18, col.D

a candidate because no party had a policy which would give relief to the wealth producers. (248) An aspect of Craigie's policy which distinguishes it from that of all his opponents is his consistent stand against compulsory wheat pools and organised marketing. He was too honest (and too inflexible) to shift with the electoral wind, and maintained that pools and similar government proposals were a confidence trick to distract farmers from their real problems. (249) (250)

Craigie's election to the first vacancy in Flinders was only apparent twelve days after the poll, so close had been the contest. The second seat went to Moseley. (251) (252) There was much rejoicing and reminiscencing in the Henry George camp at a victory social at Kimba. (253)

Table 5: Flinders election 1930: Candidates, votes and percentages.

CANDIDATE	PARTY	VOTES	PERCENTAGES
E.J. Craigie	I (ST)	2777	34.03
J.G. Moseley	Lib	1927	23.61
M.A. Cronin	Lab	1014	12.42
J.O' Connor	I	763	9.35
A.W.H. Barns	Lib	518	6.35
E.J. Barraud	CP	511	6.26
D.O. Whait	Lab	340	4.17
A.B. Wishart	CP	311	3.81

Source: Hughes and Graham; Voting, p.93

*

Craigie, the only Independent to be elected to the 1930 Parliament, was a member with a mission: to convert the whole basis and structure of taxation from a traditional dependence on revenue from income, dividends, estates and sources like entertainment, war-time profits, sales and commodities, to a single tax on unimproved land values. It was appropriate that the State should be his political forum because Federal uniform taxation was still fourteen years away. South Australia in 1884 had been the first colony to impose a tax on individual incomes. Prior to World

(248) Port Lincoln Times: 14/3/1930 p.2, col.B

(249) Ib. 18/4/1930, p.13, col.E

(250) Ib. 9/5/1930, p.11, cols.A-E

(251) Advertiser 17/4/1930, p.20, col.B

(252) Port Lincoln Times: 11/4/1930, p.1, col.C

(253) Ib. 2/5/1930, p.5, col.C

War I tax was not heavy, rates were low, Acts simple and much income escaped tax. With the war the Commonwealth was forced into the field of direct taxation in competition with the States. (254) By 1930 public opinion had taken an intolerant view of the increasingly complex and burdensome direct taxation system: taxation had become a dominating feature of Australian life and particularly in South Australia. It is understandable that Craigie could be elected to parliament if he was able to persuade people that he had an answer to both the taxation question and the depression - in the 1920's taxation was often in the news. There had been Premier's Conferences, State and Federal parliamentary debates, a Royal Commission and a disastrous Board of Inquiry, all concerned with the subject. There was little unanimity of opinion. Well publicised disagreements were frequent. Royal Commissioners resigned, senior public servants became hysterical about subordination of their departments to the Commonwealth, and the winds of States Rights oratory blew hard and hot. For Craigie, the time was right.

Soon after his election, Craigie was asked about the role he intended to play. He said "It will not be possible to bring about a big revolution in a short time, but I hope to be able to exercise a levelling influence with regard to existing policies." He considered the most urgent need was for the government to immediately change the financial policy of the railways so that they were less of a burden on the primary producer, and city landholders were forced to pay a fair contribution to the railway interest bill. *(255) This was pure Henry George theory.

Any consideration of Craigie's first three years in parliament is tempered by three important things. Firstly, he was one Independent

(254) Commonwealth Income Tax Assessment Act 1915

(255) Port Lincoln Times: 25/4/1930, p.1, cols. D, E

*At that time the average freight costs for SA from country sidings to shipping ports were lower than in any other mainland State - an indication of the indirect subsidy by the taxpayer to the farmer.

facing a government with a majority of fourteen. Secondly, his taxation proposals were anathema to the Liberal Federation and his free trade stance was counter to Labor philosophy. Thirdly, there were the problems of the Hill government itself. The financial ones were without precedent in living memory. The political ones which ensued when Hill tackled the crisis and implemented the Premiers Plan with a reactionary vigor which did the conservatives proud, resembled uncomfortably those which had seen Labor self-immolate in 1916 over conscription.

There was not much time to listen to Craigie. He tried hard to influence members and took every opportunity to get his ideas across, lecturing the government on budgets, taxation and tariffs whenever opportunity presented. He was the voice in the wilderness but he prepared the way for no financial Messiah. Members as a whole did not believe that his theories offered a solution to the economic ills. His speeches were marked by careful preparation, reasoning, masterly handling of figures and corroborative quotations from many sources. He met interjectors direct and without in any way disturbing the train of his thought. Many of his speeches make boring, repetitive reading. He was a courteous man who never resorted to abuse or recrimination and he described his one man party position with a humorous reference from W.S.Gilbert: (256)

I am the cook and the captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And the bosun tight, and the midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.

When Joseph Anderson* was elected to the Legislative Council in October 1931, Craigie evoked some humor when he pointed out that the new member was a single taxer, and as his party representatives had been increased one hundred per cent he should be considered for suitable accommodation in the House. (257)

Only once during his first term did Craigie initiate any business.

(256) SAPD 1927 Vol.1 p.213

(257) SAPD 1931 Vol. 2. p.2054

On 27 July 1931 he moved a motion calling on the Commonwealth to reduce custom duties and abolish bounties, subsidies and embargoes. He was supported by Hill and Butler but defeated by the numbers on the Labor back bench, who made plain their dislike of his anti-protectionism. During the 1930 session he asked one question (relating to land values) and spoke during five debates. In his contribution to the address-in-reply debate his remarks on general subjects cover six pages; on unimproved land values, thirteen pages. That was as it was always to be; his financial theories dominated his speaking. The unknown critic who wrote unkindly that:

Mr. Craigie and his friends...have a tendency not so much to argue, and concede their opponents a good point when they make it, as to repeat over and over with maddening iteration their false slogans, such as 'all wealth comes from the land' (258)

echoed what many of his contemporaries in the House thought. During the 1931 session he asked questions about the cost of living, land tax and the encouragement of local industries, spoke in extenso in seven debates related to economic matters and briefly in six others. In the final session the pattern was repeated.

Craigie was atavistic, but he would never have conceded this. He would have been an influential contributor to Gladstone's last ministry: he was out of place and time in South Australia. He was a true Independent. He was responsible and answerable to the Henry George League, but in reality he WAS the League. An analysis of his divisional voting pattern is unrewarding because he cast a vote which cannot be analysed to fit any particular direction far more often than when support for either party could be discerned, and he was often not present when the bell rang.

(258) Bunyip: 27/6/1930, p.10, col.C

Table 6: E.J. Craigie, Divisional Voting 1930-33

Year	Labor	Liberal
1930	6	8
1931	8	15
1932	10	10

Note: a division vote has been recorded only where it can be clearly seen that there was support for either side. In 1931, for example, Craigie recorded a "neutral" vote on twenty five occasions, and was not present on eleven others.

Notwithstanding his sincerity, integrity and admirable perseverance, by the end of the first session it was clear that a harsh remark by an editor after the 1930 election was valid:

Though Mr. Craigie will be in a position to offer some refreshing criticism, it is doubtful whether he will do much more to influence parliament than the classical sailor spitting his chew of tobacco on the rock of Gibraltar. (259)

*

On 24 October 1931 the death of the Hon. Thomas Gluyas caused a by-election in Legislative Council Central 1, and it has been mentioned that it occurred at a time of Federal and State political upheaval. Despite the violent campaign polemics, heated emotions and excited personality clashes, the low polling attendances suggest that the public at large had a monumental disinterest in the daily hurly-burly. Further, in the case of the Independent elected on a wave of conservative reaction in 1931, it would not really have mattered if the seat he filled had remained vacant for the ensuing ten years, so little difference did his election make to government.

Legislative Council Central No.1 comprised the assembly seats of Adelaide, North Adelaide, Port Adelaide and West Torrens, and there were approximately 40,000 persons exercising a restricted franchise. When nominations closed on 6 October six candidates were revealed, four being Independents. The Trades Hall Labor faction put forward J.E. Stephens; the Lang Party proposed D.H. Bardolph. The Independents comprised

(259) Bunyip. 11/4/1930, p.4, col.C

J. Anderson, L.G.Pilton, A.O.R.Tapp and T.T. Thompson. The Hill Parliamentary Labor Party decision not to present a candidate was lamented by the Advertiser. (260) At a meeting on 28 September the Liberal Federation also decided not to enter the contest.

Alderman Joseph Anderson was born in Dundee, Scotland, 1876 and arrived in South Australia in the early 1890's. He became a certificated accountant and lived at Semaphore.* He had extensive local government experience, having been a member of the Port Adelaide Council for about twenty years and had held every position thereon including Mayor. He was chairman of council's finance committee. He retained his seat in the Legislative Council until his retirement in 1944; he died on 3 December 1947.

Leonard George Pilton was a fireman, living at Coburg Road, Alberton. He then was president of the South Australian Branch of the Australian Party. Although he claimed to be the nominee of that party, he was regarded as an Independent. (261) He had once been secretary of the Alberton and Queenstown branches of the Labor Party, and a member of the Port Adelaide electorate committee executive, and had held office on the Locomotive Enginemen's Association. He was a member of the Port Adelaide school committee. (262)

Arthur Oscar Reynolds Tapp was a well known Port grocer and his shop at Port Road Alberton was for many years a landmark†. The name Tapp still is a respected one in the Port district. His father, Edgar, (died 1924) was a former Mayor of Port Adelaide, and Arthur had been a member of that council since 1912, was mayor 1924-27, and held other

(260) Ib. 16/10/1931, p.18, col.E

(261) Ib. 22/10/1931, p.10, col.G

(262) Advertiser and Register: 30/9/1931, p.20, col.F

*Anderson owned Glanville Hall, the oldest brick/stone building in Semaphore, built by John Hart.

† Now a funeral parlour.

elected offices. He was involved prominently in community life and gave his time to many local organisations. He first stood for parliament in 1912 when he contested at a by-election the assembly seat of Port Adelaide. He stood again for Port Adelaide in 1925 (by-election), Semaphore 1946 (by-election), and was a candidate for Legislative Council No.1 in 1933 and 1941. Tapp's third christian name recalls his great-uncle, Thomas Reynolds, Premier in 1860 and 1961, and Treasurer five times between 1860 and 1868. Thomas Turner Thompson has been discussed.

Scarcely was the ink dry on the nomination forms than the editorial bucket was emptied over the representatives of Labor, and the tenor of campaign reporting set. Bardolph and Stephens were two agents of 'political degeneracy': voters were urged to put Anderson and Tapp number one and two. (263) The Lang and Trades Hall groups exchanged insults and electors saw a lot of dirty linen washed in public. (264) The disquieting spectacle of the Labor Party being "cleansed" (by the comrades), and in the process ripped to shreds in the washing machine must surely have convinced those voters who were not sufficiently disgusted by the spectacle that they would not be bothered attending a polling booth, that Labor in any guise was incapable of governing. The continuing internal party strife over the Premiers Plan was serialised in the press: the expulsion of members, recriminations and threats were day by day reported prominently and at great length in September, 1931. Further spice was added by union officials suing one another for libel. (265) Time has been given it all a comic opera hue.

The by-election attracted Australia wide interest and 'National significance as a struggle between moderation and extremism.' (266)

(263) Ib. 16/10/1931, p.18, col.E

(264) Ib. 19/10/1931. p.10, col.C

(265) Advertiser and Register: 1/10/1931, p.10, col.C

(266) Advertiser: 24/10/1931, p.8, cols.F,G

The citizens League pointed out correctly that J.T.Lang's prestige depended on the outcome, (267) and interest ran high in New South Wales. (268) Bardolph was assisted by "an influx" of orators from that State, including four members of the Lang ministry.* (269) (270) The Sydney Bulletin, echoed by the Advertiser, denounced 'This invasion of stipendiary spouters from Sydney, preaching the politics of the push.' (271) On 19 October one of Bardolph's meetings was disrupted by "Communists,"† and could only be continued when the participants withdrew on to a private property. (272) In the closing weeks Bardolph's campaign was directed by a close cabinet associate of Lang, Mark Gosling. (273)

The Independent camp became very active. On the day nominations were notified (6 October) the Citizens League announced that it would take an active part in the campaign. E.D.A.Bagot, league secretary, invited all the candidates to an executive meeting on 8 October to hear their policies, and indicated that the services of the league would be placed at the feet of those whom they endorsed. (274) On 9 October it was announced that the league's order of preferences was Anderson, Tapp, Pilton, Thompson, Stephens and Bardolph. A campaign executive

(267) Ib. 17/10/1931, p.8, cols.F,G

(268) Ib. 24/10/1931, p.9, col.C.

(269) Ib. 12/10/1931, p.6, col.H

(270) Ib. 26/10/1931, p.7, col.1

(271) Ib. 24/10/1931, p.9, col.D

(272) Ib. 20/10/1931, p.9, col.F

(273) Ib. 26/10/1931, p.7, col.1

(274) Ib. 7/10/1931, p.14, col.E

*Stephens was assisted by a rival faction including senators Kneebone and Hoare.

† There was a tendency, throughout the twenties and thirties for newspapers in general to attribute all electoral phenomena to "Communists," regardless of the actual cause.

and a general committee were formed. The league claimed to have twenty nine committees in the electorate embraced by Central No.1. (275)

True to its word the League vigorously supported Anderson and some notable names spoke at meetings on his behalf, including Mr. (later Sir)William Queale. (276) Further support came from the Political Reform League who urged that he get number one vote 'because he stood for the Premiers Plan and honesty.' (277) But apart from the editorial columns of the Advertiser, Anderson's most striking advocate was L.L.Hill. He pointed out that:

Mr. Anderson, as a supporter of the Premiers Plan and of sound and honest administration generally, was in all essential respects acceptable to the government, and fully entitled to public confidence.* (278)

Hill's endorsement was considered to be a definite influence on voting and contributed to the rout of Bardolph and Stephens. (279) To Hill's numerous enemies it must have been another unforgiveable sin.

Little attention was paid to T.T.Thompson: in what appears to be the only remote comment about him, it was noted on 20 October that (with the three other Independents) there was 'a common bond of political honesty which unites them.' (280) The Port Adelaide News ignored its old bête noir.

Pilton wanted a reduction of members of parliament and cessation of borrowing for other than reproductive works. He opposed any reduction in the standard of living, and wanted reciprocity of empire trade. At a local level he attacked machine politics and railway electrification. (281) It is interesting that despite his occupation, and at a time

(275) Ib. 9/10/1931, p.20, col.G

(276) Ib. 17/10/1931, p.16, col.B

(277) Ibidem.

(278) Ib. 26/10/1931, p.6, col.D

(279) Ibidem.

(280) Ib. 20/10/1931, p.8, col.E

(281) Ib. 22/10/1931, p.10, col.G

*The enthusiasm was no doubt born of the knowledge that Anderson's success would make no more difference to the party or political situation than the election of a teddy bear.

when disgruntled railway employees were a penny a dozen, Pilton refrained from attacking Webb: his departure for America on 14 May 1930 had reduced his importance as an issue.

Tapp said he was not prepared to make promises to win votes or position, but naturally residents wanting a new Birkenhead bridge, and worried about the perennial Torrens flood waters in their front gardens would have a supporter if he was elected. Like Pilton, he stood for reducing the number of members, and reciprocal empire trade. He wanted strict economy in government undertakings and it should keep out of private enterprise. (282)

For all practical purposes the campaign was simply Anderson versus the rest: he was the focus of attention. He was a sensible, sound, broadminded man who was worthy of his enthusiastic support. He saw his role as one man who could do little but could cooperate with others to return the State to prosperity. (283) He was anti-party politics and for proportional representation, elective ministries and reduction of members of parliament. Although he had once favoured the abolition of State parliaments, he admitted having second thoughts on the subject. (283) He was a single taxer. He authorised his own advertisements and made it plain that he was an "Independent Candidate." (285) During the campaign he supported openly the Premiers Plan, was strongly anti-socialist, thought the cost of government was too high and opposed interference with private industry. (286)

The Advertiser considered that either Anderson or Tapp was worthy of the number one position: it did not matter as long as Bardolph and Stephens were put last. In the week before the poll some editorial comments bordered on the hysterical. (287) (288) The Emergency Committee

(282) Ib. 20/10/1931, p.9, col.F

(283) Ib. 21/10/1931, p.14, col.F

(284) Ibidem.

(285) Ib. 8/10/1931, p.16, cols.H,I

(286) SAPD 1931, Vol.2, pp.2629-31

(287) Advertiser:20/10/1931, p.8, cols.E,F

(288) Ib. 24/10/1931, p.8, cols.F,G

brought J.A.Lyons to Adelaide two days before the election, and the crowds heard all about inflation and Bolshevism. Apart from the inevitable letters to the editor, the liquor issue enthusiasts kept out of the campaign. This is surprising because Anderson considered that all restrictions should be removed from gambling.(289)

Anderson won. The poll of 44 per cent was considered "astonishingly light." He had a clear but not absolute majority after the first count and easily secured the seat on preferences.

TABLE 7: Legislative Council Central No.1:1931 By-election;Candidates. Votes and percentages.

CANDIDATE	PARTY	VOTES	PERCENT
J.Anderson	Indep.	9827	56.00
D.H.Bardolph	Lang Labor	3889	22.00
J.E.Stephens	Trades Hall Labor	3434	19.00
A.O.R.Tapp	Indep.	1686	9.0
T.T.Thompson	Ind.Labor	453	2.0
L.G.Pilton	Ind.(Aust.Pty)	151	0.8

Source: Advertiser: 26/10/1931,p.7,cols.H,I. (Calculations made after preference distribution).

Despite the publicity and editorial advocacy the other Independents polled very poorly. Pilton and Thompson lost their deposits; the latter did not stand again. Tapp retained his by only 58 votes. Only in the subdivision of West Adelaide did Bardolph beat Anderson,380 votes to 153. Anderson received scores of telegrams from all over Australia. Hill welcomed his victory and Bavin, the New South Wales opposition leader, was 'exceptionally pleased.'(290) The Advertiser gloated over the Labor defeat in a seat which that party had held since its inception: the Trades Hall had received an overwhelming vote of no-confidence and 'Mr. Lang has never sustained a more remarkable rebuff.'(291) It published a photo of Anderson in a heroic,Cromwellian pose.(292)

The campaign continued at the poll declaration on 27 October

(289) SAPD 1931 Vol.2,pp.2606-7

(290) Advertiser: 26/10/1931,p.7,cols.H,I

(291) Ib.26/10/1931,p.6,cols.C,D

(292) Ib.26/10/1931,p.7,col.H

with 'nasty exchanges' and 'rowdy scenes.' (293) That same day the McDonald/Baldwin National government in Britain routed the Labor Party in a general election.

Two questions must be asked about Anderson. First, if we accept the definition of "Independent" on page iii, how Independent was he? We have seen that he was supported by the Citizens League, the Political Reform League, the press and the leader of -at least in name - a Labor government. The first three were representatives of all that was most conservative in the spectrum of political thought: any Fascist or League of Rights member would have felt at home with much of their philosophy. It has been suggested, too, that in financial and social policies, the Hill government was indistinguishable from its political opponents in all States; Hill's embrace of the Premiers Plan outdid any Nationalist.* It was the Hill government which in 1931 put on the Statute book the Public Safety Act No. 2048 to "protect the Community": this reactionary measure, repealed in 1934, would have met the approval of Hitler and Mussolini. Its passage through both Houses was characterised by a disturbing unanimity of support.

It is reasonable to conclude that Anderson, had he stood as a Liberal Federation candidate, and received the same degree of support, would have won the election. The unanswerable question is how he would have fared if the Liberal Federation had fielded their own candidate. And what if the Labor Party had been united and stable?

The second question is this: How representative was he? The restrictive property franchise governing Legislative Council elections, and the fact that Anderson's vote indicates he was apparently supported by only a quarter of the electors on the roll, is interesting. Was the electoral apathy an indication that people saw little hope of parliament

(293) Ib. 28/10/1931, p.6, cols.C,D

*See e.g., Hopgood, D.J., in Cooksey, Robert, The Great Depression in Australia, chapter, "Lang Labor in South Australia", p.164

doing anything to help the current situation? When it is realised that the two whipping boys of 1931 - Bardolph and Stephens - were elected to parliament in 1933 in electorates (Adelaide and Port Adelaide respectively) forming part of Central No.1, and in an election which saw the Labor government annihilated, the difficulties of making even hypothetical conclusions are more apparent.

Again, few voters knew of Anderson's single tax views: so little publicity was given to them that only after he had taken his seat did some of his fellow members become aware of them. Perhaps the enthusiasm of his conservative supporters indicates that they might not have been aware of them, too. Anderson, after his election, described himself as a "Political Ishmaelite". (294) The Port Adelaide Council brought everyone back to reality. The Mayor, in congratulating Anderson, hoped he would be able to get them the new Birkenhead bridge. (295)

(294) SAPD 1931, Vol. 2, p. 2630

(295) Port Adelaide News: 6/11/1931, p. 1, col. A

The 1933 Election

and

The 28th Parliament

6 July 1933 - 11 February 1938

*

Twenty two Independent candidates contested twenty one seats in nine electorates: four were successful. In three by-elections 1933-38, six independents contested three seats and two were successful: by September 1934, five Independent members sat in the House of Assembly. Overall 127 candidates contested 41 seats; there were no elections in Alexandra (held by the LCL), Port Pirie (Labor), and Stanley(LCL). (see appendix J.)

A merger between the Liberal Federation and the Country Party was effected on 3 June 1932, (296) and the "new" party was called the Liberal and Country League. A.G.Cameron resigned Wooroora in 1934 to contest successfully the Federal seat of Barker; he held it for 22 years. In 1931 the Country Party joined with the Liberal Federation, the Citizens League, the Political Reform League and the Producers' and Business Men's Political Committee in forming the "Emergency Committee", which met for the first time on 1 April. (297,298) the purpose of this Committee was to secure the election of J.A.Lyons and the United Australia Party at the Federal poll in 1931, after the fall of the Scullin government on 25 November. (299)* It played no part in State elections, and disbanded in February 1932. (300)

The Labor Party was still divided. Hill had been Premier of South Australia through the worst period of the depression - economically, socially and politically. Unemployment peaked at 24,277 in July 1931: at the election in April 1933 it was 18,690. From a figure of £38,493,324

(296) Herbert, E.A. op.cit., p.83

(297) Ellis, Ulrich, A History of the Australian Country Party. M.U.P. 1963 pp.190-1

(298) South Australiana. Vol.17 No.1, p.14

(299) Ib. p.25

(300) Ib. p.39

*Emergency Committee candidates in South Australia won nine seats out of ten seats (6H ofR., 3 Senate) contested. As the Lyons government would have won office easily without them, it is difficult to understand the importance with which the Emergency Committee has been regarded, not the least by itself. The result reflected merely the swing of the pendulum.

in 1926, the value of South Australian exports of primary produce had dropped to £18,548,000 in 1931: not until 1947 was the figure of 1926 passed again. In 1930 the Treasury deficit reached an all time high, passing for the first time the one million mark: £1,625,823. In 1931 it was £1,813,857. Because of the Parliamentary Labor Party's unswerving adherence to the deflationary Premiers Plan*, with its obsession with balanced budgets and rigid economies, the deficit was reduced progressively and in 1935 a small surplus of £36,226 appeared. The cost in social terms was reproachfully high. The government retrenched, reduced rations for the unemployed and made full use of the police to keep 'order.' There are many parameters of the extent of the depression in South Australia. In 1932 the birthrate was the lowest ever recorded. The daily tales in the law courts of pathetic human tragedy throughout the State, the problems of local government bodies collecting outstanding rates, the statistics of unemployment, bankruptcies and suicides all point to widespread social disruption.

The election was preceded by a major political crisis. Polling day was announced on 23 January. Hill was reported to be standing for East Torrens. (301) It was realised that a Premiers Plan supporter had no hope of success in the Labor stronghold of Port Pirie. On 24 January Hill openly urged the abandonment of party politics and co-operation on "National Lines": this meant a State coalition government. (302) The proposal rent asunder cabinet, and caucus debated whether it could retain loyalty to him. (303) Someone leaked cabinet deliberations to the press and the attendant publicity relating to ministerial dissension pushed controversy about body-line bowling off the main news pages. On 26 January

(301) Advertiser: 24/1/1933, p. 9, col. C

(302) Ib. 25/1/1933, p. 14, col. F

(303) Ib. 26/1/1933, p. 9, cols. A, B, C, D

* Sir Otto Ernst Niemeyer GBE KCB CB (1883-1971), the enfant terrible of orthodox finance, was in Adelaide between 23/8/1930 and 26/8/1930: Cabinet fed him and listened to his wisdom.

Whitford, Hill's Chief Secretary, advised him to resign. The Advertiser sprung to the Premier's defence and suggested that any Minister who could not support Hill should resign, and Whitford should be the first. (304) (305) Two days later after a nasty personal argument in cabinet James Jelley resigned on 28 January. (306) (307) (308)

Hill thought that no one party could win an absolute majority and for this reason had proposed seriously what many considered unforgivable apostasy. (309) Hill had only been able to implement the Premier's Plan after the Labor split of 1931, with a party-political truce with Butler: it would have been logical to have continued that truce. Hill had discussed the possibilities of a coalition with both Liberal Federation and Country Party, and his revelation further antagonised colleagues and supporters. (310) Only later was it discovered that included in the discussions was a proposal to extend the life of the 1930 parliament to five years. When the Labor Party became vociferous opponents of Butler's five year parliament proposal, the reminder of this tended to be discomforting.

Bagot and the Citizens League had also become involved in Hill's discussions with his opponents: the League favoured a Centre Party rather than a coalition. The League thought that Labor and Liberal camps were simply different parties with the same policies. (311) Details of all these machinations leaked out bit by bit over the ensuing weeks as participants settled old scores. (312) (313) By 28 January it was generally

(304) Ib. 27/1/1933, p.18, cols.E, F

(305) Ib. 27/1/1933, p.19, cols.A, B, C

(306) Ib. 30/1/1933, p.7, cols.A, B

(307) Ib. 30/1/1933, p.7, col.C

(308) Kapunda Herald: 3/2/1933, p.2, col.F

(309) Kadina and Wallaroo Times. 28/1/1933, p.2, col.D

(310) Advertiser. 27/1/1933, p.19, col.C

(311) Ib. 19/1/1933, p.9, col.E

(312) Border Watch. 6/4/1933, p.1, col.A

(313) See letters of C.R.Cudmore, E.D.A.Bagot and Sir William Sowden in Victor Harbor Times, various dates February 1934

appreciated that the only solution to the political crisis was to get rid of Hill as quickly as possible. (314) On 8 February Executive Council formally appointed him Agent-general. (315) Cabinet resigned on Monday 3 February. (316) Throughout the turmoil the Advertiser backed Hill strongly. (317) R.S.Richards was elected leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party on 9 February. (318) With the election due in two months he faced a depressing, hopeless task.

Hill sailed on the Orontes on 23 March: Queale and Bagot were amongst the well-wishers. (319) A generous tribute was paid to him by Prime Minister Lyons. (320) Less kind was A.G.Cameron. Blaming the Advertiser for completing the destruction of the Labor Party after having ruled the Hill government, he aimed a final barb:

It had attempted to make a national hero out of Mr.Hill, but he had proved that he did not contain the material out of which heroes are made, and his sudden flight to London also proved that he was not willing to become a martyr for his country. (321)

The Labor-Party had problems enough without those it created over Hill. These were best demonstrated in the seat of Adelaide where nine contestants campaigned under three competing party banners: Lang Labor*, Official (i.e., Trades Hall) Labor and Premiers Plan Labor. This argumentative trinity was symptomatic of the continuing internal troubles. A "Unity Conference" settled them in a fashion, in 1934, and the first caucus held after these proceedings was on 11 July. (322) The Labor Party would have lost the 1933 election even if it had been united: crippled, defeat became a rout.

(314) Advertiser: 28/1/1933, p.15, cols.A,B

(315) Ib. 9/2/1933, p.9, cols A,B

(316) Ibidem.

(317) Ib. 30/1/1933, p.6, cols.C,D

(318) Ib. 10/2/1933, p.21, col.B

(319) Ib. 24/3/1933, p.21, col.G

(320) Ib. 6/2/1933, p.5, cols.A,B,C

(321) Kapunda Herald: 31/3/1933, p.3, col.B

(322) Advertiser: 12/7/1934, p.9, cols.E,F

*J.A.Beasley and E.J.Ward, MSHR(NSW) and W.Davies and R.J.Heffron, MsLA(NSW) came to Adelaide to support D.H.Bardolph.

The Trades Hall had its own intrinsic problems as influential unions broke from the ALP: the Australian Workers Union was the biggest to leave, and the Printers Union severed its relationship on 11 February 1933. (323) On 16 February W.J.Denny and his supporters left the Trades Hall faction and formed a Parliamentary Labor Party Committee with R.S.Richards as leader. A similar scene occurred in other branches. (324) Richards worked hard for unity in the few weeks of his premiership, but the antics of the group led by F.F.Ward, (a man described by Sir Archibald Price as 'extraordinarily stupid'), (325) made his task impossible as histrionic expulsions, threats of expulsion and general abuse continued unabated. (326)

R.S.Richards delivered the Parliamentary Labor Party/Premiers Plan Labor Party policy speech on 27 February*. It was proposed only that the previous "sound policy" continue. The Advertiser regretted that it was necessary for Richards to have to make a policy speech at all, and lamented the absence of a coalition government which caused such an inconvenience. (327) Completely absent was the biting condemnation of previous years: the Parliamentary Labor Party and the Liberal and Country League were really only tweedledum and tweedledee! Butler opened his campaign on 28 February. In a general sense his speech was much the same as that of Richards: they were two reasonable men wrestling with the same problem. Because the two major parties had been unable to agree to a coalition, despite the enthusiastic role adopted by the press as a marriage broker, they were putting the same policy to the electors: it was a 'living political paradox'. (328) Butler was considered to have succeeded 'no better

(323) Ib. 13/2/1933, p.9, col.F

(324) Ib. 17/2/1933, p.19, col.E

(325) South Australiana: vol.17, No.1, p.17

(326) Advertiser: 20/1/1933, p.10, col.F (e.g.)

(327) Ib. 28/2/1933, p.8, cols.C,D

(328) Ib. 1/3/1933, p.8, cols.D,E

*E.R.Dawes MP, leader of the Trades Hall ALP gave his at Unley on 9 March, and Bardolph set out the Lang case in the Tivoli Theatre on 7 March. A symbolic venue.

than the Premier in justifying the mutually destructive strife in which Liberalism and moderate Labor are now engaged.' (329) The overall campaign was lack-lustre, (330) most electorate interest was aroused in Adelaide where meetings were generally packed and disorderly. (331) The Advertiser ignored all issues except the need to secure a majority of Premiers Plan supporters in government, and it did not care from which party they came. (332) An interesting aspect of the election as a whole is the degree of attention shown in meetings by women, who were often severe interjectors.

*

The Citizens League was an active participant in the elections. It announced that it would help candidates irrespective of party provided they supported the Premiers Plan and a representative (i.e. coalition) national government. (333) The League also brought forward its own "Broad Principles" which were really camouflaged policy planks. It was anti-preselection, anti-caucus, anti-party control, and wanted a reduction in members of parliament. Other 'planks' included work for the unemployed and free primary education. (334) The various electorate committees of the Citizens League met candidates who desired to appear before them, gave them twenty minutes to put their case, and then took a vote to decide allocation of League support. (335) (336) Bagot had drive, organising ability and political flair, and he was very active making speaking tours and radio broadcasts. On 15 February the League held a rally in the Adelaide Town Hall, with C.E.Pellew in the chair, and again emphasised it would support candidates in favour of the Premiers Plan, regardless of their party. (337) True to its word the League endorsed

(329) Ibidem.

(330) Ib. 29/3/1933, p.14, cols.D,E

(331) Ibidem.

(332) Ibidem.

(333) Ib. 2/2/1933, p.9, col.D

(334) Ibidem.

(335) Ib. 21/3/1933, p.12, col.D

(336) Ib. 9/2/1933, p.9, col.A

(337) Ib. 16/2/1933, p.9, col.1

Independent, Labor and Liberal members. On 6 April it inserted an advertisement advising how to vote in Port Adelaide, West Torrens, North Adelaide, East Torrens, Sturt and Central No.1. An interesting exception, in view of Stott's candidacy, was Albert. (338) The action of the League in "endorsing" seemed to some a camouflage for pre-selection, and criticism followed. (339) Despite Bagot's protests the League showed clearly by its actions that it was acting plainly as a political organisation.

*

In March 1933 a Parliamentary Reform Conference was announced to seek abolition of pre-selection, removal of the need for candidates to lodge a deposit, (which was said to mitigate against Independents,) change the electoral system to proportional representation, present opposition to the proposal for five year parliaments, and endorse Independents who would subscribe to these reforms. (340) Organisation of the Conference began late in January. (341) The convenors were the Effective Voting League, Womens' Non-Party Association, Peoples' Union, WCTU, United South Australia League, Henry George League, Young Australia Political Reform Movement, Proportional Representation Group and the S.A. Alliance. The principal organisers appear to have been Jeanne Young and Leonora Polkinghorne. The conference was held in Adelaide Town Hall on 14 March: 200 attended. This is perhaps an indication of the smallness of these individual groups. (342) The Parliamentary Reform Conference does not appear to have campaigned actively on behalf of specific candidates. The matters it chose to discuss were topical; most became issues to varying extents in the 1933 campaign. By 1938, two of them, pre-selection and five year parliaments, dominated electoral thinking. It is appropriate to refer to them now because they crop up in the

(338) Ib. 6/4/1933, p.18, col.G,H

(339) Ib. 23/2/1933, p.12, col.D

(340) Ib. 10/3/1933, p.12, col.D

(341) Ib. 1/2/1933, p.16, col.B

(342) Ib. 15/3/1933, p.18, col.G

consideration of the independent campaigns which follow.

*

Selection of candidates by political bodies was a hallowed procedure: in the case of the Labor Party it was a sacred article of faith enshrined in the Rules, and severe indeed were the consequences to any who lapsed from their observance. The Liberals also required expiation and repentance from any who hindered the passage to parliament of the selected few chosen by the true followers. Pre-selection had obvious advantages for a Party. In theory it enabled the best man to be chosen to carry the banner, it eliminated vote splitting, it enabled resources to be devoted to securing the election of one person, prevented the division of loyalty, maintained the appearance of a united front, identified the candidate with the party and secured party discipline. It had also horrid shortcomings: it favoured the party hack, numbers man and machine manipulator, caused serious internal dissension and was frequently the subject of improper and corrupt practices. It also kept many people with genuine ability and intellectual accomplishment out of parliament. There was, too, widespread resentment that pre-selection disfranchised the vast majority of electors, who, not being members of a political party, had no say in who was to represent them. D.M.S. Davies made effective use of this aspect during his campaign, and it was an issue with Stott.

Hand in hand with criticism of pre-selection went censure of "Party Politics" or its synonym "Caucus Rule": indeed, to disapprovers the three terms became identical. The opposition of the detractors was nothing new; Edmund Barton and Lord Birkenhead had attacked it more than once. The Labor Party suffered no individualists: its endorsed candidates signed a "Pledge" in which, circumlocution notwithstanding, they promised to do as they were told -- or else. Liberal organisations did not go this far, but the understanding was there. However Liberal

members of parliament were only tied loosely to notions of party loyalty where their votes were concerned, and an examination of sessional division lists, 1921-41, indicates that some members voted first as personal or electorate interest demanded, and party requirements came second. The conservative group in the Legislative Council acquired a certain benign notoriety for the individualistic approach of its members, who amended and rejected legislation of their own government to their heart's content.

Although the inelegant Labor squabbles prior to and following the 1931 split focussed general attention on the unsavoury ALP plebiscite bickerings, (343) pre-selection did not lack conservative critics with good memories: one of the most outspoken was A.G.Cameron. At Carrow in April 1929 he said that

party politics had got to a low level owing to the domination of members of parliament by the party machine. It was nonsense these days to speak of a free and independent Liberal or Labor member. (344)

At Crystal Brook on 5 April that year a large gathering cheered him as he detailed 'Labor's Iron Hand' and recounted a drama in the House of Assembly when a member about to obey his conscience in preference to the Whip was "escorted" back to the Labor side, exclaiming to the Speaker 'they have got me, and I have got to vote as I am told.' (345)

Before the 1933 election, letters in the press criticised strongly pre-selection and its perceived evils. The crescendo of opposition influenced the Liberal Party, and at the Wooroora by-election in 1934 any Liberal candidate who desired to run was permitted to do so with party endorsement. This was the second occasion that this had occurred: for the seat of Boothby in the 1934 Federal election the United Australia Party endorsed two candidates.* So pre-selection and party rule was an issue in the campaigns of the Independents in 1933-4.

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(343) Ib. 21/3/1933, p.20, cols.B,E

(344) Stott Papers: "A", p.2 Cutting 5/4/1929, no source.

(345) Ib. p.3, Cutting Country News, 13/4/1929

*K.C.Wilson and J.L.Price.

Proportional Representation (PR) has long had adherents in South Australia: it is one of the corner stones of Henry George philosophy and Craigie was a most enthusiastic political proponent. The underlying theory is that the PR electoral voting system brings together like-minded electors to secure the election of a chosen representative, rather than pitting against each other unlike-minded electors.

The opponents of PR base their opposition on the tendency of the system to disintegrate established parties. Where, as in South Australia, there are two parties with substantial electoral support, PR, if it lives up to its name, should not give either a majority. For this reason PR has been attractive to opponents of party politics. although they have usually been careful to base their case on PR giving a better representation of the views of an electorate (or State) as a whole than alternative systems. A PR Group had been active in South Australia for many years. In the period we are considering Jeanne F. Young was president. She and Catherine Helen Spence, beginning in 1896, campaigned for electoral reform. Theirs had been a long and unsuccessful task.

The PR Group itself had eleven members of parliament on the executive; they were known as parliamentary vice-presidents. Their party distribution gives, perhaps, an indication of the strength of opposition to their ideas*. On 7 April the PR Group inserted an advertisement urging support for the list of candidates who opposed five year parliaments. These people invariably espoused PR as well. Not one LCLCandidate was on the list. (346)

*

(346) Advertiser.7/4/1933, p.20,cols.E,F,G,H

*LCP: Hon.W.Hannaford MLC

A.G.Cameron, S. Dennison, A.W.Christian,Ms.P

Ind: Hon. J. Anderson MLC

E.J.Craigie,T.C.Stott,D.M.S.Davies,MPs.

PLP: Hon.R.S.Richards, Hon.J.McInnes

ALP: A.W.Lacey (Leader of the Opposition)

Few issues, apart from liquor, betting and bible reading in schools, aroused as much public commotion as the Constitution (Quinquennial Parliament) Act 1933 (No.2141 of 1933), and the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1937, (No.2381 of 1937), which extended the life of the House of Assembly from three to five years*. It became fashionable to claim that Butler had no mandate for the measure, that it was his alone, that he had forced it on the electorate without warning, and that it was a "grab" for a longer time in power. All the internal manoeuvrings over the five year parliament may never be known, but it is possible to conclude that Butler was not quite the villain he has been made to appear. Butler's advocacy of a five year term was based on three principal reasons: (347) (348)

1. Three years was too short a period for a government to carry out a sustained policy of benefit to the State:
2. Private enterprise would employ more people if, ensured of a greater measure of continuity of policy;
3. Development schemes would be undertaken if there was less fear of reversal of government policy.

The concept of a five year parliament had an eminent supporter in Professor F.A.Bland, then Professor of Public Administration, University of Sydney. Writing in 1935, Bland urged the five year parliament as the preliminary step in any overhaul of the machinery of government, (349) and gave supportive reasons. The Premier of Victoria had also suggested it during the 1935 campaign, but it did not become an election issue.

(347) Ib. 1/3/1933, p.9, cols. B, C

(348) Ib. 1/3/1933, p.11, cols. A, B, C, D

(349) Duncan, W.G.K. (Ed) Trends in Australian Politics, A & R Sydney, 1935. pp155-6

* The story of the reasons for two Acts and their parliamentary passage has been told in Smith, R.F.I. The Butler Government in South Australia 1933-38. Unpub. M.A. Thesis. pp.193-213

The enemies of five year parliaments could support their case: (350)

1. Responsible government would be destroyed;
2. The triennial check on governments would be removed;
3. The longer term would stabilise bad as well as good governments;
4. It would mean that the life of the Legislative Council would be extended to ten years.

Butler in his 1930 policy speech had made it clear that he had five year parliaments in mind:

It has been suggested that the life of the State Parliament should be increased from three to five years. In the interests of economy this is to be recommended, but I cannot undertake to support the proposal without further and careful consideration. (351)

In his policy speech he made it quite plain that he advocated the measure, along with a reduction in the number of members of parliament.* (352) (353)

Further, Butler claimed that his party favoured five year parliaments. (354)

In a reference to a conversation between a reporter, R.J:Rudall and H.B.Crosby, it is recorded that Rudall and W.G.Duncan supported five year parliaments, but members of the party were not bound to support it. (355)

Immediately Butler's proposal became public, opposition began: The PR Group condemned it at a meeting on 2 March. (356) Critical letters to the press began on 7 March: then, as now, the same names become familiar as signatories. In a leader the Advertiser argued against it: the only justification would have been a coalition to fight the economic problems. (357)

It went on prophetically 'Mr Butler may yet be surprised by the vehemence with which his (proposal) will be returned through the ballot box, if he

(350) Advertiser: 3/3/1933, p.22, col.B

(351) Ib. 28/2/1930, p.21, col.B

(352) Ib. 1/3/1933, p.9, cols.B,C

(353) Ib. 1/3/1933, p.11, cols.A,B,C,D (esp.col.D)

(354) Ibidem

(355) Leader: 6/4/1933, p.2, col.B

(356) Advertiser: 3/3/1933, p.22, col.B

(357) Ib. 1/3/1933, p.8, cols.D.E

*With which latter proposal there was a happy universal concurrence.

persists with the five year proposal.'

On 8 March the strong opposition of the Labor government was announced.(358) Their rage was heightened by the knowledge that Hill had flirted with the idea. The successful Independent candidates made their deprecation plain. At least one newspaper, while noting the unpopularity of the proposal, commended Butler for his honesty and courage in saying he would introduce it if elected.(359) It urged people to think seriously about it and thought there was much to be said in favour. However, an election campaign is not conducive to serious thought. As an issue, five year parliaments had one thing going for it: it consumed all the energy available for passionate causes, and liquor did not feature in the campaign at all.

*

ALBERT

J.H.Groth, O.E.B. Kunoth and T.C.Stott contested this seat against Malcolm McIntosh and F.M.McMillan. The latter were known generally as "The Two Macs". Jacob Henry Groth was a farmer at Sandalwood, in the Mallee, and Oscar Edwin Kunoth JP a builder at Berri. He sat on the local magistrate's bench.

They campaigned together as Henry George League candidates - "Single Taxers" - and announced this on 10 February: Their advertisements were authorised by the secretary of the Berri Henry George League.(360) A.G. Cameron described them as 'cranks and faddists'.(361) They ran a comprehensive but low key campaign and were supported by Joseph Anderson. (362) They asserted their independence and stood for proportional representation, elective ministries, abolition of the Legislative Council and reduction in the number of members of parliament. They opposed five

(358) Ib. 8/3/1933, p.16, col.B

(359) Border Watch: 6/4/1933, p.3, col.C,D

(360) Pinnaroo and Border Times: 10/2/1933, p.4, col.D

(361) Ib. 24/3/1933, p.3, col.G

(362) Murray Pioneer: 30/3/1933, p.8, Col.D

year parliaments. Kunoth wanted better country education. (363) (364)

Henry George doctrine was central to their policy. At Pinnaroo on 27 February R.L. McKenzie chaired a meeting where both were on the platform. Groth's speech was a smaller version of the average Craigie offering. He pointed out that if all four single taxers were returned (i.e. Craigie and Moore as well), and held the balance of power, a reduction in rail freight rates might be possible. Kunoth said much the same as Groth: the latter was the more academic of the two. (365)

Tom Cleve Stott* JP^S (1899-1976) was a struggling wheat farmer at Mindarie[¶], a tiny stop twenty-eight miles NNE of Karoonda. The district is a depressing area of undulating developed mallee plain, mostly within the 800mm [#] isohyet, capable of producing satisfactory crops in good seasons, but ever vulnerable to the depredations of drought and consequent hardship. A skeleton of some 805 kilometres of "developmental" railways supports the agricultural fabric, and spread like tentacles from Taillem Bend to the River Murray, their tracks interrupted by stations which often are little more than named sheds.⁺ Throughout

(363) Advertiser: 25/3/1933, p.16, col.B

(364) Ib. 25/3/1933, p.16, cols.B,C

(365) Pinnaroo and Border Times: 31/3/1933, p.3, cols.E,F

*This and succeeding sections dealing with Stott are based on a number of autobiographies he wrote after his retirement from politics in 1970. Other documents amongst his papers have also been used. Two of the autobiographies were written between 1971 and 1975, and at least one subsequently. They are very unorganised documents. Where facts stated by Stott are not corroborated by contemporary written material or events, his version has been amended. Where relevant facts cannot be checked at all he has been given the benefit of the doubt, unless he is clearly mistaken.

§His appointment as a Justice was gazetted in 1930.

¶ An aboriginal word meaning 'feast'.

formerly 8 inches. 'Goyders Line' follows the ten inch isohyet.

+ The story of the development of the Murray Mallee through the construction of railways is detailed in the reports of the Royal Commission on the Murray Lands Railways:

Progress Report: SAPP 31/1909; "Final" report: SAPP 31A/1909; Third Progress Report: SAPP 30/1911; Fourth Progress Report: SAPP 33/1912, Fifth Progress Report: SAPP 73/1912

the railways are paralleled by roads.

Three factors prompted Stott to enter parliament: a very genuine concern at the plight of the wheat farmer in the depression years: annoyance with McIntosh and McMillan leaving the Country Party: his own failure to win preselection as an LCL candidate for the seat. For most of his working life Stott was engaged inside and outside parliament in the struggles of the wheat farmer to get financial security. He was born at Norwood and attended the primary school 1906-14: that was his only formal education. Thereafter he acquired knowledge by reading, and through the WEA. The extent of his self-education was a great credit to him. His grandfather, James Winchester Stott, was a blacksmith at Alma, who, with Charles Branson in the 1870s, disputed the claim of R.B. Smith of Kalkabury to have invented the stump-jump plough. His father, Thomas Henry Stott was a blacksmith and coachbuilder, senior partner in the firm of Stott and Willcocks who had offices on Magill Road, St. Peters.

In 1914 Stott senr. gave up his business and took up land at Peake, 169 kilometres from Adelaide on the Pinnaroo railway. Because of the family background he was not ignorant of farming procedures: he soon found the stony soil unsuitable for cropping and in 1915 shifted to Mindarie. There, Stott and his father carved a 2225 hectare^{*} wheat and sheep farm out of virgin mallee scrub. The parliamentary candidate learnt about the difficulties of primary producers the hard way. The eucalypts which cover most mallee country form large tubular masses of tough wood at or below soil level. Conversion to arable land is accomplished by a tedious process of rolling, burning and slashing; three or four yearly burns were usually needed before good cultivation was possible. When the family went to Peake in 1914, South Australia experienced a drought of unexampled severity. No area in the mallee gave more than

* 5500 acres.

half a bushel^{*} per acre: everywhere barren and wasted expanses illustrated the total failure of harvests and the ruin of pioneer mallee farmers. In 1916 there was a mouse plague; the vermin chewed wheat from hay in the horses' mouths: the Stotts had nearly 100 cats to control the mice, but pussy soon lost interest. So anxious were the cats to seek refuge in the family kitchen that they had to be driven away with whips. In 1926 Stott married Linda Florence Verrall, of Mount Pleasant. She was a good candidate's and MP's wife. Stott prepared his own farm next to his father and built his house himself. There were no children.

Stott's political conscience was stirred by all the troubles of the wheat farmer in the years after the first World War. His direct interest in parliament itself appears to date from early 1929, when he began keeping what became an extensive collection of newspaper cutting books dealing with politics. (366) in 1918 he was elected president of the Mindarie branch of the Agricultural Bureau,[§] and he presided over the Murray Lands divisional conference in 1926. From the start he was an intensely thoughtful person who questioned why things were so. He pondered continually why his wheat should sell overseas for a very high price, that the local consumption price was similarly high, yet the grower often struggled to recover the cost of production. Realisation that it was necessary for farmers to organise and unite into a strong pressure group dawned on him in 1927 during discussions with one of his farm workers who was a member of the Industrial Workers of the World[¶], and

(366) Stott Papers. "A" There are ten books of cuttings, several over five cm. thick, and many loose clippings. For the purpose of reference, the separate books have been labelled alphabetically, in chronological order.

* The bushel is a measure of volume and equals eight gallons. (36.4 litres)

§ He once won third prize in an Albert District crop competition.

¶ This movement arose in Chicago in 1905 and was the child of militant American socialism. The issues raised by the I.W.W. saw vigorous debates in Australia as early as 1907, and the organisation enjoyed a brief, disruptive antipodean career.

who told Stott of the determination of trade unionists to form powerful political groups. Stott perceived immediately the necessity for primary producers to emulate them.

1927 was a bad drought year and the position in the mallee was very poor: farmers needed carry-on finance to sow the next season's crop but the banks refused credit. Several farmers decided to organise a meeting to see how drought relief assistance could be provided by the government. The meeting was held at Borrika* and it resolved to form a committee to ascertain how help could be obtained. The committee[§] with Stott a member, was introduced as a deputation by F.M. McMillan to Hill. Stott records that Hill was sympathetic but cautious. On the journey to Adelaide and back the committee members discussed formation of a permanent organisation of farmers to watch over their interests and take any action necessary when requests had to be put in positive form. They had no particular axe to grind with Hill. In March 1927, at a meeting at Sandalwood[¶] called to inform the farmers of the outcome of the deputation to Hill, a resolution was carried un-animously by the 250 persons present to form a Farmers Protection Association. J.E. Maycock became president and Stott a member of the committee[#]. It was decided to promote the embryo organisation and Stott was delegated to address meetings throughout the Murray Mallee: this was the real beginning of his public involvement in the politics of wheat.

He travelled widely, addressing farmers on the need to organise and

* A siding 13 km. north of Karoonda.

§ J.E. Maycock, Borrika: W.H. Todd, Caliph: A. Roberts, Wanbi: E.A. Gallasch, Marama: L. Galley, Meribah: T.C. Stott, Mindarie.

¶ A siding 29km. NNE of Karoonda

The first executive comprised H.S. Green, W.H. Todd, J.B. Golding, W.H. Broad, Stott and W.R. Cairns, secretary.

present a united front to force governments to listen to them* . At this time Craigie was espousing the virtues of single tax as a cure for agrarian maladies. Stott was impressed with Craigie, devoured Henry George theory, and believed firmly in it, because, he said, it was based on "sound logic." But Stott did not hold it in a life-long enthusiastic and exclusive embrace, like Craigie; he used those parts of the doctrine which suited his own outlook on such matters as bank credit and mortgages. Unlike Craigie, too, Stott accepted some Douglas Credit teachings: in 1936, for instance, he addressed the Barmera Social Credit Study Circle. Macgillivray was associated with this group.

Because poor seasonal conditions resulted in a mediocre 1928-29 harvest, the Farmers Protection Association decided to send Stott and other members to the West Coast to see if a State-wide wheatgrowers organisation could be formed[§]. They found sympathetic listeners and eventually Maycock, 'professor' W.R. Bedford of Kyancutta and Stott were authorised to draft a provisional constitution for a strictly non-party political organisation. Stott became secretary of this small group and drafted a document which was to be recommended for adoption as the constitution at a meeting planned for Adelaide in March 1930.

It is not intended to discuss in depth the Australian wheat industry, but some remarks must be made about contemporary political action in the State and Federal sphere so that Stott's own activities can be related in time and place. There is an enormous literature on the subject: it has been remarked with truth that more words have

* There is no evidence that Stott had any formal understanding of Group Theory in relation to politics. He never claimed to be a political scientist. Except when they paid him fees for articles or media work he had a general contempt for them.

§ The party comprised Stott, J.E. Maycock, W.H. Broad, and W.R. Todd. They motored to Kimba - then no mean feat.

been written about wheat than grain produced. (367)

Between the visit to Eyre Peninsula and the proposed conference the Hill government enacted the Debt Adjustment Act 1929. This was an Australian precedent, and while it did not give any financial assistance it protected farmers against the action of creditors. The Act incorporated the provisions of a Farmers Relief Bill which did not survive the Legislative Council. Bankruptcies of South Australian farmers began to rise dramatically in 1929/30^{*}. It is difficult because of the absence of statistical data and individual records to determine how many farmers were ruined by depression.

TABLE 8 Bankruptcies, South Australian Farmers, 1929/29-1931/32

Year	Bankruptcies
1928-29	48
1929-30	89
1930-31	390
1931-32 [§]	314

(367) Selected references are:

- Dunsdorf, E.: The Australian Wheat Growing Industry 1788-1948. M.U.P. 1956 1st ed.
- Dyer, S.W.: Farmers and the Depression, Government Farm Relief in South Australia 1929-39. M.A. thesis. U of A. 1974
- Callaghan, A.R., and Mullington, A.J.: The Wheat Industry in Australia. A and R Sydney. 1956
- Kelly W.S.: Rural Development in South Australia. Rigby. Adel. 1962
- Mitchell, George: Growers in Action. Hawthorn. Melb. 1969
- Robertson, John: J.H. Scullin, op.cit.
- Gepp, Sir. Herbert: Democracy's Danger. A. & R. Sydney. 1939
- Smith, R.F.I. Groups and the Wheat Industry. B.A. Hon. thesis U. of A. 1962.
- Smith, R.F.I.: The Butler Government, op.cit.
- Holdich, J.R.: The Politics of Wheat. B.A. Hon. Thesis.
- Messner, G.M.: The Formation and Early History of the South Australian Farmers Cooperative Union Limited. B.A. Thesis. 1964
- Industries Assistance Commission: Draft Report on Wheat Stabilisation. Canberra: Govt. Printer. 1978.
- Australian Wheat Board: Notes Relating to Wheat Industry. The Board. Adel. 1972
- Royal Commission: Wheat, Flour and Bread Industries. (Known as the "Gepp" Commission.)
- First Report: CPP 234/1932-34. Vol. IV. p. 2425 Supplement to First: CPP 10/1934-37. Vol. IV. p. 1 Recommendations 34/35: CPP 85/1934-37. Vol. IV p. 687. Second Report: CPP 83/1934-37. Vol. IV p. 17 Third Report: CPP 233/1934-37. Vol. IV p. 283 Fourth Report: CPP 234/1934-37. Vol. IV p. 481 Fifth Report: CPP 235/1934-37. Vol. IV p. 621

* They increased throughout the Commonwealth

§ State and Federal government moratoria and relief legislation thereafter caused bankruptcies to decline

It was claimed in 1945 that between 1930 and 1939 more than 6000 were declared insolvent and over half were South Australians. (368) Dunsdorfs cites the report that during the depression years 20000 primary producers went off the land. (369) These figures seem to be wild guesses: it could be that the many applications in South Australia for assistance under the Farmers Relief Act 1931 have been regarded as indicating insolvency. Even so, the total would not reach some of those claimed.

The depression brought the wheatgrower to the verge of ruin, and all governments were jolted into realising that assistance would have to be given otherwise the entire economic footing of Australia would be destroyed. The feeling of utter hopelessness of the wheatgrowers is best shown by the motion of the Primary Producers Association of Western Australia on 1 December 1930 to stop production and abandon the farms. (370) It was in this depressing atmosphere that the Farmers Protection Association and its fellows worked, and governments contemplated.

Early in 1930 a vital diversion was provided by the Scullin government. At a Premiers Conference and meeting of ministers of agriculture in February a plan for wheat marketing via a compulsory pool was drawn up. It was necessary to stimulate the export of primary products because Australia could no longer pay for her imports. The government believed that the wheat industry would most readily respond to proposals for expansion. An Australia-wide wheat marketing system controlled by a pool board in each State, elected by wheatgrowers, and by a Commonwealth pool board on which each State board would be represented, formed the basis of the scheme. In return for the farmers growing more wheat and saving the Australian economy they would be guaranteed four

(368) SAPD 1945, Vol. 2, p. 1384 (18/12/1945)

(369) Dunsdorfs, E.: Op. Cit. p. 275

(370) Dunsdorfs, E.: Op. Cit. p. 275

shillings per bushel. (371) (372) * When prices tumbled, the mallee farmer got 1/3d per bushel.

To initiate the pool and guaranteed price Parker Moloney, Scullin's Minister for Markets and Transport, arranged a conference of farmers organisations and business interests at Parliament House Canberra on 19 and 20 February 1930. An invitation to attend was sent to the Farmers Protection Association.[§] The executive met in the Stott lounge at Mindarie and elected Maycock and Stott as delegates. In the Sydney express on 18 February they found themselves sitting opposite P.G. Stewart, the "champion" of the Victorian mallee farmers. Stott and Stewart became firm friends before the latter's untimely death in 1931. Writing of their relationship Stott said 'his influence on me was most profound...he taught me the art of reading a newspaper or book from top to bottom and memorise its main lesson. Then later to address meetings with very little notes.' (Sic)

Stott found the conference participants uneasy bedmates: grower and merchant representatives found quickly their traditional areas of disagreement. Stott, armed by Stewart, spoke on the second day and made a good impression. The conference ended by endorsing strongly the compulsory pool and price guarantee, and Scullin embarked on a "Grow More Wheat" campaign. Articles appeared in the press throughout Australia and the Prime Minister made appeals to farmers over the radio. Maycock and Stott were delighted, but before they left for home Stewart told them, correctly, as it turned out, that the plan would receive tremendous opposition from the Liberal machine throughout Australia because it was a Labor proposition, and from the wheat merchants and their overseas

(371) Ministerial Statement of Policy, 12/3/1930: CPP 61/1929-30, p.4

(372) (Records of Premiers Conference) Feby. 1930: CPP 111/1929-31, Vol. II p.57 et sequ.

* Later, Lang was to offer 7/6d per bushel.

§ An indication that the young group had established a certain degree of respectability

connections.*

Back in South Australia Stott organised a conference, held in Grant's Coffee Palace, Hindley Street, early in March 1930, to form a Statewide wheatgrowers association. The meeting was chaired by Hugh Brock of Copeville.^{§¶} It heard the report of the Canberra conference, adopted the constitution drawn up by Stott (with the help of Bedford, Maycock and Cairns), and the South Australian Wheatgrowers Protection Association, the State-wide successor of the Farmers Protection Association, came into being. Maycock was the first president and Stott was elected secretary; he held the post until 1933.

The object of the Wheatgrowers Protection Association was: "To protect the industry from unnecessary interference, and to obtain fair and equitable treatment in all legislation." The motto was: "For the Advancement of the wheatgrowing industry and the prosperity of the Australian people." Members of parliament were specifically excluded from membership and any executive officer accepting political nomination had to vacate his office. The association intended retaining political independence the better to apply pressure to all parties as needed.

Stott was delegated to travel South Australia to explain the Scullin pool-guaranteed price plan, and the executive of the Wheatgrowers Protection Association was authorised to contact interstate wheat organisations to consider forming an Australia-wide structure. He worked hard. He found plenty of support in the Murray Mallee and on Eyre Peninsula, but in the better established areas of the lower and mid-north and on Yorke Peninsula the response was not enthusiastic and he was criticised

* In Stott's draft of these events he listed opponents to the Scullin proposals, but cut it out with a pair of scissors

§ A siding 40km. north of Karoonda on the Waikerie railway.

¶ The Eyre Peninsula representatives were W.R. Bedford, L.E. & T.D. Cash (Poochera) (Two brothers who contested for the ALP Flinders in 1933), E.C. Atkinson and C.O.J. Bohlin, (the latter to stand as an Independent for Eyre in 1938) of Kimba.

as a rabble-rouser and worse - a down and our 'cocky' trying to form a union. Farmers in long established areas had little need for a new organisation which at first appeared to affront their traditional conservative instincts. They had accumulated assets and the generation of the 1930s had no real first hand knowledge of the physical hardship in establishing a farm.

Mean rainfall closely parallels wheat yield, and the geography of the country nearer Adelaide, with its two ranges of mountains running south to north, with broad, well watered plains of exceptionally good arable land intervening, made it the finest wheat growing area in the State.* In the lower north the mean rainfall in the twenty one years preceding 1935 was 12.96 inches (1296mm) for a yield of 14.47 bushels/acre, whereas the corresponding mean in the Murray Mallee was 11.10 inches (1110mm) for a yield of only 8.05 bushels/acre. In the better area the yield exceeded the mean rainfall figures and in the Murray Mallee it was less than the rainfall. The difference is all the more striking because the area of holdings in the mallee was forty per cent greater than in the lower north. In the mallee, too, it was the practice to grow on predominantly unfallowed ground, a custom which, in those days, because the science of fertilisation and cropping was crude, gave only half the yield secured on fallowed ground. (373)

* TABLE 9: Average yield per acre over five seasons 1921-26

<u>Area</u>	<u>Yield.</u>
Lower north	15.96
Eyre Peninsula	7.53
Murray Mallee	8.74
Whole State	12.06

Source: Statistical Register of South Australia.

(373) Data from the Statistical Register of South Australia, 1925-26.

Many survivors from the generation in the prosperous areas which listened to Stott cannot remember him. The comment of one retired farmer in 1976 was typical: 'Stott,...Stott...can't remember him doing much... I think he had some funny ideas'*. This contrasts with the veneration which survives in part of the Murray Mallee. While putting up with the taunts and criticism of the disinterested or the anxious, Stott initiated moves in South Australia which led to the formation of the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation. A meeting of the Wheatgrowers Protection Association was held in the district council office, Karoonda, and the main item on the agenda was the action necessary to form an Australia-wide farmers organisation. Stott was authorised to contact interstate growers' representatives and arrange a conference: by now the South Australian organisation was attracting support from sound men who appreciated the need for farmer unity in government negotiations.[§] The conference was held on 25 and 26 February 1931 in William Street, Melbourne: 750 farmers were present. After a lively meeting formation of the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation was approved. Albert Louis Bussau of Hopetown, Victoria (later MLA for Ouyen) was elected president, and Stott secretary: he held the position for 37 years until 1968.[¶]

By the time the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation was born, the wheat farmers were never in greater need of help, because the good intentions of the Scullin government had resulted in catastrophe. To meet its part in the "Grow More Wheat" plan, the government introduced a Wheat Marketing Bill on 8 April 1930, (374) This guaranteed four shillings fag at sidings and 4/8 fob. On 24 March 1930 Scullin and Gibson, chairman of directors

(374) CPD Vol.129, pp.2503-2505

* A.L. Sawley, personal interview, 1976

§ Among them were John Alexander Lyons MP, Richard Lawrence McKenzie and Ronald Redvers Loveday, both to become State members of parliament.

¶ The first S.A. delegates were J.E. Maycock, W.R. Bedford, J.A. Lyons and F.G. Bonnin

of the Commonwealth Bank, conferred about funding the Act. On 1 April Gibson advised that the bank would advance the necessary finance. On 7 April Moloney sent the Commonwealth Bank board a draft of the Wheat Marketing Bill, and on 9 April Gibson confirmed that it was satisfactory from the bank's point of view.

On 5 June the Bill passed the House of Representatives, despite a good deal of conservative opposition. The South Australian government was worried by the provision that if there was a loss on wheat sold, the difference between the guaranteed price and the proceeds would have to be paid half by the State and half by the Commonwealth. When the Bill went to the Senate the price slide had already started and the State government's fears of a large payout seemed justified. (375) The Senate second reading started on 19 June: on 4 July it was abruptly defeated.

By November 1930 the record harvest from the "Grow More Wheat" campaign was starting to come in. The Scullin government called a conference of wheatgrowers to see what could be done: nothing eventuated because the conference wanted a flour tax to finance the grower, and a Labor government would not be a party to putting up the price of bread. (376) * The government then approached the Commonwealth Bank to provide funds for advances to growers, and on being advised that this could be done, a Wheat Advance Bill was introduced. Because it placed no responsibility for losses on the States, and did not provide for a compulsory pool, (which opponents considered "socialistic"), it had a rapid passage through both Houses and received Royal Assent on 23 December 1930.

The growers still received nothing because the Commonwealth Bank, for 'Constitutional' reasons, reneged on its promise of finance. The government did not take the bank on, but waited until 18 March 1931

(375) Dunsdorfs. E.: Op cit. p.270

(376) Ib. p.271

* Stott has left no records relating to this conference.

when it introduced another Wheat Bill. This provided for a bounty and a loan. It was introduced at a time of great political turbulence. The Fiduciary Note Issue Bill was introduced the day before. Six million pounds of the proposed currency was intended for the wheat industry. The Commonwealth Bank Bill No.2 (to give the government control of gold in possession of the Commonwealth Bank) was introduced on 24 March. A Central Reserve Bank Bill followed on 2 April. These all were explosive measures which embodied financial and economic ideas too far ahead of the time to be acceptable. When the Fiduciary Note Issue Bill was defeated on 17 April, the government dropped the Wheat Bill. On 7 July a Wheat Marketing Bill No.2 was introduced. This provided for compulsory pooling by the establishment of the Australian Wheat Board: there was no price guarantee, and growers would be reimbursed through a higher local consumption price of flour. This Bill was rejected in the Senate on 6 August.

On 17 September at a Premiers conference Scullin made it clear that the government had finally abandoned paying relief for the 1930/31 "Grow More Wheat" harvest: the farmer did not receive a penny. Scullin persisted with his efforts, and on 21 October 1931 introduced a Wheat Bounty Bill for the 1931/32 harvest.* This was discharged in the Senate on 29 October. That same day a Wheat Bounty Bill No.2 was brought in, providing a bounty of 4½d per bushel on all wheat marketed in 1931/32. This Bill passed on 30 October and received assent. It was the first federal assistance the wheatgrower received, and was one of the last acts of the stricken government before its defeat on 25 November.

Stott followed closely the course of the Federal Labor government's attempts to help growers. He retained all his life a fascination for the actions of the Commonwealth Bank during the crisis, and studied banking and mortgage banking. He read widely. Once he went to great trouble to

* The S.A. 1931/32 harvest was the largest on record: 48,093,102 bushels from 4,071,370 acres.

obtain a copy of a chapter in a European book by Mileikovsky which had been cited by an author he was studying: when it arrived he found to his chagrin that the document was in Russian!

In 1931, sometime after his appointment as secretary of the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation, he published "The Stott Four-year Plan for Rehabilitation of the Wheat Industry and to Restore Financial Stability."* He addressed the Citizens League on it; at that time the League was taking an active interest in the problems of farmers. (377) (378) (379) The Stott Plan received much publicity. He went to Melbourne and explained it to the Australian Wheatgrowers Conference. The booklet was highly critical of banks, (his dislike of them was life-long), and tariffs. His solution was to reduce costs of production by a scientific review of customs duties, lowering of rail freights and wharfage charges, and reducing interest. He wanted a central bank to control currency. Essential to the Plan was that a State of National Emergency be declared, and war debts be adjusted on an international basis. The Plan shows a mind which had looked well beyond the immediate scene. Although it was a voice in the wilderness and the ideas were unlikely to be acceptable to the forces which had persecuted Scullin and Theodore, and would soon be in power, they were sound. The Wheatgrowers Protection Association supported it and gave it publicity in journals and speeches.

Stott and Maycock worked tirelessly for the wheatgrower. In 1931 Maycock was involved in discussions with the Emergency Committee about debt adjustment for farmers. In November of that year a conference was held with Hill and formidable statistics of producer's liabilities placed

(377) Advertiser & Register 15/9/1931, p.15, col.E

(378) Ib. 16/9/1931, p.20, col.D

(379) Ib. 18/9/1931, p.22, col.E

* Stott, T.C. (Title as above). Mindarie. No date. (Prices quoted in the document and related events indicate 1931 to be the year.) Privately published. Printed by E.J. McAlister. 8pp. 21x14cm.

before him. Bedford's graphs show he well deserved his humorous title "Professor." Hill was impressed and an official government "Committee of Debt Enquiry" was set up to go into the position. It comprised the Hon T. Butterfield, Malcolm McIntosh, and the other members were from the Wheatgrowers Protection Association: J.M.Nairn (president), Bedford, Stott and Maycock. The Emergency Committee worked with them. (380) No South Australian wheat industry organisation had hitherto achieved government recognition to this extent.

The Wheatgrowers Protection Association held chains of meetings, strove for the formation of new branches, and pressured individual State and Federal parliamentarians to fall in with its policies. In Albert, McIntosh and McMillan appeared on the platform with Stott. (381) The association was successful in getting the Farmers Relief Act 1931 (No.1996) and the Farmers Relief Act 1931 (No.2057) on the books. This gave advances on the security of a first charge on the ensuing season's crop, and while it did not encompass writing down of liabilities it was a first step. In the initial year of operation it assisted a quarter of all wheatgrowers in the State. The Debt Adjustment Act 1932 (No.2068) was another measure they could take credit for, and the Mortgagor's Relief Act 1931 (No.2046) gave farmers security of tenure - one of the Wheatgrowers Protection Association's basic planks. Hundreds of legal opinions were obtained for members, appeals were lodged against land tax assessments, and legal assistance was provided for a nominal fee. It threw its weight behind farmers who were faced with forced sales. Its voice was never silent. In reading publications of the Wheatgrowers Protection Association, and the contemporary reports of its activities, one is struck by the air of urgency and excitement which characterised the organisation. Its accomp-

(380) South Australian Wheatgrowers Protection Association - Murray Lands Division. Renmark. 1932, pp20; not numbered).

(381) Pinnaroo and Border Times: 13/1/1933, p.3 cols A,B,C

lishments in a time of great economic and political difficulty were remarkable, testimony to the perseverance and dedication of the officers and the tireless efficiency of Stott.

It is not surprising that the activities of the Association should engender some concern in those sections of the farming community which thought some of the policies resembled too closely those of the Scullin government, and were "socialistic." Nor is it surprising that the formal opposition came from the prosperous grain growing areas of the State. In about 1930 a "South Australian Wheatgrowers' Freedom Association" was formed on Yorke Peninsula. H.J. Cadd was an energetic president, and A.L. Langsford secretary. Through F.S. Alford it had links with Louis Dreyfus and Company, wheat merchants. During its short life it was an active group and tried to form branches where the Protection Association was established. It was an organisation not entirely deserving the scorn which Stott and some writers have heaped on it. At its annual general meeting on 15 September 1931 it put forward ideas to assist the wheat industry that were almost identical with the Stott Plan. (382) Personality differences, apart from the stigma of the wheat merchant, had much to do with the Protection Association's antipathy, and when the Freedom Association went into the Mindarie lion's den to form a branch they were fatally mauled. In a subsequent exchange Cadd and Langsford cast doubts on Stott's parentage. It is significant, when considering the rapid decline of the Freedom Association, that when Cadd contested the Yorke Peninsula plebiscite as a potential LCL candidate in 1933, he came bottom of the ballot. (383) (384) *

Stott was also experiencing the personal financial problems of

(382) Advertiser and Register: 16/9/1931, p.20, col.E

(383) Kadina and Wallaroo Times: 1/2/1933, p.3, col.F

(384) IB.18/3/1933, p.2, col.C

* This was the election won by D.M.S. Davies (Independent) and Baden Pattinson (LCL)

many of his fellow farmers. He made an application for assistance under the Farmers Relief Act 1931. (385) The State Bank board published a huge list of farmers who were in difficulty, and evoked a storm of protest. Stott called the action of the bank 'callous and brutal'. (386) A.G. Cameron was so angry and critical that the Crown Solicitor wrote to him and demanded an apology - which, naturally he did not get. An uncontrite Cameron was rebuked by Cabinet. (387) (388) The extent of the reaction indicates that a big social stigma attended the seeking of relief. Stott's financial difficulties continued for more than ten years and were to result in a serious personal crisis in 1939 which threatened his parliamentary career. For Stott sen. the depression and later years were also a time of misery, and he has left papers telling of sad life-long financial problems, dependence on the Farmers Assistance Board, and banks. Tom gave all the support and help a son could give.

*

Under the influence of Senator Chapman, W.G.J. Mills and A.P. Blessing MSLC, and A.G. Cameron, (sometime secretary of the Albert Branch of the Farmers and Settlers Association,) Stott became an enthusiastic worker for the Country Party and its antecedent. In about 1920 he was elected president of the local branch of the Country Party and was a delegate to State conferences. In 1921, under the Farmers and Settler's banner, McIntosh and McMillan had been elected to parliament as members for Albert. They defeated two Liberal Unionists, Angus and O'Connor. Stott worked hard at elections when the "Two Macs" were candidates. Chapman, Mills, Blessing and Cameron made Stott's home their base during campaigns.


In 1932, when the Liberal Federation and Country Party were finalising their merger, Stott went as a delegate to the discussions.

(385) Advertiser and Register: 1/9/1931, p.8, col.B (File CP2137)

(386) Ib. 2/9/1931, p.11, cols.A,B

(387) Ib. 24/9/1931, p.13, col.D

(388) Ib. 30/8/1931, p.19, col.H



With other representatives from the Mallee and the West Coast he opposed the idea of Liberal and Country League. But McIntosh and McMillan had already sold their principles for the spoils of office. McIntosh had received a portfolio and McMillan an appointment to the Public Works Committee in 1927, and they joined the Liberal camp in 1929. The sheer cynicism of their actions incensed many erstwhile supporters. They were dubbed "twisters", and became extremely unpopular in their electorate. Salt was rubbed into the wound by the action of Cameron and Blessing urging the merger. They were regarded as hypocrites because for years they had lectured farmers on the need to fight the Liberals and their "City big business interests". Up to the merger Stott and his supporters were numbered amongst those who hoped that the Country Party would hold eventually the balance of power. A critical account of the actions of the Two Macs is the very first cutting in the series Stott began collecting. Before the 1930 election it was believed widely that they would be defeated because the Country Party ran its own candidates against them in Albert,^{*} but this optimism was short lived,⁽³⁸⁹⁾ because the Labor Party also ran a ticket, and split the vote.[§]

Malcolm McIntosh (1888-1960) had an accountancy practice associated with a legal firm at Pinnaroo, and he acquired property interests in the Southeast and Renmark. He moved to Adelaide in 1933 and became a very prosperous King William Street farmer. He was Commissioner of Public Works and Minister of Education in the first Butler government 1927-30, and held other portfolios continuously from 1933 to 1958. He became Sir Malcolm McIntosh KBE. Stott thought that his reputation as a loyal and solid Minister was undeserved, his performance was only a little

(389) The Country New, Laura Standard, and Crystal Brook Courier heralded these sentiments.

* A.A.Petch and E.M.Rowe

§ R.L.McKenzie and H.M.Dalziel

above mediocre, and he had limited vision.* A contemporary who knew McIntosh, however, considers Stott's opinion harsh and untrue. § Frederick Murray McMillan (1893-1963) never received a ministerial post. He was a kindly, gentlemanly fellow, but, according to Stott, utterly useless as a farmer's representative, and any economic problem was completely beyond his comprehension. He became a member of the Transport Control Board in 1933, was made chairman in 1947, and held the position until his death.

*

When Stott returned to Mindarie with his report of the Country Party merger, he found seething resentment and his Country Party branch vowed to protest against it. Arising from this anger, Stott claims, he was prevailed upon to oppose the Two Macs in the 1933 election. In considering his candidacy it is necessary to assess carefully his account, which occurs several times in the autobiographical drafts. He claimed that the role of an Independent candidate was suggested to him by his Country Party branch, that he was reluctant to accept it because of his parlous financial state, his obligations to the Protection Association and the Wheat Federation, and the objections of his wife and father, and that only an appeal from four car loads of farmers calling at his home with the promise of personal and financial support, induced him to nominate. Further, he looked on his campaign as being mainly a means of enrolling more members in his organisations, because defeat of the Two Macs was unthinkable as they were backed by the formidable Liberal machine.

The fact is that Stott had tried and failed to win LCL preselection

* In later years McIntosh and Stott had a horse racing partnership. Asked why he associated with McIntosh when he was so critical of him, he replied 'In politics you cannot always choose who you are seen with.' With the exception of some of his close associates in the wheat industry, Stott was very uncharitable in his opinions of politicians.

§ Hon.D.N. Brookman.

for Albert, and he was president of the Mindarie branch of the League. (390) He had tried to influence the LCL selection committee at Karoonda, and when that failed he had tried to induce the Albert district committee to upset the Karoonda endorsement of the Two Macs, also without success. Then, and only then did he become an Independent. (391) This little drama came out in a very public exchange of insults between Stott and A.G. Cameron: the latter was scathingly critical about Stott's motives. The Independent candidate called Cameron a 'perverted opponent' and reminded him of appropriate embarrassing incidents in his own political career. (392) *

It is not possible to accept Stott's "official" version.[§] It is reasonable to assume that he had his eye on a parliamentary seat at least from 1929 and that this was one of the spurs which made him work so hard for the Protection Association. But in no way do I imply that his efforts were any less valuable and genuine than they were. I consider that he felt the LCL preselection committee should have chosen a Liberal and Country Party candidate, instead of two Liberals, and that he felt deserving of the Country Party spot. (393) (394) Stott was entitled to his anger because the proceedings which led to the Two Macs gaining endorsement were suspect: it was alleged that no nominations were called for, and no ballot was held, and that they could have acted under a rule which virtually allowed them to select themselves. (395) The facts are lost in recriminations.

Aspects which lend veracity to the newspaper accounts are Stott's

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- (390) Pinnaroo and Border Times. 7/4/1933, p.2, col.E
(391) Ib 24/3/1933, p.3, cols.F,G
(393) Ib. 7/4/1944, p.2, col.G
(394) Ib. 3/3/1933, p.4, col.C
(395) Ib. 7/4/1933, p.2, col.G

* There were plenty

§ Not a few times when reading Stott's account one senses a panegyric being written for the benefit of posterity. When Stott wrote it, all his political contemporaries with specific memories of his background and work in the 1920s and early thirties were dead.

harping on the evils of preselection during the campaign, his frequent references to Independents holding the balance of power, and, significantly, the absence of written refutation to the key alleged facts relating to his failure to win the LCL plebiscite. (If there was one: the accounts are very contradictory and cannot be checked.) It was a point with Stott to correct quickly any erroneous statements made about him. Such excursions as he did make in reply are not entirely convincing, and miss the point. The campaign preliminaries brought to an end the friendship of Cameron and Stott. The latter remained contemptuous of Cameron to his death. Stott was a good hater; in a few weeks Butler joined the list.

*

Stott's campaign in Albert was one of the most energetic fought in 1933. Stott opened at Pinnaroo on 2 March and announced that he was standing because of the high feeling in the electorate over party politics, and his disapproval of the LCL preselection. McIntosh and McMillan were denounced at length. (396) He was optimistic that Independent candidates would hold the balance of power after the election: he saw them putting an end to party political bickering and enabling parliament to get on with the job of restructuring industry and hence the economy. (397) His campaign went quickly from strength to strength. Stott, a short man with square jaw and thinning hair, was an experienced and hardened public speaker with a born platform manner. He had a fine, resonant voice, and real presence. His speeches were well organised and delivered with a minimum of notes. He had an impressive knowledge of all his many subjects, and he could reduce complicated issues to simple terms. He compelled attention and held it. By 10 March he was reported as advocating electoral reform, proportional representation and a coalition government. (398) McIntosh and McMillan began to show signs of anxiety; Butler was brought

(396) Ib. 7/4/1933, p.2, col.G

(397) Ib. 3/3/1933, p.4, col.C

(398) Ib. 10/3/1933, p.1, col.C

into the fray. At Pinnaroo the leader of the opposition began his address with an attack on Stott, and then continued with what was virtually a summary and contradiction of every point the irritatingly knowledgeable Independent candidate had made. (399) (400) On the same platform McMillan devoted himself to an attack on the Henry George League. (401) At Taillem Bend Stott again criticised the Liberal Federation-Country Party merger and preselection, and set out his policy for lowering cost of production and interest rates, and dealt extensively with the wheat industry. An exhaustive enquiry into the railways department was promised, and opposition to five years parliaments defined. While agreeing that he could not cure the national ills overnight he suggested that it was necessary for the electors to put in power people with knowledge of the difficulties and the courage to speak on them. (402)

As the electioneering progressed both sides began to get personal. A.G.Cameron appeared at Lameroo with McIntosh and delivered one of his masterly exercises in demolition. (403) Stott was a good match for Cameron: they both had hides like the proverbial rhinoceros. Stott told his audiences what he thought of McMillan and said that McIntosh had had to carry him on his back because he had not done his job. McMillan told any who cared to listen that Stott was 'an abject and pitiable object.' No love was lost. (404) In the week preceding the poll a very young, handsome Stott, with a generous mop of dark hair, and wearing a full evening dress, gazed benevolently from advertisements warning electors that party politics were a curse, and preselection a blot on democracy. (405) The Two Macs took full page advertisements in local newspapers. (406) Stott was

(399) Ib. 10/3/1933, p.1, col.B

(400) Ib. 10/3/1933, p.2, col.C,D,E

(401) Ib. 10/3/1933, p.2, cols.E,F

(402) Advertiser: 14/3/1933, p.12, col.B

(403) Pinnaroo and Border Times: 24/3/1933, p.1, cols.C,D,E

(404) Murray Pioneer: 6/4/1933, p.5, col.C

(405) Ib. 30/3/1933, p.8, col.s.G,H

(406) Pinnaroo and Border Times: 30/3/1933, p.5

put last on their how to vote ticket, (407) and they were last on his (408).

The campaign showed Stott's ability to work really hard. Committees were established all over the mallee and many volunteer workers were organised and drilled. The Independent candidate knocked on every door in Renmark, Berri, Barmera, Loxton, Pinnaroo and Tailem Bend and Meningie, hitherto a rare occurrence in this electorate. His wife was campaign director and drove everywhere in a sulky because her husband needed the car. Stott retained his tremendous personal energy right up to his death. He was a person who could go without sleep if work had to be done, but he was able to take a nap whenever circumstances allowed - travelling in trains or cars, for instance.

Stott was elected to the first vacancy^{*} and McMillan lost his seat. Because of the closeness of the preferential voting Groth demanded a recount. McIntosh, after an agonising delay, was found to have retained his seat by twelve votes. (409) He is said to have spent the days before his fate was known, in tears. (410)

TABLE 10: Albert Election -1933: Candidates, Votes and Percentages.

Candidate	Party	Votes	Percentage
T.C.Stott	Ind	3013	33.18
M.McIntosh	LCL	3695	40.70
J.H.Groth	ST	1908	21.01
O.E.B Kunoth	ST	277	3.05
F.M.McMillan	LCL	187	2.06

Source: Hughes & Graham, Voting, p.99

The Albert poll was 61.09% (with 3.96% informal). The overall State poll was fifty five per cent. Kunoth and Groth did not contest any more State elections. Because of the provision Stott had inserted in the Constitution of the South Australian Wheatgrowers Protection Association,

(407) Ib. 31/3/1933, p.3, cols.A,B'

(408) Ib. 30/3/1933, p.8, cols.G,H

(409) Ib. 14/3/1933, p.1, cols A,B

(410) Recollections of T.C. & L.F.Stott

* On Groth's preferences.

his election meant his resignation as secretary of that body. He retained his position with the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation. After tidying up the farm he went to Adelaide to select his seat and enquire about an office in Parliament House. His election is a classic illustration of all the main criteria to be met by a successful Independent. Firstly, the time was right; the problems of the wheat industry provided the astute and intelligent Stott was a cause. Secondly, he attracted a large personal following because of his force of character. Thirdly, he had the support of enthusiastic committees. Fourthly, he was prominent and well-known in the district. Finally, he was favoured by the preferences.

*

BAROSSA

Two Independents, L. Yelland and Dr. Basedow, contested the seat against nine opponents; three LCL, three ALP and three Premiers Plan Labor: no party left a vacant position on its ticket. Many months before the LCL preselection, Basedow had announced his candidacy as an Independent. (411)

Lindsay Yelland was a retired farmer of Gilles Plains. He was born and brought up on his father's farm at Point Sturt. Later he purchased a farm at Finnis Point and pursued sheep breeding and dairying. He relinquished this to take up gardening and orange growing at Gilles Plains. He was a member of the district council of Yatala, and, as a Country Party candidate had contested Alexandra in 1930, coming last with 352 votes (4.64 per cent). He became interested in parliamentary office after his retirement. (412) He does not appear to have campaigned at all: his candidacy was ignored by the main local press*, and all attention was directed to Basedow.

The electioneering lacked the excitement of the previous two contests. Basedow fought on his own and addressed meetings throughout

(411) Bunyip: 27/1/1933, p.16, cols. D, E

(412) Advertiser. 5/7/1933, p.16, cols. D, E

* The Bunyip and the Leader

the electorate. (413) At a press interview in March he blamed party politics for the economic depression, was ambivalent towards the Premiers Plan, and thought the main need was for assistance to industry and appreciation of the mining potentialities of the State. Five year parliaments were 'as atrocious as the iniquitous system of preferential voting', and he wanted a referendum on it. (414) In a speech at Two Wells he again attacked the Five year parliament proposal, and preferential voting, which, he said, Butler had introduced to get rid of the Country Party and the Independents. Steps were urged to lower the cost of production. He thought that Federation was years ahead of its time and he wanted a referendum on secession: the failure alone of South Australia to get the North-South railway itself was justification.* He supported reducing the numbers of members of parliament, and he would cut their salaries in half. (415)

Basedow had many other things to occupy himself with in addition to his campaign. Apart from his medical practice, he was engaged in financing mining ventures. During the Port Adelaide visit of the Nazi cruiser Koln, he represented the German consul at official calls and social functions, and this was a heavy pre-poll committment. (416) The Koln, on a "goodwill" cruise.[§] was feted by the Adelaide social elite, and the gay accounts of the unceasing social functions to which the obliging crew were herded, shared headlines with the daily accounts of Nazi atrocities. No one appears to have noted the incongruity attending

(413) Bunyip: 31/3/1933, p.3 col.C

(414) Ib. 10.3.1933mp.2, cols.B,C

(415) Advertiser. 24/3/1933, p.23, cols.B,C

(416) Ib. 23/3/1933, p.16, cols.C,D,E

* The secession movement in Western Australia was gaining momentum and attracting a lot of attention in 1933. In 1934 the matter came to a head with the preparation of a case, a referendum and a petition to Westminster. Early in 1934, in Melbourne, Butler dropped a hint that South Australia might take a vote on secession because of the financial 'disabilities' of the State under Federation. This was blackmail directed at the Commonwealth.

§ No cameras were permitted on board.

the "goodwill" visit at a time when the early adventures of Hitler and his thugs were terrorising Europe.

Basedow gave Yelland his number two vote. The Liberals put the former at four and the latter at five. (417) (418) Basedow won a seat by 457 votes. H.B.Crosby and H.W.Lyons, both LCL, won the other two. Basedow got the ALP preferences, (419) and his own favoured the Liberals. (420) It was some days before his win became apparent.

TABLE 11. Barossa 1933, Candidates ,Votes and Percentages.

Candidate	Party	Votes	Percentage
H.B.Crosby	LCL	3522	39.52
T.T.Edwards	PPL	2007	22.52
H. Basedow	Ind	1672	18.76
L.J.McMullin	ALP	1135	12.74
R.J.Rudall	LCL	184	2.06
H.W.Lyons	LCL	124	1.39
L.Yelland	Ind	64	0.72
J.R.Whitfield	ALP	64	0.72
H.L.Zadow	PPL	54	0.61
A.McArthur	PPL	47	0.50
S.W. O'Flaherty	ALP	38	0.43

Source Hughes and Graham: Voting, p.100 (amended.)

The preferential voting system which cost Basedow his seat in 1930, and which he criticised so vehemently, secured his re-election in 1933. He was now a sick man: it had been noted during the visit of the Koln that he appeared ill and had had to push himself. Before the new parliament sat, he died, and a by-election was held on 8 July. We cannot therefore determine conclusively what Basedow's political philosophy really was. One thing we can say with certainty is that he would have been a key opponent of the five year parliament, but whether his vote would have deprived the government of a constitutional majority at the third reading of the original Quinquennial Parliament Bill, is difficult to say, because if he had been present some members might have voted differently

(417) Bunyip 7/4/1933, p.8, cols.C,D,E

(418) Ib. 7/4/1933, p.9, cols.A,B

(419) Advertiser: 13/4/1933, p.19, col.C

(420) Bunyip: 14/4/1944, p. 19, col.C

than they did. His re-election is an illustration of the importance of force of character attracting a personal following, prominence in the community, and the need to attract preferences.

*

FLINDERS

E.J.Craigie, J.P.Moore and A.H.Pfitzner were Independents opposing two LCL and two ALP nominees. Albert Heinrich Pfitzner nominated on behalf of the Peninsula People's Party which was formed shortly before the election. John O'Connor was expected to have been the candidate but did not nominate. The campaign director was W.J.Keyes. (421) The policy of the Peninsula People's Party was simply opposition to the Henry George League. (422)

Pfitzner was a weak and ineffectual candidate and gives the impression of having been taken around on a lead by Keyes. They opened their campaign at Port Lincoln on 17 March: the meeting was described as "farcical". Supporters of Craigie were present and Keyes was heckled, counted out and howled down. (423) A meeting at Tumby Bay on 27 March was also lively, and the press treated it as a joke. (424)

Craigie and Moore campaigned together under the Single Tax banner: that they were a formidable pair is apparent from the early electoral activity of the LCL. On 6 January an advertisement appeared in the Port Lincoln Times to the effect that Butler and A.P.Blesing were going to 'visit Eyre Peninsula, and will be pleased to get in touch with anybody suffering from any disabilities whatsoever.' (!) (425) Butler promised also to tell the disabled of the need for the return of a strong party government. (426) So keen was the leader of the disability researchers to get

(421) Port Lincoln Times: 10/3/1933, p.1, col.D

(422) Ib. 24/3/1933, p.1, cols.C,D

(423) Ibidem.

(424) Ib. 31/3/1933, p.7, col.B

(425) Ib. 6/1/1933, p.2, col.D

(426) Ib. 27/1/1933, p.7, col.B

busy on the Peninsula that he did not bother to take a formulated policy with him: he explained that he wanted to tell the electors that they should support LCL candidates.(427) Craigie's reaction was to base his own campaign on a spirited opposition to party government and policies. An issue notable for its absence was the five year parliament.

His companion, James Patrick Moore, was a Kimba farmer.(428) He was recognised as a fluent speaker with a thorough grasp of his subject.(429) They worked closely together. Beginning at Couлта on 31 January they travelled and spoke with vigor and resolution.(450) Their electoral advertisements styled them as "Henry George League Candidates", (431) and the indefatigable Mrs. Ellis authorised them.(432)* Throughout whilst travelling and speaking almost non-stop, Craigie kept up a running exchange through the press with his critics; they always came off second best.

At Port Lincoln Craigie said the Henry George Plan was better than the Premiers Plan.(433) (434) He was anti-secession, regarded the arbitration system as an 'absolute confidence trick', and declared that it was more important to remove the cause of poverty than the disease itself.(435) He gave a review of the Labor split and the Liberal-Country merger, advocated a reduction in members of parliament and the abolition of the Legislative Council, and attacked both parties in regard to their taxation policies; so far as he was concerned, all taxation departments should be abolished - except the land tax department.(436)

(427) Ib. 10/2/1933, p. 7, cols. A, B

(428) Advertiser: 10/1/1933, p. 21, col. D

(429) Port Lincoln Times: 17/3/1933, p. 5, cols. A, B, C, D, E

(430) Ib. 3/2/1933, p. 1, col. E

(431) Ib. 17/2/1933, p. 4, col. C

(432) Kimba Despatch: 7/4/1933, p. 2, col. D

(433) Port Lincoln Times: 17/3/1933, p. 5, col. sA, B, C, D, E

(434) Craigie voted for the Premiers Plan: SAPD 1931 V.1, p. 832

(435) Port Lincoln Times: Ibidem

(436) Advertiser: 17/3/1933, p. 25, col. E

*Port Lincoln Times and Kimba Depatch covered the campaign: their accounts parallel each other.

Moore's contribution tended to be pure Henry George philosophy with a criticism of both major parties. (437) Replying to remarks that he was not doing anything in Parliament, Craigie sailed into his opponents: he pointed out that before the election he was 'considered a visionary who preached a strange doctrine.' (438) * The Single Taxers did not allocate preferences. (439) The Port Lincoln Times, a fair and impartial newspaper, predicted correctly that Craigie and a Liberal would be returned, and remarked that candidates would have a hard job to woo electors away from Craigie 'who looked after his constituents well.' (440)

No candidate had an absolute majority. Preferences gave Craigie the first position and A.W. Christian number two. The latter defeated Moore by 251 votes. (441)

TABLE 12: Flinders 1933: Candidates, Votes and Percentages.

Candidate	Party	Votes	Percentages
E.J. Craigie	ST	3190	40.95
A.W. Christian	LCL	2186	28.06
L.E. Cash	ALP	1419	18.22
J.M. McDonald	LCL	358	4.59
T.D. Cash	ALP	172	2.21
J.P. Moore	ST	54	0.69

Source: Hughes and Graham, Voting, p.103

Moore was to contest Eyre in 1931 as an Independent. Craigie's election on preferences was another illustration that preferential voting could be a two-edged sword so far as the major parties were concerned. His victory, and the defeat of the Peninsula People's Party candidate illustrates a number of propositions. Craigie was still identified with the cause of the long suffering Eyre Peninsula wheatgrowers: in some ways

(437) Ib. 22/3/1933, p.7, col.D

(438) Port Lincoln Times: 27/1/1933, p.3, cols.C,D

(439) Ib. 7/4/1933, p.6, col.A

(440) Ib. 7/4/1933, p.1, col.B

(441) Ib. 14/3/1933, p.9, cols.D,E

* It is fair to say that many so regarded him for most of his life.

he was to the Peninsula mallee lands what Stott was to the Murray. Whereas Stott was full of novel, even revolutionary ideas for solving the financial problems of the farmer, and had extended his sphere of active influence beyond the boundaries of his electorate and State, Craigie was a purely local phenomenon, wedded inextricably to the idea that by complete and radical taxation reform all economic and social ills would be solved. Like Stott, Craigie had fine qualities of personality which attracted loyal followers, had an organisation to assist him (at Kimba), and he was well known. Again, too, the preferences were a key: the staunch Party supporter tends to put an Independent second, rather than a political rival. Nor can we ignore the part which voluntary voting played in those days: the more politically conscious and committed person went to the polls: the sheep rather than the goats.

Craigie and Moore's opponent, Pfitzner, met none of the criteria for election. He was little known, his paper organisation was a front for hostility to the Henry George League, he was incapable of attracting a following and unable to demonstrate any cause other than opposition to Craigie, who was a popular individual. Pfitzner is typical of many of the unsuccessful Independent candidates 1927-70.

*

YORKE PENINSULA

D.M.S. Davies and H. Hudson opposed two sitting LCL members. Daniel Merddyn Scott Davies* (1872-1951), joined the old Postmaster-general's department in 1884 as a messenger boy, and in 1908 went to Minlaton as postmaster. When he left the department he went into business as an auctioneer and valuator. He was a well known and popular figure, involved in local bodies, and had a special interest in amateur

* Sources of biographical information: Parliamentary Library Advertiser: 2/10/1951, p.3, col.H (Obituary)

theatricals. He was secretary of the Minlaton Agricultural Society for thirty years, and had served as president. As returning officer for the electoral district of Yorke Peninsula he had a good inside knowledge of politics. So far as can be ascertained, he had no experience in local government.

Hugh Hudson was an agent and lived at Hawthorn. He was one of the founders of the Citizens League. (442)

Davies nominated because of very strong feelings about the Yorke Peninsula preselection. In 1927 two Pact members had been returned unopposed. In 1930 two Liberals and two Country Party candidates had gone to the electorate and the Liberals were successful. After the merger, the two Liberals were preselected on behalf of the LCL and Davies asserted that they would simply have strolled into Parliament without opposition if he and Hudson had not/nominated. (443) The two Independents made the issue of preselection, plebiscite disfranchisement and party politics, prominent and deadly weapons during their energetic campaign: there was widespread public acceptance of their powerful criticisms.

To contest the election, Davies resigned as returning officer. (444) He and Hudson worked together and first set out their policy at Port Vincent on 8 March, when a committee was formed. (445) Jeanne F. Young joined their campaign as an active speaker. Their meetings were reported to have been some of the biggest seen on the Peninsula for twenty years. (446) Of the two candidates, Davies was sensible and moderate, (except when discussing party politics,): Hudson had some

(442) Advertiser. 21/3/1933, p.11, col.C
10/1/1933, p.21, col.C

(443) Maitland Watch. 17/3/1933, p.5. Col.A,B

(444) Advertiser 2/3/1933, p.5, cols.A,B

(445) Maitland Watch 10/3/1933, p.2, col.B

(446) Advertiser: 21/3/1933, p.11, cols.C,D

rather extreme views. Both favoured proportional representation, the Premiers Plan and Empire Free Trade. (447) (448) (449) They opposed five year parliaments , but did not make this a major issue, contenting themselves with asking voters to 'Think what five years of Butler government will cost the State.' (451) Davies dealt with a lot of other matters: land tax appeals, cost of production, motor vehicle tax and registration fees, local roads, the Farmers Relief Act, (452) federal compensation for State disabilities, markets for primary industry, (453) free primary education, and secondary education to be free depending on a means test. (454)

Hudson believed party politics was 'rotten to the core,' (455) and he proposed closing parliament for three years, sacking all members and appointing a committee of businessmen to handle the affairs of State. (456) He held strong feelings about the Liberal/Country merger, believing that the Country Party had sold the farmers' birthright. (457) His solution to the unemployment problem was to create a yeoman peasantry by settling men on small holdings. (458)

At every meeting party politics, plebiscites and caucus rule were soundly condemned. (459) (460) Hudson dismissed preselection as a process of 'Half a crown in the slot, and out comes the candidate.' (461) Davies would go so far as to make plebiscites illegal. (462) Their

(447) Maitland Watch. 17/3/1933, p.5, cols.C,D,E

(448) Ib. 17/3/1933, p.5, cols.A,B

(449) Advertiser 21/3/1933, p.11, cols.C,D

(450) -

(451) Maitland Watch: 7/4/1933, p.5, cols.D,E

(452) Ib. 17/3/1933, p.5, cols.A,B

(453) Advertiser 21/3/1933, p.11, cols.C,D

(454) Kadina and Wallaroo Times: 8/4/1933, p.3, col.C

(455) Maitland Watch: 17/3/1933, cols.C,D,E

(456) Kadina and Wallaroo Times: 8/4/1933, p.3, col.C

(457) Advertiser. 21/3/1933, p.11, col.D

(458) Maitland Watch: 17/3/1933, p.5, cols.C,D,E

(459) Kadina and Wallaroo Times: 8/4/2944, p.3, col.C

(460) Advertiser: 21/3/1933, p.11, col.D

(461) Ibidem.

(462) Ib. 21/3/1933, p.11, cols.C,D

advertisements urged voters to 'Put your Country before your Party.'

(463) The Maitland Watch had given them full publicity, but it urged a vote for the LCL. (464)

Baden Pattinson (LCL) won first place by 350 votes. Davies defeated E.H.Giles with Hudson's preferences. It was the first time in twenty years that a Liberal had been defeated. (465)

TABLE 13 Yorke Peninsula 1933: Candidates, Votes and Percentages:

Candidate	Party	Votes	Percentages
D.M.S. Davies	Ind	2263	42.64
B.Pattinson	LCL	2254	42.47
E.H.Giles	LCL	432	8.14
H.Hudson	Ind.	358	6.75

Source: Hughes and Graham, Voting, p.108

Hudson contested no further State elections. Davies was 59 at his election, an illustration that electors do not consider age of any relevance when a candidate is prominent and well known in the community in which he stands. Davies cleverly used the preselection issue as a significant cause and turned it against the LCL which had provided it as an electoral weapon. He had also a strong personal following.

*

The final state of the parties in the House of Assembly was six ALP, four Lang Labor, and four Independents: Stott, Davies, Craigie and Basedow. The latter died before parliament resumed. The LCL had won a convincing victory, with twenty nine of their adherents elected. They had no effective opposition at all, and a majority of thirteen over their opponents combined made any pre-election optimistic references to the "balance of power" a bad joke. Proportional representation would have made no difference to the fact of an LCL government: an analysis of first preference votes indicates that a maximum of six independents would have been returned. Generally, the LCL had favoured the Independents

(463) Maitland Watch: 31/3/1933, p.5, col.E

(464) Ib. 7/4/1933, p.4, col.B

(465) Ib. 14/4/1933, p.4, col.C

with its preferences, and Butler had said there was little difference between the views of the LCL and the Independent candidates. (466)

The Advertiser had been generous with the coverage given to their campaign, had not discouraged them, and only an occasional letter appeared which attacked them. (467) A.G.Cameron had criticised the Advertiser because he concluded it had actively supported them: the paper quickly refuted this allegation. (468) (469) The presence of the Independents and their successes was interpreted widely as a protest at the party system. (470) (471) The Advertiser considered that the most gratifying feature of the election result was the overwhelming vote recorded in favour of the Premiers plan, and it was genuinely disappointed that the PLP had been decimated. (472) Its main worry became the anticipation that Butler would introduce five year parliaments, (473) a proposal it continued to condemn strongly.

If Butler had been a more astute politician he would have perceived some warnings in the results in Albert, Barossa, Flinders and Yorke Peninsula, not to mention the other electorates where Independents had appeared and voiced their rejection of his proposed parliamentary reform, plebiscites and party politics. Apart from the unhappy labor disunity, Butler was also fortunate that liquor and betting were not issues in 1933. The absence of the last mentioned was due not so much to disinterest - it was still a live topic - but because the Betting Commission began taking evidence on 4 January 1933, * and the more vocal public debate had to submerge for a while.

As it was, Butler quickly displayed unusual tactlessness and arrogance: he not only brought about eventually his own downfall, but

(466) Ib. 20/3/1933, p.10, col.B

(467) Ib. 27/3/1933, p.12, col.D (e.g.)

(468) Ib. 29/3/1933, p.15, col.A

(469) Kapunda Herald: 31/3/1933, p.3, col.B

(470) Advertiser: 10/4/1933, p.14, cols.C,D

(471) Maitland Watch. 7/4/1933, p.4, col.B

(472) Advertiser: 10/4/1933, p.14, cols.C,D

(473) Ib. 19/4/1933, p.8, cols.E,F

* The Chairman was W.V.Wray, SM, and members E.H.Hannaford, A.McArthur G.R.Laffer and J.O.Critchley, MPs.

very nearly succeeded in wrecking the LCL government. His policies united his enemies, antagonised some of his own party members, and finally alienated a sizeable majority of the general community. The concept "Balance of Power", with which some of the Independent candidates had been so enamoured in 1933, became, to Butler, an embarrassing reality in 1938.

But before then there were three House of Assembly by-elections, two being of very great significance, the outcome of which should, had Butler possessed more political insight, and been less impetuous and stubborn, have served as a warning that the electorate was becoming seriously dissatisfied with his performance.

*

ALEXANDRA - 10 February 1934

Three Independents, G. Connor, F. G. Filmer, and A. P. Davies opposed one endorsed LCL candidate. In the months since parliament had resumed after the 1933 general election, the government had enacted the Quinquennial Parliament Act in the face of a formidable parliamentary and public outcry, and had attempted to control bookmakers, after the Betting Commission had reported in September 1933, by setting up a Betting Control Board which began immediately to licence what many people felt was an extraordinary large number of betting shops. (474)

A. P. Davies now gave his occupation as consulting engineer, and he lived at New Parkside.* He told an audience at Echunga that he was an Independent Democrat, and had been connected with primary production for twenty seven years. He was strongly opposed to the quinquennial parliament, criticised Butler's general policies, indicated he would support anything the dairy industry wanted, and promised a deep sea port at Goolwa. (475)

(474) The history of betting in South Australia and the Butler government's involvement is set out in Rendell, A. A., The Punter in Paradise. A History of the Relations between the Punter and the State in South Australia. BA thesis. 1960 U. of A.

(475) Advertiser. 3/2/1934, p. 21, col. B

*
Now Unley

F.G. Filmer gave the impression that he had no policy as such. He attacked preselection, party politics, five year parliaments, and the writing off of debts, and suggested that the Citizens League should be the subject of legislation as it used unfair tactics. (476) (477) The Citizens League had been very busy - supporting Connor.

George Connor* (1878-1941) was born at Prospect Hill in the district of Kuitpo, and was educated at the State school. He moved to Kangarilla around 1900 where he established a dairy farm. In about 1920 he was elected to the district council of Clarendon. He was a prominent local identity: a member of the committee of the local Agricultural Bureau, general president of the Organised Dairymen's Association of South Australia (which he founded), and promoter of the McLaren Flat vine and fruit pruning competition which decided the State championship. He founded the McLaren Flat Show and had been president since its inception. In 1925 he had won a pastoral improvement competition.

The by-election had been caused by the sudden death of G.R.Laffer on 8 December, 1933. In the 1933 general election he and two colleagues had been unopposed. The seat had long been a Liberal stronghold and it was believed that the LCL would hold it. (478) There were eight candidates at the LCL plebiscite: Connor was a member of the LCL (479) (480) but did not seek preselection. (481) He was quickly recognised as the LCL nominee A.H.Frazer's most serious opponent. (482) §

Bagot had emerged as a formidable opponent of the five year parlia-

(476) Ib. 7/2/1934, p.17, col.E

(477) Victor Harbour Times: 12/2/1933, p.16, col.D

(478) Advertiser: 12/2/1933, p.16, col.D

(479) Ib. 18/1/1934, p.10, col.B

(480) Ib. 12/2/1934, p.9, col.B

(481) Southern Argus: 11/1/1934, p.3, col.C

(482) Advertiser. 18/1/1934, p.10; col.B

* Source of biographical information: Parliamentary Library

Advertiser: 25/1/1934

Ib. 12/2/1934, p.9, col.B

Civic Record of South Australia 1921-23

§ Frazer was a vigneron, at McLaren Flat

ment"grab". He had organised public protests and had worked with Independents to rally criticism. The Citizens League adopted Connor with enthusiasm: he was soon advertised as the 'Citizens' League Candidate', (483) and the 'Independent Candidate endorsed by the Citizens' League', (484) but he appears to have announced himself as an Independent Liberal. Although McLaren Flat vineyard owner, Cyril Robertson, was his campaign director, (485) the real push came from Bagot, who canvassed, wrote letters, organised meetings, and, with T.C.Stott, appeared on the platform and harangued audiences on the evils of the quinquennial parliament and party politics. (486) (487) (488) (489)

Stott was involved because he wanted Independents elected to hold the balance of power. His dislike of Bulter, nascent from the Albert campaign, had matured quickly after Stott had taken his seat. He was an active and loquacious member who seized every opportunity to discomfort the premier, and political differences hardened swiftly into a mutual and intense personal dislike. Sometimes the disagreements were related to genuine legislative grievances, such as the administration of the Farmers Assistance Act, when Maycock joined with Stott in public criticism.

(490) Sometimes animosity arose through Stott's cultivated ability to irritate the government: soon after his election, on an occasion when the government had been anxious to dispose of business, Stott called a division late at night and caused members to miss the last trams home.

(491) By September 1934 Stott and Butler were openly abusing each other, and the latter called the unrepentant Independent an 'ambitious fool.' (492)

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- (483) Southern Argus: 11/1/1934, p.3, col.C
(484) Kangaroo Island Courier: 27/1/1934, p.3, col.D
(485) Victor Harbour Times: 26/1/1934, p.3, col.A
(486) Advertiser: 22/1/1934, p.12, col.E
(487) Ib. 30/1/1934, p.13, col.A
(488) Southern Argus: 8/2/1934, p.3, col.G
(489) Advertiser: 30/1/1934, p.13, col.A
(490) Ib. 20/1/1934, p.18, col.C
(491) Stott Papers: "B" p.7
(492) Advertiser: 6/9/1934, p.10, col.D

The local president of the Citizens League was Sir William Sowden^{*}, who shared Bagot's dislike of five year parliaments, and he supported Connor, causing some provocative exchanges in the press.(493) Butler entered the campaign and made a personal attack on Bagot at Strathalbyn, which did not assist the LCL cause.(494) It was another illustration of the premier's unhappy knack of needlessly antagonising people. Bagot was a skilful enemy who, in 1938, was to deal Butler a telling personal humiliation. Connor kept above the mud slinging. The basis of his policy was an attack on tariffs.(495) He spoke of the need for assistance to primary producers, and to write down debts of soldier settlers.He was against government interference with private enterprise.(496) He opposed the quinquennial parliament and supported a reduction of members.(497) Whether he realised it or not, Bagot and Stott had made the main election issues virtually five year parliaments and the need for Independent candidates,(498) (499) and the requirements of primary industry in general and dairy industry in particular, came second.

The LCL campaign was easily eclipsed by the enthusiasm of Connor's articulate supporters. In addition to the premier,S.W.Jeffries, H.S.Hudd, A.P.Blesing and C.A.S.Hawker came to Frazer's assistance.(500) (501) In a 43 per cent poll, Connor had an absolute majority after the first count. It was 'one of the biggest political surprises of recent years.'(502) (503) Most of his support came from Strathalbyn, though he won in every box

(493) Victor Harbour Times: 2/2/1934,p.2,col.E

(494) Southern Argus: 8/2/1934,p.3,cols.C,D

(495) Advertiser:25/1/1935,p.17,col.B

(496) Ib.1/2/1934,p.17,cols.F,G,H

(497) Southern Argus:8/2/1934,p.3,col.G

(498) Victor Harbour Times:9/2/1934,p.1,col.A

(499) Southern Argus:15/2/1934,p.3,col.C,D

(500) Advertiser: 24/1/1933,p.2,col.G

(501) Ib.3/2/1934,p.18,col.A

(502) Ib.12/2/1934,p.9,col.B

(503) Victor Harbour Times:16/2/1934,p.3,col.C

* Sir William Sowden Kt. Formerly part proprietor and editor-in-chief of the Register. A distinguished and influential public figure.

except Kingscote.

TABLE 14: Alexandra 1934: candidates, votes and percentages.

Candidate	Party	Votes	Percentages
G.Connor	Ind	3574	51.04
A.H.Frazer	LCL	1896	27.08
F.G.Filmer	Ind	1242	17.74
A.P.Davies	Ind	98	1.40
Informal	-	192	2.74

Source: Victor Harbour Times: 16/2/1934,p.3,col.C

In a review of the result, the Kangaroo Island Courier thought the reason for Connor's victory was the Road Transport Act^{*}, the refusal of the government to supply free books to children in private schools, fees in high schools, the unwillingness to allow reduced motor licence fees on the Island, and five year parliaments: the latter was said to be the main issue in that part of the electorate.(504) Stott and Bagot saw the five year parliament topic as important, along with high school fees and party politics.(505) Bagot's belief that betting shops had become an issue in the last week of the campaign was endorsed by the president of the LCL.(506)

There are none so blind as do not wish to see: Butler denied that the election had any political significance at all, and explained Connor's victory on the fact that he had been a member of the LCL up to the holding of the plebiscite, and the electors voted for him because they knew he was a Liberal.(507) The only issues to him were the Transport Act and education. The immediate consequence of Connor's election was that two days after the poll the government announced a committee to investigate the dairy industry in South Australia.(508)

Connor's victory was significant and interesting. Significant, because despite Butler's assertions, it was a definite rebuke to the

(504) Kangaroo Island Courier: 17/2/1934,p.3,col.A

(505) Advertiser: 12/2/1934,p.9,col.B

(506) Ibidem.

(507) Ibidem.

(508) Ib.13/2/1934,p.9 col.D

* The Act had been introduced in 1930, and established a Transport Control Board to license road carriers in order to protect the railways from unfair competition. It was very unpopular.

Premier, and interesting because Connor was elected solely on the basis of his prominence in the community where he stood. He contrasts with Stott who filled all the criteria for election as an Independent. Causes were there; but they were emphasised by Stott and Bagot and not the candidate. Connor had no outstanding force of character, but he was likeable and popular, and had no enemies. (509) In the course of his modest public life he had given no person cause to resent him. His genial and unflappable nature comes out in reports of his speeches, which were usually brief and simple. Nor is it possible to claim his victory on the basis of his membership of the LCL, because later he was to defeat an LCL cabinet minister. Connor received valuable help from his campaign supporter Cyril Robertson, a man well-known and respected in the electorate and who would have influenced the vote of many people he had contact with.

*

WOOROORA - 29 September, 1934

This by-election resulted from the resignation of A.G.Cameron on 7 August to contest the seat of Barker at the Federal election on 15 September 1934. (510) (511) Two Independents, AW.Robinson and J.J.O'Sullivan, opposed four LCL and one ALP candidate. The plethora of Liberals came about because the party had become very sensitive to the effective criticism of preselection, and it had announced that there would be no plebiscite : any member of the LCL was at liberty to nominate. (512) The by-election was overshadowed by the Federal poll and it did not attract the publicity which attended the one in Alexandra.

Albert William Robinson^{*} (1877-1943), a pastoralist, was born at

(509) For information about Connor I am indebted to the Hon.D.N.Brookman, who held Alexandra from 1948-73

(510) Advertiser: 20/7/1934, p.21, col.D

(511) Ib. 8/8/1934, p.16, col.G

(512) Ib. 18/8/1934, p.20, col.E

* Sources of biographical information:
Rydon, Joan: A Biographical Register of the Commonwealth Parliament, 1901-72. ANUP. Canberra, 1975
Advertiser: 26/5/1943, p.6, col.F (Obituary)
Whos Who in Australia, 1941
Parliament House records.

Lyndoch and educated at the Clare Advanced School and Roseworthy Agricultural College. With his father he opened Werocata station near Balaklava. In the late thirties, with his eldest son, he developed a property on Kangaroo Island. He had been president of the Balaklava-Dalkey Agricultural Society, and chairman of the Balaklava Racing Club. He had been elected to the House of Assembly as a Liberal member for Wooroora in 1915 and held the seat until his defeat in 1924. He did not stand in 1927, and in April 1928 was chosen by the South Australian parliament as senator to replace Sir Henry Barwell who had resigned to become Agent-General for the State in London. Robinson was a senator for only eight months before his defeat.

Robinson had been induced to not nominate in 1927, in favour of A.G. Cameron in order to preserve the Pact. He retained bitter memories of the incident and it was clearly a factor which led to his candidacy in 1934. (513)

James John O'Sullivan was a Kapunda farmer with his own unpleasant memories of plebiscite ballots. In 1930 he had contested the Country Party plebiscite for Wooroora. It is not clear what precisely happened, but O'Sullivan claimed that there were serious ballot irregularities, and he sought unsuccessfully to dispute the result. (514) His attempts to get a recount were obstructed. (515) Feelings ran high and it was rumoured that he would stand in 1930 as an Independent: he did not.

He had been one of the earliest members of the Country Party, and one of its first vice-presidents. He had fought strenuously the merger and always strongly opposed it. (516) (517) He refused membership of the LCL. (518) He addressed electors on the evils of the tariff, the

(513) Ib. 6/10/1934, p. 23, col. C

(514) Ib. 21/1/1930, p. 17, col. C

(515) Ib. 22/1/1930, p. 17, col. C

(516) Ib. 6/9/1934, p. 16, col. F

(517) Kapunda Herald: 28/9/1934, p. 3, cols. A. B

(518) Ib. 31/8/1934, p. 2, cols. B, C, D.

need for mortgage adjustment legislation, rural planning and other matters relevant to country interests. (519) (520) He was also anxious to re-establish the Country Party in South Australia.

Robinson ran a low-key campaign based on his personal association with the district and his previous parliamentary service. He made it clear that he was a non-party candidate, and did not allocate any preferences. (551) The extent to which the personal knowledge of the electors of the candidates determined their vote is indicated by his story that at Eudunda, the home town of one LCL candidate, he was unable to get anyone to scrutineer for him and at another opponent's stronghold not a soul turned up at his meeting. (522) Robinson won on preferences after a long count.

TABLE 15: Wooroora 1934: Candidates, votes and percentages.

Candidate	Party	Votes	Percentages
A.W. Robinson	Ind [*]	1875	28.76
W.P. Eckermann	Ind	1217	18.67
E.E. George	ALP	1013	15.54
D.L. Clarke	LCL	699	10.72
J.J.O'Sullivan	Ind [§]	676	10.37
H.T. Chapman	LCL	555	8.51
S.Nairn	LCL	485	7.44

Source: Hughes and Graham. Voting p.109

Robinson's success occurred two weeks after the Lyons UAP won a resounding victory at the Federal election on 15 September. Then South Australia polled heavily for the LCL and Labor won only in Hindmarsh.

(No emergency Committee was active in the State.) The absence of the

(519) Ibidem

(520) Ib. 28/9/1934, p.3, cols.A.B

(521) Ib. 14/9/1934, p.2, col.F

(522) Ib. 12/10/1934, p.2, col.F

* Robinson made a point that he was a "Non-Party candidate," and not an Independent. The distinction is unclear.

§ O'Sullivan described himself as a "Straight out Party Candidate." So far as can be ascertained, he did not describe himself as Independent Country Party.

Both of them were accepted as Independents.

Citizens League from Wooroora is explained by their involvement in the Federal election, where Bagot was a candidate. O'Sullivan did not stand again.

Like Connor, Robinson could claim victory on the basis of his prominence in the local community: in particular he was a very popular chairman of the Balaklava Racing Club. His success cannot be attributed to his known Liberal sympathies because on his death the seat was captured by Labor. His victory was helped by the LCL vote being split between rival candidates. As a lesson on the virtues of preselection, it did not go unnoticed.

*

Not once during the five year parliament did the five Independents act as a group which had an influence on important government policy. The following table shows how each Independent voted in divisions in the sessions of parliament 1933-37.

TABLE 16: Independent divisional votes, Parliamentary sessions 1933-37

Year	Connor			Craigie			Davies			Robinson			Stott		
	Lib	-	Lab	Lib	-	Lab	Lib	-	Lab	Lib	-	Lab	Lib	-	Lab
1933	-	-	-	7	15	34	7	15	26	-	-	-	1	11	38
1934	12	15	7	9	20	30	14	15	14	8	10	7	9	16	13
1935	19	9	17	10	19	37	13	14	23	17	12	24	7	16	33
1936	9	9	25	10	30	67	8	20	41	23	12	34	5	17	43
1937	13	6	14	9	9	40	7	4	34	25	7	17	17	5	22
Total	53	39	63	45	93	208	49	68	138	73	31	82	39	67	149
Total of all division votes.	155			346			255			186			255		
Expressed as percentage Craigie =100	44.8			100			73.7			53.8			73.7		

Source: SAPD 1933-37 Compiled by author.

There is a remarkable similarity in the pattern of voting of Davies and Stott; it is less marked in the case of Robinson and Connor, but the correlation is apparent. Of the five, Craigie was the most conscientious in his attendance. Connor the least so. This can be partly explained by his need to leave the House early

when night sittings were held because of travelling time and distance to his home.

Although the Independents did not criticise one another in the House, they often were found in opposite division lobbies; they had no consultative or coordinating mechanism to secure the unity of approach which is necessary if a group desires to initiate or influence specific action and become an effective political force. This can be seen in a survey of their attitude to legislation which became of relevance to the 1938 election. Twelve such examples will be given.

The Constitutional (Quinquennial Parliament) Bill was introduced on 17 August, 1933. The second reading was carried on 5 September, 25:20, with the three Independents then in the Assembly (Craigie, Davies and Stott) dissenting. The third reading was carried the same day, on the same vote, with the same three dissentients. All had consistently opposed it, but to no avail, and did not have the numbers even with four LCL defectors.* (523)

The controversial Lottery and Gaming Bill, (524) which implemented the recommendations of the Betting Commission, had its second reading in November 1933, and the third reading was carried on 24 November, 26:7. Davies supported it, and Stott and Craigie were not present.

In the Legislative Council on 31 July 1934 H. Tassie introduced an Education Act Amendment Bill (525) which provided for religious instruction in State Schools. The House of Assembly second reading was on 19 September, and it was negatived on 8 November. Craigie, Davies and Robinson voted against it, Connor for it, and Stott was not present. Yet another Lottery and Gaming Acts Amendment Act (526) was carried in the Assembly on 22 November, 20:11. This was supported by Davies, Robinson

(523) Smith, R.F.I., Butler Government, op cit., pp. 193-207

(524) Lottery and Gaming and Licensing Act 1933. No. 2135

(525) Lottery and Gaming Act Amendment Act 1934. No. 2159

(526) Lottery and Gaming Act Amendment Act 1934. No. 2188

* A.W. Christian, H.B. Crosby, H.S. Dunks, H.H. Shannon

and Stott, and opposed by Connor and Craigie. On 27 August 1935 a Licensing Bill (527) to liberalise liquor trading hours, was introduced in the Upper House. By now the churches and their kindred organisations perceived the Butler government as wicked and libertine, promoting the destruction of ethics and decency, and threatening the edifice of South Australian society. When the Bill had its second reading in the Assembly on 13 November the public gallery was packed with the ardent representatives of social and moral reform. To their horror it was carried 20:19, and the third reading passed without division on 6 December. Craigie, Davies, Robinson and Stott supported it, and Connor was opposed.

A Lottery and Gaming Acts Amendment Bill, (528) to direct the disposal of the turnover tax on bookmakers to various racing clubs was passed on 10 December, 1935. The second reading was carried 20:11 with Robinson and Stott in support and Craigie and Davies dissenting.

In 1936 the government got around to fulfilling its election promise to reduce the number of members of parliament. The Constitution Act Amendment Bill (529) providing for thirty nine single member electorates was introduced in the House of Assembly on 12 August.* The Electoral Office had drawn up the new boundaries, and cabinet had referred them to a committee comprising Judge H.K.Paine, N.V.Jeffreys, (Commonwealth Deputy Returning Officer for the State), and J.H.McNamara, (Surveyor-General), before adopting them. The reaction of the Independents to this measure was strangely at variance with their well known enthusiasm for reducing the quantity of legislators. Craigie, Davies and Stott opposed and Robinson supported it. Connor had no interest.

Craigie, setting out his opposition in a protracted speech, considered the districts had been rigged, and he wanted proportional representation. Davies based his opposition on the expense which would be incurred

(527) Licensing Act 1935. No. 2241

(528) Lottery and Gaming Acts Amendment Act 1935. No. 2245

(529) Constitution Act Amendment Act 1936. No. 2336

* This Act in later years was to make "gerrymander" a household word.

in having extra returning officers. Stott did not want single member electorates, thought the Act was a scheme to secure the election of LCL candidates, and, like Craigie, wanted proportional representation or nothing. The third reading was carried on 22 September, 25:16.

On 4 November, 1936, a Constitution Act Amendment Bill No.2 was introduced in the House of Assembly to consider further the question of five year parliaments. The first reading was carried the same day, 19:16, with Craigie, Davies, Robinson and Stott against, and Connor not present. This Bill lapsed. It was succeeded in 1937 by the Constitution Act Amendment Bill, (530) which was brought in the Assembly on 2 September. This Bill was to give full legislative validity to the five year parliament, and remove any technical doubts which remained after the passing of the Constitution (Quinquennial Parliament) Act 1933. The first reading passed without division on 2 September, at the end of the second reading on 21 September it passed 25:19 with all five Independents opposed.

Their attitudes had been consistent in 1933 and 1937. On both occasions Craigie dissected in masterly and irrefutable fashion Butler's reasons for bringing in such legislation. Using his enthusiasm for proportional representation as a chassis for the body of his speeches, he showed the fallacy of Butler's claims for a mandate, under any system of preferential voting. (531) (532) He scorned Butler's appeals to democracy: 'I would very much like to know where democracy has been tried in Australia.' (533)

To extend the life of Parliament is...a removal of Parliament further from the control of the people than it is at present time...it is opposed to the principles of democracy and as it is an attempt to give a longer lease of life to the Government which has not received a mandate from the people, I intend

(530) Constitution Act Amendment Act 1937.No.2381

(531) SAPD 1933 vol.1,pp818-822

(532) SAPD 1937 vol.2 p.1240

(533) SAPD 1933 vol.1,p.826

to oppose the measure. I hope there will be a majority against it. (534)

Four years later Craigie was surprised the Bill had been introduced 'in view of the general consensus of opinion outside the House in opposition to it.' (535)

The general tendency of the longer term is to weaken Parliament and to take out of the hands of the people a power which should always be left with them. (536)

In both major debates on the quinquennial parliament, Craigie showed his remarkable ability to handle interjectors and turn effortlessly their comments against them: this is a striking feature of his ability as a speaker.

Davies, in 1933, was 'absolutely convinced that in my electorate there is a preponderance of opinion against this proposal.' (537) He was concerned that public apathy towards elections, bad enough with a three year term, would be 'increased to a deplorable extent.' (538) He saw a dangerous precedent being set: an extremist or unscrupulous government might decide to extend parliament to ten or twenty years. (539) He pointed out that the House contained twenty six new members who had only been elected two months and were being asked to vote themselves a longer term: it was 'brazen impudence.' (540) Four years later Davies considered that 'nothing new has been brought forward in favour of five year Parliaments' (541) As to Butler's "mandate" he felt that no government could claim to have a mandate from electors 'because the Party system operates to such an extent that items of policy are lost sight of.' (542) The Bill was 'absolutely undemocratic' and should have been the subject of a referendum. (543)

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- (534) Ib. p.829
(535) SAPD 1937 vol.2, p.1240
(536) Ib. p.1241
(537) SAPD 1933, vol.1, p.934
(538) Ib. p.935
(539) Ib. p.936
(540) SAPD 1933 vol.2, p.1464
(541) SAPD 1937 vol.2 p.1430
(542) Ib. p.1431
(543) Ib. p.1433

Stott was a trenchant critic.

If this Bill becomes law we will be getting pretty close to a dictatorship in South Australia. We have Hitlerism in Germany, and will get pretty near to Butlerism in South Australia. (544)

In 1937, like Craigie and Davies, he criticised Butler's "mandate" and expressed his concern that some government members previously opposed to the five year term had done somersaults and, four years later, favoured it. (545) Connor and Robinson, who had not been in parliament during the storms of 1933, made plain in 1937 their aversion to the quinquennial legislation. Connor believed that 'The supporters of this measure know well that they did a wrong thing when they extended the term of this Parliament by two years' (546), and he considered that people had a right to 'the frequent appearance before them of members of Parliament to give an account of their stewardship.' (547) Robinson wanted a referendum on the question and believed that Butler's action 'gave the people of South Australia the biggest shock they have received for many a day.' (548) The whole business had been done 'behind the backs of the people.' (549)

This was the only occasion when during the passage of legislation which was to prove contentious, all had acted with one mind, and before the third reading Connor had gone home.

A Licensing Act Amendment Bill, to limit drinking at dances, was introduced on 12 October 1937 and passed through the Assembly without division. On 24 November it was negatived 10:6 in the Council, (Hon Joseph Anderson being among the minority.) In an effort to regulate off-course betting, a private member introduced a Lottery and Gaming Act Amendment Bill on 1 September. After a second reading commencing in the

(544) SAPD 1933 vol.1, p.898

(545) SAPD 1937 vol.2, pp.1436-64, 1495-96

(546) Ib. p.1427

(547) Ib. p.1428

(548) Ib. p.1326

(549) Ib. p.1327

Assembly on 8 September it was negatived 7:24 on 2 December. Craigie and Robinson opposed the Bill, Connor, Davies and Stott were not present.

None of the Independents took any initiative to introduce legislation dealing with matters which they had claimed, during their campaigns, were of concern to them. In the matter of proportional representation, on 9 August 1933 R.S. Richards introduced a Constitutional Amendment (Proportional Representation) Bill. This lapsed the same day before any member other than the mover had spoken. It was never revived.

The random way in which the Independents voted on the twelve matters mentioned, was repeated throughout the five year parliament on all legislation.

Between 1933 and 1937 the Butler government was not put to any real test of confidence, but on three occasions when a minor opportunity was available to show disapproval, the Independents were unimpressive. In 1933 D.H. Bardolph moved a motion of no confidence. (550) Bardolph was a vigorous critic and throughout the term of the parliament was a far more effective leader of the Opposition than A.W. Lacey. His motion related to the government's handling of the unemployed. It was not seconded, and was negatived when he had finished speaking: Craigie and Davies supported Butler, and Stott was not present. In 1935 the ALP amended the address-in-reply. When the vote was taken the Liberals found that Connor, Craigie, Davies and Robinson supported them: again, Stott was absent. (551) In 1936 Lacey again amended the address-in-reply. Connor and Robinson voted for the government, Craigie for the opposition, and Stott and Davies were not present. (552) The behaviour of elected Independents, which led to so much criticism after 1938, can be predicted

(550) SAPD 1933, vol.1, pp.1295-1301

(551) SAPD 1935, vol.1, p.49

(552) SAPD 1936 Vol.1 pp.320-1

from these three minor incidents.

TABLE 17: Parliamentary Activity of Independent Members 1933-38

Member	Year	Questions	Speeches	Business	Other*
Connor	1934	4	3	-	-
	1935	7	3	-	-
	1936	5	2	-	-
	1937	5	2	-	-
	TOTAL	21	10	-	-
Craigie	1933	1	16	-	-
	1934	4	17	-	-
	1935	6	19	-	-
	1936	11	15	-	1
	1937	6	21	1 [§]	-
	TOTAL	28	88	1	1
Davies	1933	3	14	-	-
	1934	5	9	-	-
	1935	3	7	-	1
	1936	16	8	-	-
	1937	4	9	-	-
	TOTAL	31	57	-	1
Robinson	1934	8	4	-	-
	1935	13	13	-	3
	1936	17	3	-	-
	1937	9	4	-	-
	TOTAL	47	24	-	3
Stott	1933	62	31	-	-
	1934	49	22	-	-
	1935	106	46	-	5
	1936	86	17	-	-
	1937	61	20	-	-
	TOTAL	364	136	-	5

* Personal explanations, points of order, call to order.

§ A motion to disallow certain regulations, SAPD 1937 Vol 1. pp.409-10,514-5.

Source: SAPD 1933-37. Compiled by author.

This table speaks for itself. Connor was very inactive, showed concern only in matters relating to dairy interests, and then only briefly. Craigie's speeches often were of great length, and the longest dealt with taxation and proportional representation. Davies usually spoke briefly when he entered debate: in 1933 he had most to say about the five year parliament. Robinson was unimpressive. The most active member was Stott, whose questions were directed over a very broad range of subjects, and whose speeches, on a variety of topics, were well prepared and generally trenchant. Stott also avoided Craigie's tendency to obsession and constant persistence with single, abstract topics. The

total of Stott's questions and speeches shows that he was a thorn in Butler's side: well may the premier have had delusions of persecution.

When noting the success of three Independents in 1933, the Maitland Watch had commented that 'it is highly questionable whether they can become an active force in determining the policy of the country.' (553) The numbers were still against them; their own lack of cohesion reduced their potential for impact.

*

Until 1941 Stott met all the criteria of independence. He was a vocal and effective critic. He pressed relentlessly the wheatfarmers case and when Butler was no longer premier he became an important influence on government policy towards the grain industry. In these early years of his long parliamentary career he was the most outstanding Independent member and overshadowed the others. (Macgillivray, elected in 1938, was also a sound critic of government policies who was not scared to say what he thought. After 1944, it will be suggested, he became virtually the Opposition.) Stott's energy, tenacity and willpower made him a very unpopular parliamentarian: he said his first reception in the House was icy. One anecdote concerned a short journey in a hotel lift with a knighted Legislative Councillor. Stott had asked him how he was, and used his christian name: the gentleman ignored him and on getting out of the lift with his acquaintance said audibly 'Fancy having to stomach that!' His first open clash with the Butler government was over the Farmers Assistance Act 1933. (554)

The officious rigidity which characterised the administration of this Act has passed into farm folklore. It received Assent on 7 December 1933, and early in 1934 a board, chaired by the ubiquitous

(553) Maitland Watch: 7/4/1933, p.4, col.B

(554) Dyer, S.W. Farmers and the Depression. M.A. thesis, U.ofA. 1974 pp. 97-121 sets out the history of government farm relief in S.A. 1929-39, including the Farmers Assistance Act.

Paine began administering it.* Paine has received much criticism over the way in which he applied the Act. He had a rigid legal mind and insisted that its provisions be interpreted within the letter of the law. To many people very soon he and the detested Act became indistinguishable and equally unpopular. A sore point was the nature of the application form which had to be completed to apply for assistance: it gave the board every conceivable personal and private detail about the farmer. When he accepted assistance, the applicant signed over all his property and income, and became a statistic administered by the bureaucracy, supervised by managers and snooped on by inspectors. Before a farmer could receive urgent sustenance he had to account for every pound of butter and every dozen eggs. If he wanted a hank of twine or gallon of oil, an application was necessary to obtain the necessary authority. Farmers found that material supplied by the board was more expensive than the same things bought locally. The board despatched goods by parcel post, the most expensive form of transport, and this charge, too, was set against the crop.

Stott has recounted the story of the farmer whose application for medical attention was refused because, in the opinion of the board, he already had received a fair advance against his crop. Paine had a personality which throughout his judicial life made it impossible for him to temper justice with mercy. Another family received a letter from the board ordering them off their farm and indicating that it was to be offered for sale: the board had discovered that the housewife was selling poultry and eggs to get money to buy clothes for her husband and children. The Wheatgrowers Protection Association took up the cudgels on behalf of these people, and many more. At forced sales members ensured that none of the attending farmers would bid at auction. At one such

* The other members were R.R. Stuckey, C. Harding-Browne and J.C. Venning. A.J. Penglase was secretary.

occasion on the West Coast, when someone came from Port Lincoln hoping to get cheap machinery, he was taken aside and shown a horse trough, and told he would end up in it if he made a bid.

The board prosecuted anyone who infringed the regulations, and one magistrate was reported to have complained that all he had been doing for months was travel around the State hearing charges and convicting "decent citizens" for breaches of the Farmers Assistance Act. This, and many other incidents, were seized upon by Stott and publicised widely to cause Butler maximum embarrassment. Stott and Maycock led the battle against the harsh provisions of the Act, which was described as a "death warrant." After a public meeting at Mindarie, Butler reacted angrily at their criticism, attacked Maycock personally and said he was deliberately misleading farmers because he had political ambitions*. Resentment towards the board was crystallised at a large meeting at Karoonda, early in 1934. McIntosh attended and received a hostile reception: The meeting asked Stott to take their protests to the floor of the House. One farmer present caused a flurry by suggesting the farmers were on the point of revolution.

Stott attempted several times to bring the anomalies and hardships created by the method and manner in which the Act was administered to the notice of parliament, but found everytime he made the effort that either the Speaker or Chairman of Committees, insisting on a very rigid interpretation of the standing orders, ruled against him. One evening, feeling very depressed at his failure to get over the procedural barriers which had been erected to prevent criticism, Stott retired to the parliamentary bar. He poured out his troubles to an officer of the House who wrote on a slip of paper some paragraph references from standard books on parliamentary practice. He found a rarely used standing order which,

* Maycock contested the House of Representatives seat of Barker in 1934 as a Douglas Credit candidate. (Advertiser.11/9/34 p.5,col.C)

on a particular motion being moved, permitted a member to speak and cover any matter he desired to mention. The following week Butler moved the motion, and, amid strong opposition, Stott spent over an hour systematically criticising the Farmers Assistance Act. He found that this both put an end to the obstructive tactics he had met, and ushered in a more friendly acceptance by the other members.

Apart from his efforts in parliament on behalf of the farmer, and his public engagements, he kept up a press campaign against the board's administration policies, criticised Penglase, the secretary, interviewed and wrote letters to Paine, and introduced deputations to Butler. He found the latter unhelpful: the premier was prepared to concede that there were problems but he adopted the view that the board had a difficult job to do and he lacked sympathy for farmers whose relief applications had been refused.

By mid 1934 Butler had come to the conclusion that the only answer to the problems of the wheatgrower was some form of debt adjustment. That the premier's cogitations got even that far is a tribute to the activity of Stott in publicising and criticising government inactivity and indifference, and in putting forward suggestions: he had made it clear to Butler that the wheat industry could no longer be ignored.

One of Stott's main plans to rehabilitate debt ridden farmers was for a general mortgage bank in Australia, financed by Commonwealth bonds, at long term low interest rates, and which could convert existing mortgages to a rate of interest which the industry could bear. This suggestion, which entailed a long term solution to a problem which governments had tackled with year by year stop-gap relief and subsidy legislation, in itself mere temporary checks to a continual decline, is typical of Stott's approach to a problem. He was an active, trenchant,

and, at times (as when berating Penglase,) vindictive critic, but he was always constructive, and his proposals went beyond immediate causes and effects. The problem was to get governments to take notice.

The concept of a mortgage bank was pushed by Stott for years, and even after his retirement he corresponded with the Reserve Bank on the mechanics of credit creation and control. In 1941 he was to press for an enquiry into mortgage banking by the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation, and that organisation appointed a committee to go into the subject. It reported in October of that year and the report was sent to all governments. Compilation of the report was interrupted by the resignation, because of philosophical disagreements, of one of the committee members, J.S. Teasdale, In part his action was precipitated by a dislike of Stott. Teasdale later became chairman of the Australian Wheat Board. Over the next few years he and Stott drew further apart and their enmity was mutual and intense. Not all the influential enemies Stott attracted were in parliament.

The second Butler government's record in relation to the wheat industry is a dismal one, distinguished by vacillation, evasion and mis-statement. Smith has pointed out that not only cabinet but the LCL were weak, lacked coordination, and the party leadership was inadequate and deficient in ability. (555) A prime reason was Butler's temperament. His dislike of Stott and Maycock made him reluctant to listen to the South Australian Wheatgrowers Association^{*}, and he was influenced more by the views of the conservative organisations typified by Cadd's Freedom Association: their aversion to government interference with any commercial activity was in keeping with his own philosophy. At first sight it seems that Stott's aggressive criticism and eternal agitations

(555) Smith, R.F.I., Butler Government, op.cit. pp.5,6

*The word "Protection" had been dropped from their title.

in and our of parliament, may well have been counter-productive in the pre-war years: his animosity against Butler was life-long; their personalities were very opposite. But even if Stott had been more congenial towards the LCL, and less assertive and bellicose, it is unlikely that he would have achieved much in the nature of legislation to bring stability and security to the wheatgrower in those years. Butler's habit of seeing all Commonwealth initiatives in this area as sinister attempts to gain power and erode "States Rights", (556) (557) had become so ingrained that doing absolutely nothing became his basic defence of the status quo. Ever critical of the Commonwealth government, (558) (559) Butler himself remained inactive.

In 1935 the S.A. Wheatgrowers Association formally adopted the concept of a compulsory pool, and did not have long to wait to find out that cabinet opposed it. (560) It was the same dislike that was to kill a Storage and Handling of Wheat Bill in 1938 and 1939. (561) This measure had been introduced by A.W.Christian, like Stott, a wheat farmer who suffered in the depression, but whose personality was very different from that of the fiery rebel from the Murray Mallee. The key point of this measure was to secure the farmer's proprietary right to his wheat until he had been paid for it in full.

Butler tergiversated on bulk handling. The S.A.Farmers Union opposed it, and had influential members of parliament to put its point of view* . It is difficult to find any documentary indication or other reasons for

(556) CPP 156/1934 vol.IV,p.13

(557) CPP 268/1934,col.II,pp 39,41

(558) Advertiser,12/8/1932,p.20 (e.g.)

(559) SAPD 1933 vol.2,p.1562

(560) SAPD 1935 vol.1,p.49

(561) SAPD 61/1932 Select Committee on Wheat (Storage) Bill, and SAPP 40/1939: Report on Select Committee on Storage and Handling of Wheat Bill.

* H.G. Hawkins,MLC;A,P,Blesing,MLC,Hon R.D.Nicholls (Speaker) H.H.Shannon MP: J.A.Lyons.MP.

the failure over five years to do anything about it, but it is known that Anderson^{*}, the railways commissioner, with very vivid memories of the Webb era and the subsequent shameful political persecution in the early thirties, had no desire to involve the railways in the expense of providing bulk handling facilities. (562) There were serious arguments between the Harbours Board and the South Australian Railways, too, and these went back to times in dim memory in 1913 when the two bodies had disputed the control of wharves which had railway lines on them. They had been revived forcibly after 1923 when Webb had built a new jetty at Wallaroo in defiance of the Board and Minister of Marine. (563) Thereafter the two departments, hitherto suspicious of each other and wary of cooperation, developed a hostility to the verge of paranoia.[§] In 1934 the question of Bulk Handling had been referred to the Public Works Parliamentary Standing Committee, and it had issued a report, but nothing came of it. (564)

Mention has been made of Butler's reluctance to interfere with the Farmers Assistance Act: despite the hullabaloo, that legislation not only ran its full course to 1937/38, but was then extended[¶]. The only other legislation which purported to assist wheatgrowers was the Primary Producers Debts Act 1935 No.2200. In that year the Commonwealth passed the Loan (Farmers Debt Adjustment) Act, No.23 of 1935, which provided debt adjustment for wheatgrowers and other needy primary producers. The State legislation was necessary to provide the mechanism for disbursing the State's share of the Commonwealth grant. Butler's broad

(562) S.H.Watson; personal interview.

(563) Jennings, R.I., W.A.Webb, opcit., p.126

(564) SAPP35/1934 Public Works Parliamentary Standing Committee; First Progress Report on Bulk Handling of Wheat.

* Charles Buxton Anderson CMG ISO MIEAust MInstCE (1879-1952)
Railways Commissioner 1930-46

§ An attitude not helped by Webb's action in summarily rejecting the Board's plan for his new jetty because he regarded it as an inadequate design.

¶ Farmers Assistance (Extension) Act, 1938 No.2418

stand, when not carping and criticising Commonwealth policy towards wheatgrowers, was to favour an excise and bounty scheme supplemented by contributions from growers when prices rose above a certain level. This attitude had considerable support from his party and the wheat merchants, but the principal opposition came from the influential Sydney Chamber of Commerce. Publicly that body opposed an excise and flour tax because it 'hit the poorer section of the people.' This blatant hypocrisy masked its real concern that as there was a much greater consumption of grain and its products in the eastern States, they might have to pay what amounted to a subsidy to South Australia. (565) (566)

The most striking aspect of the Commonwealth actions to assist growers between 1933 and 1939 is the absence of a long term policy. Direct financial assistance to wheat growers was given from 1931/32 to 1940/41, except in the years 1936/37 and 1937/38. It was 'a heavy burden for the treasury...a drop in the bucket as a remedy.' (567) The Financial Relief Act (No.64/1932) was followed by the Wheat Growers Relief Act 1933 (No.42/1933) These gave assistance for the 1932/33 and 1933/34 seasons respectively. The latter Act was implemented by a flour tax imposed by three separate Acts* which in May 1933 superseded the Flour Tax Act: the flour tax was reimposed on 13 December 1934. (568) It was abandoned in 1936 because it was found ultra vires.

On 25 January 1934 an important turning point was reached with the appointment of the Royal Commission on the Wheat, Flour and Bread Industries, which became known as the "Gepp Commission", after the chairman, Sir Herbert Gepp[§]. The Commission made crucial recommendations

(565) Stott Papers: "C" p.63, col.1

(566) Ib. p.74, cols 3,4

(567) Dunsdorfs, E.; Wheat, op.cit. p.263

(568) Year Book Australia, 1934, no.27, p891

* Nos. 44,45 and 46/1933

§ The other members were Professor Samuel McMahon Wadham, Thomas Stanley Cheadle, Charles Walter Harper, and Edward Patrick Michael Sheedy.

for a compulsory wheat marketing scheme centred on a Commonwealth wheat marketing board, home consumption price for flour, production bounty and direct financial assistance. During the second World War when the wheat industry was subject to National Security Regulations, the compulsory marketing scheme, pricing arrangements and production controls were introduced virtually as Gepp Commission recommendations. (569)

The Australian Wheatgrowers Federation had been lobbying for a Royal Commission early in 1933, and in September of that year adopted the appointment of one as policy, and each State organisation wrote or interviewed their Federal members to press for it. The first suggestion in the Commonwealth Parliament for a Royal Commission appears to have come from J.H.Prowse, MHR Forrest, W.A., and it was supported by P.G. Stewart and his successor Hugh McLelland. Stott assisted the Commission by arranging the attendance of suitable witnesses, and he also attended sessions and cross-examined. The Australian Wheatgrowers Federation thought highly of the Commission: it regarded the reports as a bible on which to build rehabilitation.

On the basis of the Commission's recommendations the Commonwealth passed the Wheat Bounty Act 1934 (no.60/1934), the Wheat Growers Relief Act (No.2) 1934 (No.59/1934), and the Wheatgrowers Relief Act 1935 (no. 11/1935), which established a home consumption price for wheat: here the Commonwealth came unstuck. As a result of the James case this legislation was found to be invalid along with the three Flour Tax Acts. F.A.James was a grower and producer of dried fruits with his business in Berri. The Commonwealth and certain States including South Australia legislated to deal with the whole question of marketing dried fruits and attempted to direct the export of the maximum quantity. James fought four notable constitutional legal battles based on Section 92. The most

(569) Wheat, Flour and Bread Industries Royal Commission, CPP234/1932-34 v.IV.p.2425:CPP 10/1934-37,v.IV.p.1:CPP 85/1934-37,v.IV.p.687: CPP 83/1934,v.IV.p.481:CPP 235/1934-37,v. IV.p.621

celebrated was James v. Commonwealth (1936) 55 CLR 1: this is the case referred to generally as the "Dried Fruit" case. (570) When in 1936 he won his final appeal to the Privy Council the Commonwealth was considered to have suffered its gravest defeat since Federation: all its marketing and ancillary legislation was invalidated. In an effort to get the necessary powers to regulate interstate trade, the Commonwealth in 1937 held a referendum to alter section 92, but the proposal was defeated*. Stott took a keen interest in these proceedings and supported the referendum proposals in and out of parliament. He appreciated the importance of James' victory, and had a very good knowledge of judicial interpretation of the Constitution as applied to Section 92.

After the Privy Council and referendum rebuffs the Commonwealth lost interest in long term wheat planning, and continued with ad hoc assistance. The constitutional set-backs now provided an excuse for inaction: the Federal government, if criticised, could say that its hands were tied. Two years after the final James case we find the Australian Agricultural Council meeting in Canberra to consider 'comprehensive legal report designed to unravel the tangled marketing position created by the Privy Council decision in the Dried Fruits Case.'

In reality the Commonwealth already possessed the power to provide a bounty under the excise provisions of the Constitution: it vacillated for political, and not constitutional reasons. It was not prepared to upset the milling and merchant interests. At the same time it had to appear to be helping the wheatgrower, hence the continual frenetic empty gestures of the pre-war years. In Butler, the Commonwealth had an ally because he personally had no time for enforced marketing schemes.

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(570) Jennings, R.I.: Some Historically Insoluble..(bibl)..pp.32-3 gives details of the four James cases.

* Included in the referendum was another proposal to give the Commonwealth control over aviation: this too, was lost.

In late 1938 K.C.Wilson MHR and Senator Uppill prepared a wheat stabilisation scheme which became known as the Wilson-Uppill Plan. Wilson introduced a Bill* in the Senate on 7 December 1938. It provided for a stabilised price and stabilisation fund which could be drawn upon to maintain that price. The plan did not provide for acquisition: the merchant or wheat pool receiver would give the grower a certificate when he delivered his wheat.

Stott was an enthusiastic supporter of the plan. He and Wilson drove to Horsham to put it before the Victorian Wheatgrowers Association: they approved it. The South Australian Wheatgrowers Association printed hundreds of copies of the proposal and distributed them, in an effort to enlist support for its adoption. In March 1939 the Australian Wheat-growers Federation recommended its implementation to McLeay, the Minister of Commerce. Debate was still going on when war broke out and the Australian Wheat Board was created under the emergency powers. The war time regulatory authority of the Australian Wheat Board was similar to the principles embodied in the Wilson-Uppill Plan.

The legal basis for Commonwealth relief 1935/36 was the Wheat Growers Relief Act and the flour tax, the latter was continued to contribute towards a bounty on the 1935/36 harvest. Because of price improvements, no relief was necessary in 1936/37 or 1937/38, but in 1938 yet another price slump occurred and again short term relief was provided by the Federal Wheat Tax Act 1938(no.52 of 1938) and the Federal Wheat Industry Assistance Act 1938(no.53 of 1938). The former Act provided for a home consumption price; the premiers agreed upon it on 26 August 1938 and the States passed complementary legislation; in South Australia the Wheat Products Prices Act 1938 No.2406 was assented to on 24 November. The constitutional validity of the Federal Wheat Tax

* Wheat Industry Insurance Bill

Act was challenged but it was upheld by the High Court and the Privy Council*.

Between 1933 and 1938 a number of attempts were made by the Commonwealth to secure international agreements on wheat marketing. The first such entered into by Australia was the International Wheat agreement of 1933. The Commonwealth passed a Wheat Acquisition Act (no.67 of 1933) in December 1933 to enable it to purchase wheatgrowers' exportable surpluses and participate in the international agreement. The agreement was not a success(571) and the Acquisition Act was largely irrelevant. Less still came from the Ottawa Agreement of 1937. (572)

In 1935 Dr. Earle Page the Federal Minister for Commerce, convened a conference of wheat industry representatives at Canberra. (573) This approved in theory the application of a home consumption price for wheat, the scheme to be superintended by the Commonwealth. Stott attended, and from that time retained a low opinion of Page's abilities.

In 1938 a conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers was held in Canberra on 29 August. (574) Butler was most anxious that the forceful Independent critic who was tormenting him in and out of parliament should not go, and he enlisted support from Stevens, the New South Wales Premier, and the Western Australian branch of the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation, to that end. These efforts were foiled by the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation which chose Stott as its delegate to put the wheatgrowers case. The realisation at this conference that the wheatgrowers faced formidable city opposition, led him to organise a farmer's march in 1939.

(571) Dunsdorfs, E. Wheat, op.cit.p.263

(572) CPP 3/1937-40, v.II, p.905

(573) CPP 156/1934, v.IV, p691

(574) CPP 93/1937040, v III p.1299

* Deputy Federal Commissioner of Taxation (N.S.W.) v. W.R.Moran Pty. Ltd. (1939) 61 CLR 735 ("Moran's Case")

Stott's role in the South Australian Parliament was that of the "Farmers' Champion." Each session he seized every opportunity to put their problems before the House, starting with his address-in-reply speech. Few aspects of the wheat industry were not debated by him during the quinquennial parliament: from cornsacks, bulk handling, statistics, stabilisation and home consumption prices, to flour taxes, orderly marketing, interest rates, mortgage banking, loan conversion and debt adjustment. Of the 364 questions he asked over the five year period, 139 related to wheat matters, and he made twenty six significant speeches on different aspects of the industry. His contributions to the understanding of a home consumption price (575) and Commonwealth powers under Section 92(576) are outstanding for their clarity. His dissertation in 1935 on the problems of primary producers' debts, when he covered every imaginable aspect of their financial problems and argued cogently for legislation to give long term assistance, makes impressive reading and shows him at the height of his intellectual powers. Butler generally was totally unsympathetic. After listening to one of Stott's reasoned arguments for amendments to the Primary Producers' Debts Bill, the Premier told him that he did not understand the Bill.(577)

The indefatigable Stott was engaged in other organisations, too. In 1934 he and Maycock went to Sydney to participate in the formation of the Primary Producers Council of Australia. The Australian Wheatgrowers Federation became affiliated with it, and the Primary Producers Council of Australia in turn became affiliated with the International Federation of Agricultural Producers. A few years later the Primary Producers Council altered its name to the National Farmers Union of Australia. Stott was a delegate to this body and was meticulous in attending meetings.

(575) SAPD 1935 vol.2,pp.1215 16
(576) SAPD 1936 vol.a.p.1094
(577) SAPD 1935 Third Session p.284

He eclipsed totally the other four Independents, not only in the extent of his parliamentary criticism of the government, but his untiring work for the wheatgrowers, and in the range of his general interests. Although he had nothing to show in the way of legislative accomplishments he had prepared the way for important achievements when a new, less hostile Premier, and more tolerant parliament would be prepared to accomodate him. Craigie continued to display his fixation with reforming the taxable basis of the country and his other pet project of voting reform; Davies and Robinson had no real cause to fight and no particular objective to work for, and Connor was unsuccessful in achieving anything tangible for the dairy industry, although Butler was more sympathetic to his cause because Connor was elderly, uncritical and generally mute. In 1934 the Dairy Produce Act No.2166 which raised the price of butter through an equalisation payment, was passed, but attempts to stabilise and rationalise the industry and introduce proper control from the public health point of view failed in 1934,1935, and 1936. The Legislative Council was totally opposed to milk legislation.

CHAPTER II

1938 - 1941

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"A Parliament of mad men..."

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The 1938 Election

and

The 29th Parliament

19 May 1938 - 18 February 1941

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On 25 March 1937 the Royal Assent was proclaimed to the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1936 (No.2336), which introduced thirty-nine single member House of Assembly electorates. The 1938 elections were the first fought on the new boundaries. The reduction in the number of members led inevitably to some wrangles over who would receive party endorsement for the new seats. As usual, the ALP suffered more in the ensuing arguments. During the weeks before polling day very good press coverage was given to the quarrels between rival factions and the voting public were reminded that Labor unity was as far away as ever.

After the ballots there had been a lot of disappointed aspirants who were not backward in publicising their grief. (1) (2) It was feared that there might have been candidates so aggrieved at the failure of their talents to be recognised that they might have run as Independent Labor contenders. As it turned out, only one rejected former MP, A.J. Blackwell, did so, in West Torrens.

When nominations closed on 23 February, 148 candidates were revealed, 127 for the House of Assembly and 21 for the Legislative Council. There were 65 Independents for the lower House and six for the upper House*. Included among the Assembly Independents were three women[§]. There was hardly any surprise at the record number of Independents: to the Advertiser the most interesting feature of the nominations was the candidacy of Joel Moses Gabb in Light[¶]. (3) (4) A country newspaper thought

(1) Advertiser: 31/3/1938, p.17, cols. A.B

(2) Ib. 2/2/1938, p.23, col. B

(3) Ib. 24/3/1938, p.19, col. D

(4) Ib. 16/3/1938, p.25, col. H

* A list of Independent candidates is in Appendix K

§ Jeanne Forster Young, Ruth Olive Ravenscroft, Millicent Maud Bowering. None were successful.

¶ Gabb's Federal seat of Angas was wiped out in an electoral redistribution prior to the 1934 elections. Then he was reported to be interested in Butler's seat. In 1938, as an Independent, he concentrated on social issues and greatly annoyed Butler.

the reason for so many Independents was the introduction of single electorates, resentment at betting legislation*, quinquennial parliaments and preselection. (5) This was shrewd and accurate observation. There were other relevant triggers:

- (1) A general sickening of party politics can be noted from editorials and letters in many newspapers, and this was fuelled by seemingly never-ending disputes within the ALP. At one stage, to the incessant threats and cajolings was added the possibility that a "Country" ALP might be formed. (6)
- (2) Agitation over the extended hotel hours followed the passing of the Licensing Act 1935.
- (3) The government's habit of appointing Boards and Commissions brought criticism that the function of parliament was being usurped.
- (4) Opposition to taxes from motorists being paid into general revenue and not being put into better roads and facilities.
- (5) Butler's personal unpopularity.
- (6) The government's refusal to provide books for non-government schools, and
- (7) Its refusal to introduce bible reading in State schools.
- (8) The "extravagant" expenditure in completing the building of parliament house. §

But these issues did not all enjoy notable prominence before the date of the election was announced. In the weeks before the close of nominations there was raised hardly a zephyr by the proponents of thrift and abstinence, and if there was a principal object of public passion it was the question of re-opening the North Terrace to Glenelg railway.

(5) Port Lincoln Times: 28/1/1938, p.6, col.B

(6) Stott Papers "C", p.17, col.3: p.18, col.2

* Yet another Betting Royal Commission was sitting at the time of the 1938 elections.

§ This was an issue which did not attract much sympathy.

There were more articles, letters, public meetings and specific agitations about this than anything else and it became a political issue which contributed to the success of Fisk and Langdon. (7) (8) The churches and their associates were preparing behind the scenes, and they appear to have struck first at Gawler on or about nomination day: there the candidates had been "invited" by a committee of religious bodies and temperance workers to indicate where they stood on social questions, and were told that their replies were to be read at a public meeting. (9) Thereafter in the election campaign throughout the State, the church was to '(poke) its nose into political affairs.' (10) Its United Social Reform Committee was led by the Rev. E. H. Woolacott, and

disrupted the congregations of most of the Protestant churches of the State, and did great damage to the true cause of Christianity and religion. (11)

Woolacott took a year off from his official duties to manage the campaigns of thirty two candidates who had the backing of his committee.

That social questions were to assume an important place in the political campaign had been foreshadowed in October 1934 when a by-election was held for Legislative Council Northern. The by-election, unimportant in itself, was a pointer to the bitter controversies of 1938, and a significant landmark in the involvement of the church in its steadily growing opposition to the stand taken by the Butler government on liquor, gambling and bible reading in State schools. The Rev. Bernard Edward Charles Tuck, a prominent critic of Butler, used the campaign to damn his government. (12) The LCL had no trouble winning, but Tuck's supporters learnt their lesson: four years later they were well organised

(7) Advertiser: 3/2/1938, p.6, cols. F, G, H

(8) Wheaton, R. T.: Rails to the Bay. A. E. T. A. 1971. Sydney. This is a concise history of the Glenelg railways

(9) Advertiser: 23/2/1938, p.25, col. E

(10) Stott Paper "D" p.87, cutting, no source, 31/3/1941

(11) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.189

(12) Advertiser: 4/8/1934, p.6, col. H Ib. p.18, col. D Ib. 19/10/1934, p.24, col. C: Ib. p.25, col. C

had more specific issues, and selected candidates carefully. The United Social Reform Committee and its affiliates were formidable and intolerant.

The churches believed that all political leaders should support them. Opposition or inaction was not a legitimate difference of opinion but wickedness, (13)

Woolacott issued a circular to Ministers and "keymen," giving the names of every candidate in the metropolitan area, and marking those for whom the United Social Reform Committee expected people to vote. The circular contained a footnote to the effect that the recommendations were to be disseminated as widely as possible but not used for publication in the press. (14) The Temperance Alliance, a special committee appointed by various nonconformist churches, and the Scriptural Instruction in State Schools League, began an intensive campaign to have the 1935 betting and licensing Acts repealed. They distributed literature, canvassed house to house, held special meetings, framed how to vote instructions, sent questionnaires to candidates and arranged for radio broadcasts. (15) They were joined by the Womens' Christian Temperance Union and the S.A. Protestant Federation. The Anglican Bishop of Adelaide, Nutter Thomas, supported their proposals with a pastoral letter. The Protestant Federation published a list of candidates who favoured bible reading, betting and liquor reform, and who were against State aid for denomination schools: it, too, used the wireless as a campaign adjunct. (16) A list of candidates sympathetic to its views was also published by the Religious Instruction in State Schools Council of South Australia. (17) Some candidates took exception to the publication of their name and repudiated the Council's action. (18) Sunday 6 March 1938 was set aside as "Religious Instruction in State Schools Sunday." Prayers were offered, sermons preached, and voters had the importance of the subject placed before them.

(13) Smith, R.F.I.: Butler Government, op.cit. p.251

(14) Stott Papers: "C" p.62, col.1, n.d.

(15) Advertiser: 25/2/1938, p.30, col.F

(16) Ib. 16/3/1938, p.28, col.A,B

(17) Ib. 17/3/1938, p.28, cols.A,B

(18) Ib. 18/3/1938, p.22, cols.A,B

The Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches would have nothing to do with these antics. (19)

To fire the church protests at the betting and liquor laws a United Christian Citizenship demonstration was held in the Adelaide Town Hall on Sunday 27 February. Representatives of the Methodist, Anglican, Baptist, Congregationalist Churches, and the Churches of Christ, were present. The meeting was thronged. Woolacott, in his capacity as director of the Methodist social services department, made plain what the churches were up to: they possessed the power to 'purify politics and to rid the land of legislative blots.' 'We need better men in Parliament.' 'Pray and work as never before so that after (the election) we shall have a new era for righteousness in South Australia.' A resolution was carried sine dissente setting out the low opinion the meeting had of parliamentarians who had refused to allow bible reading in schools, and had supported liquor and betting interests. (22) By 2 March an anxious Advertiser noted that betting and liquor were topics the subject of acute controversy, and that some astute Independents were blaming the existence of betting shops on the government.

The great majority of South Australians almost certainly hold the view that the betting shop system has been productive of evils even more deplorable than those which it was designed to remove. It may be conceded that 'Illegal betting has been abolished;' but this feat has been accomplished by the simple expedient of legalising a perfect orgy of betting under the 'control' of a public department. The betting habit has been made respectable; but it has also been prodigiously stimulated and extended and still tends to grow. (23) (24)

The editorial went on to note that neither in nor outside of parliament did anyone appear to know what the answer was. Finally it warned voters

(19) Ib. 5/3/1938, p.25, col.E

(20) —

(21) —

(22) Ib. 28/2/1938, p.20, col.E

(23) Ib. 28/2/1938, p.20, col.E

(24) See Chennell, P.H.: The Bombardment of the Betting Shop. Adel. 1937. and the same author: The Sport Without a Smile. Adel. 1934
The writer was a Methodist minister at Moonta.

against supporting Independents who blamed Butler for betting and liquor problems. Lacey, the leader of the opposition, defended betting shops and supported liquor permits at a public meeting on 28 February, (25) and the Advertiser commended him for his candour and honesty. (26) Butler was not so lucky; the Liberal Womens' Education Association held a meeting on 7 March and subjected him to cross-examination on social legislation. (27) He unwisely told his audience that no government had done more than his to reduce drinking and gambling: the wrath of the church quickly descended upon him. (28)

*

In looking for issues which would be relevant to the 1938 campaign, the Advertiser could only think of betting shops, (29) and that as a pre-eminent topic the five year parliament controversy would vie with the obsessions of the United Reform Committee, appears not to have occurred to it. A few days later Lacey announced that as far as the Labor Party was concerned, the quinquennial parliament would be the main issue. (30) One LCL candidate noted that criticism of five year parliaments was about the only criticism the ALP could level at the Butler government, and a study of the overall ALP campaign tends to confirm this. (31) Apart from straight-out opposition to the five year term there still was widespread dislike of the way Butler was alleged to have introduced the legislation in the first place ; it still was thought that he had been underhand. (32) Most Independents made it an issue, and the more it was attacked the more stridently did the LCL defend it, (33) one member proclaimed that it would never be altered, (34) and Butler supported him, even saying at Mount Gambier several months after the election that he would 'rather go down

(25) Ib. 1/3/1938, p.19, col.F

(26) Ib. 2/3/1938, p.24, col.A

(27) Ib. 7/3/1938, p.24, col.A

(28) Ib. 10/3/1938, p.26, col.C

(29) Ib. 20/1/1938, p.16, col.C

(30) Ib. 26/1/1938, p.25, col.F

(31) Ib. 10/3/1938, p.11, col.B

(32) Campaign address by J.S.Honner and P.V.Provis, Independents, in "Stott Papers" p.2, cols.C.D

(33) Ib.; "C" p.10, col.B

(34) Ib. "C" p.8, col.B

fighting than go back to three year parliaments.' (35)

The election, which was held one week after Hitler invaded Austria and during a poliomyelitis epidemic in the State, did not generate much overt excitement apart from the pulpit. The State was over the worst of the depression, there had been good harvests and satisfactory prices. Unemployment was diminishing and the external evidence of hardship was becoming less obvious: in March the last of the "camps" established on the Torrens banks in 1930 were removed. (36) Factory output had increased, along with the value of exports. In 1936, too, the centenary of the State had been celebrated with some euphoria. The policies of the major parties point to an absence of serious reformatory zeal or desire for change. Apart from the United Social Reform Committee and its ecclesiastical relatives, no other organisations with any impact participated in the campaign: E.E.Craig had formed an Independent Country Party on 27 July 1937, and it announced a policy of thirty six items on 4 January 1938, (37) and the Democratic Womens' Association at one stage contemplated fielding seven female candidates. (38) Nothing more seems to have been heard of them. The Advertiser had now reverted to its role as preserver of the political status quo, and it no longer regarded the ALP with charity or tolerance. On 20 January it praised the record of the Butler government, carefully avoiding reference to the five year parliament, (39) and a week later published a large financial supplement which was a paean to Butler for delivering the State to prosperity. (40) In his policy speech at Kapunda on 24 February the Premier stood on his record and promised to continue as in the past, and only a few very modest baits were laid. (41) He mentioned the five year parliament only to assert that he had no intention

(35) Border Watch. 18/6/1938, p.1, col.C

(36) Advertiser: 3/2/1938, p.11, col.F

(37) Ib. 5/1/1938, p.21, col.H

(38) Ib. 29/1/1938, p.5, col.E

(39) Ib. 20/1/1938, p.16, col.C

(40) Ib. 27/1/1938, pp.I-XII

(41) Ib. 25/2/1938, p.22

of altering it and he affirmed that social questions would never become an issue. The editorial in the Advertiser was ecstatic.(42)

Lacey gave the ALP policy speech at Port Pirie on 15 February, and the morning newspaper, after commenting that the speech could be read in its pages and assessed by readers, went on : 'It can hardly be doubted, however, that the majority verdict will be far from favourable.' The writer then tore it to shreds point by point.(43) Lacey attacked strongly five year parliaments and the new boundaries, and his other main topic was Labor's intention to introduce the forty hour week.(44) The party had been under pressure to push for this; as recently as January the Amalgamated Engineering Union had proposed a general strike to emphasise the demand for it.(45)The electorate was not ready for it: the proposal brought forth a lot of criticism,(46) and the LCL used it skilfully to damage Labor, claiming, for instance, that it would result in more insolvency and drunkenness.(47) The ALP issued two principal electoral pamphlets: one dealt with the change to single member electorates and had the slogan:"Vote Labor and defeat the gerrymanderers(sic.)" The other dealt with primary industry and proclaimed an awful choice: "Prosper with Labor or perish under Butler."(48) The ALP had little hope of attracting country voters because, not satisfied with the reduction of members, they intended reducing the House of Assembly to thirty, using the five Federal districts and allocating six members to each. The LCL lost no time in publicising the resultant reduction of country representation from twenty six seats to fourteen.(49)

A few days before the poll it was noted that the course of the campaign had been singularly unruffled,(50) a fact confirmed by reading

(42) Ib. 25/2/1938, p.28, col.C

(43) Ib. 16/2/1938, p.22, cols.C,D

(44) Ib. 16/2/1938, p.23, cols.A,B:p.27, cols.A-H

(45) Ib. 26/1/1938, p.26, col.G

(46) Ib. 28/2/1938, p.20, col F: 1/3/1938, p.18, cols.C,D (e.g.)

(47) Stott Papers: "C"p.10, col.A

(48) Advertiser: 15/2/1938, p.19, col.G

(49) Stott Papers: "C", p.4, cols.A,C

(50) Advertiser: 17/3/1938, p.24, cols.C,D

the various reports of meetings. Even the "Letters" column had few references to contentious social questions: the impression is that it was a campaign fought in the churches and door to door. Neither side could win where liquor and betting was concerned: any utterance was the trigger for an outburst of righteous church wrath, and silence itself was criticised as connivance and encouragement. There was one topic, however, which found Labor and Liberal in striking agreement: both disliked and feared the influx of Independents and seized every opportunity to denounce, criticise and belittle them.

On 18 January Lacey asserted that Labor would not take office by means of an alliance with Independents, (51) and he repeated the statement on 8 March. (52) With considerable foresight he believed the Independents were likely, if elected, to support the LCL. (53) (54) His rigid stand was to cause embarrassment and conflict in the party after the election. Butler had first treated the plethora of Independents as a joke. (55) As the campaign proceeded and the extent of their support became obvious he and his colleagues seized every opportunity to ridicule and abuse them. They were described as 'Political opportunists' and Self-styled, so-called independents,' (56) 'Flotsam and jetsam washed up on the political shores,' 'neither flesh, fish nor good red herring.' 'Mistletoe, a parasitical growth on the political life of this State.' (57) They were unattached free booters with votes to barter, (58) 'a floating kidney in the body politic.' (59) The extent of the abuse is the best indication of the real alarm in the Liberal camp at the Independent threat. On 16 March Butler, in a broadcast, warned voters against supporting them and asked people to

(51) Ib. 19/1/1938, p.25, col.F

(52) Ib. 9/3/1938, p.26, col.G

(53) Murray Pioneer: 10/2/1938, p.11, col.A

(54) Advertiser: 19/1/1938, p.25, col.F

(55) Ib. 25/2/1938, p.29, col.C

(56) Border Watch: 1/3/1938, p.4, col.E

(57) SAPD 1938, vol.1 p.225

(58) Murray Valley Standard: 4/3/1938, p.6, col.C

(59) Mount Barker Courier: 3/3/1938, p.1, col.F

adhere to the party system. In Hindmarsh the ALP was opposed by an Independent, so Butler was seeking votes for the ALP. (60) He also voiced his dislike of the Council of Churches for intruding into the realm of party politics.

Rarely, pre-election criticism of Independents was astute. The MP who claimed that 'Independents, with no organisation, no agreement on any real question of government, and no team work, could not hope to form a workable government, and individual Independents could never exercise any substantial influence on the broader aspects of State policy,' (61) while prejudiced, was a realist. He erred, however, in inferring that the Independents had no organisation: they had one, the "Centre Group," and in it lay the seeds of their eventual disintegration as an effective parliamentary force.

This organisation was formed some time after the 1933 elections. Its object was to secure the election of Independent members of parliament. Its origins are not clear, but it does not seem to have come from the Citizens League. Stott was associated with it: we have seen that he canvassed actively on behalf of Independent candidates, and that he had much to say about the 'balance of power.' A.G. Cameron claimed that the Centre Group was the product of conflict between the Federal and Victorian Country Parties. (62) The Constitution and Rules of the Centre Group were very similar to those of the Victorian Country Party. (63) Also associated with the Centre Group was a lawyer, McPhail. He is alleged to have had a grievance with the government because he was not recompensed adequately when his land was acquired for a chemical works. (64) Stott was advised by him, and he is noted in his diary as being contacted on election day. The Centre Group quietly organised branches in different parts of the

(60) Stott Papers "C", p. 61, col. A

(61) Ib. "C", p. 8, col. B

(62) Murray Valley Standard: 4/3/1938, p. 6, col. C

(63) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, p. 191

(64) Ibidem.

State, one being formed at Renmark, for instance, in August 1937. (65) The 1938 general election quickly brought the organisation into prominence. Samuel Harold Pearce JP, one of the foundation members, was president, and the group's offices were in King William Street. The secretary was W.J. Mierisch. Pearce, a farmer at Flaxley, was born at Moonta in 1886 and had spent his early years developing property on Eyre Peninsula. He had been a member of the district council of Cleve and later held office on the district council of Meadows. He was associated both with the Wheatgrowers Association and the dairy industry. (66) He contested Stirling at the 1938 poll. The Centre Group's main planks were: (i) opposition to quinquennial parliaments, (ii) belief that Royal Commissions on betting and transport indicated that the government lacked courage to face up to its responsibilities, (iii) concern over the way Butler had balanced the budget hiding an interest account. (67) Their letter paper bore the heading in green ink 'Defeat the Butler Government.' (68)

On 9 February 1938 the Independent Campaign Committee^{*}, a sub-division of the Centre Group, (69) with the same executive officers, gave details of thirty two Independent candidates and the twenty six seats they would contest. (70) Six successful candidates were on the list: Connor, Fletcher, Illingworth, Macgillivray, Smith and Stott. Two days later Pearce announced that Independents would contest thirty two Assembly and all Legislative Council seats, (71) and that the Independent Campaign Committee had been doing preliminary organising. As assurance was given that candidates would not be required to sign a pledge, but would be free to vote in the best interests of their constituencies.

(65) Murray Pioneer: 2/9/1937, p.1, col.B

(66) Southern Argus: 23/2/1938, p.5, cols.D.E

(67) Port Lincoln Times: 7/1/1938, p.10, col.E

(68) Naracoorte Herald: 15/3/1938, p.1, col.E

(69) Southern Argus : 23/2/1938, p.5, cols.D.E

(70) Advertiser: 9/2/1938, p.24, col.C

(71) ibid: 7/1/1938, p.29, col.D

* Also known as the Independent Candidate Campaign Committee.

It was not long before some people were looking very critically at the Centre Group. On 18 January Butler attacked them and later remarked: 'certain members of this so-called party known as the Centre Group were endeavouring to masquerade under the name of 'Independents', although they were more rigidly bound and controlled than any member of the Liberal Party.' (72) Butler's criticism could be dismissed as sour grapes, but the Centre Group constitution and rules indicate that it was a party organisation. (73) Members also paid an annual subscription of ten shillings. While Mierisch was at pains to stress that pre-selection and endorsement were not practised, this is at variance with the publication of lists of candidates, and, indeed, the whole approach of the Centre Group. As election day drew near the Centre Group and Independent Campaign Committee showed signs of being under stress from the critical broadsides of both major parties. It became hard to convince people that the word 'Independent' was not an alias. Pearce, on the defensive, said that forty Independents had formed themselves into an "organisation," (74) and this made it more difficult to deny that they were a party. At public meetings, Pearce became evasive. Worried by the adverse conclusions stimulated by the open association of the Centre Group and Independent Campaign Committee in the same office, Pearce shifted the Centre Group to the Theatre Royal Building, Hindley Street, and Mierisch remained at 22 King William Street as "Secretary of Independent Campaign."

One eminent bureaucracy which had no delusions about the Centre Group was the Australian Broadcasting Commission. The Independent Campaign Committee requested broadcasting facilities equivalent to those of its opponents. The ABC refused and referred to the applicant as the "Centre Party." (75) (76) Use of that dreadful word greatly upset Mierisch.

(72) Border Watch: 20/1/1939, p. 29, col. D

(73) SAPD: 1938. vol. 1. p. 190

(74) Stott Papers: "C", p. 19, col. D

(75) Southern Argus: 23/2/1938, p. 6, col. C

(76) Advertiser. 25/2/1938, p. 30, col. F

The Independent Campaign Committee appealed to the South Australian Advisory Committee to the ABC. Salt was rubbed into their wound by the chairman, A.J. Hannan KC, who declined to call the committee together but agreed to place the matter before them two days after the election. (77) This was not the only problem. On 18 March the News published a letter from Mierisch which claimed that the LCL paid the expenses of its candidates and in return the latter did as they were told. The LCL issued libel writs against the News and Mierisch: settlement was reached out of court in June 1938, and included a profuse and abject public apology by the joint defendants. (78)

On 19 March the Independent Campaign Committee inserted a full page advertisement indicating how to vote for Independents. The list was notable for significant omissions of successful candidates. Only the six previously named were on it. There was no support for Bardolph, Craigie, Davies, Dunn, Fisk, Langdon, McKenzie, McLeay, and Robinson. The other favoured twenty eight Independents were not elected. Additionally six Independents were supported for Legislative Council seats, and two were successful: J. Anderson (re-election) and F.A. Halleday. (79)

But the most significant part of the advertisement related to the Independent Campaign Committee's aspirations: the Independents 'were definitely prepared to form a Government.' Such a government 'would mean the first truly democratic administration enjoyed for many years and will be completely untrammelled by party and sectional influences.'

*

ADELAIDE

Six candidates contested this seat; one LCL, one ALP and four Independents: it was won by D.H. Bardolph. Douglas Henry Bardolph *

(77) Border Watch: 17/3/1938, p.6, col.C

(78) Southern Argus: 22/6/1938, p.7, col.C

(79) Advertiser: 19/3/1938, p.29, col.A;B

* Sources of biographical information:

Who's Who in Australia, 1941-44

Biographical Notes, SAA

Parliamentary Library

Hopgood, D.J., op.cit.

160.

Kelly, D.S. in Australian Dictionary of Biography, vol.7, pp 171-2

(1895-1951) was born in Sydney. He described himself as a journalist: he published the Unley News (1918-23) and then the South Australian Worker, which was adopted by the Trades and Labor Council as the official party organ. He was an ambitious, colourful figure who easily made enemies. As an unendorsed Labor candidate in 1929 and Lang Labor in 1931 he had stood unsuccessfully for Legislative Council Central No.1, the latter election being won by the Independent Alderman Joseph Anderson. In 1930 Bardolph had been expelled from the ALP because of pre-selection irregularities in connection with the 1929 Upper House plebiscite. In the shady realm of party machine politics, Bardolph was more than a match for any of the unscrupulous Labor Party ballot and plebiscite technicians, whose recurrent pre-selection activities invariably provided the press with publicity of a most damaging kind.

In 1933 Bardolph successfully contested Adelaide on a Lang Labor ticket with R.A.Dale and T.P. Howard, and this crowned his work as the chief protagonist of Lang doctrine in South Australia. His behaviour as an aspiring politician had attracted a lot of wide and detrimental publicity, and in helping create and perpetuate the schisms and controversies which wracked Labor in the depression years, he must be held responsible to a not insignificant extent for the unfortunate public image of the Party as an organisation in perpetual internal disruption and unlikely to be capable of governing.

In 1934 at a unity conference he was readmitted to the ALP but the following year did not pay the parliamentary levy on his salary and was expelled: he never rejoined, and at the 1938 general election styled himself as an Independent Labor candidate. He was re-elected in 1941 and defeated by R.A.Dale in 1944. He stood in 1947 and 1950 but was unsuccessful. He was 'strongly imbued with the Labor spirit and beliefs, (and) was, at heart, an independent. He suffered no superior and brooked no equal.' (80)

(80) Hopgood, D.J., op.cit. p.172

We cannot detract from Bardolph as a parliamentarian: he was effective, diligent and conscientious, and before 1938, virtually usurped the position of Leader of the Opposition. His claim during the 1938 campaign that he had accomplished more than any other representative of Adelaide, was not puffing: he had been an active and incisive critic of the Butler government, attacking monopolies, rent rackets and poor standards of living. In 1938 he campaigned on a policy of securing a fair rents court, a women's hospital, control over money lender's interest rates, free medical attention for pensioners and free transport to hospitals for the unemployed. He put forward other points which were based on social welfare legislation: many of them have been adopted over the years. (81) Clearly the unscrupulous and destructive self-serving party manipulator, who found it impossible to relate to other people, had a strong conscience: he was certainly prepared to fight for what he believed in.

The Adelaide campaign was virtually between Bardolph and Albert Augustine Edwards (1888-1963). (82) The other Independents were irrelevant. Patrick Joseph Flanagan was a prominent hotelier and company director, and the principal claim to note of John Atkins was that he had lived in Adelaide all his life and had nine children. Bardolph and Edwards were worthy of the Adelaide electorate. It had a long tradition of colourful representation. Campaigns were fought vigorously on platform and through the press, political meetings enjoyed audience participation, and often were described as "rowdy" and "disorderly", while the in-fighting, intrigue and personal squabbling within and between the local party machine and the Trades Hall provided employment for successive political journalists.

The outcome of the poll was a victory for Bardolph on preferences, five counts being necessary.

(81) Advertiser. 19/3/1938, p. 18, col. E

(82) An account of Edward's political controversies is in Jennings, R.I.: Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia, no. 8 pp. 92-8

TABLE 18: Adelaide 1928: Candidates, votes and percentages.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Vote</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
A.A. Edwards	Ind.	2740	29.82
D.H. Bardolph	Ind.	2367	25.76
D.Menzies	LCL	1541	16.77
R.A.Dale	ALP	1250	13.60
P.J.Flannagan	Ind	1146	12.47
J.Atkins	Ind	144	1.57

Source: Hughes and Graham; Voting, p.110

Bardolph and Edwards had a lot in common. Both had as an issue the social problems of a depressed electorate, both had great force of character and personal followings, both had active organisations and both were very well known in Adelaide. Victory could have gone to either: Bardolph was a sitting member and attracted the preferences.

*

ALEXANDRA

This was a straight out fight between the sitting Independent George Connor and the Honourable Sir Herbert Sydney Hudd, KBE, MC, Commissioner of Public Works, Minister of Railways and Minister of Marine, in the Butler cabinet. With Connor and P.T.Heggarton, Hudd had been one of the three members for Alexandra in the twenty eighth parliament. Not much is known about the campaign. On the one hand, Connor did very little work, and on the other there appears to have been some complacency in the Liberal camp. Hudd was a prominent (though mediocre) cabinet minister and well known in the electorate. The press appears to have ignored the election: under the new boundaries only the town of Kingscote had a newspaper. Connor spoke there on 15 March and attracted little interest. He stressed the need for smaller holdings, and was opposed to five year parliaments and the construction of a new parliament house. (83) Another press reference records that he opened the new Kondoparinga Cooperative Dairymen's cheese factory on 12 February. (84)

When it became known that Connor had defeated Hudd by twenty

(83) Kangaroo Island Courier: 18/3/1938, p.2, col.B

(84) Mount Barker Courier: 24/2/1938, p.1, col.C

nine votes, many people were shocked. (85) Some of Connor's fellow MPs could not reconcile the result with his undistinguished parliamentary performance. His victory is an illustration of the importance of a personal following and the significant support a person well-known in the community gets. To a lesser extent it was a vote against the quinquennial parliament. Although a rather colourless person, Connor had a pleasant nature: his ability to ignore absolutely personal abuse and criticism was an electoral asset. He had given offence to no-one during his term in office, and had carried out his electoral duties conscientiously. Hudd, on the other hand, carried the disabilities of Ministerial Office, a Minister has to make decisions: inevitably he displeases a proportion of his electors, who, human nature being what it is, work against him.

*

CHAFFEY

Two Independents, W. Macgillivray and H.S. Denman, opposed one ALP and two endorsed LCI candidates. Henry Spencer Denman was a fruitgrower of Loveday. William Macgillivray* (1891-1975), a returned soldier, had been a fruitgrower at Barmera since 1923, producing varieties of grapes and oranges. In 1934 he had conducted an experimental plot of tobacco plants with a Commonwealth grant, but the river areas were not suited to this branch of agricultural industry^S. Macgillivray had experienced at first hand the trials of the soldier settlers who had to develop their blocks, and he knew all about the frustrations and tensions of dealing with the Department of Lands and the Irrigation and Drainage Commission, because in establishing his own block he endured all the problems associated with poor or unsuitable soil, frosts, salinity and seepage which

(85) Kangaroo Island Courier. 18/3/1938, p.2, col.B

* Sources of biographical information:

Mrs. F. Davis (daughter) made available some papers.

^S The first attempt on the river to grow tobacco was a commercial venture at Cobdogla in 1931/32. Yields were excellent but inexperience made it a financial failure. In 1934 the Commonwealth government made grants to the States to foster tobacco growing. (Murray Pioneer: 2/9/1937, p.2, cols. A, B, C)

bedevilled the irrigation settlements. He knew, too, the fine line between barely living, and financial failure. Like his fellow growers, he had had to apply to the government for advances, accept the writing down of debts, government relief and other complicated financial adjustments which seem an inseparable part of the total existence of the soldier settler. He had been on the committee of the Australian Dried Fruits Association for six years, and considered from that experience that no government had done anything for the settlers. (86)

Macgillivray was born at Inverness-Shire, Scotland, and came to South Australia in 1933 after service in Egypt in the first World War. He was one of the original Barmera soldier settlers. (87) Although sometimes referred to as a 'dour Scot', this description ignored a deep, rich sense of humour and wit which made him a popular figure locally and in parliament. He was an intensely thoughtful man who had a particular interest in finance and national credit, and like Stott, felt very strongly about the role of private banks in the financial system, but he was not another Craigie wedded to an untiring crusade to utilise parliament to change the whole fiscal basis of the country. Macgillivray was a realist who confined himself to drawing attention to the shortcomings of the economic system and inviting people to think for themselves. He was a member of the Barmera Social Credit Study Circle, and they had chosen him to run as an Independent. (88) Social or "Douglas" Credit, was a system which was anathema to Craigie, and it was not long after the 1938 parliament sat that the two were sniping at each other. Macgillivray had no time for Henry George, and Craigie was equally critical of Major Douglas.

Macgillivray said that he stood for parliament because his supporters 'had had their fill of the party system,' and he was

(86) Murray Pioneer:10/3/1938,p.7,col.A

(87) Advertiser:24/2/1959,p.6,col.F

(88) Murray Pioneer: 19/3/1959,p.3,col.C

attracted to an Independent' s role because he 'has got to substantiate his advocacy to his electors, thus giving control to the electors over their candidate.' (89) A committee was formed to work for him. (90) The LCL dispensed with preselection and nominated two candidates. (91) Macgillivray worked hard and his campaign meetings were associated with Roderick Lindsay Donald Bonnar and Joseph St.Livinus Honner, Independent candidates for the Legislative Council seat of Midland* .(92)

Soon the church entered the fray. On 19/20 March 'a team of Adelaide men representing the high court of the Methodist order of Knights (sic) visited river centres: to conduct special services and meetings.' Electors were asked to vote only for those opposed to the evil betting and liquor legislation of the Butler government. (93) This narrow minded bigotry associated in the pulpit with such absurd and childish titular pretentiousness had no effect on Macgillivray. He was a broad-minded, tolerant man who gave high minded persons short shrift whenever he believed they had their priorities wrong. Replying to a clergyman who had advocated re-armament and made some uncharitable observations on mankind, Macgillivray set out some penetrating observations about the economic basis of arms manufacture, and went on to criticise moral re-armament as hypocrisy and to make the point that unnecessary suffering and poverty was a bigger insult to god than all the swearing which upset people. (94)

In campaign speeches Macgillivray concentrated on two main themes - party politics and finance. He maintained that the party system was fundamentally wrong, and he used the poor state of the wheat industry as an illustration of this fact. (95) He also discussed party politics in

(89) Ib. 3/2/1938, p.7, col.B

(90) Ib. 10/3/1938, p.11, col.A

(91) Ib. 3/3/1938, p.1, col.A

(92) Ib. 3/3/1938, p.19, col.C

(93) Ib. 24/2/1938, p.17, col.A, B

(94) Macgillivray Papers. Loose cutting: 25/6/1939. No source.

(95) Murray Pioneer. 10/3/1938, p.1. col.C

* Both of whom strongly criticised five year parliaments.

terms of city-country jealousies. (96) He was at his most convincing when dealing with government finance, taxation and public debt. He ridiculed effectively Butler's claim of credit for prosperity and showed that there was no real prosperity either among individuals or in the case of the State. (97) Near polling day he noted that the vicious personal attacks on Independents which were a conspicuous feature in other constituencies, had begun to creep into Chaffey. (98) However the savage personality clashes in Ridley were absent on his side of the river. (99) He found himself opposed both by the church and the bookmakers.

Macgillivray won on preferences. He believed that the contest had boiled down to a straight out fight Independent versus Party. (100) That is right, however Macgillivray had a cause - the economic problems of the irrigation settlers; he had a personal following, a committee, and was well known. He overshadowed completely Denman.

TABLE 19: Chaffey 1938: Candidates, votes and percentages.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
W. Macgillivray	Ind	975	29.65
C. S. Ruston	LCL	877	26.79
H. S. Denman	Ind	529	16.09
R. G. Lambert	ALP	522	15.78
A. H. Kelly	LCL	381	11.59

Source: Murray Pioneer: 31/3/1938, p.1, cols. A, B, C
 Final figures were Macgillivray:1960, Ruston:1328.

*

FLINDERS

E. J. Craigie was opposed by a rival Independent, a Labor and Liberal candidate. Percy Valentine Provis, the other Independent, was a farmer and grazier of Stokes and not associated with Craigie in any way. He may have been put forward by Stott, as he had been State president

(96) Advertiser: 18/3/1938, p.25, col. D

(97) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.177

(98) Murray Pioneer: 17/3/1938, p.4, col. C

(99) Ib. 31/3/1938, p.1, cols. A, B, C

(100) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.177.

of the Wheatgrowers Association and a council member of the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation. (101) He was not endorsed by the Centre Group: neither was Craigie. J.V.O'Leary, the ALP candidate, was a rail car driver stationed at Port Lincoln, and the LCL nominee, R.W. Pearson, was a man of impeccable credentials who was later to have a distinguished State parliamentary career: in 1938 he was president of the Yeelanna branch of the Wheatgrowers Association.

Craigie threw himself into the campaign with his characteristic energy. Like Macgillivray he criticised Butler for claiming responsibility for returning the State to prosperity - he said it was due solely to better prices for wheat and wool. He censured the new electoral boundaries, attacked the five year parliament and discussed the shortcomings of transport control. His taxation concepts got the usual thorough airing. (102) (103) Pearson and Provis attacked his views: Craigie demolished them in press and on platform. (104) He won on preferences.

TABLE 20: Flinders 1938: Candidates, votes and percentages.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
E.J. Craigie	Ind	1451	34.92
R.W. Pearson	LCL	1272	30.61
J.V.O'Leary	ALP	1117	26.88
P.V. Provis	Ind	315	7.58

Source: Hughes and Graham: Voting: p.111

Craigie's victory in 1938 was a remarkable personal achievement because two of his opponents were sound alternatives: Pearson and Provis were both practical farmers, involved personally in the politics of wheat, and with indisputable experience of farmers' problems, particularly on Eyre Peninsula. In contrast, Craigie had never tilled the soil, was a very academic theoretician, wedded to antediluvian concepts which became less relevant with each passing year. He also lived in the City. Provis'

(101) Port Lincoln Times: 4/2/1938.p:2,col.B

(102) Advertiser:8/3/1938,p.12,col.F,G

(103) Port Lincoln Times: 11/3/1938,p.3,cols.B,C

(104) Ib.18/3/1938,p.19,cols.D,E

policy was almost identical point by point with Craigie's, except that he had no brief for Henry George. (105) Electors had a choice of impressive alternatives. Craigie's parliamentary career 1930-39 indicates that he was not the obvious "Farmers Friend" he would have them believe -- his rigidity of outlook on economic problems and his unyielding subservience to fundamental single tax philosophy, particularly his abhorrence of any kind of government control or interference with an absolutely free market made it quite impossible for him to compromise where issues concerning primary producers were concerned. When Stott, for example, moved motions and tried to get either definite government action or at least a manifestation of concern, he could not rely on Craigie to back him. After the 1938 election Craigie's inflexible doctrine led him to vote against measures which would have been of benefit to the wheatgrower, and his parliamentary days early in 1939 became numbered. The review of Craigie's parliamentary activity indicates that he was a talker rather than a doer. He did not take any initiative on behalf of the farmers. He makes a very strong contrast with Stott.

Craigie's re-election in 1938 is an example of the importance of the candidate's character and personal following; the value to the candidate of being well known (he had been an MP for eight years), and the need to attract preferences. Craigie had done nothing to deserve his victory.

*

GLENELG

An Independent, W.Fisk, opposed a sitting LCL parliamentarian and an ALP candidate.

(105) Advertiser: 11/3/1938, p. 34, col. F

William Fisk JP^{*} (1871-1940) was a colourful person whose name for many years was inseparable from Glenelg, where he lived and worked: he was one of those unique personalities who pass into local legend. In Fisk's case, however, time has been kinder to his memory than were some of his contemporaries, and the written evidence relating to his local government and parliamentary careers reveals a less flattering picture of the man than the creators of folklore would approve. He was born at Adelaide, the eleventh and last child of John William and Margaret Fisk[§], and educated at Flinders Street and Unley Public Schools, a boarding school at Goolwa, Whinham College North Adelaide and the South Australian School of Mines[¶]. It was planned for him to become a doctor but a bank crash ruined his father's business. He was apprenticed in 1885 to pharmacy and dentistry with R.C. Baker, a Pulteney Street chemist. On completion of his apprenticeship he became in 1888 assistant to H.J. Fowles in a strategically located shop on the northeast corner of Jetty Road and Durham Street, Glenelg: it is known to this day as Fisk's Pharmacy. Fisk became manager and in 1936 acquired ownership.

He was known as "The Village Apothecary." He was very dedicated and provided what amounted to a twenty four hour service. Apart from the

* Sources of biographical information: (n.b.: Most of these contain inaccuracies.)
Historical Glenelg Birthplace of South Australia. 1979. The Corporation
Official Civic Record of S.A. 1936. Adelaide.
William Fisk: Talk by A.B. Cox 11/10/1970: D5390 SAA
Who's Who 1936, p. 176
Advertiser: 19/12/1940 p. 19, col. C
Glenelg Times: March 1976, p. 6, Articles William Fisk by Dorothy Walter.
Jeannes, W.H.: Glenelg Birthplace of South Australia. 1955. The Corporation, Corporation of the City of Glenelg.
Recollections of Fisk's contemporaries,
[§] A brother, H.L. Fisk was Surveyor-general of S.A.

[¶] Now the Institute of Technology.

chemist's routine and his dental practice* Fisk conducted - unofficially - what was virtually a medical practice. His exclusive tonic was well known: containing quinine and iron, it cured weakness, lassitude, nervousness indigestion, neuralgia, headache, depression and sleeplessness. In his youth he was an active sportsman, lacrosse being his special interest, and he twice managed interstate teams. After the Pharmacy Board was created, Fisk became a member for ten years. When the depression was approaching its worst, Fisk and some friends formed the Glenelg Optimist Society - members were not allowed to talk about the depression or any of their problems. It was an amusing organisation which helped maintain morale and gave the City a psychological stimulus.

In 1930 Fisk was elected to the Glenelg Council, representing Glenelg ward. The following year he nominated for the position of Mayor. Then, as now, the Local Government Act required that a person must serve at least twelve months as a Councillor or Alderman before he may become Mayor. At the time of submitting his nomination Fisk had only ten months local government experience. The Town Clerk, as Returning Officer, was placed in a difficult position whether or not to accept Fisk's irregular nomination. On legal advice the Town Clerk agreed to turn a blind eye and leave the question of a legal challenge until after the poll. Fisk won the election by a handsome majority: it has been said that at the time he was regarded almost as the Messiah, and citizens deemed it a privilege to touch the hem of his coat. The enthusiasm of vox populi was not reciprocated by the corporation, and a number of enraged councillors resigned. Fisk nominated some friends for the vacancies and they were elected. It was a characteristic start to a record mayoral term of seven years which saw the Mayor, Town Clerk and most of the councillors in perpetual conflict.

* Fisk qualified in the days before prescribed University courses and compulsory legal registration. When the government controls were introduced chemists and dentists who had been in practice and had experience were permitted to continue.

Fisk was a tall, fat man, with a bluff and hearty manner which camouflaged a number of significant personal shortcomings, including an inability to relate to people whom it was essential that he, as Mayor, should work harmoniously with. He was dictatorial, careless with the truth, unreliable, argumentative and could be personally offensive. He and his Town Clerk, Frank Lewis, fought almost continually, and the arguments spilled over to other council officers and elected members. It is said that after six months in office even his closest friends on the council had turned against him. During one argument in council over the distribution of christmas puddings, Fisk called an alderman a "dirty dog." When pressed to withdraw he argued, and then did so, because, he said, the expression was insulting to dogs. (106) Fisk's habit of saying what he meant often saw people shocked by his crudity and coarseness^{*}. One contemporary suggested that he was never more than the town jester. When he was defeated in a secret ballot for the position of president of the Glenelg Optimists Society, he created an infantile scene, resigned on the spot and stormed out of the meeting and sulked. (107) It is traditional for a mayor to provide his councillors with a supper after meetings: Fisk's council found that if the decisions of the evening had gone against him there was no supper that night.

As mayor, Fisk gloried in the title of Chief Magistrate of Glenelg, and sat on the bench at the Glenelg court.[§] He involved himself actively in the social life of the City and was patron, president or vice-president of every sporting body. As a member of the State centenary executive he entertained many distinguished guests and presided over numerous functions.

(106) Ib. 17/1/1934, p.16, col.C

(107) Ib. 17/5/1938, p.12, col.G

* Most of the anecdotes collected about Fisk are unprintable.

§ A mayor is ex officio a JP. Some have the position before their election. An ex officio mayoral JP does not retain his commission when his term finishes unless he is specifically gazetted on the permanent roll. The custom of metropolitan mayors sitting on the local magistrate bench has fallen into disuse.

The opportunities for a mayor to become well known, together with Fisk's existing prominence in the community, accounts in no small way for his election to parliament: it is also an illustration of the old saying that any publicity is good publicity. Apart from the wide community, sporting and social activities with which he was associated, Fisk also held a number of official local government appointments, including chairman of the now defunct Marion and Glenelg abattoirs board. Although claims have been made that Fisk 'had been most zealous to further the interests of Glenelg in every respect, and it has been due to him as mayor of the town that...Glenelg has well earned the name of premier watering place of South Australia', it is not possible to substantiate this puffing, and there is no evidence to show that Glenelg under Fisk, made any more municipal progress than with any other mayor in the pre-war years. Even a minor work, under Fisk's guidance, could blow up into a major scandal; the construction of a St. John Ambulance room using a government grant of £200 blossomed into one such full scale municipal crisis. Fisk claimed credit for the building of the Anzac Highway; however this was a joint venture between the State government and the Unley, West Torrens and Glenelg councils. (108) He may have been one of the first people to suggest the suitability of the West Beach site for an airport. Fisk drew attention to the region before the Minister of Defence visited South Australia in May 1938: he inspected the site and was impressed. (109) (110) It was seventeen years (1955) before the airport eventuated.

Fisk married twice: he had two daughters by his first wife. He died after a brief illness, at his house at 47 Byron Street, Glenelg on 18 December 1940, and is buried in the North Brighton cemetery. Like many

(108) Corporation of the City of West Torrens Centenary 1953
West Torrens Council. 1953. p. 112

(109) Advertiser: 30/4/1938, p. 22, col. E

(110) Stott Papers: "C". p. 23, col. 2

other interesting characters he has enlarged in death and attracted his own apocrypha. In 1947 the Glenelg Council built a lifeboat and named it the William Fisk; it continued in use until 1971.

*

When Fisk nominated he was still a financial member of the Glenelg LCL, and he had been president of that branch for a considerable period. He stood as an Independent because he objected to the plebiscite and 'refused to submit to being chosen or rejected by a coterie of three or four elderly gentlemen and a few well meaning old ladies.' (111) He claimed that his friends requested him repeatedly to stand, and that he saw the endorsed LCL candidate, Anthoney, and offered to stand down, but the latter told him to stand as he (Anthoney) would 'clean him up.' (112) To the public at large he said he was standing because he was of the opinion party politics was not in the best interests of people. (113)

Of all the Independents, none campaigned under such patent false pretences as Fisk, and none, after their election, reneged so blatantly on their proclaimed policies: none revealed themselves so significantly as opportunists. Three aspects of Fisk's campaign when considered in the light of his post-election behaviour, reveal the true nature of both his campaign and his "independence."

Firstly, in a characteristic half page advertisement he stressed his independence and said that he owed allegiance to no party or organisation. (114) In the light of his long association with the LCL and his conduct after the election, this was a barefaced lie. Secondly, during his campaign he opposed quinquennial parliaments: he turned out to be the only Independent who was to vote to retain them. Thirdly, in his attitude towards the North Terrace - Glenelg railway he showed himself to be

(111) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.144

(112) Ib. p.145.

(113) Glenelg Guardian: 24/2/1938, p.7, cols.A,E

(114) Ib. 10/3/1938, p.7, col.A-E

devious, unreliable and dishonest, and within a few weeks of his election he had alienated a significant group of local residents.

Mention has been made of the controversy surrounding the re-opening of the Holdfast Bay Railway. A renewed and strong Glenelg agitation to secure restoration of this train service began with the first meeting of the Glenelg branch of the Residents Committee on 20 January 1938. (115) Butler, the Municipal Tramways Trust and the South Australian Railways had no intention of restoring the train. As mayor, Fisk was shifty in his dealings with the residents committee and said different things to opposing sides. Early in the course of the election campaign he had proclaimed that rehabilitation of the railway line was something he had fought for during the whole of his municipal career. (116) In his final pre-election announcement he was equivocal, and indicated that he would link up Glenelg with outside areas through "transport facilities." (117) The fact was that Fisk already knew reopening of the line was a lost cause because the Municipal Tramways Trust had sold some of the land near Hilton for industrial purposes, and by being deliberately vague he hoped to dodge the criticism which would be thrown at him. When his prevarication was pointed out he responded with characteristic bombast and abuse. (118) Within weeks of his election he was in open conflict not only with the residents committee, which was activated by a sincere and inoffensive West Torrens resident and S.A.R. fireman, S.E.C. Gay, but with the more influential Glenelg Citizens Association, and in particular a prominent, astute, competent and ambitious lawyer later to become an eminent cabinet minister and knight - Baden Pattinson. He entered the fray shortly after Fisk's election. (119) Fisk found himself acutely unpopular. At one stage the Citizens Association had asked him

(115) Ib. 13/1/1938, p.4, col.A

(116) Ib. 24/2/1938, p.7, cols.C,D

(117) Ib. 17/3/1938, p.7, cols.A-E

(118) Advertiser. 17/2/1938, p.24, col.B

(119) Glenelg Guardian. 5/5/1938, p.4, cols.B,C

to stand for re-election as mayor, (120) but he later decided not to and Frank Smith was elected in his place. A deputation on 9 May from the Citizens Association to Butler, led by Fisk, to seek restoration of the line, became so heated that Butler threatened to dismiss them. (121) Soon after this meeting Fisk came out openly against the re-opening. He referred to the people who wanted the line opened as "nit-wits." (122) The Glenelg Citizens Association censured him because of his lies, (123) 'Any man who thinks he can get away with this in his municipal career must be taught that such a thing cannot be done in public life. Bluff and intrigue will have to be nailed in Glenelg.' On 6 June at a hostile public meeting Fisk was catcalled and counted out. (124) But he had been elected and displayed complete indifference to the protests.

TABLE 21: Glenelg 1938: Candidates, votes and percentages.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
W.Fisk	Ind	3831	40.54
E.Anthoney	LCL	3793	40.14
T.J.D.Barker	ALP	1825	19.31

Source: Hughes and Graham: Voting.p.112

He won the seat on ALP preferences. He had also attracted the "flapper" vote. At this time there was controversy over what constituted appropriate bathing attire on Adelaide beaches, and Fisk was a supporter of trends to liberalise the rigid and well-policed regulations of what the guardians of public morals considered to be appropriate bathing gear. He had dominated the election campaign and had attracted most local publicity, and even the alleged intrusion of "sectarian interests" (of which there is no clear evidence) added little obvious colour. (125) Fisk's victory came from his personality and local prominence. The man he succeeded,

(120) Advertiser: 17/2/1938, p.24, col.B

(121) Stott Papers: "C", p.21, col.C

(122) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.146

(123) Stott Papers: "C", p.25, col.C

(124) Ib. p.49, col.D

(125) Advertiser: 26/3/1938, p.9 col.G

Ernest Anthoney, had been a member of the House of Assembly since 1921. Educated, intelligent, conscientious and sound, he lacked the flamboyance and local recognition of Fisk; they were opposites. The latter had grave shortcomings of character; before the poll he showed himself to be unscrupulous and dishonest. Aware of public opinion on matters affecting the electorate he sought to represent, he misled people in his bid to gain votes at all costs. His frequent and large advertisements were replete with deliberate untruths. It appears that Anthoney did very little, or nothing, to draw attention to Fisk's misleading statements. It was only after parliament sat, for instance, that Fisk's paid up membership of the LCL was made public. Soon after his election he stood revealed as a liar and an opportunist, and his behaviour after the parliamentary session began was the negation of everything he had led people to believe the work 'Independent' meant.

Fisk was a person temperamentally unsuited to local government. His bluff and hearty manner and his long residence in the community endeared him to electors who were content with the appearance of superficiality and rarely looked beyond the candidate's facade. He was a popular mayor. But there is more to local government than wearing a robe and chain in public, telling jokes and reiterating platitudes at incessant minor public occasions, and the continual conflicts and disagreements in the council chamber between Fisk and his fellow elected members, and the salaried staff, hindered rather than promoted municipal progress.

His decision to stand for parliament was taken on the spur of the moment, and prompted by the change to single member electorates: the new seat of Glenelg was tailored to Fisk: that city was the predominant part of it, where he was best known. He did not venture out of it during the campaign; Anthoney does not appear to have been particularly energetic within it. He had lived at Brighton for many years and had been mayor of that municipality. Fisk's election is a sobering reminder of

the relevance of superficial appearances, subjective personality judgements, the lack of discernment, and, perhaps, intelligence of a significant proportion of voters.

*

GOODWOOD

Two Independents, G.W. Illingworth and J.H.B. Hick, opposed one LCL and one ALP nominee. Illingworth won.

Jack Horace Barnett Hick described himself as an engineer and lived at Glenelg, outside the electorate. He was anti-communist and pro-motor car, and the general gist of his enthusiastic campaign was that his election would ensure that the motorist would be really looked after and the communists would be run out of the country, though not necessarily in that order. (126)

George Walker Illingworth JP FAIS* (1877-1950) was born, the son of William Illingworth, at Shipley, Yorkshire, and was educated at the Knaresborough public school. He arrived in Australia 1892/4. He was associated with a dictionary and cyclopaedia service in Sydney until 1899 when he came to South Australia and joined the Critic Newspaper Company Limited: he was the managing editor and secretary for twenty five years, and for seventeen years managed the Adelaide and Suburban Advertising Company. In 1918 he contested Sturt with three other Independents in a ten sided contest, finishing eighth, and in 1920 as an Independent stood unsuccessfully for the federal seat of Boothby.

Illingworth lived at Nichols Street, Goodwood, and took a strong

(126) Ib. 15/3/1938, p.16, col.E

* Sources of biographical information

Corporation of the City of Unley,

Who's Who:1947

Advertiser: 13/6/1950, p.3, col.B (Obit)

Payne, G.B. and Cosh, E: History of Unley 1871-1971. The Corporation. 1971

Civic Record of South Australia 1921-3

interest in local government. He was elected to the Unley city council in 1917 as councillor for Goodwood ward, became an alderman in 1923, and mayor 1927/28. He was re-elected as councillor, Goodwood ward, in 1934/38, He and his wife were heavily involved in community activities; she formed the Unley Women's Service Association in 1928. Illingworth himself took a keen interest in the boy scout movement and served on the State council, executive and finance committee of the association; locally he worked for the first Goodwood scout group. He also served on the State council and executive of the District and Bush Nursing society. He had other interests: he was founder and life member of the Yorkshire Society of South Australia, and a prominent freemason: the Goodwood masonic lodge hall is named after him. He was a president of the Master Process Engravers Society of South Australia, a vice-president of the Federal body of that organisation, and a fellow of the Australian Institute of Secretaries.

In 1933 he supported the Citizens League, (127) but had had no involvement with the Emergency Committee. In 1930 he was associated with the independent campaign of Leonora Ethel Polkinghorne for Sturt, (128) and in 1937 he had indicated that he was in favour of the abolition of State parliaments. (129) Illingworth was not a political opportunist. His Independent motivation was sincere, consistent, and proven by past actions in the political field. He was a protege of the Centre Group. After his election in 1938 he enjoyed prominent but fleeting fame. He was close to Stott, but dissimilar in temperament. He was a stable, sound man, well known and respected in the local community. His family comprised his wife (nee Bray,) five sons and four daughters. He died at his home, aged 73, and is buried in the Mitcham cemetery.

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(127) Ib. 23/2/1933, p.12, col.D

(128) Ib. 25/3/1930, p.13, col.D

(129) Ib. 12/1/1927, p.11, col.C

Illingworth claimed that he stood in response to a petition signed by 1000 electors. (130) In a speech at Goodwood on 13 March he asserted strongly his independence and said that preselection should be made an offence. He opposed single electorates and five year parliaments, thought that there should be a referendum on all social questions, (but the race-course was the proper place for betting), and supported scripture reading and proportional representation. Other planks were shorter hours of work, health reforms, reduced taxation and free education from kindergarten to university. (131) The United Social Reform League campaigned in a way which made Illingworth critical of their tactics. (132) He won on preferences, the figures indicating that he had a rather tenuous hold on the seat.

TABLE 22 Goodwood 1938: Candidates, votes and percentages.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
D.S. Fraser	ALP	3214	41.96
G.W. Illingworth	Ind	2062	26.92
A.B. Cox	LCL	1483	19.37
J.H.B. Hick	Ind	901	11.76

Source: Hughes and Graham: Voting, p.112

The Independent Hick received publicity equivalent to Illingworth, and spent more on advertising. The latter's victory is attributable to a personal following, his prominence in the community, the backing of the Centre Group and Independent Campaign Committee. Goodwood was a new seat carved out of the three member electorate of Sturt. None of the three sitting LCL members of Sturt 1933-38 contested Goodwood. Of these three, only H.S. Dunks was successful, in Mitcham; there, his two Independent opponents were unimpressive and the ALP candidate was never a serious threat. The Mitcham campaign will not be considered here because it was not won by an Independent, but it is relevant to this thesis because

(130) Ib. 14/3/1938, p.17, col.A

(131) Ibidem

(132) Ib. 26/3/1938, p.9, col.H

it supports the contention that to be successful an Independent must meet certain defined criteria. Mitcham, Glenelg and Goodwood were all excisions from Sturt. Between 1933-38 Sturt was represented by Ernest Anthoney, Dunks and H.C. Hogben. Anthoney's defeat in Glenelg has been recounted. Hogben was defeated in Unley by another locally prominent Independent.

*

GOUGER

This was a straight out contest between H.B. Crosby who was an LCL member for Barossa 1933-38, and the Independent A.W. Robinson. No useful records remain of the election which was largely ignored by both City and provincial press. A brief note in the Wooroora Producer notes that Robinson spoke in the Balaklava Institute on 16 March, but gives no details of what he said. (133) The absence of reports confirms that the campaign was based on the personal appeal of the candidates, and Robinson acknowledged this. He attributed his victory to the fact that Crosby, although a man of fine character, was a draper at Gawler, not in the Gouger district, and had no connection with primary industry. The main polling place was Balaklava where Robinson had lived for fifty years and his personality and friendship with constituents gave him the seat. (134) Even the Rev. Mr. Woolacott, who had come twice to Balaklava to preach the godliness of Crosby, had been unable to thwart the work of the devil. Robinson, the popular chairman of the local racing club, had no time for social reform, or the Centre Group. He secured 54.8 per cent of the vote.

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MOUNT GAMBIER

The Independent J. Fletcher won this seat from an LCL and ALP

(133) Wooroora Producer: 17/3/1938, p. 2, col. E

(134) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, pp 174-5

opponent. Mount Gambier was carved out of the two member seat of Victoria. None of the contestants at the Victoria 1933 election, nor the successful LCL members 1933-38, stood for Mount Gambier in 1938.

John Fletcher* (1883-1958) was born, the son of John Fletcher, at Mount Schank and educated at Kingsley, O.B. Flat, Mount Schank and Mount Gambier Grammar schools. There were four sisters and one brother; his father had also been born at Mount Schank. He worked first on Mount Schank station and then on the construction of the Pinnaroo railway line. On completion of that project he became a shearer for three years and in 1908 purchased a dairy farm at Compton[§] and worked it in conjunction with a large building-stone quarry.

Fletcher was a prominent figure in the Mount Gambier district. For many years he was a leading official of the Australian Natives Association and on several occasions was president. He was at one time a member of the district council of Mount Gambier. He was actively interested in the home of A.L. Gordon and was chairman of the Dingley Dell restoration committee, and took part in the annual Australia day pilgrimage to that house. For some years he was a church worker and Sunday school superintendent. Fletcher was known locally as "Honest John", and was renowned for his friendly disposition and cordial manner.

Fletcher was supported by the Centre Group. He opened his campaign at Suttontown with a trenchant attack on quinquennial parliaments, criticism of Butler's crown land sales, and a review of local issues. (135) He was a hard working candidate who travelled and spoke extensively. The quinquennial parliament featured in all his reported platform speeches. The Mount Gambier minister's fraternal addressed a questionnaire to all

* Sources of biographical information.

Advertiser: 5/6/1958, p.5, col.D (Obit)

Who's Who 1955

Border Watch Pty. Ltd. Letter and photostats of cuttings.

Border Watch: 12/2/1938, p.3, col.D

Mrs. N.L. Ralston; Miss. J.M. Ryan.

[§] Small settlement on the western extremity of Mount Gambier proper.

candidates asking their views on social questions. When the answers were published, it was seen that Fletcher would support neither six o'clock closing nor prohibition of off-course betting, unless some better way of overcoming that latter evil could be found. (136) This honest bluntness was typical of the man. He had previously made it plain that he believed the betting legislation was as good as one could expect. (137) Apart from these contemporary controversial issues Fletcher discussed many other things: the need for unrestricted road transport and free secondary education: (138) general development of the Southeast, reclamation of swamps, motor taxation, afforestation, closer settlement and council subsidies. (139)

A.G. Cameron entered on the hustings, supported the LCL opponent and said scathing things about Independents^{*}. (140) Fletcher replied convincingly to these remarks at Mount Gambier on 16 March, and, in the course of a one and a half hours speech repeated his criticism of five year parliaments and also condemned preselection. (141) He joined with Alex Bagot and Frank Halleday, the Independent contenders for Legislative Council Southern: on 9 March they made a joint attack on party machines and quinquennial parliaments. (142) Fletcher had an active organising committee and his how-to-vote advertisements gave the phone number of an "Independent Committee Room." Both the ALP and LCL gave him second preferences, (143) and his own remained open. He won what had been a very clean fight. (144)

(136) Ib. 8/3/1938, p. 3, col. C

(137) Advertiser: 10/3/1938, p. 11, col. G

(138) Border Watch: 10/3/1938, p. 6, cols. C, D

(139) Advertiser: 10/3/1938, p. 11, col. G

(140) Border Watch: 15/3/1938, p. 4, cols. A, B, C

(141) Ib. 17/3/1938, p. 6, cols. C, D

(142) Ib. 12/3/1938, p. 4, col. D

(143) Ib. 17/3/1938, p. 3

(144) Ib. 31/3/1938, p. 1, col. A

* When-ever Cameron appeared, the Independents were victorious.

TABLE 23: Mount Gambier 1938: Candidates, Votes, and Percentages.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
J. Fletcher	Ind	1694	36.09
F.E.Young	ALP	1689	35.97
H.L.Kennedy	LCL	1312	27.94

Source: Hughes and Graham: Voting: p,113.

Fletcher claimed that 'he was elected for no other reason than that the electors had had enough of party politics.' (145) To an extent this is true but it is in no way a complete explanation. Fletcher was a well known, highly regarded and popular figure, for whom the time was right. He had in 1938, and retained until his tragic death, an enormous personal following and at elections had no shortage of enthusiastic workers. And yet, all these advantages do not explain completely the reason for his election, because Mount Gambier had been contested unsuccessfully before by Independents with formidable personal attributes. In 1933 Anthony Francis Sutton had stood as an Independent for Victoria. A prominent grazier at Dismal Swamp, near Suttons, that place took its name from his grandfather who had founded the estate in 1844/5. He had been chairman of the Mount Gambier West district council and was the first chairman of the Mount Gambier Council. He was chairman of the South-east district council's association and president of the Southeast branch of the stockowner's association. (146) He had influential support, fought a hard, clean campaign, and in some respects, particularly in regards to Southeast development, transport and taxation, his views were the same as Fletcher's. Sutton, widely respected and with impeccable credentials, finished well down the poll with only thirteen percent of the vote.

A study of both campaigns, as well as the candidates, reveals other cogent reasons for Fletcher achieving what Sutton could not:

(145) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.193

(146) Border Watch: 2/3/1933, p.1, col.A

Fletcher was not tainted by party politics - Sutton had been an active member of the LCL. Fletcher had working class origins and was a man of the people - Sutton was a member of the provincial landed gentry and a leading Roman Catholic. (Fletcher was a Prebyterian.) It is reasonable to conclude that those intangible qualities which contribute to character and "image" play a very important part in the mental processes which induce an elector to support a particular parliamentary candidate, regardless of anything else.

*

Fletcher was a popular member. The Border Watch, writing after his death, said:

John Fletcher "lived" and loved Mount Gambier and was as hard a worker in its interests as he was in his own during his pioneering days. His admirers can be counted in their thousands, his enemies few, if any. Supporters and opponents alike in the political sphere agreed on his sincerity and it is doubtful if ever a Mount Gambier man had such a wide circle of friends. (147)

He was returned to parliament with impressive majorities at elections in 1941, 1944, 1947, 1950, 1953, and 1956. He had married in 1909 and there were two daughters. His wife died in 1950 and six years later he remarried. It was rumoured that this marriage was not a happy one.

Early in June 1958 Fletcher was in Mount Gambier for a brother-in-law's funeral, (he had moved to Clarence Park, some time before,) and had discussed with a local reporter forthcoming civic engagements. He returned to Adelaide on the train. On 4 June he was baby sitting and had an argument with his wife. He went out into the backyard and hanged himself from a tree. He was 74 and had represented the district for twenty years. His funeral cortege at Mount Gambier was one and a half miles long and he was widely and sincerely mourned. When he had entered parliament his more enthusiastic supporters had likened him to Adam Lindsay Gordon. There is poignancy in Fletcher's love for Gordon's

(147) Ib. Cutting dated 7/6/1958. Courtesy Editor.

poetry, and his work to perpetuate the poet's memory, that both represented the Southeast, and both died by their own hands.

*

MURRAY

Two Independents, P.H. Suter and R.L. McKenzie opposed one ALP and one ICL candidate: McKenzie was successful. The ICL nominee, G.C. Morphet had held the seat 1933-38.

Percy Hampden Suter, the Centre Group nominee, was a government dairy instructor, who resigned his position to stand. Richard Lawrence McKenzie^{*} (1883-1959) was a complex individual, a curious mixture of political ambition and good intentions. He had been a well known wheat farmer and grazier at Pinnaroo since 1905 and had won a prize for being the first settler to bring wheat into the Pinnaroo railway station. (148) He had been a member of the Pinnaroo district council, representing South ward. He had been involved, more on the periphery, in the politics of wheat, and in 1931 was active in the Wheatgrowers Protection Association. (149) Apparently he was a realist when faced with the problems of organising farmers: he once remarked that it was impossible to organise lunatics or farmers. In 1927 he was the endorsed Labor candidate for Albert. His preselection caused considerable dissatisfaction. (150) He was defeated, polling twenty one percent of the vote. In 1930 he was again endorsed by the ALP for Albert and this time polled only four per cent. The figure explains why he lost interest in contesting that electorate again.

McKenzie did not contest the 1938 ALP plebiscite. He said that he nominated as a protest against "City Control" through which Murray

(148) Advertiser. 12/2/1927, p.19, col.A

(149) Advertiser and Register: 23/9/1931, p.16, cols.G.H.I

(150) Advertiser: 17/2/1927, p.19, col.A

* Sources of biographical information.

district residents were denied the right to make their selection of a candidate. (151) He was careful to overlook the fact that he lived 130 kilometres outside the electorate: one cynic was moved to wonder if he had either forgotten he lived in Albert or else got his nomination papers mixed up. He was a strong campaigner and was assisted on the hustings by his sons while his daughters did house to house canvassing.

(152) He advocated free punts, a freezing works at Taillem Bend and woollen mills and a housing scheme for Murray Bridge, (153) reclassification of swamps for dairymen, development of the Moorlands coal field, and he had the usual things to say about unemployment and payable prices for primary products. (154) He supported free education*, better roads, and debt adjustment for farmers. (155) Regarding the length of life of parliament, he favoured a two year term, (156) and got around tricky social questions by saying that he advocated referenda where matters affected the liberty of the people. (157) He won the seat with the help of preferences.

TABLE 24: Murray 1938: Candidates, Votes and Percentages

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
R.L. McKenzie	Ind	1494	34.11
G.C. Morphett	LCL	1445	32.99
P.H. Suter	Ind	858	19.59
J.T. Cassidy	ALP	583	13.31

Source: Hughes and Graham: Voting; p.113

His victory surprised many onlookers who regarded him as an outsider.

However, Morphett was an aristocratic absentee dairyman whose family

(151) Murray Valley Standard: 4/2/1938, p.1, col.A

(152) Ib. 18/3/1938, p.5, col.C

(153) Ib. 4/2/1938, p.1, col.A

(154) Ib. 11/3/1938, p.7, cols.D,E

(155) Advertiser: 19/3/1938, p.18, col.E

(156) Murray Valley Standard: 25/3/1938, p.1, col.C

(157) Ib. 11/3/1938, p.7, cols.D,E

* All candidates, successful or otherwise, who had families, were advocates of free education. Perhaps it was a deliberate act on the part of the LCL government that saw the education portfolio held by childless Ministers for 23 years between 1933-65.

seat was in West Torrens, and Suter was handicapped as an ex-public servant: the government was very unpopular with dairy farmers, (as Connor's elections show,) and Suter was the paid representative of the city bureaucrats. The ALP candidate had no electoral appeal. McKenzie had been active in public life for over ten years and his association with wheat farmers interests had given him some prominence: he contested Murray at the right time. As a parliamentarian he was active on behalf of his constituents and tried to keep his promises. He moved into a house at Murray Bridge after the election. He was a member whom few now can recall. Stott noted that he liked to back winners, and before selecting his causes he would procrastinate until certain of their popular support and inevitable victory. A prominent grazier's most vivid recollection of McKenzie is of a gregarious, well dressed man in a bowler hat who carried a small notebook and who, on being asked if he could help an inquirer get a job, would write the person's name therein and tell him that he would see what was available in the Taillem Bend roundhouse. One former MP recollected him with amusement, as a very pungent and witty speaker who had an obsession with River Murray punts. He recalled that his speeches were often irrelevant but quite entertaining.

*

The role of the successful Independents will be considered in due course, however certain matters appertaining to McKenzie as an MP are relevant now.

It could be said that McKenzie was elected by false pretences because of his prior official association with the ALP. There is some evidence that he campaigned in places as an Independent Labor candidate, but it is not incontrovertible. His voting record in 1938-41 parliament indicates that the electors had returned another member to the Labor camp.

TABLE 25: R.L.McKenzie: Votes during Divisions, 1938-40, Recorded by Party.

<u>Year</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>No Party</u>	<u>LCL</u>
1938	74	34	4
1939	35	20	5
1940	29	14	-
Total	138	68	13

Source: SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

However, McKenzie was not, like H.C.Dunn^{*}, a dummy: he was one of the more active Independents who questioned, spoke and tried to fulfil their promises. He was to rejoin the Labor Party and became their successful endorsed candidate in 1944, 1947, and 1950.

*

RIDLEY

Stott was opposed by an LCL candidate, F.J.Petch. He consolidated his hold on the seat with one of the largest voting percentages of the elections. The campaign was distinguished by the extent of the vilification and slander which the wheatgrowers' champion was subjected to. Petch, a sound opponent, was chairman of the Loxton district council, and had the active support of A.G.Cameron and State cabinet ministers.

The campaign started off fairly innocuously. Stott appealed to the electors to look at his record: few could deny that it was an impressive one both in and out of parliament. He concentrated on the need for road transport restrictions to be lifted, and had a go at the five year parliament. (158) His campaign, as usual, was of unrelenting vigor, very demanding, and backed up by a large and enthusiastic committee of acolytes. Many of these families, whose grateful letters survive in Stott's files, stood by him throughout his long parliamentary career. Their belief in him never wavered, nor did their enthusiasm flag: it is not irreverent to say that Stott was regarded as the Christ of the Mallee, and few would have looked twice if he had walked on water.

(158) Murray Pioneer. 17/2/1938, p.4, col.A

*
Infra

Then there were the unbelievers. One who lost sleep, but not love, for the Independent member was the Premier, who did what he could to deliver himself from the renewed presence of his principal irritant in the next parliament. They continued to loath each other. It is not clear this time who started the mud slinging; it appears to have been Butler. Stott was a good match: at various tin sheds in the Mallee he repeated a popular speech which attacked generally party politics, likened Lacey to Hitler, and poured scorn on Butler as a grumbling itinerant mendicant going to Canberra 'cap in hand every year for a grant.' (159) Soon it was on for all and sundry and Cameron indulged some sarcasm:

Mr. Stott claims to be a heaven-sent blessing. If he came from heaven, providence must have been not only dozing, but loudly snoring,--(loud applause)-- when he got out of heaven... Ridley should send him back to where he came from to get fresh instructions --(great applause.) (160)

Stott called a special meeting at Moorook on 12 March to reply to Cameron and his other critics. He told the crowded hall 'that in his eighteen years experience fighting elections he had 'never before... found a campaign which had been full of such unsavoury tactics, personal abuse, and malicious propoganda as this one.' (161) At Loxton Butler unkindly told a Petch audience that Stott had been a rotten representative who had achieved nothing, (162) but far more worrying to Stott was a Butler allegation, made in the course of a savage attack on Stott at Sutherlands on 22 February. Then Butler had told an audience that Stott had never assisted primary producers and to illustrate his point suggested that Stott had been untruthful in claiming that he had participated in the Page wheat industry conference in 1935. The official record of the conference was flourished and the absence of Stott's name from the list of representatives thereat was pointedly emphasised. (163) (164) However, Butler's

(159) Ib. 3/3/1938, p.4, cols.C,D

(160) Ib. 10/3/1938, p.1, col.B

(161) Ib. 17/3/1938, p.1, col.C

(162) Ib. 17/3/1938, p.14, cols.C,D,E

(163) Wooroora Producer: 17/3/1938, p.6, col.D

(164) Advertiser: 17/3/1938, p.12, col.D

move rebounded on him. Stott's name is certainly omitted from the official list of individuals attending, but he was at the conference and his embarrassing interjections are recorded in the published transcript at pages 22,28,33 and 34,(165) including a pointed exchange with Butler's nominee H.T.Chapman, concerning who was representing the South Australian Wheatgrowers Association. Stott's copy of this Commonwealth Parliamentary paper survives, with his participation under-scored heavily in pencil: in 1938 it was waved from many public platforms. He made Butler look foolish. Stott was always superb in the role of martyr; when he painted himself as the champion of the farmer, tied to the cross of grower's sacrifice and wounded by the arrows of hostile government and obtuse bureaucracy, one senses the presence of Saint Sebastian of Mindarie.

No part of the electorate was ignored by Stott and he spoke in every town where there was a tin hall, as well as the main centres. Everywhere the principal theme was his record, the perfidy of the Butler government, and his opposition to quinquennial parliaments. But he dealt with many other matters including railway interest accounts, free high school education, credit for farmers, and, of course, the wheat industry. (166) He knew his subjects. He ignored social issues^{*} and the churches worked against him. (167) He had a resounding and well deserved victory, obtaining 65.6 per cent of the vote in an overall 70 per cent poll with only 38 informal votes. (168) It was very much a personal triumph and a humiliating slap in the face for Butler who had done so much to secure his defeat. The activities of Butler and his supporters during the campaign are the best indicators we have of Stott's importance as an active and aggressive Independent playing an effective role; criticising, stirring

(165) CPP 156/1934-35: Wheat Industry.

(166) Advertiser. 19/3/1938, p.18, col.F

(167) Murray Pioneer: 31/3/1938, p.4, col.C

(168) Hughes and Graham: Voting. p.114

* Stott drank, raced horses, bet, smoked (until later years) and was not religious.

putting ideas forward, questioning and attacking. It is the best tribute to him, that he was the only Independent who was deemed worthy of so much personal attention from the Premier of South Australia.

*

STIRLING

Two Independents, S.H. Pearce and H.C. Dunn, opposed P.T. Heggaton who had been one of three sitting LCL members for Alexandra. In 1933 Heggaton had not been opposed; his colleague Hudd was defeated by George Connor and Heggaton met a similar fate at the hand of Dunn, who secured election as an Independent under the most brazen of false pretences. Fisk's manipulation of the truth was the clumsy effort of a bumbling, uncouth amateur: Dunn raised the electoral lie to an art form.

Herbert Charles Dunn JP^{*} (1883-1952) was born at Woodchester, the son of Charles Henry Dunn JP, a former chairman of the Woodchester and Strathalbyn district councils, treasurer and ex-president of the Liberal Union, and a man prominent and active in the local community. Herbert Charles continued successfully the family mixed farm on the Finnis River and like his father, became well known in the district. He was a member of the executive of the Strathalbyn Agricultural Society, and played a leading role in wheat crop competitions. In 1930 he was elected to the Strathalbyn District Council representing Finnis ward, and became chairman. In 1932, at the local elections, in 1938 he was re-elected unopposed. (169) (170) (171) He was married, with a son and a daughter.

The nature of Dunn's campaign, his successful election, and his subsequent career raise important questions in relation to the motivation

(169) Southern Argus: 16/2/1938, p. 2, cols. D, E

(170) Advertiser: 21/3/1938, p. 16, col. G

(171) Southern Argus: 22/6/1938, p. 4, col. B

* Sources of biographical information:

Civic Record of South Australia 1936

Civic Record of South Australia 1921-23

Who's Who 1947

Advertiser: 12/9/1952, p. 3, col. H (Obit.)

of an individual to seek election to parliament. It is clear from his behaviour after the new parliament sat that Dunn had not only misled the electors of Stirling as to his political philosophy, but he had nothing to offer as a parliamentarian. Any misgivings we may entertain about Dunn's campaign untruths and the sheer mediocrity of his performance in the House have to be tempered by the realisation that he was returned at every subsequent poll: this says a good deal about electorate indifference and would confirm the cynic in his belief that electors get the politicians they deserve. One of Dunn's first actions when campaigning began was to stress the purity of his independence. He said that he was 'standing as an Independent candidate for (Stirling), and claims that men of independent thought and action, unfettered by Party Control, can guide the affairs of State in such a manner that Democracy has a chance to function.' At the same time electors were urged to register their protest against preselection and vote for free men: 'Think Independent. Be Independent. Vote Independent. For the People and not for a Party.' (172)

Dunn was backed by hardworking supporters and he campaigned effectively. He criticised members of parliament who did not reside in their districts^{*}, party politics, preferential voting, preselection, five year parliaments, compulsory voting and writing down of railway and developmental debts. He supported national insurance and a retiring age for members of parliament[§]. (173) He was opposed to transport control and objected to the way in which district councils were tending to become taxing machines. (174) He gave his second preferences to Pearce, (175) who

(172) Ib. 16/2/1938, p.2, cols.D.E

(173) Advertiser: 14/3/1938, p.17, cols.D.E

(174) Southern Argus: 16/3/1938, p.17, cols.B,C

(175) Ib. 16/3/1938, p.1, col.A

*

No doubt a shot at Heggaton who lived at Glenalg

[§] But not, evidently, for himself: he retained his seat until his death in 1952, aged 69.

reciprocated, (176) and the LCL gave Dunn the second preferences. (177)

The Independents polled closely; the preferences favoured Dunn.

TABLE 26: Stirling 1938: Candidates, Votes, and Percentages.

Candidates	Party	Votes	Percentages
S.H. Pearce	Ind	1597	37.02
H.C. Dunn	Ind	1503	34.84
P.T. Heggaton	LCL	1214	28.14

Source: Hughes and Graham: Voting:p.114

This result was a blow to the Centre Group because of Pearce's key role therein.

In the light of Dunn's ostentatious campaign pretensions to independence, his role in parliament will be briefly indicated. He allied himself with the LCL as soon as he was elected, and a review of his divisional votes 1938-40 shows that the alliance was far from a casual one.

TABLE 26: H.C. Dunn: Votes during divisions 1938-40; recorded by party.

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	11	31	81
1939	7	17	32
1940	2	13	29
Total	20	61	142

Source: SAPD 1938-40; extracted by author. *

During the Legislative Council by-election campaign in June 1938[§] Dunn took the platform with the LCL candidate and attacked E.D.A. Bagot, the Independent, as a King William Street farmer. (178) Finally even the flimsy independent facade was dropped. Dunn joined the LCL and attended his first party meeting on 12 June 1940. The impressive platitudes of his 1938 campaign show that he was a hypocrite and an opportunist. His parliamentary record, he spoke only eight times in three years, indicates the feebleness of his representation. Yet Dunn was returned each time he

(176) Ib. 16/3/1938, p.4, col.C

(177) Ib. 16/3/1938, p.7, col.A

(178) Ib. 15/6/1938, p.1, col.C

* Compare with McKenzie, Table 25.

[§] Infra.

offered himself. Like Connor he is a striking illustration of the importance of being well known locally and, although occupying public office, being either careful or lucky enough not to have made decisions which created enemies. Dunn is remembered as a very unenergetic member, but his pleasant personality is also recalled. It is clear that his supporters considered his affability to be of more importance than his parliamentary role.

*

THEBARTON

Four Independents, including J. Langdon, the successful one, opposed Mrs. Marie Elizabeth Skitch, the first woman in South Australia to be endorsed by the ALP. Langdon was not supported by the Centre Group, that body chose instead Charles Walter Lloyd* and Leonard James Smith[§]. The fourth Independent, A.J. Blackwell, was a sour loser of ALP endorsement. By selecting Mrs. Skitch the ALP effectively forfeited the seat, and it became a question of which Independent would be successful. In 1938 no electorate was ready to accept female candidates, endorsed or unendorsed.

Jules Langdon[¶] (1871-1942) was a building contractor who lived at Torrensville. He was mayor of Thebarton 1931-37, and had been previously a member of council for five years. Langdon was succeeded by a bachelor mayor, and Mrs. Langdon continued in office as mayoress.[#] There were two sons and two daughters. He was born at Kapunda and educated at the State

* b.1890. Formerly a skilled tradesman, he became a licensed valuator. Sometime member Thebarton and West Torrens councils, and Country Party candidate. A tireless seeker of a parliamentary seat.

§ An industrial psychologist. During years in Victoria he contested Federal and State elections.

¶ Sources of biographical information:
Thebarton Corporation
Official Civic Record of South Australia 1936
Advertiser: 10/1/1933, p.21, col.B
Advertiser: 3/11/1942, p.4, col.C

The position of mayoress has no legal footing.

school. He was remembered with some affection because when he made a social visit to Kapunda prior to the 1933 election, the Herald commented that he was popular in his municipality, and it wished him success. Langdon was a freemason and Methodist, and active in local charitable and sporting bodies, including the District Trained Nursing Society and the S.A. Ambulance Transport. His own recreations were bowls and motoring. Langdon was re-elected in 1941. Near the close of the 1942 session he collapsed during a debate and was removed to a private hospital where he died.

Langdon had first stood as an Independent in 1933 for the seat of West Torrens. Then he had campaigned with C.W. Lloyd against two ALP, two Premiers Plan Labor, two Lang Labor and one communist. Both Independents were supported by the Citizens League. Langdon told them that he had done well out of the country and wanted to make some return in service, (180) a remark which perhaps reminds us of the ambiguity of human motives. During the 1933 campaign Langdon was very careful to stress his Independence. (181) In his speeches that year he urged that the Torrens be regarded as a national waterway^{*} and criticised caucus control and the overlapping of State and Federal services. He was pro-Premiers Plan, but not enthusiastically so, pro-industry, pro-capitalism and favoured a reduction in parliamentarians. (182) The seat was won by the two Premiers Plan Labor men (one being A.J. Blackwell), but Langdon's primary vote was the second highest. Lloyd lost his deposit.

In 1938 Langdon was now an alderman on the Thebarton Council, and very irate about the failure of the government to restore the North

(180) Advertiser: 16/2/1933, p.9, col.1

(181) Ib. 16/2/1933, p.9, col.1

(182) Ib. 16/2/1933, p.12, col.6

* In the western suburbs the Torrens held a position as fundamentally important as the non-existent Birkenhead bridge at Port Adelaide. Urban floods have been reduced by successive drainage schemes, but bitter inter-council arguments continue to this day.

Terrace-Glenelg railway line, which skirted the eastern boundary of that corporation. (183) He again asserted his independence and freedom from any party or organisation. (184) His principal speech avoided all controversial topics: it was mainly an attack on budgets, a consideration of the financial aspects of water-works and railways, and he suggested that social ills would be eliminated by profitable employment. (185) This time he had nothing to do with C.W.Lloyd, who went his own way trying to convert voters to a scheme he had devised for successful members of parliament to enjoy 'cooperative consultation' with the electorate. (186) He was never to get an opportunity to put it into practice. It was said that the campaign in Thebarton was particularly dirty, with religion dragged in and the inevitable scurrilous rumours spread about Mrs. Skitch. (187) Langdon won on preferences.

TABLE 27: Thebarton 1938: Candidates, Votes, and Percentages.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
M.E. Skitch	ALP	2735	31.79
J.Langdon	Ind	2373	27.54
C.W.Lloyd	Ind	1876	21.80
A.J.Blackwell	Ind (L)	1171	13.61
L.J.Smith	Ind	449	5.22

Source: Hughes and Graham, Voting, p.115

Langdon's victory was brought about first of all by the failure of the Labor Party to read contemporary community feeling and make the blunder of selecting a female nominee with an unfortunate surname which invited some uncharitable jokes. Blackwell, who had held the seat for twenty years, was painted as a scab, and Smith had no electoral appeal; he was too closely involved in the Church of Christ for the comfort of a working class electorate which liked a beer and a bet. Langdon won because of his personality, following, and the fact that his local

(183) Ib. 26/1/1938, p.26, col.E

(184) Ib. 24/2/1938, p.21, col.H

(185) Ib. 14/3/1938, p.17, col.C

(186) Ib. 11/3/1938, p.34, col.G

(187) Ib. 26/3/1938, p.9, col.G

government service made him so well known. While Lloyd was also well known, he was not a popular figure, had too many axes to grind and his high opinion of his own abilities irritates readers of his speeches even now. (188)

*

UNLEY

The Independent J. McLeay won this seat against an ALP and an LCL opponent. He was the only Independent candidate, and was not supported by the Centre Group.

John McLeay MM JP^{*} (1893-1982) was an executive of McLeay brothers, a notable Adelaide carpet/furniture business. He was born at Port Clinton the son of George, a farmer, and Margaretta, nee Barton. His brother was George McLeay (1894-1955), Senator 1934-47, 1949-55, and holder of important ministerial offices and Liberal Party positions. He was educated at the Port Clinton and Unley schools and Muirden college. He served in the Great War as a stretcher bearer and was awarded the Military Medal. He entered public life in 1925 when he was elected to the Unley City Council[§], representing Parkside ward. He became an alderman in 1931 and was Mayor 1935/37, after which he was re-elected as councillor for Parkside ward, a position he held until 1946. McLeay's association with the Liberal Party began on his return from the war. He was very well known not only in municipal life but through his involvement in various community, social and sporting organisations, often in his own right and apart from his obligatory local government participation. Positions he filled included vice-president of Legacy Club, vice-president of the

(188) For the example see Ib. 15/3/1933, p.19, col.D

* Sources of biographical information:

Corporation of the City of Unley.

Advertiser: 1/1/1962, p.3, col.C

Year Book Adelaide 1946/47, and 1948/49.

Who's Who 1936, 1950

Rydon, Joan, Biographical Register, op.cit., p.149

Advertiser: 21/3/1938, p.16, col.F

§ A council contemporary was Illingworth; they were not close.

R.S.L., director of the Caledonian Society and member of the Municipal Tramways Trust. Few institutions in the Unley district were not associated with him.

Unlike all the other Independents who were elected in 1938, and who, with the exception of Stott, passed into obscurity after the passage of various years, McLeay surged to public prominence only after he lost his seat in the House of Assembly in 1941. He became an alderman on the Adelaide City Council in 1940 and was Lord Mayor of Adelaide 1946/49. In 1949, aged 56, he became Federal member for Boothby, and in 1956 on the death of A.G. Cameron, Speaker of the House of Representatives. In 1962 he became the Honourable Sir John McLeay, KCMG. He retired, greatly respected and admired, from Federal politics in 1966. He was by then even more heavily committed to official and unofficial community work and service. McLeay's sojourn in State politics was too brief for his remarkable personal qualities to develop. He was an efficient, energetic and resolute man who outshone his contemporaries. Because he campaigned openly as an Independent Liberal, and made clear his position and philosophy, he was a somewhat isolated member. The ALP had no time for him, the LCL smarted over his defeat of their endorsed candidate. He kept aloof from the post-election Independent intrigue: his ability was never recognised or allowed to flower.

McLeay felt very strongly about five year parliaments and the preselection process and for those reasons had refused to offer himself for the party plebiscite. (189) In his principal electoral speech both these subjects got a lashing. It would be unfair to consider that they were an exclusive obsession. McLeay was a man of very broad vision who saw beyond the immediate electoral excitement to the need for fundamental Federal-State relationship changes if South Australia was to progress. On

(189) Ib. 18/3/1938, p.22, cols. E, F

social questions he had an open mind. His political views were well known and he said that 'it would be ridiculous for me to suggest that I have anything other than Liberal tendencies.' (190) The hypocrisy of Dunn was completely absent. McLeay topped the poll and was favoured by preferences.

TABLE 28: Unley 1938: Candidates, Votes and Percentages.

<u>Candidates</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
J. McLeay	Ind. (Lib)	4356	40.70
H. C. Hogben	LCL	3750	35.04
T. W. Grealy	ALP	2596	24.26

Source: Hughes and Graham, Voting, p.115

He attributed his victory to community anger at pre-selection. (191) This, along with five year parliaments was certainly a significant cause which he identified with*, but McLeay's prominence in the community and personal calibre cannot be denied as important factors in his election. H. C. Hogben, AUA, FCIS, a public accountant and an erudite young man, had held Sturt 1933-38 as a Liberal. He was very capable and in his later years achieved prominence for his work with the Savings Bank of South Australia, the Housing Trust, as well as private industry and commerce. It is a tribute to McLeay's own personality that he could defeat such a sensible man who had been a hard working member.

*

VICTORIA

This contest was between an Independent, C. J. D. Smith, V. G. Petherick (LCL) and J. J. Daly (ALP). Petherick had been one of the members for Victoria 1933-38.

Clement James Drummond Smith[§] (1894-1968), was a Centre Group protege.

(190) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, p. 195

(191) Ibidem

* Illingworth had views which paralleled McLeay's.

[§] Sources of biographical information:

Advertiser: 3/3/1938, p. 4, col. B

Ib. 21/3/1938, p. 16, col. F

Who's Who 1950

Parliamentary Library

He was born at Kingston, (Southeast), son of Thomas Smith, and educated at Wangolina. The family were well known graziers. In 1908 he entered the service of the Post Master General. At the outbreak of World War 1 he sailed with the 10th Battalion to Gallipoli and in 1917 was commissioned in the field at Ypres and mentioned in despatches. In 1934 he raised the Kingston troop 3rd Light Horse regiment and supported it enthusiastically*. He was a keen and active member of the R.S. & S.I.L. and contributed prolifically to returned soldier magazines, mostly under a nom de plume. He was a captain in the reserve of officers during the second World War. After the war he took up grazing interests and at the time of the elections he had been fifteen years in partnership with his brother, and had done extensive pasture development work on his property "Cattle Station Creek", Kingston. He was president of the Kingston branch of the Stockowners Association.

Smith was a thorough campaigner who claimed that he stood because he was opposed to preselection and five year parliaments, and he appeared on the platform with E.D.A. Bagot, and F.A. Halleday to emphasise those points. (192) He wanted to establish Southeast ports and coordinate transport by developing harbour facilities at Kingston, Robe, Beachport and Port Macdonnell, and constructing a canal system via Kingston and the Coorong to the Murray River. (193) (194) (195) This was the brain-child of Vice-Admiral Sir W.R. Creswell, who had reported favourably on it in 1926. (196) It was an inappropriate, grandiose and expensive dream, but the candidate found that it had considerable local appeal, and he thought it preferable to developing railways. Other topics considered by Smith were the need for local government to be given more power, revision of income

(192) Border Watch: 10/3/1938, p. 6, cols. A, B

(193) Naracoorte Herald: 15/3/1938, p. 2, col. G

(194) Border Watch: 3/3/1938, p. 4, col. B

(195) Naracoorte Herald: 4/3/1938, p. 11, col. F

(196) SAPP 76/1926: Murray River: Direct Sea Communication.

* Perhaps this force might have appealed to Sir Arthur Sullivan.

tax, and the welfare of war veterans. (197) (198) Smith narrowly topped the poll and won on preferences.

TABLE 29: Victoria 1938, Candidate, Votes and Percentages.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
C.J.D. Smith	Ind.	1755	36.34
V.G.Petherick	LCL	1678	34.75
J.J.Daly	ALP	1396	28.91

Source: Hughes and Graham; Voting, p.115

In 1941 Smith said that his election was largely due to the resentment against betting shops. (199) However social issues seem to have been completely absent from his 1938 campaign, so far as can be judged by the surviving brief reports. Smith won because he identified with the anti-party and quinquennial parliament sentiment of the time, and was well known in the electorate and had a personal following. His misplaced enthusiasm for Southeast ports and cannals had strong local appeal: financial reality rarely troubles voters when local matters are embraced.

*

YORKE PENINSULA

This was a straight out contest between the sitting Independent D.M.S.Davies and an LCL candidate. Baden Pattinson, Davies' fellow member 1933-38, had retired temporarily from political life, and was occupying himself with the Glenelg Citizens Association and William Fisk.

Davies' campaign was another version of 1933. He criticised the LCL plebiscite and again claimed that his candidacy restored the right of the people to vote for a person of their choice; he attacked party politics and urged proportional representation. (200) He unwisely 'thanked' the LCL government for what it had done, through him, for Yorke Peninsula: this evoked a violent reaction and it was quickly pointed out that the road works on Yorke Peninsula were done on a basis of need and that Davies

(197) Border Watch. 3/3/1938, p.4, col.B

(198) Advertiser: 12/3/1938, p.21, col.F

(199) Stott Papers: "D", p.82, col.B

(200) Advertiser: 15/3/1938, p.16, col.C,D

had nothing to do with it. The ensuing recriminations continued up to election eve. (201) (202) He still opposed five year parliaments and was very critical of the new single electorates. On the question of betting, however, he thought the Butler government legislation had improved a bad situation. (203) On the day prior to polling the chairman of the District Council of Minlaton wrote a letter to the local paper and told readers that Davies was the best member the area every had* . (204) Davies also deemed it prudent to counter a sectarian whispering campaign and he published an advertisement denying that he had promised catholics aid to their schools, and also declaring that he was opposed to religious instruction in schools. (205) He won convincingly with 56 per cent of the vote: it was a victory for his personal following, and, to some extent, was a protest at quinquennial parliaments. He was not returned on the strength of his legislative achievements - there were none.

*

CENTRAL NO.1

Joseph Anderson stood for re-election and ran on a ticket with another Independent, J.H.Clouston, who sought F.J.Condon's seat. Joseph Henry Clouston lived at Birkenhead and described himself as 'out of business'. He was a former mayor of Port. Adelaide. (206) He campaigned closely with Anderson. They spoke and wrote rather vaguely of advocating a 'people's parliament', (207) and drew attention to 'reactionary' legislation of the Butler government: single electorates, five year parliaments and the Licensing Bill. They considered that a large section

(201) Ibidem.

(202) Ib. 18/3/1938, p.5, col .A

(203) Maitland Watch: 25/2/1938, p.5, cols.B,C,D,E

(204) Ib. 18/3/1938, p.4, cols.D.E

(205) Ib. 18/3/1938, p.1, col.A

(206) Advertiser: 4/4/1938, p.20, col.F

(207) Ib. 2/3/1938, p.26, col.C,D.E

* In which case one shudders to think what the worst member would have been like.

of the public had lost confidence in the integrity of parliamentary institutions. (208) Their policy was equitable taxation, more stringent traffic laws, motor taxation revenue to be spent on roads, encouragement of secondary industries, local option polls for betting shops, and abolition of emergency taxation. Anderson and Condon were re-elected.

*

SOUTHERN

John Cowan and R.C.Mowbray came up for re-election and were opposed by two Independents, F.A.Halleday and E.D.A.Bagot. Frank Andrew Halleday* (1899-) was an Algate dairyman and breeder of dairy cattle who had been a railway worker and seaman. He had been educated at public schools, Hayward's school and Muirden college, and said he had taken an active interest in farmer's movements. He was a member of the Church of Christ and had the strongest aversion to social legislation, and in particular hated gambling in any shape or form. He was to sit in the Legislative Council from 1938 until 14 July 1943 when he resigned to contest unsuccessfully the Federal seat of Barker. He attempted various other elections in 1944, 1947, 1949, and 1953.

Edward Daniel Alexander Bagot JP* (1893-1968) is an impressive figure of the times: a fascinating, complex individual. Some of his biographical details have been published. (209)

Bagot in 1930 took an interest in public affairs and founded the Citizens League. A.G.Price has left a sketch of him at the time.

(208) Ib. 12/3/1938, p.26, cols.A,B,C

(209) Lonie, J. Australian Dictionary of Biography, vol.7 pp.132-3

* Sources of biographical information.

The S.A. Archives has a large quantity of personal material relating to Bagot: PRG 278: "Bagot Papers."

The National Library of Australia has material relating to the Citizens League: MS 1186, and personal papers: copies of the Citizens League material are in PRG 278.

South Australiana: Vol 17, no.1, pp.5-40: A.G.Price on Bagot. A biased and uncharitable contemporary assessment.

Advertiser: 13/6/1938, p.8, col.F

Who's Who: 1965.

Bagot is a man who merits description. Of middle height, florid, rather bald and inclined to be stout, he possesses quite a good presence to which he adds an excellent manner and a good voice. He was an English Public School boy. He also possesses great courage, and originality, and he has made himself a very fair speaker. Of his organising abilities there is little doubt. His main faults are an extraordinary self assurance, a domineering outlook (I christened him the "democratic dictator") an utter inability to work with anyone on an equal or subordinate footing, and great rashness. Bagot had, up to the formation of the League failed in what ever he had taken up... (he) showed both good and bad qualities to a remarkable degree. He did some splendid work, and gained a fine name with the outside public, but it was always evident to those who worked with him that E.D.A. Bagot and his interests came first, and it was through this that he missed doing even more valuable work. (210)

The inaugural meeting of the Citizens League was held on 3 October 1930. It was, during the brief period of its flower, a great civic organisation, and mention has been made of the part it played in the election campaigns of certain independents in 1933/34. Bagot had been briefly associated with W.M. Hughes early in 1930 when the latter came to Adelaide when he was forming the Australia Party. (211) Bagot formed the Citizens League through the Political Reform League and the Constitutional Club, of which he was the president. The Citizens League was involved in the formation and work of the Emergency Committee. It seems that Bagot's relationships with some members of the Emergency Committee were not good: he was offered the job as campaign director for the City Emergency Committee candidates at the 1931 Federal elections, but is said to have refused it because he wanted to be supreme director, and he resigned from the campaign committee. Price said, and he was probably right, that it was the mistake of Bagot's life. In 1934 the Citizens League supported Bagot as an unsuccessful Independent candidate for the Federal seat of Adelaide. (212) Another candidate was J.E. Maycock. At that general Federal election South Australia polled heavily for the UAP and only in Hindmarsh did Labor win. 1934 also marks the approximate time of demise of the Citizens League as an active force in the community;

(210) South Australiana: v.17, no.1. pp8,9

(211) Advertiser: 6/2/1930, p.12, cols.C,D

(212) Ib. 8/8/1934, p.16, col.G

although it survived to about 1940, by then it had been relatively dormant for six years, and played no discernible role in the 1938 State campaigns. In 1935 Bagot unsuccessfully sought appointment as Commonwealth trade commissioner to the East.

He did not win Legislative Council Southern at his first attempt in 1938, but was successful at a by-election a few months later. He stood for re-election in 1941 and was easily defeated by the LCL. He contested no more State or Federal elections.

Bagot's appearance in the public arena in South Australia was brief, ardent and stormy. The Citizens League was an important facet of political life 1930-34 and Bagot's election to the Legislative Council in 1938 is a key turning point in the campaign against quinquennial parliaments. He had always been an uncompromising opponent of R.L. Butler and both several times had made public their mutual aversion. Bagot's tragedy lies in his complex personality, particularly his difficulties relating to other people in the public sphere, and his need to dominate and see his opinions and wishes prevail. He had many good qualities: he was brave, and his organising ability, capacity for hard work, efficiency, and energy made him a formidable figure who was either respected or feared. His great fault was that he lacked the more charismatic powers of leadership.

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Halleday and Bagot conducted a flamboyant campaign in a black caravan, with the fact of their candidacy painted prominently on it. It was equipped with loud speakers, use of which was not always appreciated by those within fortuitious earshot. (213) (214) S.H. Pearce was associated with them and the Centre Group had a district campaign director, G. Penna, who organised for the three candidates. (215) Bagot and Halleday attacked

(213) Southern Argus: 9/3/1938, p.5, col.C

(214) Border Watch: 19/3/1938, p.3, col.D

(215) Southern Argus: 23/2/1938, p.5, cols.D.E

party politics, preselection, five year parliaments and betting shops. (216) (217) Both criticised Butler and in some respects one can regard their whole campaign as having a general anti-premier footing. Insults were traded with Butler through the press, and they supported each other against him. In some ways Butler had only himself to blame. At Mount Gambier he had spent the first twelve minutes of a speech thumping Independents - a fact which Halleday used to good effect. (218) When Bagot and Halleday put Butler aside they covered many other policy points: closer settlement, taxation, education, the grape industry, and more.

Halleday claimed that his victory was due to the electorate wanting a change of government. (219) It is difficult to assess the reasons for Independent wins in Legislative Council elections because the electoral districts are so large and heterogeneous that the usual criteria we have applied for evaluation do not hold. The sheer hard work of the Independents and their flair for publicity gave Halleday the numbers.

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And there the matter might have rested but for an unforeseen event. On 20 April 1938 Thomas McCallum, MLC, set out to drive to the Meningie Council Chambers for a meeting when he had the unpredictable political misfortune to drop dead. The ensuing by-election has some importance as an indicator of the extent of the very real unpopularity of Butler. It was held on 18 June 1938. Seven LCL hopefuls contested the plebiscite and the winner R.W.R. Hunt found himself opposed only by Bagot, who had started campaigning before the plebiscite was held. The latter travelled and spoke with all his customary energy and vigor*, concentrating on the evils of party politics, preselection and five year parliaments. While he also

(218) Ibidem .

(219) Stott Papers: "C"p.44, col.B

* Bagot used a plane for some of his journeys.

discussed gauge widening, road transport, closer settlement and local issues, the foregoing remained the principal topics. His was the last colourful Independent election campaign. Throughout the South-east he was supported by John Fletcher, C.J.D. Smith and Frank Halleday. (220) (221) (222) In a 49 per cent poll Bagot defeated Hunt by 501 votes.

TABLE 30:LC Southern by-election 1938:Candidates, Votes and Percentages.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentages.</u>
E.D.A. Bagot	Ind	5076	51.21
R.W.R.Hunt	LCL	4575	46.16
Informal	.	260	2.62

Source: Southern Argus: 22/6/1938, p.1, col.C
Stott Papers: "C" p.62, col.A

Great was the anguish in the LCL camp, because Bagot's success, by the very nature of his campaign, was undeniable proof of the unpopularity of Butler: Bagot considered that the five year parliament had been the main issue. (223) Butler took his victory with ill grace because he had personally campaigned against him with the full weight of the LCL^{*}; as usual the two had sniped at each other through the press. Some of Butler's remarks after the poll were more appropriate to a spiteful seven year old than the premier of South Australia. (224) Hunt's electorate committee rationalised the defeat as due to apathy and felt that it demonstrated the essentiality for compulsory voting.[§] (225) A somewhat bemused president of the LCL could not understand what had happened when, as he noted particularly, the Independents were 'fairly harmless sorts of chaps' who voted with the Liberals. (226) An injured Hunt refused to attend the poll

- (220) Border Watch: 17/5/1938, p.1, col.C
(221) Southern Argus: 25/5/1938, p.5, col.E
(222) Border Watch: 14/6/1938, p.6, cols.E.F
(223) Stott Papers: "C" p.67, col.B
(224) Border Watch. 21/6/1938, p.1, col.D
(225) Stott Papers: "C": p.61, col.B
(226) Ibidem.

* Butler's support was not necessarily an undisguised blessing: at Mt. Gambier where he campaigned for Hunt, the poll was so low the ballot papers were counted in thirty minutes.

§ Presumably as a means of keeping the LCL power.

declaration and sent a sarcastic telegram.

There is no doubt that the well-known Independent, who was highly regarded because of his work with the Citizens league (and also another organisation, the Australian Listeners League), showed great astuteness in making Butler and his legislation the chief target in the campaign, because by the time the election was held, the 1938 parliament had met and on no less than four occasions sufficient "Independents" had demonstrated confidence in Butler and enabled him to carry on^{*}. The actions of men who weeks previously had promised to clean the Augean stables, induced electoral cynicism, apathy and resentment. Another significant factor in Bagot's victory was the procedure of the Royal Commission on transport, (227) which had taken evidence at Mount Gambier before the election and had declined, because of the limitations of its terms of reference, to take cognisance of submissions for broadening the gauge: this was the most important and relevant issue in the Southeast. Many sensible people were astounded and greatly annoyed[§]. The day after Bagot's victory, Butler announced that the Public Works Committee would hold an immediate inquiry into gauge widening. (228)

Bagot's win is also a significant milestone in the decline and fall of Butler as Premier. It helps explain the nonchalance with which the premier's resignation was received late in 1938 when on the death of C.A.S.Hawker, and while the body was still warm, he decided to contest the Federal seat of Wakefield. It makes his subsequent defeat less of a surprise, and finally, accounts for his failure to then secure LCL preselection for a further attempted entry into the House of Representatives.

(227) SAPP 20/1938

(228) Border Watch: 21/6/1938, p.1, col.D

* Infra

§ Until the gauge broadening to 5'3" in 1953, the South-east division of the then South Australian Railways (Wolseley to Mt.Gambier, Naracoorte to Kingston, Wandilo to Glencoe and Mr. Gambier Junction to Beachport), was an isolated 3'6" narrow gauge system with transfer facilities at Wolseley.

Bagot's election meant that there were now three Independents in the Legislative Council. By 1943 all had relinquished their seats and none had been elected in the subsequent thirty seven years. During their brief sojourn they occupied seats facing an average of fourteen LCL members in a House of twenty: these numbers ensured their impotence.

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Generally, in the 1938 campaign, Labor gave preferences to the Independents, (229) while the LCL directed most of theirs towards them. (230) Few were prepared to predict the outcome of the election because the change to single-member electorates, the large number of Independents and the intrusion of non-party issues complicated fore-casting. When it was realised that Independents had captured fifteen seats, Butler was amazed; (231) a few days before the poll he had been prepared to concede them three seats. The Liberals had also secured fifteen, and the Labor Party won only nine: one of the worst electoral outcomes it had ever suffered. It was in no position to say that the election result was a vote of no-confidence in the Butler government. The final result was not clear until 1 April: the LCL were deprived of a majority, the Labor Party reduced to an ineffective fragment, and the Independents held the balance of power*: no group could govern on its own.

There were many inquests, and the LCL and the United Social Reform Committee had some unedifying and futile public arguments. The Committee had recommended candidates in order of preference in thirty two electorates and in nine instances its contender was successful. Butler was strongly critical of the church's role, (232) but the Advertiser thought they were quite entitled to have done what they did. (233) Despite heated arguments and allegations which continued after the election and into the parlia-

(229) Advertiser: 25/2/1938, p.29, col.C

(230) Ib. 26/2/1938, p.23, col.C

(231) Ib. 21/3/1938, p.23, col.C

* The overall State poll was 63.13% compared with 59.35% in 1933.

mentary sitting (234) (235) (236) the United Social Reform Committee cannot take credit for any important electoral achievement and its role has been exaggerated by strong contemporary feelings of anger and frustration which clouded objective judgement. The Rev. Woolacott was close to the truth when he said that Butler was a bigger burden to the LCL than any Independents: (237) the five year parliament was a very divisive wedge in the community and a focus of electoral cynicism and disillusionment, and many Independents made it a key target. Community disquiet over betting shops came a close second as a focus of disquiet: significantly, these were the only two things which Butler thought had been important contributors to his debacle. (238) But the ordinary citizen was not much upset by the "wickedness" of gambling as he was by the thoughtless siting of betting shops in his suburb without regard for the amenity of the local community, and he disliked women being in them. Apart from the personal unpopularity of Butler, (and a very good pointer is the Ridley election result) there was community hostility towards the LCL government's habit of appointing Boards and Royal Commissions, which 'usurped' the functions of parliament; motorists resented their taxation revenue being consolidated and not returned back to them as better roads and facilities; party politics and the chronic, unsavoury preselection wrangles had made all political parties smell of corruption and self-interest. There were in these matters enough reasons for deep electoral disillusionment with the LCL and ALP. The liquor and bible reading issues were but two more straws. Even experienced and perspicacious observers were hard put to explain the 1938 results: the Advertiser thought it was mainly a protest at the undue

(234) Ib. 22/3/1938, p.19, col.C

(235) Ib. 23/3/1938, p.24, col.B

(236) SAPD 1938 vol.1, pp189,197

(237) Advertiser: 22/3/1938, p.19, col.C

(238) SAPD 1938, vol.1, from 25/5/1938 to 1/6/1938, debate on no-confidence motion, contains all the references to issues and arguments which the reader would ever want to find.

rigidity of the party system, and that there were so many cross-currents in individual electorates that speculation was futile. (239) Voting, it noted, was marked by unprecedented and capricious cross-voting and preference distribution, probably because of social issues which had been raised to varying degrees in electorates. (240) The South Australian result was unique. At an election in New South Wales on 26 March 1938 the Stevens-Bruxner government was returned with a massive victory against Labor, and only one Independent sat in the Legislative Assembly. On 2 April, in a strongly sectarian election in Queensland, Labor won easily.

If, however, by turning against party and electing Independents, the voter hoped to drive the traders out of the parliamentary temple and cleanse the soul of politics, they were destined within three weeks to be sadly disillusioned.

When faced with the election results, Butler's first decision was immediately to rule out the possibility of another election. (241) He said very little, and on 23 March went to Kangaroo Island for a fishing holiday, and remained there until 28 March. The Advertiser had a lot to say, and it was remarkably accurate in its predictions, and astute in its judgement. Noting that the only thing the Independents had in common was an aversion to five year parliaments, and that their criticism of the Butler government during the campaign came merely as a necessity of the circumstances, it suggested that they would not agree amongst themselves, and would be reluctant to become an opposition. It observed that

there is little to choose between the policy of the great majority of Independents, and the policy of the government itself; and it may thus safely assume that, if ordinary political reason prevails, Mr. Butler will find all the support requisite to the realisation of the wise and moderate programme to which he is committed.

(239) Advertiser: 21/3/1938, p.22, col.C

(240) Ib. 22/3/1938, p.18, col.C

(241) Ib. 21/3/1938, p.23, cols.A,B

Finally, the leader writer noted that most of the Independents would have offered themselves as Liberals if it had not been for party rules. (242) The next day, 22 March (three days after the poll) the survival of the Butler government was seen as "inevitable," (243) a view which found its foremost opponent in Stott: he and Halleday, however, were the only prominent voices calling for Butler's resignation, (244) and Stott was trying as hard as he could to form an Independent government.

From the public statements of the Independents who spoke to the press, it was clear that their camp was disparate. McLeay said that he was going to wait and see: he had always worked and thought as a Liberal and his only argument with the LCL was preselection. (245) Two days later on 22 March he was still not committing himself. (246) Dunn would support any government which would work for the good of the people*. Langdon on 23 March saw no reason why Independents could not formulate a policy acceptable to the electors, (248) Smith said only that he would join neither Liberal nor Labor party, (249) and Fletcher, who had had lengthy discussion with his electorate committee, (250) would not commit himself to a stand: (251) A.W. Robinson said he was negotiating with neither side. (252) Fisk had a lot to say: he was going to confer with other Independents with the formation of a Liberal-Independent coalition in mind. The possibility of union with the ALP was rejected outright. Two days later when pressed for further details, he declined to elaborate. (253) (254)

(242) Ib. 21/3/1938, p. 22, col. C

(243) Ib. 22/3/1938, p. 18, col. C

(244) Naracoorte Herald: 25/3/1938, p. 2, col. G

(245) Advertiser: 21/3/1938, p. 23, col. D

(246) Ib. 23/3/1938, p. 23, col. C

(247) Ibidem.

(248) Ib. 23/3/1938, p. 23, col. C

(249) Ib. 23/3/1938, p. 23, col. C

(250) Border Watch: 24/3/1938, p. 1, col. D

(251) Advertiser: 21/3/1938, p. 23, col. C

(252) Ibidem.

(253) Ib. 21/3/1938, p. 23, col. D

(254) Ib. 21/3/1938, p. 23, col. C

* We have seen that this meant the LCL government.

On Monday 21 March Stott was quite adamant that he could form a government. He intended to get enough supporters from those Independents associated with the Independent Campaign Committee to form a Centre Group, and he was optimistic that others would come in. Even at this early stage, however, he had noted that Davies, Robinson, McLeay, and Fisk would not cooperate with him, and were likely to support Butler. (255) (256) Just how Stott carried on his negotiations is not known*. However it is clear that he was hawking portfolios: McLeay was tempted with the ministry of local government, (257) (258) and Craigie was offered a cabinet post, possibly treasurer. (259) Stott arranged a meeting of Independents at Parliament House on Wednesday 23 March, and even though many of them were noted to be non-committal about such a step, Stott remained confident that he could form a government and that it would not be a coalition with Labor. (260) (261) The meeting was a disaster and marks the first definite stage of the process of division of the Independents into two hostile camps, only four days after the election. SH. Pearce presided at the meeting and Stott was elected "leader" of the group of Independents in order that he could negotiate officially with all of them. There were ten people at the meeting. Pearce, F.C. Staniford[§], Bagot and P.H. Quirke (the latter two thought that they had been successful,) were not members of parliament. Halleday had been elected to the Legislative Council. This left five House of Assembly Independents: Stott, Connor, Fletcher, Smith and Illingworth. It was not an auspicious start

(255) Ib. 22/3/1938, p.19, cols. A, B

(256) Border Watch: 22/3/1938, p.1, col. D

(257) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.196

(258) Stott Papers "C" p.46, cols. C, D

(259) SAPD 1940, vol.1, p.115

(260) Advertiser: 23/3/1938, p.23, cols. A, B

(261) Ib. 23/3/1938, p.23, col. C

* When questioned, Stott maintained a deafening silence on such matters, his memoirs skip over the period in question, and there are gaps in his files. His diary contains few references and most of them are cryptic.

§ Frank Clement Staniford (1893-) MHA 1924-27, 1930-33. Contested Onkaparinga as a Centre Group Independent, 1938.

for any ambitious cabal. Stott considered that Macgillivray and McKenzie would support him, even though they were not present. Davies, Langdon, Robinson, McLeay, Fisk, Craigie and Bardolph did not attend^{*}: the first four said they had not been invited. (262) Davies, who evidently had his own ambitions, claimed that the talk of forming a government of Independents was premature: he wanted to see the final figures, and have a meeting and then appoint a leader, (263) and he would be prepared to call the meeting. (264) He would not associate himself with the Independent Campaign Committee. (265) Craigie said that he would not throw in his lot with Stott because he had no policy. (266) He never wavered from this stand: at the poll declaration he affirmed that he would neither seek ministerial honours with the Independents, nor associate with the ALP. (267) Bardolph was even more blunt and rude: 'A government with Mr. Stott as leader would be funnier than comic opera.' He suggested that Stott was not even capable of moving intelligently an amendment to government business. (268) Like Craigie, Bardolph was immovable: in 25 March he made it clear that he would have nothing to do with 'the bartering which is going on at present with regard to the formation of a government,' and he would not sell himself for a job. (269)

Illingworth, whose election had only become clear on 22 March, adopted an attitude of wait and see: he wanted to ascertain what Butler was going to do about five year parliaments, betting and licensing laws, before determining his attitude. (270) The anonymous Independent who suggested that Stott did not have the confidence of all the Independents was stating the obvious. (271)

(262) Ib. 24/3/1938, p.19, cols. A, B

(263) Ib. 23/3/1938, p.23, col. C

(264) Ib. 24/3/1938, p.19, cols. A, B

(265) Ibidem

(266) Ibidem

(267) Port Lincoln Times: 8/4/1938, p.7, col. C

(268) Advertiser: 24/3/1938, p.19, col. B

(269) Ib. 26/3/1938, p.9, col. F

(270) Ib. 23/3/1938, p.23, col. C

(271) Ib. 24/3/1938, p.19, cols. A, B

* None had been supported by the Centre Group or ICC.

The only definite business transacted at the meeting of 23 March was formal termination of the Independent Campaign Committee, (272) a move no doubt dictated by the absence of nine Independents who were elected without its support. Stott noted that day that the position was 'still obscure', (273) and on 24 March the position of the LCL was 'weakening': (274) a statement not supported by facts. On 25 March he conceded that Davies and Robinson were 'hostile' and Fisk and McLeay 'doubtful'. (275) On 29 March Stott was reported to be arranging a further meeting of Independents: (276) it was not held because in the following days the initiative was taken out of his hands by Davies. Stott did hold meetings at the ICC headquarters and with Illingworth, at least, but apart from enigmatic diary references, no records remain of them. Stott was accused of trying with frenzied haste to form a government without a semblance of policy, (277) and was criticised for his 'headlong enthusiasm' for an Independent ministry. (278)

The meeting of 23 March made apparent the irreconcilable internal dissidence within the Independent ranks, and in a leader the Advertiser made some pertinent comments, noting the lack of cohesion and common policy, and pointed out that a "party" of Independents was a direct contradiction in terms and if one was formed, it would be at the mercy of the ALP. It also noted that the majority of Independents were Liberals in all but name. (279) These reflections were followed the next day with an editorial in support of Butler and deploring the attacks on him. (280) The next day (25 March) Stott told a poll declaration audience that an Independent government was inevitable, and that no Independent

(272) Ib. 30/3/1938, p.7, col.A

(273) Stott 1938 diary entry

(274) Ibidem.

(275) Ibidem.

(276) Advertiser. 30/3/1938, p.7, col.A

(277) Stott Papers"C"p.60, col.C

(278) Advertiser: 24/3/1938, p.18, cols.C,D

(279) Ibidem.

(280) Ib. 25/3/1938, p.28, col.C

would support the LCL. (281) That same day the Advertiser noted a greater possibility of the LCL continuing in office: although no Independent had definitely and openly declared a stand, the belief was held in well-informed Liberal-Country Party circles that sufficient Independents had indicated their support for a continuation of the Butler government to be inescapable. (282) On Monday 28 March Butler returned from his fishing holiday and said that he had made no contacts with Independents and would not do anything until a party meeting on 30 March decided on the Party leadership. (283) At that meeting he was unanimously re-elected leader and he indicated that he would negotiate with the Independents: support for his government seems to have been taken for granted^{*}. (284) A number of uncharitable individuals, learning of Butler's resolve to negotiate with the Independents, reminded him that he had only recently been referring to them as "barnacles" and "parasites", and noted that he was now making love to these erstwhile excessences. (285) (286)

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If Butler had to eat a substantial serve of humble pie, he would have taken some comfort from knowledge that the Labor Party was suffering indigestion from the same dish. The election result had stunned Labor and created a most embarrassing situation by leaving it a minority third party: worse, it had a leader who during the election had persistently re-iterated his determination never to cooperate with Independents. On Sunday 20 March, the day after the election, F.F. Ward, orating from his Botanic Garden stump, told his audience that Labor would get behind the

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- (281) Ib. 28/3/1938, p. 20, col. A
(282) Stott Papers: "C" p. 67, col. A
(283) Advertiser: 29/3/1938, p. 19, col. A
(284) Ib. 31/3/1938, p. 19, col. A
(285) Ib. 25/3/1938, p. 8, col. F
(286) Stott Papers: "C", p. 11, col. D

* On 1 April R.S. Richards replaced A.W. Lacey as Leader of the Opposition.

Independents and keep Butler out of office. He was reminded by "a voice" of Lacey's unyielding utterances. (287) The gulf between Labor and Independents was wide and deep: some pressure was put on Lacey to come to a working arrangement with them, but he declared that he would leave public life before doing so. (288) By 23 March both the ALP and its recalcitrant leader had got around semantic problems by agreeing that there was no question of coalition with Independents, but the Party would support their legislation if...&c. (289) It is clear that both industrial and political Labor favoured some kind of arrangement with the Independents, even if keeping Butler out of office was the only visible accomplishment. Negotiations did take place, (290) and the Trades Hall worked out what it would want in return for support. (291) Ironically, the biggest obstacle to an ALP-Independent alliance was Stott, who said that because of ALP support for a forty hour week they could never expect a say in an Independent government. (292) However, he had been opposed to a Labor coalition from the start, (293) and it was never a serious possibility. Although in the House Stott supported the ALP far more than he did the LCL, this was a stand necessitated by his role as the active representative of wheatgrowers, who had to be seen to be attacking a government which "did nothing". It would have been electorally fatal for Stott to have openly embraced the ALP which, as far as the primary producer was concerned, stunk because of its protectionism, and memories of the unlucky Scullin government were still very fresh. Richards remained optimistic even when political reality showed that outlook to be inappropriate: at Gawler on 20 April he was speaking of the Butler government's imminent resignation, when nothing was more certain that

(287) Advertiser: 21/3/1938, p. 23, col. B

(288) Ib. 22/3/1938, p. 19, col. C

(289) Ib. 24/3/1938, p. 19, cols. A, B

(290) Ib. 29/3/1938, p. 19, col. A

(291) Stott Papers: "C", p. 19, col. B

(292) Advertiser: 28/3/1938, p. 20, col. A

(293) Ib. 23/3/1938, p. 23, col. C

such an event was completely out of the question, (294) and on at least one occasion the Party made a public statement that it favoured government by Independents. (295)

On 30 March Davies announced that he was writing to all Independents to secure their attendance at a meeting on 5 April, (296) and Stott then abandoned his own proposals in that direction and announced that he would attend Davies' meeting. (297) The meeting precipitated various rumours and it was expected that one of the outcomes would be the establishment of some form of stable government. It was held at 3 p.m. at Parliament House and every Independent except Bardolph, attended. (298) (299) It continued the following day. Davies was elected chairman. No known records exist of the proceedings, (in a few weeks even the most active participants were disagreeing about what took place,) but there were two important outcomes: firstly, all hope of an Independent government evaporated permanently, and the Butler government, seventeen days after the poll, was formally secured in office: secondly, the meeting further fragmented the Independents. It is possible to piece together some of the meeting's deliberations. Stott moved that the Independents form a government: his motion was lost 12:3. (300) Fisk moved for a coalition with the Liberals: this was lost 8:7. (301) These facts came to light during an acrimonious address-in-reply on 19 May. Then, Stott, who was quite upset at Fisk's revelations, claimed that no votes were taken, but Davies confirmed that they were. (302) Fisk made another revealing remark:

We are not a united family because we have in our midst an opportunist, a man who in imagination took for himself the highest position in this House and hawked around portfolios like a chap in a banana cart. Some of us rebelled against it. (303)

(294) Stott Papers: "C" p.17, col.D

(295) Ib. "C" p.25, col.B

(296) Advertiser: 31/3/1938, p.19, col.A

(297) Ib. 2/4/1938, p.18, col.H

(298) Stott Papers: "C" p.18, col.D

(299) Advertiser: 6/4/1938, p.25, col.B

(300) SAPD: 1938, vol.1, p.37

(301) Ibidem.

(302) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.39

(303) Ib. p.144

Fisk also claimed that he had been threatened with being torn to pieces unless he came into the Centre Group. (304) He was clearly referring to Stott, a fact borne out by subsequent recriminations, and, indeed, Stott's words and actions throughout*. Fisk may have been so brutally indiscreet because he was peeved that the Independents would not put him forward as chairman of committees, a position he coveted..

Most controversy arose from a joint statement by Davies and Butler which was issued on 6 April, and which appears to have originated without the knowledge or consent of some of the Independents. An innocuous "official" statement of the Independents' position was issued on 6 April:

At the meetings of Independents the political situation was discussed in all its bearings, all members expressing their views.

It was unanimously decided that the most important and vital thing was that members retain their independence. As a result of the long discussion, and in view of the fact that all Independents are desirous that Parliament should be called together at the earliest possible moment no movement to upset the present Government was contemplated at the meeting. (306)

This could hardly cause offence. In a personal joint statement Fletcher and Smith endorsed it:

The official statement issued by the Independents' meeting is in accordance with their unanimous attitude that they will maintain their independence at all times. They desire also that the Premier shall call Parliament together at the earliest possible moment. Further than this, no assurances whatever have been given to the Premier in regard to support. (307)

It was quite a different matter with the Davies-Butler joint statement, which further accentuated the divisions between the Independents. The most inflammatory part of it said that it was the desire of the Liberal

(304) Ib. p.145

(305) Ib. pp.158-9

(306) Stott Papers: "C" p.12, cols. A, B

(307) Ibidem.

* Stott's vanity made it impossible for him to accept that his life was marked by anything other than a succession of brilliant achievements, and the existence of failures, rebuffs, personal difficulties and set-backs were so effectively shunted out of his mind that little or no evidence of them survived in his records or his memory

Country Party and all Independents that Parliament be called together as soon as possible on the understanding that the government would have sufficient support to carry on. It went on to recognise the Independents freedom to vote as they wished and the government agreed to support the restoration of three year parliaments. Finally, because of the importance of the Public Works Committee, the government intended to make appointments to it immediately so that it could continue its work.(308) Butler claimed that he had set out the basis of this memorandum in writing and had sent it to the meeting of Independents.(309) It is more likely that some Independents approached the Premier and gave him assurances.(310) Stott was enraged by the Davies-Butler communication and demanded that it be retracted.(311) Craigie and Halleday dissociated themselves from it,(312) and others,unnamed, were reported to have taken exception to it.(313) It is obvious from the concurrent uproar and the subsequent actions of some of the Independents, both prior to the date parliament met, and in the House, that the Davies-Butler statement had not been drafted or issued by unanimous consent, and it is quite probable that it had not even been considered by the meeting. Even McLeay,who had no time for Stott, said after the 6 April meeting that support for the Butler government would be a flagrant breach of electoral trust.(314) McLeay was relieved, however, that 'After much discussion the position has been clarified to a point where the House can meet and make some effort to get ahead with the job it was elected to do', and he had some scathing things to say about the 'welter of discussion and manoeuvring of the past few days'.(315) It was also reported that 'most of the Independents are emphatic that they are not in any way committed to support

(308) Advertiser: 7/4/1938,p.23,col.A

(309) Ib. 20/5/1938,p.30,col.E

(310) Ib. 20/5/1938,p.29,col.A,B

(311) Stott Papers:"C",p.12,cols.A,B

(312) Advertiser:8/4/1938,p.32,col.C

(313) Ib. 8/4/1938,p.29,col.A

(314) Stott Papers."C"p.12,col.B

(315) Ib.p.12,cols.A,B

(Butler's) ministry. They resent any suggestion that they have given assurances of support to the Premier, or that there is any understanding between them and the government.' (316)

What is very clear is that after 6 April Butler was a confident man. He had received assurances from Davies that the Independents would keep his government in office*, and the Independents had indicated that they did not want any portfolio payoffs. (317) R.S. Richards described the transactions as the first act of the 1938 political comedy, though he wondered if it was more a tragedy. (318) On 8 April, the political situation having been clarified to cabinet's satisfaction, it elevated T. Playford to the ministry, vice Hudd, and Davies and Robinson were appointed to the Public Works Committee. Richards criticised the appointments as 'unsavoury'. (319) Stott was enraged: he considered that the Butler LCL government was a defeated government and had no constitutional right to make appointments. He had not wavered from his wish to see an Independent government with a leader of its own choice, and now sought legal advice as to the precise constitutional position of the Butler ministry. By now, Stott was a 'leader' of a minority group of four Independents: Illingworth, McKenzie, Fletcher, and Connor. It is significant that a sound member like Macgillivray would not associate with them. He gave an interview wherein he claimed that the City press was misrepresenting and disparaging Independents. He said that as a whole the Independents had agreed to preserve their independence and pledge support to no party, they were not forming an Independent Group and as they could not form a government and retain their independence they had obtained an assurance from Butler about restoring three year parliaments, and agreed to let him carry on. Macgillivray said there was no desire to put the Butler government off the treasury benches and form an Independent ministry. (320) Macgillivray's own actions, detachment from intrigue, and

(317) Advertiser: 7/4/1938, p.23, col.A

(318) Ibidem.

(319) Ib. 16/3/1938, p.20, col.D

(320) Murray Pioneer: 14/4/1938, p.1, cols.A,B

* A fact confirmed during the numerous attempts to unseat the government after parliament met. (Infra) 222.

neutrality, suggests that his version must stand as the truth of the matter so far as the majority of the Independents were concerned. It is clear that Stott alone was determined to unseat Butler: by doing so he was being entirely consistent with his past actions and public statements.

Stott's problem illustrated the classic dilemma of the person who was so close to trees that he could not see the wood. He was too closely bound to, and swept along by the currents of intrigue and manoeuvre to retain objective judgement. With hindsight it is obvious that Butler would continue in office even before the meeting of 5/6 April. Stott's fury of activity and ambition blinded him to reality. Not until October 1938 did he give up. He had hoped to become Premier; in his writings he says merely that an approach was made to him to form a government. He never elaborated. It has not been possible to trace the records of the Centre Group, or other documents which would shed more light on the machinations. Only if they are found will it be possible to corroborate press reports, and clear up the several remaining obscure points in an interesting episode in the State's political life.

So far as Butler was concerned, after 7 April the political situation was clarified beyond all doubt and his government continued to administer the State. On 22 April he attended the Loan Council as Premier of South Australia. Stott continued to fulminate, attacking Butler in press and on platform: (321) (322) there was no reason why "real Independents" could not frame a policy and introduce legislation. Such legislation would cover elective ministries, triennial parliaments, electoral boundary alterations, proportional representation and Legislative Council reform. Stott recognised a number of problems, administrative, procedural and constitutional, which had to be solved before his Centre Group could form a government. (1) Did the Independents receive a mandate on 19 March to form a Ministry? (2) Was it possible for the Independents to govern

(321) Stott Papers. "C", p.13, col.C

(322) Victor Harbour Times: 29/4/1938, p.2, col.D

without forming themselves into a group and not appointing a leader?

(3) If the Independents permitted the Butler government to carry on for the present but defeated it at sometime in the future, could the Governor grant Butler a dissolution?

An opinion was sought from Mr. J.W. Nelligan, an up and coming young junior counsel, (later KC) and made public on 7 May. The questions were answered plainly and decisively. (323) Firstly, he believed the fact that the Independent candidates received more votes than the Liberals was the 'real index to the opinion of the electorate', and if none of the major parties would combine to form a Ministry, the decision to do so was up to the Independents, and he indicated the course they should follow. Secondly, current British and dominion constitutional practice necessitated the appointment of a recognised leader whom the Governor could commission to form a Ministry. Finally, in Nelligan's opinion, there was 'ample constitutional precedent' to permit the Governor to grant Butler a dis-solution, even if previously he had enjoyed the confidence of the House.

Nelligan was also asked to clarify some other matters which had obsessed Stott; the propriety of Butler's appointments to cabinet and the Public Works Committee on 8 April, and the validity of the Royal Assent to the Quinquennial Parliament Act. In regard to the first query Nelligan could find no suggestion that the appointments did not conform to the conventions of constitutional practice, and he noted particularly that the Butler ministry had made no appointment until the meeting of Independents on 5 and 6 April had publicly announced that no action was contemplated by them to put Butler out of office. The crux of the matter was that

This public announcement was in effect a mandate to the present Ministry to carry on the administration, and no doubt the Governor would interpret the announcement to mean that he must look to the Butler Ministry for advice and not to the Independents, who on their own statement did not desire to be requested by him to form a Ministry.

(323) The full text of Nelligan's reply is in appendix G.

As to whether the Royal Assent should have been given to the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1937, counsel was of opinion that the Governor had no option but to recommend the King's approval, but he made some very pertinent comments.

The extension of the life of the last Parliament was a grave intrusion on the rights of the electors. That the extension was quite legal so far as Parliament was concerned does not determine the issue. Dicey, one of the greatest constitutional authorities summarises the meaning of constitutional government in the following words:

The electorate is in fact the sovereign of England. It is a body which does not, and from its nature hardly can, itself legislate, and which, owing chiefly to historical causes, has left in existence a theoretically supreme legislature. The result of this state of things would naturally be that the conduct of the legislature, which cannot be governed by laws, should be regulated by understandings of which the object is to secure the conformity of Parliament to the will of the nation. Our modern code of constitutional morality secures, though in a roundabout way, what is called abroad 'the sovereignty of the people.' (324)

This dictum of Dicey applies equally to South Australia as it does to England.

In 1933 the electors chose certain representatives for the definite period of three years, and Parliament, in extending its life, ignored the possibility that the people had repented their decision.

When the Bill was passed, the Crown and its direct representative, the Governor, no doubt carefully weighed the position in the light of the advice tendered by the Ministry, together with the welfare of the country, and the wishes of the electors. It is reasonable to assume that the Governor, in forwarding the Bill to the King, to whom it had to be submitted as a constitutional Bill, felt bound by precedent to recommend the King's approval.

But it was evident from the public protest when the South Australian Bill was passed that the electors did not approve of the extension of the life of the Butler Ministry. A major issue of the recent election was the Five-Year Parliament when the desires of the electorate were clearly demonstrated*. (325)

Armed with Nelligan's interpretation, Stott arranged for it to be considered at a meeting of Independents on 6 May: all were invited,

(324) Dicey, A.V.: Introduction to the Study of the Law of Constitution. 6th Ed. Macmillan. London 1902 pp.373/4

(325) Ibidem.

*Stott claimed that Nelligan's opinion was the main reason for him never obtaining a Supreme Court judgeship. Nelligan died an embittered man.

only six turned up: Stott, Illingworth, McKenzie, Fletcher, Connor, Fisk. The latter attended only out of curiosity, and made it clear that he was supporting Butler, and that the majority of the Independents rejected the idea of their own Ministry. (326) The small Centre Group discussed Nelligan's opinion and decided to appoint a leader 'in accordance with constitutional practice.' The object was to have a leader in the event of a vote of no-confidence being carried against the Butler government on the floor of the House and the Independents being invited to form a Ministry. (327)

It is reasonable to assume that in the light of Nelligan's advice the Centre Group (which more or less means Stott) accepted that the Independents would not form government before Parliament resumed. Stott was nominated Leader, but declined. McKenzie then nominated Illingworth, who was elected unanimously. (328) (329) (330) (331) The move caused little public comment. McLeay remarked that:

He presumed the Centre Group had decided to replace its leader by appointing Mr. Illingworth. The decision from the Centre Group should not, however, affect the opinion of the other Independents, who were in the majority...it is my intention to abide by the previous decision of the Independents, and wait until the House meets. There does not appear to be any need for any indecent haste to gain control of the Ministerial benches. (332)

Davies, who said he received his invitation after the meeting, was sour:

Surely there must be some mistake. I cannot imagine a meeting of six Independents proceeding to such an important matter as the election of a leader, with ministerial honours in view. Perhaps it should have been termed a meeting of the Centre Group and not of the Independents. (333)

(326) Advertiser: 9/5/1938, p.19, col.E

(327) Stott Papers: "C" p.25, col.D

(328) Ib. p.29, cols.A,B

(329) Ib. p.25, col.D

(330) Advertiser: 9/5/1938, p.19, col.E

(331) Mail: 7/5/1938, (a) p.2, cols.A,B; (b) p.4, cols.A,B,C

(332) Stott Papers: "C", p.25, col.D

(333) Ib. p.21, col.D

In political circles there was no doubt of the government's ability to continue in office with the support of the majority of Independents.

The Independents, now more decisively divided into two opposing factions than ever before, held two more meetings before parliament opened. At 9.30am on 18 May all except Connor and Bardolph attended a meeting at Parliament House arranged by Davies, for the purpose of considering the appointment of Speaker, Chairman of Committee, and members of sessional committees. (334) Davies and Illingworth were suggested as chairmen, and the former was elected in a secret ballot. The meeting decided to support the LCL nomination for Speaker and Chairman of Committees, and drew up a list of Independents for election to various other committees^{*}. (335)

Immediately that meeting finished, all those present, with the exception of Robinson and Craigie, went to the Independent Campaign Committee office at 22 King William Street to attend a meeting arranged by Illingworth, (who styled himself "Independent Leader pro tem."), and which purported to be the continuation of the adjourned meeting of 6 May. Again there was a clash over occupation of the chair, and after another secret ballot, Illingworth was elected "Convenor." (336) After the meeting an official statement was issued.

At a meeting of Independents convened by Mr. Illingworth, at which twelve Independents were present, it was decided that a convenor should be appointed. Mr. Illingworth tendered his resignation as leader pro tem. The resignation was accepted. Mr. Illingworth was then nominated as the convenor in accordance with the previous resolution, and was subsequently elected. By having a convenor appointed, it will mean that the Independents will adopt a non-party

(334) Ib. p.40, col.B

(335) Ib. p.42, cols.A,B

(336) Ibidem.

* The nominations to the Assembly committees were:
Standing Orders:G.W.Illingworth
Court of Disputed Returns:E.J.Craigie
Library:C.J.D.Smith
House:D.M.S.Davies
Printing:H.C.Dunn,T.C.Stott
Consolidation of Bills:W.Macgillivray
Representative on University Council:J.McLeay

attitude on all questions before the House. (337) (338)

Illingworth explained subsequently that he was appointed convenor so that, if a constitutional crisis arose, the Governor could send for him as spokesman for the Independents. (339) The Centre Group had wanted a leader, rather than a convenor, but Davies had successfully opposed this suggestion. (340) Illingworth's term as "leader pro tem" had not lasted two weeks.

From the political wilderness, S.H. Pearce, still president of the Centre Group, sent on 17 May a cry of anguish to all Independents. After voicing apprehension at the events since the poll, Pearce criticised the concept of independence without responsibility, pointed out the need for Independents to agree on a policy and then cooperate in putting it into effect. He sharply reminded some Independents that more was needed to enable them to discharge their obligations than 'a frequent declaration of independence.' Pearce went on to deplore the lack of 'cooperation shown to date and the existence of two disparate groups, and called for the election of a single leader to represent all Independents, a method of cooperation, and a programme. (341) (342) He should have saved his ink: there was no hope of uniting all the Independents in support of a common policy, and less hope still of a Labor government supported by Independents, because even if the Centre Group had gone into the socialist fold the combined numbers were insufficient against the Butler LCL and the 'Liberal Independents.' The Advertiser leader on the day parliament opened was a mixture of propaganda and truth:

despite the mischievous notions cherished by some few members, Parliament will meet to do constructive work for the State, and not to destroy an Administration which stands pre-eminently for sound government, and for which, if it were destroyed, no practical substitute could be supplied in the existing state of parties. (343)

(337) Ibidem.

(338) Advertiser: 19/5/1938, p. 23, A, B.

(339) Ib. 20/5/1938, p. 30, col. E

(340) Stott Papers: "C" p. 34, col. C

(341) Advertiser: 18/5/1938, p. 23, col. D, p. 24, col. D

(342) Stott Papers: "C" p. 40, cols. B, C

(343) Ib. "C", p. 33, col. A

During the first session of the 1938-41 parliament, the Butler government was put to five tests of confidence: thereafter no further challenges were made.

The first came on the day parliament opened; 19 May. Bardolph moved an amendment that would have taken control of business out of the government's hands^{*}. It was not seconded, and lapsed. (344) Shortly afterwards R.S.Richards amended the motion to draft the address-in-reply. (345) Stott, the perennial optimist, welcomed the opportunity for the Independents to vote the Butler government out. (346) The amendment was lost the same day, 22:15. The eight Independents supporting Butler were Connor, Davies, Dunn, Fisk, Langdon, Macgillivray, McLeay and Robinson. Seven Independents supported Labor: Bardolph, Craigie, Fletcher, Illingworth, McKenzie, Smith and Stott. (347) (348) It had not taken very long for the Independent camp to stand revealed as a group split into almost equal parts: "And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."

On 25 May a third effort to get control of business was made by Labor's F.K.Nieass, who amended a Butler administrative motion. (349) It was put to division after a debate which saw no Independent speak, and the amendment was lost 23:13. This time Butler's Independent supporters had increased to nine: Connor, Davies, Dunn, Fisk, Fletcher, Illingworth, McLeay, Robinson and Smith. Labor was supported by Bardolph, Craigie, Langdon, Macgillivray and McKenzie. Stott was not present. (350)

This series of figures, with its impressive testimony of support for Butler, should have been sufficient to convince the most sceptical that

(344) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.13

(345) Ib. p.24

(346) Ib. p.42

(347) Ib. p.52

(348) Advertiser: 20.5.1938, p.29, cols.A,B

(349) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.102

(350) Ib. p.105

* This was typical Bardolph grandstanding.

the LCL was going to stay on the ministerial benches, and an astute Leader of the Opposition should have proceeded with circumspection. However, Richards, while generally a level-headed man with an impressive record of respect for parliamentary procedure and decorum, now made a tactical blunder. Soon after the Nieass amendment was disposed of, he amended the address-in-reply to make it a formal no-confidence motion. (351) The immediate effect was to irritate especially the pro-Butler Independents who made it plain that they were: 'altogether out of sympathy with the continued and unavailing efforts of the opposition to upset the Ministry.' With an extraordinary lack of tact and common-sense Richards then proceeded to alienate permanently many of the Independents by making offensive references to them. (352) It cannot be denied that some of them were self-seekers and political hacks, but it was the height of stupidity to say this to their faces, with appropriate illustrations, during a debate designed to bring down the government most of them had aligned themselves with. Fisk in particular took exception to Richard's personal insults, and suggested the Opposition Leader's behaviour had cemented the Independent ranks. (353) (354) During this lengthy debate, which was a waste of parliamentary time, Stott, despite the irrefutable extent of Independent support for Butler, still lectured them: if the no-confidence motion was carried, he said, another election would not be necessary: all his Excellency had to do was explore all avenues, for the formation of a government. (355) One such avenue, of course, was an Independent ministry. When Richard's crucial amendment was put to the vote, it, too, was impressively lost, 20:11. Butler was now supported by Connor, Davies, Dunn, Fisk, Fletcher, McEay, Robinson, Smith and Macgillivray: Richards by Bardolph, Craigie, Langdon, Stott and Illingworth. McKenzie was absent. (356)

(351) Ib. p. 103,

(352) Stott Papers "C" p. 43, col. A

(353) Ib. p. 31, col. C

(354) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, p. 144

(355) Stott Papers: "C" p. 47, col. B

(356) Ibidem

(357) SAPD: 1938, vol. 1, p. 236.

It was four months before the fifth and final attempt to get rid of Butler was made, and then he had a much narrower escape. On 18 June E.D.A. Bagot won the Southern L.C. by-election. Stott rejoiced exceedingly and made several public utterances to the effect that the by-election result

will mean that Independents will act on the people's decision, and take all possible steps, without further delay, to bring the control of parliament back where it rightly belongs, to the hands of the people. (358) (359)

The people's advocate bided his time until an opportunity presented itself on 5 October 1938, when he moved a straight out no-confidence motion. (360) It was lost the same day, but by only three votes. (361) Stott was supported by Bardolph, Craigie, Fletcher, Illingworth, Langdon and McKenzie (seven); Butler was supported by Connor, Davies, Dunn, Fisk, McLeay and Robinson (six). Macgillivray and Smith were not present. Butler may well have felt a sense of relief when he left parliament a month later. Stott's was the last challenge made to a ministry of the twenty ninth parliament. Reliable Independent support gave the LCL complete security of tenure; Butler's resignation removed the person to whom was channelled most aggressive discontent, and finally, in 1939, a serious personal crisis, along with the declaration of war, diverted Stott's energies.

There are other reasons why the Butler government was able to continue in office after the extraordinary set-back on 19 March, 1938. Although there were cogent bases for widespread electoral dissatisfaction with Butler, and some of these became causes which provided effective campaign material for Independents, the majority of those elected were of defective calibre. Alongside of Stott, most seem very timid. It was remarked about some that their reluctance to form a government was due

(358) Stott Papers: "C", p. 68, col. D

(359) Border Watch: 28/6/1938, p. 3, col. C

(360) SAPD 1938, vol. @, p. 1737

(361) Ib. p. 1745

in part to lack of parliamentary experience, (362) and this was obviously true. Of more relevance is that they had nothing in common, not even, as it turned out, an aversion to five year parliaments. Assessment of their motives for entering parliament, and the stands they took, is not made any easier by some of their own remarks. Illingworth, for instance, despite his role in the two months before parliament met, could say in 1941 that

The independents when returned at the last elections, never seriously considered forming a government, and care little who governs. They are more concerned with legislation as it affects the people. (363)

Yet the Centre Group continued to meet, sometimes weekly, throughout the life of the 1938-41 parliament, and in a mutant form organised for the 1941 general election. The great dilemma of the Independent is that if he organises he becomes a party- yet without such agreement he is part of an impotent political appendage, unless he holds the balance of power. The failure of the Independents to either form a government or become an effective and relevant opposition in 1938-41 is best explained, firstly, by a remark of McLeay in 1941, when he said that the Independents elected in 1938 in the main were Liberals at heart, (364) and secondly, by their inability because of personality conflicts, philosophical disagreements and jealousies, to elect a leader of their group as a whole. This meant that under the Westminster form of government they had no constitutional respectability and could never govern in their own right. If they took a leader they ceased to be Independent: here, again, is their great dilemma: the practical impossibility of reconciling their espoused, but, as it always turns out, indefinable role, with the need to face the demands of political reality and organise if they were to accomplish all the things they had stood for on the hustings. Most had given up within two weeks of the election.

(362) Port Lincoln Times: 1/4/1948, p.6, col.B

(363) Stott Papers: "D", p.72, col.D

(364) Ib. p.69, col.D

Apart from this, community opposition to Butler's legislative adventures may have been emotional and transient. He was now premier at a time when the State was in a vastly different position to what it had been in 1927-33. South Australia was over the worst of the depression and the seasonal outlook was good. Unemployment was diminishing and factory output had increased. Butler had balanced the budget for the fourth year in succession. In 1936 amidst restrained euphoria, the centenary of the State had been celebrated. Butler personally was honest and conscientious. These wider entries on the ledger much be borne in mind when we ask how it was possible for his government to continue in 1938. Once Butler had survived the no-confidence motion of 26 May, little interest was taken in the overall political situation, except as the Advertiser noted tartly, by 'a few not very finished political strategists.'

TABLE 31: Summarising the parliamentary activity of the Independent members, 1938-40 inclusive. (A consideration of their parliamentary contribution and role follows.)

Member	Year	Questions	No. of subjects debated	Business initiated	Misc. *
Bardolph	1938	56	22	3	1
	1939	38	20	4	-
	1940	19	11	1	1
	TOTAL	113	53	8	2
Connor	1938	5	4	-	-
	1939	-	1	-	-
	1940	1	-	-	-
	TOTAL	6	5	-	-
Craigie	1938	8	32	2	-
	1939	1	14	-	-
	1940	4	23	4	-
	TOTAL	13	69	6	-

(table cont'd)

Member	Year	Questions	No. of sub- jects debated	Business initiated	Misc.*
Davies	1938	2	5	1	-
	1939	9	8	-	-
	1940	3	4	-	2
	TOTAL	14	17	1	2
Dunn	1938	7	2	-	-
	1939	7	3	1	-
	1940	4	4	-	2
	TOTAL	18	8	1	2
Fisk	1938	10	25	2	1
	1939	40	21	1	1
	1940	29	16	-	1
	TOTAL	79	62	3	3
Fletcher	1938	19	18	-	-
	1939	25	14	1	-
	1940	20	21	-	1
	TOTAL	64	53	1	1
Illingworth	1938	13	25	1	-
	1939	24	22	1	-
	1940	10	18	2	-
	TOTAL	47	65	4	-
Langdon	1938	2	7	2	1
	1939	10	5	1	-
	1940	12	10	-	-
	TOTAL	24	22	3	1
Macgillivray	1938	23	20	1	-
	1939	46	22	2	-
	1940	32	19	-	1
	TOTAL	101	61	3	1
McKenzie	1938	84	29	6	1
	1939	141	22	4	-
	1940	88	17	4	-
	TOTAL	313	68	14	1
McLeay	1938	5	12	-	-
	1939	19	6	-	-
	1940	42	13	1	-
	TOTAL	66	31	1	-

(table cont'd)

Member	Year	Questions	No. of sub- jects debated	Business initiated	Misc.*
Robinson	1938	25	17	-	1
	1939	25	5	2	-
	1940	25	-	-	1
	TOTAL	75	22	2	2
Smith	1938	25	14	1	-
	1939	20	8	-	-
	1940	21	9	-	-
	TOTAL	66	31	1	-
Stott	1938	15	42	6	2
	1939	77	36	6	2
	1940	28	12	1	-
	TOTAL	220	90	13	4

Source: SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

*

* Includes points of order, calls to order, personal explanations, naming etc.

On 25 May 1938 Bardolph obtained leave to introduce a Bill to provide for a fair rents court to determine rents and protect tenants. (365) The measure lapsed and in August 1939 he re-introduced it. (366) The Fair Rents Bill proceeded to the second reading which was marred by an exchange of personal insults between Bardolph, Craigie and Fisk, and the reading was negatived by two votes on 6 December 1939. (367) In 1940 the government introduced a Rent Control Bill and Bardolph attempted to introduce two new clauses consistent with his own legislative aims; both were convincingly negatived. (368)

On 10 August 1938 he obtained leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Money-lenders Act 1924-36; it lapsed, (369) and was not heard of again. On 7 December, 1938 he moved to suspend Standing Orders to enable a debate on the price of bread: he was supported by two Independents and one ALP member, insufficient to permit the debate. (370) On 27 September 1939 he obtained leave to introduce a Moratorium Bill which provided that before a mortgagee could proceed under his mortgage, court permission was required. The purpose of the Bill, which lapsed, was to protect people who through no fault of their own could not pay their liabilities. (371) On 1 November 1939 he moved for leave to introduce an Act to reduce the term of Legislative Councillors to three years. (372) The move is an excellent illustration of Bardolph's ability to antagonise the LCL by deliberately throwing down the gauntlet, and simultaneously aggravate the ALP by stealing their thunder. He was ruled out of order, moved dissent from the chair's ruling, and in the subsequent division found himself in the lobby with a single non-Independent supporter. This is about the extent of his support: he was an active and conscientious member,

(365) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, p. 101

(366) SAPD 1939, vol. 1, p. 444

(367) Ib. Vol. 2, p. 2239

(368) SAPD 1940 vol. 2, p. 1455-6

(369) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, p. 846

(370) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, p. 846

(371) SAPD 1939, vol. 1, p. 990

(372) Ib. vol. 2, p. 1783

asking questions and contributing to debates, but his abrasive personality made cooperation for the purpose of joint enterprise with other people, out of the question, and his not infrequent descent to personal abuse contributed to his ineffectiveness. It is possible occasionally to sympathise with him: in October 1940 he was suspended from the House for telling Fisk that he was the biggest imitation of a member of parliament that he had ever seen - a sentiment shared by others who preferred to keep it to themselves. (373) His voting record indicates that for all intents and purposes he was an ALP member - a fact he never tried to disguise, deny or explain away. Without such colourful, prickly characters, parliament lacks something.

TABLE 32: D.H. Bardolph: Votes During Divisions, 1938-40, Recorded by Party

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	72	23	7
1939	32	21	6
1940	25	11	2
TOTAL	129	55	15

Source: SAPD 1938-40 extracted by author

*

Craigie took an interest in subordinate legislation. On 8 June 1938 he moved unsuccessfully to disallow regulations under the Dairy Produce Act, (374) and on 13 July his motion to disallow regulations under the Dangerous Drugs Act did not come to a vote. (375) He lay dormant until 1940: on 7 August that year he was successful both in disallowing a Laura district council by-law in relation to Sunday trading of restaurant, (376) and in revoking an SAR regulation which attempted to limit officers and employees taking other jobs. That same day he obtained leave to introduce a Constitution and Electoral Acts Amendment (Proportional Representation) Bill which would have reduced the number of members of

(373) SAPD 1940, vol. 2, p. 757

(374) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, pp 273, 1154

(375) Ib. vol. 1, p. 414

(376) SAPD 1940, vol. 1, p. 22

parliament, altered the House of Assembly and Legislative Council electoral districts, and provided for proportional representation. (377) The second reading was carried on 9 October, 20:16 and the Bill was taken into committee where it lapsed. On 6 November 1930 he moved a very long motion relating to the removal of the tax burden on industry. He was the only speaker. He resumed his monologue on 22 November, and Henry George featured large. The debate was never completed: it was a fitting swansong because Craigie lost his seat at the ensuing elections.

His parliamentary career is typical of the solitary crusader who seeks election to an influential podium from which an enthusiastically held doctrine, a universal panacea, can be spread. Such individuals find that they fight lost causes. Craigie was conscientious, intelligent, articulate, sincere and honest: his obsession with single tax doctrine made him at times a trying member. He was summed up well by Playford in 1941, as a 'very charming friend' whose political views were shared by nobody because they were based on ideas thrown overboard 80 years before. (378) In parliament, no-one took him seriously. His rigidity of thought and absolute refusal to compromise his political beliefs led him into unwise courses of action. In 1939 he opposed the Wilson-Uppill plan, would not support an investigation into disparities between State wheat prices, and twice opposed a Storage and Handling of Wheat Bill. All these measures were recognised as of benefit to the primary producer, and Craigie's stand, as the representative of a wheat growing electorate, was heroic but suicidal. He simply sacrificed his seat on the altar of philosophical intransigence. Maycock, whom Craigie disliked intensely*, said in 1944 that the farmers had sacked Craigie because of his stand on those questions. (379) That was the last election Craigie contested and he again lost. From his Rose Park home he continued to preach and

(377) Ib. ... p.223

(378) Stott Papers: "D", p.55, col.A

(379) Ib. "E", p.36, cols.D,E

* Craigie fostered the belief that Maycock was a communist: he was an advocate of social credit.

write but he seemed more irrelevant with each passing year. When the Commonwealth celebrated its jubilee he published a fourpenny pamphlet entitled "Jubilee without Jubilation", emphasising the tax burdens and public debt which federation had brought^{*}. His voting record 1938-40 indicates that he generally favoured the ALP.

TABLE 33: E.J.Craigie: Votes during divisions:1938-40: Recorded by Party

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	67	26	22
1939	22	22	13
1940	14	13	17
TOTAL	103	61	52

Source: SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

*

The only business initiated by Davies 1938-40 was to give notice, soon after the start of the 1938 session, of a motion for leave to introduce a Bill to restore the three year parliament: he withdrew this on 6 July. (380) He was a very inactive member and a reliable supporter of the LCL. He lost his seat in 1941 and did not stand again.

TABLE34:D.M.S.Davies: Votes during divisions: 1938-40:Recorded by Party.

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	11	26	66
1939	3	8	20
1940	-	3	25
TOTAL	14	37	111

Source: SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

Davies made no contribution to parliament.

*

Some comments have already been made about the parliamentary record of H.C.Dunn. There was an amusing sequel to his joining the LCL; the party did not select him to contest the seat at the 1941 election. Dunn stood as an unendorsed LCL candidate and topped the poll. The party learnt its lesson: Dunn thereafter remained the LCL member (endorsed) for

(380) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.36, cols.D,E

* Craigie, E.J.: Jubilee without Jubilation; Adelaide, no date (?1950) printed Fitzroy, Vic. pp16.

Stirling until his death in 1952. He is irrelevant in any consideration of Independent MPs, as is George Connor, who in three years asked six questions and spoke on five occasions. Towards the end of his term ill health took its toll of him. He did not nominate for the 1941 election, and his old opponent H.S.Hudd was elected unopposed. Connor, who died in 1941, was a staunch LCL supporter, and had no specific role.

TABLE 35:G.Connor: Votes during Divisions: 1938-40:Recorded by Party.

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	11	26	66
1939	3	8	20
1940	-	3	25
TOTAL	14	37	111

Source:SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

*

In 1938 Fisk displayed an interest in certain matters relating to pharmacies and shop hours. On 13 July he moved to disallow a regulation under the Pharmacy Act which requires chemists to be in constant attendance unless relieved by a qualified pharmaceutical chemist.(381) The motion was carried without a division on 7 September. On 26 October he moved for the repeal of part of the Early Closing Act which related to chemist shops. (382) The motion was negatived the same day without division. Not to be taken aback, on 23 November he obtained leave to introduce a Bill to amend the same Act.(383) This measure was negatived on 30 November without division. In each of these three cases, Fisk, a pharmacist, stood to gain materially from the passage of his motion or Statute.

In 1939 he obtained leave to introduce a Lottery and Gaming Act Amendment (Bookmakers and Permit) Bill;(384) it lapsed after the first reading. As a parliamentarian Fisk was trustworthy only where support for the LCL was essential.Otherwise he was unreliable and indiscreet.

(381) Ib.p.418

(382) Ib.vol.2,pp.2081,1086

(383)Ib. pp.2628,2769

(384) SAPD 1939,vol.2,p.1383

and his conduct at times was that of a buffoon. His death during the 1940 Christmas recess deprived his constituents of his candidacy before and representation after in the 1941 parliament. It is difficult to speculate on such things, but it is doubtful if Fisk would have been re-elected. The LCL endorsed Frank Smith, who had succeeded Fisk as Mayor, and he was a popular local figure. The ALP candidate was S.E.C. Gay, who continued to promise the re-opening of the Holdfast Bay Railway line. Fisk had proved so devious and had accumulated sufficient influential enemies to raise doubts as to his ability to retain the seat. Fisk's volte-face in regards to quinquennial parliaments is discussed later.

TABLE 36: Fisk:Votes During Divisions: 1938-40: Recorded by Party

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	29	36	67
1939	19	19	24
1940	3	10	21
TOTAL	51	65	112

Source: SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

*

John Fletcher's sole venture into the legislative field occurred on 25 October 1939 when he introduced a Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill No. 2 which allowed motorists to register temporarily vehicles at local police stations pending official registration. It passed the third reading on 22 November and became Act 34/1939.

TABLE 37: J. Fletcher:Votes during Division:1938-40:Recorded by Party

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	45	32	34
1939	29	19	8
1940	21	12	10
TOTAL	95	63	52

Source: SAPD: 1938-40: extracted by author.

(383) Ib. pp.2628,2769

(384) SAPD 1939, vol.2, p.1383

He was a popular member. In his first speech he said that he 'would support any legislation which he considered was in the best interests of the State.' (385) This he did: he was without ambition and had no axes to grind. Although his voting record indicates support for the ALP, Fletcher stood by the LCL when any important matter was involved: his position will be discussed in more detail later.

*

On 2 November, 1938 Illingworth introduced a Bill to amend the Control of Advertisements Act, and after debate this was carried at the third reading on 7 December 1938. (386) The purpose of the Bill was to make a minor alteration in the wording of a section of the original Act to provide a defence in the event of a prosecution. The Bill went to the Legislative Council where it lapsed. It was restored to the Council notice paper on 23 August 1939 and Bagot moved the second reading on 5 September. It was negatived on 31/10/39. (387) Illingworth had a material interest in the Bill.

On 20 September he moved a motion that when tenants or purchasers of State Bank houses were unable to meet their commitments through unemployment, they be provided with one days work per week to enable them to pay their installments. (388) The debate did not take long to degenerate into a political mud-slinging match: it was carried after being amended by the LCL, on 18 October, 1939. (389) In 1940 Illingworth had a legislative success: on 18 September he introduced a private Bill to incorporate the S.A. branch of the Boy Scouts Association. The proposal had an unhampered passage and received assent on 21 November. On 25 September 1940 he moved for a referendum to be taken at the 1941 State election to have the "People's Initiative Referendum" embodied in the Constitution of South Australia. (390) This was a concept which had its first important public airing at a non-party meeting on 14 March

(385) Stott Papers: "C", p.46, col.D

(386) SAPD 1938, vol.2, pp 2229, 2960

(387) SAPD 1939, vol.2, p.1939

(388) Ib. p.1371

(389)

(390) SAPD 1940, vol.1, p.697

1933. (391) It was essentially an idea to allow electors to bring forward Acts of Parliament. The electors presented a petition and parliament held a referendum: if the subject of the petition was approved, legislation was enacted. The basis of the idea is in the Swiss Constitution.

(392) Only Illingworth debated the proposal. On 22 November the premier expressed opposition and Richards amended the motion so as to delete the referendum, and the amendment was carried: the amended motion was then negatived.

TABLES 38: G.W. Illingworth: Votes during Divisions: 1938-40: Recorded by Party

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	55	34	32
1939	22	17	11
1940	14	12	15
Total	91	63	58

Source: SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

Illingworth did not divide the House. (393) Illingworth's voting pattern 1938-40 is similar to that of Fletcher. He was a conscientious but unremarkable member who was convincingly defeated in 1941, and he did not stand again.

*

Langdon early directed his attention to the re-opening of the Holdfast Bay Railway Line. On 21 September he introduced a North Terrace to Glenelg Railway Re-Opening Bill. (394) At the second reading on 28 September he found that there was little interest among members to attend the chamber and listen to him*, so he produced a hand-bell and rung it vigorously to attract attention. He was severely rebuked by the deputy-speaker. (395) Some four months previously, Langdon had complained about members leaving the chamber during debates. (396) On 26 October his Bill was read and

(391) Advertiser: 15/3/1933, p.18, col. G

(392) Dacey, A.V.: op.cit. pp 57-8

(393) SAPD: 1940, vol. 2, p. 1573

(394) SAPD: 1938, vol. 2, p. 1480

(395) Ib. p. 1631

(396) Ib. vol. 1, p. 137

* A contemporary described Langdon as an 'elderly bore.'

discharged when it was realised that a private member could not introduce such a measure because it involved expenditure of public moneys. (397) The question of re-opening the railway was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on 7 December: Dunn and McLeay opposed the move. (398)

On 23 August 1939 he introduced a Bill to amend the Road Traffic Act and allow cyclists to ride two abreast anywhere in the State. It passed the second reading on 4 October and was taken immediately through committee and the third reading. Such expeditious handling of a private members Bill amazed the opposition and brought comment. (399) Langdon favoured the ALP, which in his case is contradictory behaviour for a man who was a vigorous and voluble proponent of capitalism and private

TABLE 39: J. Langdon: Votes during Divisions: 1938-40: Recorded by Party

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	56	23	24
1939	19	10	10
1940	11	12	10
Total	86	45	44

Source: SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

enterprise. However, the electorate of Thebarton was working class, (although in pre-war years not yet a Greek and Italian ghetto,) and Langdon may have appreciated his voting source. He was not an energetic member. He was returned in 1941, died in 1942, and at the by-election the seat was easily won by Labor.

*

Macgillivray's first legislative opportunity came about when he was asked to introduce, as a private member's Bill, a measure to incorporate community hotels. (400) It was an innocuous thing which had an easy passage

(397) Ib. vol., 2, p. 2087

(398) Ib. p. 1955

(399) SAPD 1939, vol. 1, p. 1138

(400) SAPD 1938, vol. 2, p. 1764

to assent on 6 December, but its handing to Macgillivray indicates that the government still had a morbid fear of being associated with liquor legislation in any form.

On 9 August 1939 he moved that

an address be presented to the Governor, praying his Excellency to transmit to His Excellency the Governor General the following resolution: That, in the opinion of this House, the national credit of the Commonwealth should be used in the interest of defence, the primary industries, and the general welfare of the people of Australia. (401)

The motion was a thoughtful social creditor's contribution to the currents of economic thought. The speech Macgillivray made in its support brought him wide acclaim. He received congratulations from Federal members, (402) and the British Industrial Christian Fellowship sought and obtained his permission to print it in pamphlet form. It was also circularised locally as a two page dodger entitled, "The Devilish Bonds of an Unholy System." (403) Despite Playford's suggestion that the resolution be thrown in the waste paper basket, (404) it was carried on 23 August, 17:13, Macgillivray being supported by the ALP, Fisk, Fletcher, Illingworth, Langdon, McKenzie, McLeay, Stott, Bardolph and Smith. Of the Independents, only Connor, Dunn and Craigie (who had no time for Major Douglas) supported the LCL. The fate of the resolution was not discovered for 28 years. The Governor of South Australia transmitted promptly the resolution to the Governor-General, (405) and nothing more was heard of it. On 29 June 1967 the Free Pensions Association wrote to Prime Minister McMahon and asked him what had happened to it. (406) McMahon replied that the resolution had never been considered by the Commonwealth parliament and suggested the reason was that it did not contain a request for his Excellency to pass it on to the legislature. (407) A further attempt by the Free Pensions Association to have Dunstan re-

(401) BAPD 1939, vol.1, p.445

(402) Macgillivray Papers: loose letters

(403) Ibidem.

(404) SAPD 1939, vol.1, p.664

(405) Ib. p.863

(406) Stott Papers: Social Credit File, Carruthers to McMahon 29/6/1967

(407) Ib. McMahon to Carruthers 15/7/1967

submit the resolution, failed. (408)

On 17 October 1939 Macgillivray moved to suspend Standing Orders to deal with the question of military pay. This was properly a Commonwealth function and the motion was discharged. (409) Macgillivray was a significant ALP supporter, but far from an uncritical one. In his maiden speech he said that

He could not support or oppose the government, both of which he had been urged to do. As an Independent, his duty lay not in differentiating between forms of party government, but in dealing with legislation, as it comes before the House, according to his convictions. (410)

TABLE 40:W.Macgillivray:Votes during Divisions:1938-40:Recorded by Party.

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	65	28	25
1939	31	23	8
1940	21	11	9
Total	117	62	42

Source: SAPD: 1938-40:extracted by author.

It was the outlook which guided him during his eighteen year term. He was a sensible, and practical person who always criticised constructively, and he was a hard working local member. Soon after his election he organised one of the biggest parties of parliamentarians ever to make an unofficial tour of the Murray River settlements: its purpose was to show them at first hand the local problems. The tour, which lasted four days, was an outstanding success. Members who had not previously visited the area were shown direct the problems facing soldier settlers. The district councils seized the opportunity to meet parliamentarians for face to face discussions. It was agreed generally that the participants had gained practical knowledge of the conditions along the River and were in a better position to understand the motivation for settlers' anxiety

(408) Ib. Carruthers to Dunstan, no date.

(409) SAPD 1939, vol. 2, p. 1410

(410) Stott Papers. "C", p. 46, col. C.

in regard to finance and marketing. The social activities brought parliamentarian and elector close.

*

Mention has been made of the ALP sympathies of R.L.McKenzie. His first positive action in parliament was to obtain leave to introduce a Family Endowment Bill on 28 September 1938: this lapsed. (411) Twelve months later he moved that child endowment be introduced in South Australia: he was the only member to speak and debate did not resume after an adjournment on 26 October 1939. (412) He did not give up easily and in 1940, for the third time, brought child endowment up. The motion that it be introduced was amended without destroying its object and it was carried without division. (413) The motion did not bind the government to any positive action; it would not have got through if it had.

On 5 October 1938 he introduced a Bill to amend the Irrigation Act. His object was to reclassify and revalue irrigation blocks for the purpose of debt adjustment. The Bill was negatived 16:14 on 30 November. McKenzie was not supported by Bardolph, Connor, McLeay and Robinson. (414) The following year he had another go. On 8 November 1939 he was out of the chamber when debate was to be resumed and the second reading was abruptly negatived. This was hitting below the belt, but his efforts to have his Irrigation Act Amendment Bill restored to the notice paper failed. (415) One of McKenzie's election promises was to abolish River Murray punt tolls and fares. His first try was on 6 July 1938 and his motion was negatived on 16 November. Independents who did not support him were Connor, Craigie (to whom the notion of someone getting something for nothing was utterly abhorrent), Dunn, Fletcher, McLeay and Robinson. (416) On 30 October 1940 he again moved to achieve this objective. On 22

-
- (411) SAPD .1938, vol.2, p.1619
(412) SAPD.1939, vol.1p.1739, vol.2, p.1508
(413) SAPD 1940, vol.1, p.227; vol.2, p.1571
(414) SAPD 1938, vol.2, p.1736, pp2781-2
(415) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.659, vol.2, pp1724; 1917
(416) Ib. p.316

November his motion was amended to apply to all river punt tolls and fares, and then was promptly defeated. (417)

McKenzie's main concern was with the wheat industry. On 30 November, 1938 he moved that the State government approach the Commonwealth to obtain assistance for wheat growers. His motion was amended by Richards and Stott^{*}, both the amendments were negatived the same day and the motion left mutilated beyond repair. (418) The previous June McKenzie had moved the adjournment to discuss wheat prices, and the debate had been talked out. (419) As a parting gesture to 1938 he moved for a special session of parliament in the new year to deal with unemployment, problems of primary producers, and other urgent business. He found a very determined effort to obstruct this through the Standing Orders and when the House divided for the final time, of the Independents, only Bardolph, Illingworth and Stott supported him. (420) On 18 October 1939 Stott moved on McKenzie's behalf to secure a statistical return of wheat merchant and grower stored wheat. After a brief debate the motion was negatived. (421)

Another of McKenzie's electoral promises was to secure for daily paid railway employees the same sick leave entitlements as salaried officers. He moved a motion to this effect on 15 November 1939: it was opposed by the government but never came to a vote. (422) He made a further attempt on 7 August 1940, but this motion lapsed. (423)

In the closing stages of the 1940 session McKenzie again moved that parliament come together in January 1941 to deal with "urgent business":

(417) SAPD 1940, vol.2, pp.1131,1574

(418) SAPD 1938, vol.2, pp.2576,2767

(419) Ib. vol.1, pp256,264

(420) Ib. vol.2, pp 2945,2947-8

(421) SAPD 1940, vol.2, p.1345

(422) SAPD 1939, vol.2, p.1780

(423) SAPD 1940, vol.2, p.1584

* A fact which shows that there often was little communication and cooperation between people with the same views and objectives.

the disabilities of primary producers, unemployment and general depression. There was a most acrimonious debate and the motion was lost 24:5, only five Independents, McKenzie, Illingworth, Langdon, Macgillivray and Smith supporting it. (424) There is no doubt that McKenzie proposed the earlier resumption of parliament from the sincerest of motives. As a member of parliament, it is impossible to ignore him. He was an opportunist, and had a somewhat shallow personality, but he was an effective Independent, keeping the government on its toes with questions and criticism, and doing what he could for the people he represented. His parliamentary work for the wheatgrowers is overshadowed by Stott's contribution, and he can be credited with no lasting achievement.

*

John McLeay only raised one matter in three years. On 23 October 1940 he moved that the government should make available additional finance for the purpose of securing and assisting secondary industries in South Australia. After debate, the motion was carried on 20 November. Of the Independents, only Craigie opposed it. (425) (He considered that the only way to assist industry was to abolish tarriffs.) Looking back on his term in 1941, McLeay told his electors:

TABLE 41: McLeay, Votes during Divisions: 1938-40: Recorded by Party.

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	25	29	58
1939	15	14	20
1940	12	7	14
TOTAL	52	50	92

Source: SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

I acted as I felt you had elected me to act, as I am a completely Independent and critical supporter of the government. (426)

Although this seems to be a case of having the cake and eating it, it is a fair summary of his three years, although he was not a particularly

(424) Ib. pp 1575, 1581

(425) Ib. pp 1039, 1500

(426) Stott Papers: "D", p. 69, col. D

troublesome critic, and could always be relied on to support the LCL when things were tight. He was not re-elected in 1941, but as mentioned went on to a distinguished career in Federal politics.

*

Like McLeay, C.J.D. Smith raised only one matter in three years. On 5 October 1938 a motion was moved on his behalf that a complete set of Statutes be provided for the use of each member during his term of office. The motion was negatived on 9 November, Smith receiving no support from Bardolph, Connor or Craigie. (427) Smith's voting record shows a

TABLE 42: C.J.D. Smith: Votes during Divisions: 1938-40: Recorded by Party.

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	35	33	42
1939	8	4	12
1940	10	10	14
TOTAL	53	47	68

Source: SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

lean towards the LCL. He was an unimpressive member and was defeated in 1941.

*

A.W. Robinson was a fervent supporter of the LCL, and in this he was simply being consistent. In 1938 he was 61 years old, not a well man, and not an active contributor to parliamentary debate. Robinson when younger had shown that he was a sound and hard-working politician: in particular as a member of the Railway Standing Committee for six years (the forerunner of the Public Works Committee) and its sometime chairman, he rendered valuable service. One of the legacies of that Committee was Webb and railway rehabilitation. Robinson referred to himself as an "Independent Independent", (428) and on more than one occasion made it clear that he loathed the Labor Party. (429)

Robinsons' sole participation in parliamentary work 1938-40 was (427) SAPD. 1938, vol. 2, pp. 1736-7: 2385

(428) Stott Papers: "C", p. 46, col. C

(429) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, 174.

two unsuccessful attempts in 1939 to get approval for a totalisator at speed course meetings. He was re-elected in 1941, with a slightly reduced majority, and when he died in 1943 the ALP captured the seat. It was probable that death was the only way the seat could have been taken from him because he had many personal supporters in Gouger. His voting record speaks for itself.

TABLE 43:A.W.Robinson:Votes during Divisions:1938-40:Recorded by Party.

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	21	25	60
1939	16	21	21
1940	3	4	26
TOTAL	40	50	107

Source:SAPD 1938-40:extracted by the author.

*

Stott concerned himself with wheat and other matters relevant to primary production, electoral reform, and divorce. Ironically, only in the latter subject did he enjoy success.

On 6 July 1938 he moved for a select committee on wheat prices, it was to concern itself principally with the reasons for the discrepancy between prices for wheat offered by purchasers in Melbourne and Adelaide. On 20 July the motion was lost on the casting vote of the Speaker: Independents who did not support Stott were Bardolph, Connor, Dunn, Craigie, Fisk and McLeay. (430) On 28 August 1939 he obtained leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the adjustment of primary producer's mortgages. It was opposed by the government and after a reasonable second reading was negatived on 29 November, Stott finding that his only supporters were Macgillivray and McKenzie* . (431) On 4 October 1939 he introduced a Wheat

(430) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, pp. 331, 528'

(431) SAPD 1939, vol. 2, p. 2033

* It was five years after Stott had moved an amendment to the Debts Adjustment Act to give the administering board power to write down secured as well as unsecured debts, a move defeated by the Butler government.

Storage Contracts (Price-fixing) Bill which aimed to reduce the opportunities for the wheat merchants to profit from the war situation. It, too, was strongly criticised by the government, and on 29 November was lost, 25:7. Again, of the Independents, only Macgillivray and McKenzie supported Stott. On 31 October he tried to suspend Standing Orders to move an urgency motion to secure a guaranteed price for wheat from the Commonwealth Wheat Board after the declaration of war. The motion was quickly lost after Playford opposed it. (432)

On 6 July 1938 Stott introduced a Bill to amend the Electoral Act to provide for compulsory voting^{*}. (433) This subject found a happy unanimity of opinion amongst legislators and the second reading was carried with a majority of twenty on 26 October: four Independents, Craigie, Robinson, Dunn and Macgillivray opposed it. The third reading was carried without division on 1 December, (434) The measure lapsed in the Legislative Council. On 20 July 1938 he introduced a Bill to provide for elective ministries[§]. The Bill reached the second reading stage and then lapsed. (435) Nothing more was heard of it until 4 September 1940 when a lively second reading debate re-commenced. The measure was negatived 22:9 on 13 November. The nine supporters were all Independents: Craigie, Fisk, Fletcher, Illingworth, Langdon, Macgillivray, McKenzie, Smith and Stott. (436)

The remaining two Stott Bills provide a good illustration of the useful work an Independent member can do. On 21 September 1938 he introduced a Bill which was to become the Matrimonial Causes Act Amendment Act. It enabled either husband or wife to obtain a divorce if the other party had been guilty of desertion for at least three years, instead of five

(432) Ib. p.1553

(433) SAPD 1938, vol.1, p.331

(434) Ib. vol.2, pp2090:2794

(435) Ib. vol.1, p.521: vol.2, p.1376

(436) SAPD 1940, vol.1, p.521, vol.2, p.2098

* Electoral Act Amendment Bill

§ Constitution Act Amendment (Elective Ministries) Bill

as the law then provided. Stott's action was regarded as 'meritorious' by C.L.Abbott.(437) Stott's interest in divorce arose from the the problems which a very close personal friend experienced with a disastrous marriage. Separated, he was distressed by the period of time which had to elapse before he could marry the woman he loved. The Independent pursued the law reform out of a genuine desire to help him, but when it became known where Stott's sympathies lay, he was contacted by others in a similar situation.(438) The second and third readings passed without division on 26 October 1938, the Bill survived passage through the Council and was reserved for the Royal Assent.(439) Stott characteristically did a lot of research before submitting the legislation, and a large file containing divorce references and details of laws in other countries survives among his papers. There was public pressure for a change to the existing Matrimonial Causes Act along the lines Stott introduced. The government viewed his Bill favourably and was pleased that a private member had relieved it of the need to grasp a prickly social nettle. Stott's action in introducing it was not without courage. No member of either Party was prepared to bring down such a measure.

The other Bill was promoted by Stott in response to appeals made to him by interested parties affected by the Draught Stallions Act. Because of a series of poor seasons the horse breeding industry had run into difficulty getting some of its stallions passed by the government veterinary inspectors as suitable to service mares. Stott's Bill would have allowed rejected, but sound stallions, to be used for owner's own breeding purposes until they were permitted to breed generally. His proposal was negatived 25:9 on 29 November 1939.(440)

(437) SAPD 1938, vol. 2, p. 2087

(438) Recounted by I.F.Stott and H.C.W.P., who had sought Stott's assistance with his own matrimonial problems.

(439) SAPD 1938, vol. 1, p. 1480: vol. S. pp, 2087, 2617

(440) SAPD 1939, vol. 2, p. 2045

TABLE 44: T.C. Stott: Votes during Divisions: 1938-40: Recorded by Party

Year	ALP	No Party	LCL
1938	59	27	15
1939	32	21	4
1940	17	5	1
TOTAL	108	53	20

Source: SAPD 1938-40: extracted by author.

When his voting in those years was drawn to his attention in later times when he had used his casting vote to keep a decadent LCL government in office for five years, he would explain it as due to altered circumstances.

*

During the first session of the 29th parliament 1938-41, six Bills proposing Constitutional amendments were introduced and none was enacted. A Bill designed to deal with deadlocks need not concern us, mention has already been made of Stott's proposal for elective ministries, and Davies' withdrawal of the proposed triennial parliament legislation. The two remaining relevant Bills both had as their object the return to three year parliaments; one was introduced in the House of Assembly and the other in the Legislative Council. R.S. Richards introduced a Constitution Act Amendment (Triennial Parliaments) Bill on 5 July 1938. His attempt to suspend Standing Orders to move forthwith the second reading was defeated: the Independents Connor, Davies, Dunn and Robinson opposed the motion and deprived Richards of a constitutional majority in favour. (441) Debate resumed on 6 July and the second reading was carried on 24 August: Fisk was the only Independent to vote against it: after his election he had quickly changed his mind on this question, too. Hence even on this most contentious issue the Independents were not unanimous. After a brief time in committee the third reading was carried that same day and the Bill went to the Legislative Council and the second reading

(441)

there started on 31 August. It was not a very long second reading debate. After an adjournment the Bill was defeated on 28 September. The three upper House Independents supported it.(442) A reading of the Legislative Council debates gives the impression that the Bill was not taken seriously: Richards, for one, believed that the government had arranged for its defeat there. On 12 July leave had been granted to Joseph Anderson to introduce a Bill to restore the three year parliament: it was read and discharged when the Assembly Bill reached the Council.

On 16 August 1939 Richards again introduced a Bill to repeal the quinquennial parliament legislation, and it was similar to the 1938 proposal. On 8 November it passed the second reading 24:12, and again Fisk was the only dissenting Independent.(443) Connor was not present. The third reading was carried the same day, 22:12.(444) In the Legislative Council the Bill had quite a different reception to that afforded it twelve months earlier. It passed the second reading without a single dissident, (445) went quickly through committee, and passed the third reading without division. The last business of the House of Assembly before prorogation in 1939 was to agree to a minor Legislative Council amendment, and the Bill was reserved for the Royal Assent and became an Act 49/1939*. The reasons for the astounding Legislative Council reversal of its point of view of the year before are complex, disguised behind a screen of ambivalent altruism, and outside the scope of this thesis. The five year parliament had been a controversial and divisive topic, and the only major question which saw Labor and Independent in agreement. As soon as parliament met in 1938 manoeuvring began to see who would be first to propose repeal of the long parliament, and at times the Labor

(442) Ib. vol.2, p.1608

(443) SAPD 1939, vol.2, p.1713

(444) Ib. p.1724

(445) Ib. p.1814

* Constitutional Act Amendment Act (No.2), 1939
Royal Assent was proclaimed on 28 March 1940

leadership was quite childish in its determination to forestall the Independents in moving repeal. (446) (447) (448) (449) The frantic ALP activity makes it plain that the Party would have been shattered psychologically if the Independents had been able to seize the initiative and present a Bill. Like the ALP, the Advertiser remained a consistent opponent of the five year legislation. The lesson was not lost on Playford. In his 1941 policy speech he made it plain that the Constitution was not going to be altered in any material way and in particular the life of parliament would not be increased. (450)

*

On 27 July 1938 in the Legislative Council S.R. Whitford introduced a Bill to amend the Licensing Act, the most important clause being one which would alter hotel hours to enable trading from 9.00am to 6.30pm, and 8.00pm to 10.00pm. The Bill had an uncomfortable passage through the Legislative Council and passed the third reading on 6 September, (451) Anderson and Halleday opposing. By the time the Bill had reached the House of Assembly the agitated custodians of public morals had been busy. (452) The second reading was lost by one vote on 8 December after an acrimonious all night sitting. Connor, Dunn, Fletcher, Illingworth, Langdon, McKenzie and Smith opposed it. (453)

Two Bills to amend the Lottery and Gaming Act 1936 were passed during the 1938 session: both were minor and uncontroversial. In 1939 no contentious social legislation was introduced, nor were any amendments made to existing betting laws which were other than in relation to financial and administrative matters. On 18 September 1940 Richards introduced an Education Act Amendment Bill which provided for religious

(446) Advertiser: 20/5/1938, p.14, col.F

(447) Ib. 24/5/1938, p.19, col.F

(448) Ib. 1/6/1938, p.7, col.B

(449) Ib. 3/6/1938, p.35, col.A

(450) Stott Papers: "D", pp78-9

(451) SAPD: 1938, vol.1, p.1314

(452) Ib. pp.1356, 1481

(453) Ib. vol.2, p.3028

instruction in State schools. It was assented to on 28 November. It had passed its third reading in the House of Assembly 27:3, only Craigie, Davies and Macgillivray opposed it: a highlight of the second reading debate was a four hour speech by Craigie.

*

In Legislative Council on 23 August 1939 the Electoral Act Amendment (Compulsory Voting at Assembly Elections) Bill was restored to the notice paper. The second reading was carried on 1 November 1939: Anderson opposed, and Bagot and Halleday supported it. (454) On 16 November the third reading was defeated 10:8.

*

There were two occasions during the 1938 session when the extent of dissent within the Assembly Independent camp was revealed. Although the occasions were in themselves unimportant, they are significant in providing evidence of the factions which militated against cooperative enterprises. On 25 October 1938 C.A.S. Hawker, MHR, with thirteen other passengers and a crew of four left Adelaide for Melbourne in the ANA plane "Kyeema". At 1.43pm in fog the aircraft struck Mr. Dandenong and all aboard were killed. Butler promptly resigned from State parliament to contest Hawker's Federal seat of Wakefield (of which Butler's State electorate was part.) On 3 November the House of Assembly paid tribute to Butler with the typical fulsome and hypocritical panegyrics which disguise the sense of relief of people who record the departure of an unwelcome incumbent. Illingworth spoke "As the convenor of the Independent Group" and was followed by A.W. Robinson who made it very clear he was unsure if Illingworth spoke for him. Craigie spoke facetiously on his own behalf and Bardolph asserted his separate Independence. (455) Butler's

(454) SAPD 1939, vol. 2, p. 1590

(455) SAPD 1838, vol. 2, pp 2284-87

departure necessitated the appointment of a new chairman of committees. The LCL nominee was H.S.Dunks: Macgillivray and McKenzie nominated Stott. A secret ballot was held, Bardolph moved successfully that the voting be made public. It was found that Dunks had secured twenty five votes, Stott, eight, and three were invalid. Clearly, half the Independents and the ALP had no time for Stott.

*

Outside of parliament, Stott was as extraordinarily active as ever, attending wheat and other conferences in Perth and the eastern States, conducting a running war with Judge Paine and staff administering the Farmers Relief Act, interviewing public servants, addressing organisations and keeping in touch with his electorate. These demanding calls on his time would be sufficient to exhaust the most conscientious public figure, but Stott was also involved in a heavy private social life. He was an active freemason* and attended many lodge nights: he went to dinners, dances, football matches, social occasions and even lectures at the University of Adelaide. He seems rarely to have been at his home, even when parliament was sitting. His diary entries for the two weeks between 28 November and 12 December 1938 are typical. In that period he visited Robertstown, Eudunda, Kapunda, Nuriootpa, Freeling, Balaklava, Lobethal, Birdwood, Morgan, Renmark and Waikerie: he kept appointments, attended sales, participated in social functions and fulfilled electorate engagements. A long time neighbour of the Stotts when they lived in Wheaton Road Glandore, remembered that he was rarely at home, and recalled one incident with amusement. Stott had been overseas for several weeks. He returned home just as his wife was going out. They exchanged greetings at the front gate, said goodbye, and went to separate engagements: their contact lasted less than a minute!

In December 1938 Stott was faced with a serious personal and political

* He was initiated in Adelaide Lewis Lodge on 25/7/1933.

crisis. His financial situation had become progressively worse during and after the depression years and we have seen that in 1931 he became an applicant for relief under the Farmers Relief Act. Stott's money problems continued notwithstanding his parliamentary and wheat federation salaries. The plight of the mallee wheat farmer had not improved in ten years, which is hardly surprising considering the overall State and Federal government inaction tempered occasionally by ad hoc rescue measures. (456) There was only one matter where anything resembling long term planning was a feature; a conference of Commonwealth and State ministers on 16 November 1938 decided to tackle the problem of wheatgrowing in "marginal" lands, and £500,000 was set aside annually for four years from the flour tax to reconstruct holdings in areas where rainfall and geography made wheatgrowing a lottery. (457) These proposals, somewhat diluted, were embodied in the Federal Wheat Industry Assistance Act 1938, and the States were invited to submit plans. The S.A. Government duly appointed a committee which enquired into the utilisation of marginal lands and brought down a report.

On 16 December 1938 Stott called a meeting of his creditors under the Bankruptcy Act*. The meeting was held on 22 December and liabilities of £2,913 were revealed. Stott made a proposal for composition of his debts which was accepted and subsequently confirmed on 4 January 1939: the composition became binding on creditors on 21 January. The Speaker of the House of Assembly, R.D. Nicholls, became aware of the proceedings under the Bankruptcy Act and

(456) Some of these are detailed in two unprinted ministerial statements:
Financial Assistance to Wheat Industry 15/11/1939:
Financial Assistance, Marketing and Stabilisation 29/11/1939.
(Commonwealth Parliamentary Library.)

(457) Dunsdorfs, E.: op cit, p. 301

* The following account has been compiled from Stott v. Parker judgment of Cleland J, 26/4/1939. Docket CSO 25/1939. Official Receiver's Correspondence Assignment no. 4 of 1939. Newspaper reports. SAPD. There are no useful diary references to the crisis and the various Stott autobiographies omit all mention of it. A newspaper cutting in Stott Papers "C" p. 83/A drew my attention to the matters. Certain other documents were obtained from a source which cannot be named: they include correspondence between the Speaker and Crown Solicitor and Stott's solicitor.

deemed it his duty to ascertain whether, in consequence of what has occurred, the Ridley seat had become vacant by reason of Mr. Stott having become an insolvent debtor within the meaning of the laws in force in the State.

What then happened had, at the time, the appearance of being an attempted victimisation. Nicholls, through Playford, sought the advice of the Crown Solicitor, and on 2 February both A.J. Hannan, K.C. and Francis Villeneuve Smith, K.C., opined that the seat of Ridley had become vacant on 21 January 1939. Stott's salary as an MP was immediately stopped and vacation of his seat pursuant to Section 31 Sub-section (c) of the Constitution Act 1934-36 confirmed by the Speaker. Stott faced a problem with more ramifications than immediately apparent because payment of part of his parliamentary salary to his creditors was one of the resolutions of his assignment.

On 24 February Stott presented a Petition of Right praying that the Supreme Court should order that at all material times he was a member of parliament and was entitled to the salary which had been withheld*. The judges of the Supreme Court were shrewd enough to make sure they did not have to do cabinet's dirty work and on 26 April 1938 the full court, Napier, Richards and Cleland JJ, by a majority decided that the proceedings should be stayed to enable the House of Assembly to determine whether the seat had become vacant. Napier and Richards held that the court had no jurisdiction, Cleland, dissenting, claimed not only that the court did have jurisdiction, but that Stott had become neither an insolvent debtor nor a public defaulter.

It is difficult to conclude other than that Stott was the object of a determined effort by the LCL government to remove from parliament a capable, efficient, irritating critic and opponent. Although Playford protested that the government had never regarded the matter as a political or personal question, he was not believed by anyone, and cer-

* Stott's solicitors were Genders, Wilson & Pellew. He was represented by J.J. Bray, later Chief Justice.

tainly not supported by a dispassionate review of the contemporary documents. In the first place cabinet was annoyed at the decision of the Supreme Court and wanted an appeal to the High Court. This required Stott's consent, and so was out of the question. Then, Playford foolishly approached Napier and Richards, through the Chief Justice, Murray, behind the backs of all parties, to see if he could have their personal views. This indiscreet action, when it was discovered, upset parliament more than anything else.

Having failed to get rid of the tempestuous Independent before the 1939 parliamentary session commenced, the government had to put the case for Stott's unseating to the House when it resumed in July. Playford had initially toyed with the idea of a select committee to deal with the problem of the interpretation of the law but he found some hostility to this. On 6 July 1939 he therefore moved to declare Stott's seat vacant and the motion was seconded pro forma by McIntosh. In the ensuing debate Playford was torn to shreds by Labor, Independent and even some of his own side, notably C.L. Abbott. It is clear that there was a general feeling that Stott was being victimised and that to get rid of him cabinet had allowed the judiciary to be dragged through the political mud. After an acrid six hour debate the Assembly decided 24:9 that it would not declare his seat vacant; no Independent opposed the motion. An anxious Stott, who had watched the proceedings in the public gallery, resumed his seat in the House. (458) The congratulatory telegrams and letters he received leave no doubt that the ordinary man in the street believed that he had been set up. Another dispute arose over his commission as a Justice of the Peace which he was faced with forfeiting. After the Assembly decision Playford directed him to resign his appointment, and then to re-apply for nomination: this was done and

458) A full account of the debate is in the Advertiser: 7/7/1939, p.7, cols. D, E, F, G.

he was re-appointed. The final dividend to the creditors in Stott's estate was not declared until 1944.

Although Stott's memoirs avoid all reference to the foregoing, he does refer to another incident and sheds some light on a section of the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1939. This Act removed doubts which had previously existed as to the constitutional position of an MP being paid for serving in certain offices of profit under the Crown, such as Select Committees and Royal Commissions. Section 4(h) affirmed the right of a person to sit in parliament when he had received a loan from a government instrumentality. Hitherto the belief had existed in some circles that a person who received a State Bank loan or assistance under the Farmers Relief Act forfeited his parliamentary seat. According to Stott, an action to unseat him because he had been the recipient of a State Bank loan, was started by the Under-treasurer, but discontinued. Stott always suspected that it was begun because of his constant criticism of the bureaucracy administering the Farmers Assistance Act and Debt Adjustment Boards. The Act of 1939 clarified the situation.

*

Notwithstanding the enormity of the personal problems which he faced, and the constant frustrations which met his efforts in parliament, far from giving up Stott became even more determined, and during the whole of the period when his parliamentary future was under a cloud, he never relaxed one jot his official and unofficial engagements and obligations: if anything, the pace of his activities increased. On 27 March 1939, when his Petition of Right was before the Court, a Farmers March, which he had organised, took place in Adelaide. About 350 farmers and their families from all over the State assembled at the City Baths and with the assistance of the police marched down King William Street and a deputation waited on the Premier. They displayed placards in

support of wheat stabilisation, security of tenure, and calling for justice and unity - two elusive abstractions. As a publicity stunt drawing attention to the plight of the primary producer, it was a great success, but it accomplished nothing else. (459) Stott noted that McKenzie and Davies stood on the sidelines until they saw the extent of the support, and then joined in: the former tried to get hold of the microphone, but was told to take his place in the procession.

Stott then turned his attention more determinedly than ever before to the question of wheat stabilisation and an International Wheat Agreement. The latter was a drafting attempt of ten countries, including Australia, working as a preparatory committee under the auspices of the International Wheat Advisory Committee. The negotiations were aborted by war. (460) By then the position of the Commonwealth and States in relation to the wheat industry was one of hostile disagreement. The Commonwealth wanted a scheme of internal stabilisation where the States came to the financial party on a fifty-fifty basis, and would enact legislation to control production. Unfortunately the States' contribution would have required them to erode their loan money because revenue would have been quite inadequate to meet the high subsidy which would have been called for. There were other arguments over Commonwealth jurisdiction: the Federal government continued to tell the States that it lacked the constitutional power to control production; the States continued to tell the Commonwealth that under the trade and commerce provision of the Constitution the power did exist. The last thing either side considered was the wheatgrower himself. The Commonwealth promoted this "new" wheat plan amid national controversy and most opposition came from Victoria where, reacting to grower protest, the premier, A.A. Dunstan, sought a legal opinion from W.K. Fullagar, KC, which showed

(459) Stott Papers: "D", p. 71, col. A (Stott at Moorook, 1941)

(460) Dunstons, E: op. cit., p. 310

that the Commonwealth proposals were constitutionally invalid. Dunstan was not so much concerned with the welfare of growers as he was opposed to the Victorian treasury subsidising other States. (461) The Victorian attitude upset South Australia which promptly obtained an opinion the exact opposite of Fullagar's from the parliamentary draftsman, E.L. Bean. The public hostility between Dunstan and prime minister Menzies put the whole wheat industry problem back in the melting pot. Both sides had legitimate fears about "wheat plans." The Commonwealth wanted the States to pay for half of the scheme because it saw that some limitation of production was essential and if the States had to pay half the bill they would be more inclined to legislate to curb production. The last thing the Commonwealth wanted was to be placed in a position where it had to guarantee unlimited production.

The Australian Wheatgrowers Federation was disgusted to see the continuation of its role as a political football, and Stott arranged an Australia wide conference in Melbourne on 30 August 1939 to draft proposals for stabilisation which could be put to the Menzies government and hopefully, would not lend themselves to constitutional challenge by disgruntled State premiers. (462) The problems of the wheat industry had now begun again to hurt South Australia. The whole economic structure of the State continued to rest on agriculture and practically all exports consisted of agricultural produce. Wheat still dominated this agricultural system. When wheat prices fell in the middle of 1938 the government was bewildered. We have seen that when Stott had attempted to set up a select committee to enquire into the interstate grain price discrepancies, his proposal was defeated by one vote: the government itself did nothing: the price slump was sufficient to produce a substantial state deficit. (463) The low prices continued in 1939. The Advertiser

(461) Stott Papers: "D", p. 4, col. A

(462) Loose memo in Stott Papers.

(463) Governor's Speech, 1939.

then was totally opposed to the orderly marketing of wheat, and did not change its mind until December 1940. (464) (465) From the safety of private life Sir Richard Butler lectured on his own solution to the problems of the wheat industry: tenant farms, smaller holdings, writing off sixty percent of agriculturalist's debts, and replacement of tractors by horses. (466) To say the least, the proposals were extraordinary, coming from an ex-premier who had been distinguished by almost complete inactivity where the wheat grower was concerned*.

"Plans" for the salvation of the wheat industry abounded; it seems that every State political party and farmer's organisation had its own pet project: every scheme attracted supporters and hostile critics. In late 1938 the AWF favoured the Simpson stabilisation wheat plan, which took its name from a past president H.L.Simpson, of Victoria. It provided for a system of levies and equalisation of home and export prices, and it was regarded as a stepping stone to the establishment of a wheat export control board. (467) At about the same time H.K.Nock, MHR, put forward another eponymous wheat stabilisation scheme involving a special home consumption price and an excise on flour. He discussed it with Stott and others. (468) All these proposals were eclipsed by the Wilson-Uppill Plan which attracted wide support.

Unlike Butler, Playford was prepared to do something positive for wheatgrowers. He held the view that responsibility for financing a wheat scheme rested solely with the Commonwealth, but he gave the other States

(464) Stott Papers; "C", p.40, col.D

(465) Ib. "D", p.17, col.D

(466) Ib. p.3, col.B

(467) Ib. "C" p.58, col.D

(468) Ib. p.81, col.B

* In fairness to Butler it must also be recorded that some of the senior representatives of wheatgrowers had some peculiar ideas about obligations of the State to the primary producer. At a Royal Commission on Transport on 22 April 1938, Maycock told the amazed members that the railways should run solely for the carriage of wheat and sugar, and everything else should be eliminated. He crystallised the farmer's attitude to railways, and much else.

a lead by indicating that South Australia was prepared to devote part of its share of loan funds to any scheme of relief. At the Premiers Conference in Canberra in August 1939 Playford found complete disagreement and the meeting decided to drop the whole concept of equitable sharing of loan moneys because of the arguments between Menzies and Dunstan, until there was an outcome to efforts to get an international wheat agreement - any plausible excuse would do. (469) At that time a "Conference of Wheat Exporting Countries" was being held in London*, and its cogitations had been expedited by dramatic price falls. Nothing came of it. The conference ambled to a 'Lame and impotent conclusion,' and the Advertiser thought that any hope of stabilising the wheat industry by international agreement were specious. (470) In August, 1939, R.L. McKenzie, MP, uttered a cry of despair which reflected the views of many: ruin faced the primary producers; the Menzies government had made the wheat question a party political brawl; only a miracle could save the industry, and farmers had to organise. (471)

Stott and the South Australian Wheatgrowers Association continued actively to do just that, and pressure governments. On 26 July 1939, for instance, Maycock chaired a meeting of 400 farmers at Wanbi[§]: Senators McBride and Wilson, Messrs, Cameron MHR, Bagot MLC and Stott were present. The meeting resolved that the Wilson-Uppill Plan be used to stabilise the price of wheat at four shillings a bushel, and, a striking concession, supported the concept of wheatgrowers accepting stabilisation on a quota of their wheat production. (472) The next day the indefatigable Stott was at Loxton, on 28th at Waikerie, and on the 29th he left for Brisbane to discuss the International Wheat Agreement

(469) Ib. "D", p. 6, col. B

(470) Ibidem.

(471) Ib. p. 6, col. D

(472) Ib. p. 4, col. C

* Australia was represented by S.M. Bruce and F. McDougall, the economic adviser (sic) at Australia House.

[§] A siding 39km northeast of Karoonda.

and to organise the AWF in all the eastern States. He was back in his electorate by 18 August and left for Melbourne on 26th for the special stabilisation conference. (473) One of the pivots of Stott's argument for stabilisation through a guaranteed price was the writing of the Royal Commission on Banking* in relation to the provision of credit: Stott was able not only to argue effectively for a certain price per bushel, but he could explain the financial mechanism through which funds would be provided. Then on Sunday 3 September Australia was at war; the old order changed with a vengeance and all the insurmountable and insoluble problems of the primary producer's previous twenty five years vanished overnight. Solutions which hitherto had been either totally unthinkable, obstacles which were insuperable, and arrangements which had been thought to be politically suicidal, suddenly became faits accompli and completely acceptable.

On 5 September 1939 Britain bought the entire Australian wool clip and all surplus food products. On 13 September the Australian wheat crop for the duration of the war was purchased by the Commonwealth government and marketed through a compulsory federal wheat pool, chaired by Clive McPherson. Hardly a murmur greeted this move which had until then been regarded as the most execrable socialism. The acquisition and disposal of wheat was done under the National Security Act 1939[§], and the administrative mechanism, The Australian Wheat Board, was established on 21 September 1939. The Commonwealth had achieved in less than three weeks what had hitherto been impossible of accomplishment for twenty years.

The board moved quickly: it acquired all wheat in South Australia on 9 October, both previous harvests (pool no.1)[¶], and the new harvest

(473) Details from Stott's personal diary 1939.

* Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Monetary and Banking Systems at present in Operation in Australia.

§ Wheat Acquisition Regulations (Statutory Rules 1939, no.96)

¶ Number 1 pool was all Australian wheat of the 1938-39 season acquired by the Commonwealth.

(pool no.2). It had all been sold to the UK and Japan^{*} by November 1939. Dunsdorfs has put succinctly the overall role of the war in the existence of the wheatgrower:

The general failure of Australian wheatgrowers was averted only by the still greater calamity of the Second World War. The Australian wheatgrowers who had succeeded in passing the purgatory of the depression and post depression years entered a period which provided economic prosperity and also lifted their social status. (474)

The financial arrangements for regulation and control of the wheat industry during the war were embodied in the Wheat Industry (War-time Control) Act 1939 , which received Assent on 15 December.

It has been mentioned that the authority of the Australian Wheat Board was based on principles embodied in the Wilson-Uppill plan, and we have noted that Stott played an important part in promoting this plan at meetings in South Australia and other States. (475) A key feature was the guaranteed price. The Commonwealth government was approached and after many conferences agreed to pay 3/- per bushel. The AWF which zealously lobbied on behalf of its members rejected this because it was below the cost of production. In July 1940 the Federation appointed a committee of three, F.H. Cullen (Victoria), T. Kendall (N.S.W.) and Stott, and gave them full authority to negotiate with the Commonwealth for a wheat stabilisation plan, an acceptable guaranteed price, and an international wheat agreement. At this time yet another stabilisation scheme was being promoted. Known as the Robertson[§] scheme it was supported by the Country Party in N.S.W. and provided for a stabilised price of 4/- per bushel net to grower for the first 3000 bushels of production. It was not popular outside of N.S.W. (476) The AWF committee found themselves negotiating with A.G. Cameron, then Minister of Commerce. He made an offer of 3/6d. a bushel

(474) Dunsdorfs, E.: op. cit., p. 263

(475) Stott Papers; "D", p. 71, col. A

(476) Ib. p. 5, col. A, p. 10, col. A

* Where it no doubt helped sustain their own war preparations.

§ Also known incorrectly as the Robertson scheme. The originator was Hugh Stevenson Robertson, MHR.

at ports: the committee - who knew what they wanted and would take nothing else - refused it. Shortly afterwards Cameron was replaced as Minister by Page, who, in October 1930, wired Stott as secretary of the trinity to ask him to bring them to Canberra and thrash out details of a wheat stabilisation scheme. From the ensuing negotiations came the wheat stabilisation plan which became law under the National Security Regulations.

Much effort underlay the accomplishment. In August 1940 the Agricultural Council had met in Sydney and following discussions the Commonwealth asked the States to submit plans for stabilisation. State cabinet appointed an honorary committee to examine the whole wheat position and submit appropriate plans^{*}. The Wheatgrowers Association was strongly represented and the minister (Blesing) was in tune with AWF's aspirations. At a key AWF conference in October 1940 the federation agreed on "their" (Cullen-Kendal-Stott) stabilisation plan and carried an important Stott motion which provided that a wheat stabilisation plan should be implemented by Federal and State governments acquiring and controlling all wheat grown, under an Australian Wheat Board, with a majority of grower representatives[§]. Cullen, Kendal and Stott held three days of meetings with Cameron and the plan was submitted to the Melbourne conference on wheat held on 25 October. Premiers, Ministers of Agriculture and officials from all States were present: the Commonwealth accepted responsibility for guaranteeing a minimum price for all wheat grown in Australia. This was the last such meeting chaired by Cameron before he lost his portfolio. On 9 November 1940 stabilisation was introduced

* The personnel of the committee were:
A.P. Blesing, Minister of Agriculture; W.J. Spafford, Director of Agriculture,
A.R. Callaghan, Principal of Roseworthy; H. Grose; E.A. Badcock, Chairman S.A.
Wheat Advisory Committee; H.S. Green, Chairman, S.A. Wheatgrowers Association.
Borrika; Elliot Day, Wasleys; S.K. Coleman, Maitland.

§ The presence of the wheat brokers - a hated species - on the Australian Wheat Board was a festering sore. At the conference one delegate spoke of brokers as the 'Parasites on the industry, adding further burdens on the growers.' In 1941 the Federal government appointed additional growers representatives.

under the National Security Regulations. A feather in the AWF special committee's cap was the guaranteed price of 3/10d per bushel. Initially on 8 November the Commonwealth was going to pay 3/6d, but Page found that his unyielding negotiators would settle for nothing less than 3/10d - not even a compromise 3/8d. To their persistent pressure was added the weight of State government opinion in support of the higher price, and the threat by Mr. Wilson MHR Indi, and a leading figure in the Victorian Wheatgrowers Association, to vote against the Budget if the higher price was not agreed to. The AWF, highly pleased, believed, with justification, that they had achieved the foundation of a permanent stabilisation plan for the wheat industry of Australia. It has been remarked that: 'Without the consequences of war and without the onset of inflation, the position of Australian wheatgrowers would have been hopeless.' (477) *

The Commonwealth legislation which implemented the wheat stabilisation scheme was the Wheat Tax (War-time) Act 1940 and the Assessment and Collection of a Tax upon Wheat Act 1940. Under the stabilisation scheme all wheat had to be marketed through the Australian Wheat Board, a stabilisation fund was established, wheat farms were registered, growers licensed, acreage prescribed and the Regulations empowered the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Board to issue specific directions to farmers. This Board was appointed with wheat board joint chairmanship, and in each State a local stabilisation committee was formed. The first Commonwealth stabilisation board members were Clive McPherson (Chairman AWB), J.F. Murphy, Secretary Department of Commerce, and F.H. Cullen, president AWF. The stabilisation board operated during each session 1941/42 to 1948/49, ceasing to function when the first successful postwar stabilisation plan was introduced in 1948.

(477) Dunsdorfs, E.: op. cit. p. 290

* Drought was again a problem in 1940. A Loan (Drought Relief) Act 1940 empowered the Treasurer to borrow and make loans to the States and in October £1,000,000 was made available.

Such sudden and radical changes to the wheat industry caused inevitably consternation in the more conservative farm circles, and individuals and isolated groups criticised. But probably the best indicator of the extent of acceptance of compulsion and regimentation is provided by the wheat board's early concern at the large number of unscrupulous farmers who submitted false applications to plant areas greatly in excess of anything they had planted in previous years. The board investigated extravagant claims: in N.S.W. growers claimed to have harvested 1,300,000 acres in excess of the area known to have been actually stripped. It was said that South Australian farmers were relatively honest: they only claimed 200,000 acres in excess of their known statistical mean. (478) Stott addressed meetings to explain the scheme. After one such gathering had listened to him, a vote of thanks was carried: the wording is an indication of the general regard in which he was held:

the address given by Mr. Stott was inspiring and informative...the farmers should be grateful for having such a champion of their interests in the right place...the speaker had given a masterly address which showed he had the whole matter appertaining to the wheat industry at his finger ends. (479)

The speakers were sincere and their remarks were true.

Often in reading Stott's several accounts of his role in the efforts to secure wheat industry stabilisation, either as a considered autobiography or in the epideictic political speeches or writing, one notes an effort - perhaps it is unconscious - to create the impression that he alone secured stabilisation. In his later years when he devoted much effort to securing a knighthood his claims became sadly pretentious. There were many dedicated men in all mainland States who worked for the wheatgrowers and made great sacrifices of time and personal convenience,

(478) Stott Papers: "D", p.25, col.B (1941)

(479) Ib. "F", p.3, col.C (1941)

fighting to achieve a decent standard of living for the farmer. In all the standard works on the wheat industry, from Dunsdorfs, to the 1978 Industries Assistance Commission report on stabilisation, Stott does not get a mention, although George Mitchell refers to him in his work on the Victorian Wheat and Woolgrowers Association. (480) In Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australian, contemporary with Stott there were able and vigorous men working for the same object as he was^{*}: the AWF, after all, was an Australia-wide organisation. Stott did not like sharing credit. These comments in no way disparage the valuable contribution he made.

In 1941 there was established a Commonwealth Wheat Advisory Committee to advise the Federal government and the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Board on all matters associated with the stabilisation scheme. Stott and Maycock were the South Australian representatives. In South Australia 95 country committees were established to police the stabilisation scheme: each consisted of two farmers and a government official who had knowledge of local conditions. When the Labor Federal government took office in October 1941 the stabilisation scheme was altered only in that the guaranteed price applied to a quota and the AWF could acquire non-quota wheat without a price guarantee. In 1942 an Australian Flour Industry Committee was set up to control the supply and distribution of flour. The only instance of a compulsory restriction of acreage occurred in Western Australia in 1942/43-44/45. (481) In South Australia because of the drought, shortages of superphosphate and other problems, farmers were hard-pressed to sow even their licensed areas. By late 1943 the demand for Australia's wheat and flour had become so urgent that there was difficulty getting it to ports and loaded on ships fast enough.

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(480) Mitchell, George: Growers in Action. 1969. Melb. Hawthorn

(481) Dunsdorfs, E.: op. cit. p. 293

* And there were some influential individuals and groups trying just as hard and just as sincerely to white-ant the stabilisation efforts.

In June 1941 five countries, including Australia, met to draft a new wheat agreement. After a memorandum of agreement was initialled, a draft convention was prepared in April 1942. Nothing further could be done during the war. An international wheat conference to be held at Washington was postponed also.

In February 1941 A.R.Callaghan gave his views on the overall situation:

It seems a pity that the stabilisation is being undertaken through the channels of emergency legislation and thus depriving it of a full degree of permanence. However, the difficulties are many and the problems great, and all interested in the welfare of the Australian wheat industry should wholeheartedly support the registration of wheat farms and the licensing of growers as the fundamental precursor to effective stabilisation.(482)

A very important and significant step had been taken. There would be a lot more work before Australia had a permanent wheat stabilisation scheme. The success of the emergency war scheme ensured that a permanent plan was inevitable. It was a question of when.

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Apart from his active and industrious involvement with the wheatgrower, Stott also took a keen interest in the wool industry and maintained a cutting book in which he pasted press references on that subject,(483) and he did work for the dried fruit growers.(484) He also faced a problem which caused quite a lot of men in his age group considerable anxiety - the question of war service. He was a young (40 year old) MP when war broke out, and represented an electorate populated generously with war veterans conscious of their contribution to the well being of democracy, and the RSL was a prominent and self important local social focus. Any ambitions Stott had to become a Hero

(482) Stott Papers:"D",p.18,cols.A,B

(483) Ib."G" passim

(484) Ib."D"p.48,col.B

of the Empire were tempered by a certain amount of reasoned cunning. He corresponded with the Commonwealth seeking an administrative position in the Royal Australian Airforce, but was told that the demand for such sinecures far exceeded the supply. Then, he was tormented by the fact that if he did actually serve King and Country at Victoria Park, he might lose his seat in parliament, because he would have accepted an office of profit under the Crown. This was a fate far worse than a glorious death behind an air-force desk. In 1942 he raised with the Commonwealth Attorney-General the matter of the need for a Regulation under the National Security Regulations to exempt Members of Parliament from losing their seats if they served their country. Stott had no intention of enlisting, except on his own terms. He was mainly concerned to get into a uniform to symbolise his pledge to the war effort, avoid embarrassing explanations (especially at electoral meetings) and get votes. His campaign speeches in 1941 indicate his embarrassment at his civilian status. He explained that he was too young for World War 1: however, he had been an associate member of the RSL and would still be if the Constitution allowed associate members.' He had tried to enlist...etc. (485) (486) He also told the story of the vehicle accident in 1940 which had made him medically unfit for war service. On the 5 August that year he had been involved in a serious head-on collision, was hospitalised for three weeks and was lucky to escape with his life*. By a remarkable coincidence he had had his Air Force physical while convalescing - and failed it. Later he tried to get the Commonwealth to strike a special lapel badge^S for issue to people like himself who, though keen to lay down all for their country on the desk of sacrifice, were precluded from doing so by hostile

(485) Ib. "D", p.48, col.B

(486) Ib. "D" p.71, col.A

* Not everyone shared that sentiment.

^S A Rejected Volunteer Association of Australia was eventually formed and members were able to wear a distinctive lapel badge. It went quickly from strength to strength but died very rapidly at the end of the hostilities.

red tape, lamentable coincidences, vehicle accidents, and the realisation that they were vital to the proper functioning of parliamentary democracy and the wheat industry.

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The electoral experiment in returning fifteen Independent members of parliament in 1938 was overall a futile and pointless exercise. The early principal catalysts for this temporary and ill-fated rejection of the Party system were disenchantment with party politics brought about by pre-selection squabbles and well publicised Labor internal strife: concern over hotel hours and the siting of betting shops; vehicle taxation and restrictive transport regulation; controversy over the provision of books for non-government schools, and compulsory bible reading classes. In three electorates purely local issues, such as the re-opening of the Holdfast Bay railway were decisive influences. When the election got under way, most of these items were overshadowed by the quinquennial parliament controversy and betting shop legislation, and these issues contributed chiefly to Butler's unpopular image. Argument was fanned skilfully by Stott and other very able contemporaries. Church agitation over 'social issues', although vociferous, was not influential in deciding the outcome of the election.

The result may have been different if the electors had been adequately appraised of the political leanings of some of those who posed as Independents. Connor, Fisk, Robinson, Dunn and McLeay had long-standing connections with the LCL; Bardolph and McKenzie with Labor. Craigie, Davies, Fletcher, Illingworth, Langdon, Macgillivray, Smith and Stott could claim, to varying degrees, to be bona fide Independents. The only criterion for a government to hold office is control of the House of Assembly. Butler had sufficient support to continue in office despite five tests of confidence in 1938, and important support came from within the membership of those who had a claim to be Independent, but who rallied to support a premier against whom on the hustings they had often

directed their harshest criticism. Interesting, too, is the way Davies' recorded division votes changed after the 1938 election when Butler appointed him to the Public Works Committee, from pro-Labor (table 16) to pro-LCL (table 34). Smith generally supported the LCL (table 42). To the thoughtful Macgillivray, and the fence-sitting Fletcher, Labor did not project itself as a responsible alternative to the LCL.

Because of the underlying deep party political differences, internal squabbles, jealousies and personality conflicts, the Independents were unable to overcome the organisational, administrative and procedural difficulties of electing a leader, and hence surmount traditional constitutional obstacles to an Independent government. These problems, inherent in practising the concept of Independence, were already apparent in the 1933-38 parliament. Such a government is not a practical proposition, because the very nature of independence from party rule necessitates a lack of organisation inconsistent with following a policy. Between 1938-41 the overall disappointing parliamentary performances of no less than ten Independents, assessed from a review of their activities in the House, reveals how unreal any of Stott's aspirations to leadership of such a group were: it would have been a one man band. Stott, various divisional votes indicate, was mistrusted and disliked by a majority of his colleagues, and did not receive an opportunity to put his desires to form a government of Independents into effect.

The performance of the Independents apparently disillusioned the electorate; in 1941 five were defeated; one retired and one died; all were replaced by party men. Two changed (or re-changed) to a party. By the end of the 1941-44 parliament only Fletcher, Macgillivray and Stott held their seats, and only Macgillivray could claim to be Independent. The anticipated 1938 experience of an Independent 'first truly democratic administration...completely untrammelled by party and sectional influences'

never materialised, and became a bad joke. The South Australian electorate never repeated the experiment.