

# **ANTI-COMMUNISM IN TASMANIA IN THE LATE 1950s WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE HURSEY CASE**

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## SYNOPSIS.

While the strength of the Democratic Labor Party (DLP) was concentrated in Victoria, Tasmania was also significant for several reasons : it was the electoral base of Senator George Cole, the DLP's leader in the Senate up to 1964; Hobart was the venue of the ALP Federal Conference when the Split occurred in 1955; and it was the only state with a Labor Government throughout the Menzies years.

While the Anti-Communist Labour Party, later the DLP, contested all State and Federal elections after 1956, they failed to make significant inroads into the ALP vote, although Senator George Cole (first elected on the ALP ticket in 1949) was able to maintain his Senate seat until 1964 - largely because of the Tasmanian tradition of voting for personalities rather than ideologies.

The DLP vote in both State and Federal elections failed to affect the overall results, except in the 1959 state election, when DLP preferences in Franklin gave an extra unexpected extra seat to the Liberal Party and resulted in a situation where two Independents held the balance of power. Nonetheless, the ALP remained in power for the next five years, and was again returned to office in 1964, when the DLP vote dropped by a half. No candidates stood at State level after 1969 or for the Senate after 1974.

While Tasmania had a staunch anti-communist Catholic Archbishop in Guilford Young, there were less Catholics as a proportion of the overall population than on the mainland, and many of them remained in the ALP - including Premier Cosgrove, Senator O'Byrne and trade unionists like Fred Peters.

There was only a small industrial base in Tasmania so the DLP had largely to rely on allegations of communist influence in the unions on the mainland. The Communist Party had few members in key positions in the trade unions, while the ALP leadership was dominated by the Right. Premier Cosgrove supported the Communist Party Dissolution Bill in 1951 and the ALP in Tasmania gave little active support to H.V. Evatt when he was leader of the party.

The fear of communism was maintained through a succession of visits by exiles from communist-occupied countries, especially addressing church

groups and New Australians, as well as feature articles and letters in the press and constant emphasis in homilies delivered by Catholic priests to their congregations and school students.

One significant event in the late 1950's concerned the refusal of two wharfies, Frank and Denis Hursey - father and son, to pay their ten shilling ALP levy to the WWF, and the struggle over this issue, both on the wharf and in the courts, was to last from 1957 to 1959. Well known in the Hobart community, the Hurseys had a higher level of support on the mainland than in Tasmania itself.

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## CHAPTER ONE. THE BACKGROUND TO THE SPLIT.

In the early 1950's, the climate of anti-communism was strongly fostered in Tasmania through the Catholic Church, the RSL, the presence of New Australians from the Captive Nations. China had gone communist in 1949 and the confrontation with Taiwan (Formosa) was at its height in the 1950s. The Korean War had only finished in 1953 and Vietnam was partitioned after 1954; the *Catholic Standard* in particular carried frequent news reports of the persecution of Catholics in North Vietnam and the movement of many of them to South Vietnam where the new leader - Ngo Dinh Diem - was himself a Catholic, even though his people were predominantly Buddhists.

The Petrov Inquiry continued to focus on Soviet subversion through 1955, following the timely revelations prior to the Federal Election in the previous year, which so disheartened the ALP under H.V. Evatt. The Soviet nuclear threat figured prominently in news reports, although China was portrayed as a greater direct threat to Australia through its subversive activities in Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Burma, the Philippines, Singapore and India.

The daily press in Tasmania maintained a constant stream of articles, through wire service reports, on the dangers of Communism. These were the years of unrest in East Europe, with the riots in Poznan in 1956 and the rebellion in Hungary later in the same year. There were articles about Communist influence in Indonesia as well as Communist aims in India, where Kerala had a Communist Party (Marxist) state government. Communists were active in Malaysia and Singapore, and behind all these movements in Asia was seen the hand of Mao Tse-Tung's China. Nuclear weapon tests by the United States, United Kingdom and the Soviet Union were frequently in the news, and France was preparing to test in Algeria for the first time in 1960. When a major Peace Congress was organised in Melbourne in November 1959, and attended by Tasmanian delegates from progressive organisations, the press was full of Letters to the Editor about Communist influence behind the Congress, along with excerpts from speeches in Canberra by Members of Parliament and from church leaders warning against participation.

Dire warnings of a direct threat of invasion were

uttered by the more apocalyptic letter writers<sup>1</sup>, although there was disagreement about the significance and effectiveness of the Communist fifth column within Australia. Visiting speakers and letters to the editor often referred to the communist strategy of working to create four or five big trade unions within the framework of Lenin's dictum that the way to power lay through the unions<sup>2</sup>.

The Catholic Church in particular fostered a militant anti-communism by organising visits to Tasmania from priests who had served in the communist bloc, and were either imprisoned then expelled, or lived in exile. The *Catholic Standard* was proud of its role in reporting persecution of Catholics in communist countries and the Columban Fathers who had been expelled from China after 1949 and came to Tasmania to speak about the horrors of life under the communists, received good coverage in its columns. The Tasmanian press often reprinted articles by overseas experts on the communist threat and the need for the Free West to have nuclear weapons to defend itself, writers such as the British journalist,

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<sup>1</sup> John Citizen wrote to the *Mercury* on 8th June 1957, page 6, saying, "On current indication we could become a satellite of China within ten years." *News Weekly* also had some very serious warnings about the imminence of a Red takeover in the 1950's, emanating from Moscow via Asia.

<sup>2</sup> The DLP Speakers notes for the 1966 election contained an article on Communist infiltration in Australia. The author, F.M. Dowling, argued along the lines that the Communist Party did not seriously contest Parliamentary elections. It ran candidates to obtain a platform for its propaganda and to win recruits. Lenin pointed the way to power through the unions. There were to be four dominant groups - Iron and Steel; Light, Fuel and Power; Building; Transport. They obtain power through unity tickets. "The Communist Party believes that with the assistance of Red China, it will one day rule Australia. Until that day, its role is to serve Communist foreign policy, hamper our development and defence, and weaken our will to resist." The same line was taken by Frank McManus who referred to a strategy enunciated by CPA secretary, Lance Sharkey, which aimed to get communists into key positions in these amalgamated unions. *The Tumult and the Shouting* Frank McManus. Rigby. 1977. p.168-169

Chapman Pincher<sup>3</sup>.

Tasmania narrowly voted "YES" in the September 1951 referendum to ban the Communist Party but only by a majority of 805 votes out of 164,844 electors. There was a majority of "No" voters in both the seats of Darwin (now Braddon) and Wilmot (now Lyons), while the strongest "Yes" vote was in Franklin<sup>4</sup>. Polls indicated that while Catholics were evenly divided on the proposed legislation, other denominations were predominantly "Yes" voters<sup>5</sup>.

The regular political columnist for the *Mercury* wrote of the campaign, "So far there has not been much interest in the campaign in Tasmania, and most meetings have been poorly attended. Labor speakers have been confining themselves almost entirely to short radio addresses but the Liberal Party has been holding meetings at most of the most important country centres."<sup>6</sup>

Over a thousand people went to hear Prime Minister Menzies speak about the referendum at the Theatre Royal on 18th September<sup>7</sup> while more than 300 attended a debate between Senator Wright (Liberal)<sup>8</sup> and Senator Morrow (ALP) at the Playhouse on 19th September<sup>9</sup>.

The *Mercury* was strongly in support of a YES vote and

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<sup>3</sup> One such article by Pincher appeared in the *Examiner* on 4th April 1957 when the writer defended Britain's Hydrogen Bomb test programme in the Pacific in order for the United Kingdom to retain its major power status in the world.

<sup>4</sup> *Mercury*. 9th October 1951. The final vote was 78,154 in favour and 77,349 against. In the Commonwealth of Australia as a whole there was a 50.48% "NO" vote.

<sup>5</sup> *Mercury*. 22nd September 1951. p.3

<sup>6</sup> *Mercury*. 18th September 1951. p.3

<sup>7</sup> *Mercury*. 19th September 1951. p.1

<sup>8</sup> The line up was not entirely one-sided as it was a conservative Legislative Council member, Mr Baker, who led the fight against the 1951 Bill.

<sup>9</sup> *Mercury*. 20th September 1951. p.6



in one typical editorial declared, "Communism represents such a danger to the nation that special constitutional action is warranted by the real rulers - the people ... The Prime Minister has torn to shreds the arguments advanced by Dr. Evatt as the chief opponent of the constitutional amendment. He has answered - it should be to the satisfaction of the people - the assertions that the new law is undemocratic and dangerous. The fact is that the new law is dangerous only to the active disciples of communism."<sup>10</sup>

R.H. "Bert" Lacey at the Trades Hall in Hobart responded with an advertisement in the *Mercury* in which he stated: "Menzies is trying to create mass hysteria over Communism. Communists in Australia are a group which could be rendered harmless now if Menzies chose to act under existing powers."<sup>11</sup>

Another advertisement, bearing Lacey's name, later claimed that the "Churches say NO, Trade Unions say NO, Liberals say NO, Labor says NO."<sup>12</sup> but next day, Protestant church leaders in a statement rejected implications that any directions on voting had been issued by the churches. The letter was signed by representatives of the Methodists, Presbyterians, Salvation Army, Congregationalists and Baptists<sup>13</sup>.

The Industrial Groups became active in Tasmania after 1950<sup>14</sup> although it was "in a perfunctory sort of way."<sup>15</sup> However the trade union movement in Tasmania was not as polarised as on the mainland and there were few Communists in any positions of significance. Senator Morrow (ALP), with his background in Launceston and the ARU, was frequently accused of

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<sup>10</sup> *Mercury*. 5th September 1951. p.4

<sup>11</sup> *Mercury*. 10th September 1951. p.6

<sup>12</sup> *Mercury*. 20th September 1951. p.19

<sup>13</sup> *Mercury*. 20th September 1951.

<sup>14</sup> Conversation with Jack Mahoney. Hobart. 27th September 1995. However Frank McManus in his autobiography says that the Industrial Groups never existed in Tasmania. *The Tumult and the Shouting*. Frank McManus. Rigby. 1977. p.99

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Eric Reece. 14th October 1995.

being a Communist sympathiser<sup>16</sup> but he lost pre-selection in 1952 and then having resigned from the ALP and run on his own Tasmanian Labor ticket, lost his seat in the half-Senate election in 1953<sup>17</sup>. He left Tasmania in 1954 and moved to Sydney.

While Archbishop Guilford Young - appointed in September 1955 - was a strong critic of communism, and frequently preached on its dangers, Tasmania had fewer Catholics as a proportion of the overall population compared to the mainland states. Catholics made up 17.18% of the population of Tasmania in the 1954 census (53,042) and 18.27% in the 1961 census (63,993). This was primarily because of the proportionately less Irish and Italian migration to Tasmania in the nineteenth and twentieth century.

Tasmania was unique in having a State Labor government throughout the Menzies years in Canberra and Premier Cosgrove, a Catholic, supported the Communist Party Dissolution Bill in 1951. Nonetheless there was a variety of opinion within the ALP in Tasmania as events moved to a head in 1955, following the disappointing Federal Election result for Labor in 1954 and a growing awareness of the activities of "the Movement" within the Labor Party.

The great split in the ALP finally took place at the Federal Conference in Hobart in March 1955, followed by the State Election in Victoria on 28 May, after the breakaway Australian Labor Party (Anti-Communist)

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<sup>16</sup> John Orchard, who entered the House of Assembly as Liberal member for Bass in 1948 says in his autobiography that he was very active in confronting Communists in Tasmania and, in particular, endeavouring to foil the influence of A.R.U. Secretary, W. (Bill) Morrow, and his attempt to gain a Senate Seat..... When I entered the House of Assembly in 1948, I lost no time in bringing public attention to the Communists and their aims, and many older people will still remember the bitter attacks on me and the many Press headlines this conflict produced. My main objective was to help ensure that Bill Morrow did not retain his Senate seat which he had gained in 1946 as a member of the ALP team. *Not to Yield. The John Orchard Story 1906-1982.* J.R. Orchard. Telegraph Printery, Launceston. 1982. p.162

<sup>17</sup> *Fly a Rebel Flag. Bill Morrow, 1888-1980.* Audrey Johnson. Penguin (1986).

had voted with the Opposition Liberal Party to bring down the Cain Government<sup>18</sup>.

By 1955, tension was also building up in the Labor Party in Tasmania, and Cosgrove called a State election in February, prior to the Federal ALP conference in March. The *Mercury*, which had foreseen a schism after the election<sup>19</sup>, observed after a comfortable Labor victory: "Apparently the split in the Federal ranks of the ALP did not influence the Tasmanian electors to any extent and the Labor win might be attributed to a big extent to the leadership of the Premier and the more moderate line of policy he has followed .... The big poll recorded by the Minister for Lands and Works (Eric Reece) in Darwin showed that the Labor Party split on the mainland had not lost him any support. .... The result indicated also that numbers of Tasmanians who oppose Federal Labor, support the party in State politics."<sup>20</sup>

#### **The 1955 Conference.**

The Federal ALP Conference was held in Hobart in February 1955. H.V. Evatt was very much the target of those who felt that the ALP was laying itself open to communist infiltration through the failure to take an effective stand against unity tickets and fellow travellers within its own ranks. Premier Cosgrove was intensely embarrassed by events on the mainland and sought to present his case with no reference to the ALP on the other side of the Bass Strait. Federal ALP leaders - in particular, the party leader himself - were not welcome in state election campaigns.

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<sup>18</sup> The Victorian Labor Government had resigned and then reformed on 30 March, excluding from the ministry four members who supported the 'old' executive. The dismissed ministers with twelve other State MPs formed the Australian Labor Party (Anti-Communist), also known as the Barry-Coleman party. The rebels crossed the floor of the Legislative Assembly on 20 April on a motion of no confidence in the Cain Government, moved by the leader of the Opposition, Henry Bolte. At the ensuing election, the rebels lost all but one seat, but they managed to keep the ALP out of office until 1982.

<sup>19</sup> *Mercury*. 11th February 1955. p.4

<sup>20</sup> *Mercury*. 21st February 1951. p.1

There were many in the Tasmanian ALP who shared his hostility towards communism but did not feel it was a threat in Tasmania itself. Senator Frank McManus from Victoria, who sat with Senator Cole in the Federal Parliament, commented: "Eric Reece, then Federal President of the ALP and later Premier of Tasmania, was a close associate of Joe Chamberlain (state secretary of the ALP in Western Australia and a member of the ACTU and the ALP Federal Executive). Both could be excused for their attitude, to a degree. They came from States where there was little industry, and the battles fought in the industrialised eastern States between the Industrial Groups, the Movement and the Communist Party seemed to have little relevance<sup>21</sup>."

The Split in the ALP came about because Evatt turned on the Groupers within the party. Members of Parliament who were strongly anti-communist felt that the Labor Party had made itself vulnerable to the threat within, which had a wider agenda than just purging the unions of communists. Others felt that communist influence in Tasmania had been exaggerated and loyalty to the ALP and the trade union movement was the touchstone of their existence<sup>22</sup>.

Within the Catholic Church there was no unanimity either, for while some Catholics were powerfully influenced by Archbishop Mannix in Melbourne, Archbishop Young in Hobart and the witness of B.A. Santamaria in his various capacities as a lay leader in the Catholic Church, others preferred the line of Cardinal Gilroy in Sydney who felt that the struggle would be more effective if anti-communists stayed within the ranks of the party. Gilroy had grown up with an Australian working class background and in New South Wales, most Catholics voted for the ALP. Mannix, on the other hand, came from Ireland, and had a natural ally in the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop

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<sup>21</sup> *The Tumult and the Shouting*. Frank McManus. op.cit. p.78

<sup>22</sup> "Only the courage of Dr Evatt in asking the Federal ALP Executive, of which I was a Tassie delegate with Eric Reece, to investigate the affairs of the Victorian ALP State Executive, prevented this takeover when the ALP would have become the right wing of the Liberal Party." Letter from Gil Duthie, former MHR for Wilmot, 1946-75, to the writer, 24th October 1995.

Romolo Carboni, who arrived in 1955, with a background coloured by the post-war struggle between the Christian Democrats and the Communist Party in Italy.<sup>23</sup>

Evatt had decided to clamp down on the influence of the Groups within the ranks of the ALP in 1954, following what Gil Duthie referred to as the party's civil war which raged "in the back rooms and lobbies, in dark corners and secret meetings<sup>24</sup>." Many Members of Parliament agreed that the Industrial Groups had done a useful job in combatting communism within the trade unions but felt that they were now developing a wider agenda.

Senator McKenna, the Tasmanian ALP Senator who was Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, told the chamber on March 20th 1955, that the Industrial groups had done magnificent work in Tasmania, entrusted to them by the ALP, of eliminating communist influence and control in trade unions. However in using their efficient techniques and organisation, or allowing them to be used for ends unconnected with their original purpose, they did not serve the interests of Labor<sup>25</sup>.

#### **The ALP Conference - Hobart. February 1955.**

Events had moved quickly in Victoria and with the split in the ALP there, two rival delegations came to the annual ALP Conference in Hobart on March 14th, both claiming to represent the Victorian ALP. The old Victorian Executive barred other delegates from entering the conference room in the Trades Hall, although the Federal President, Eric Reece, and another Federal Labor M.P. Clyde Cameron, were already in there discussing the agenda.

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<sup>23</sup> Conversation with Father Clem Kilby in Hobart on 24th October 1995. Father Kilby was a young priest at St Mary's Cathedral after 1954, having spent the previous eight years at Corpus Christi College, Werribee, in Victoria. He became the director of the Lay Institute in Sandy Bay in December 1959, succeeding Father Lalor.

<sup>24</sup> *I Had 50,000 Bosses. Memoirs of a Labour Back Bencher. 1946-1975.* Gil Duthie. Angus and Robertson. 1984. p.133

<sup>25</sup> *Examiner.* 21st March 1955. p.4

Two of the six Tasmanian delegates, Senator Cole and Virgil Morgan, joined the rebel group of seventeen in all, arguing that the Conference should recognise the old Victorian Central Executive which was critical of ALP leader, H.V. Evatt. The remaining nineteen delegates - including the other four Tasmanians, R.H. "Bert" Lacey who later became a Senator, G.W.A. Duthie MHR, with F. Taylor and R.J. Murray, both from the Engine Drivers and Firemen's Union - met on March 15th at the Trinity Hall and voted to remove the Industrial Groups everywhere from the ALP umbrella and ALP recognition<sup>26</sup>. Bert Lacey was a Catholic<sup>27</sup> and under a lot of Movement pressure to join the dissidents but he stayed with official Labor.<sup>28</sup>

As Robert Murray observed in *The Split*, Tasmania was little changed by the split<sup>29</sup>, but Senator George Cole and Virgil Morgan were to emerge as the two main personalities who did leave the ALP to try and set up the new Anti-Communist Labor Party in the State.

Senator George Cole was born at Don in 1908, one of five children. His father was a labourer and a small contractor while his mother was a staunch Methodist. He was educated at Devonport High School and after becoming a student teacher, he attended the University of Tasmania. He then taught at Albura Street School, Huonville and Devonport Practising School where he was assistant headmaster. In 1939 he enlisted as a private in the 12th/50th Battalion of the CMF. Two years later he was promoted to lieutenant and in 1942 transferred to the AIF. In 1943 he briefly had charge of a prisoner-of-war camp near Darwin where he formed an amicable relationship with the inmates, most of whom were Italian. It was during these years that he became interested in politics.

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<sup>26</sup> Gil Duthie. op. cit. p. 159

<sup>27</sup> He grew up as a Protestant but became a Catholic when he got married to one.

<sup>28</sup> *80 Years Labor, 1903-83*. Richard Davis. Sassafras Books and History Department, University of Tasmania. 1983. p.51

<sup>29</sup> Robert Murray. *The Split. Australian Labor in the Fifties*. F.W. Cheshire Publishing, Melbourne. 1970. p.331

After the war, he went to Strahan as headmaster and reformed the local branch of the ALP, as well as getting cricket and football teams under way there. He went on to become headmaster at Longford in 1947 where he again reformed the local branch of the ALP and became involved in sport, and in 1948 moved on to Latrobe in the same role - once more reforming the local branch of the ALP. He made a name for himself as a senior football player for 25 years. He was captain of Devonport High football team and played senior football for Devonport, then New Norfolk, and then the old New Town club in Hobart where he won the Wilson J. Bailey trophy for the TFL's best and fairest in 1928. In 1930 he played in the Tasmanian carnival side in Adelaide and won another medal. Later he became captain-coach of Huonville - which he led to its first premiership in 1933 - Devonport and Longford, then finally hung up his boots in 1949 at Latrobe.

That was the year he was pre-selected for the Senate in Tasmania, but as a convert to Catholicism<sup>30</sup>, he became more and more concerned about what he saw as the advance of communist influence in the Labor Party. This distanced him from his colleagues and on 13th October 1954, believing that Calwell would have the numbers to defeat Evatt, he moved that all leadership positions be declared vacant. He was the lone Tasmanian to vote for the motion which was defeated by 52 votes to 28<sup>31</sup>.

Virgil Daniel Morgan, who was 45 in 1955, was born in Beaconsfield and educated in Launceston and Sydney. Well known in cricket, football and athletic circles, he was a secondary school teacher for four years then ran his own business for three years before joining the RAAF in the Second World War. He served in the Pacific, and on discharge in 1946, joined the

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<sup>30</sup> George Cole became a convert before he married, after a lot of reading and thinking. His wife was a Catholic but that was not the reason for his conversion. Phone conversation with Jill O'Keefe, Cole's daughter. 30th October 1995.

<sup>31</sup> *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Vol. 13. 1940-80. ed. John Ritchie. Melbourne University Press. 1993. p.460-461. *Mercury*. 14th August 1957 and October 24th 1958. *Examiner*. 23rd November 1964. *Advocate*. 24th January 1969. p.5

Commonwealth Public Service as an executive officer in the Department of Post-War Reconstruction in Hobart. From 1948 to 1951, he was chairman of the Tasmanian Reconstruction Training Committee and acting Deputy-Director of Re-Establishment. In 1951, he transferred to the staff of the State Legislative Council and became secretary to Thomas D'Alton, MLC for Gordon from 1947 to 1968 and the Leader of the Government in the Upper House.

For many years, Morgan was a State Councillor of the Federated Clerks' Union, union delegate to Hobart Trades Hall, a member of the Trades Hall Executive Committee, and held other positions within the union movement. On an overseas visit, he went to 23 countries, studying industrial, social and migration matters. He was also State President and Citizenship convention delegate of the Tasmanian Good Neighbour Council<sup>32</sup>.

While Cosgrove managed to maintain the official Labor Party line in Tasmania, the action of Cole and Morgan caused considerable bitterness. Senator Aylett (ALP), who represented Tasmania from 1937 to 1965, commented after the Conference, that "the Keon-Mullens-Santamaria<sup>33</sup> movement" had its agents in Tasmania. The proof lay in the vote of the two delegates who defied instructions. There would be no split in the Tasmanian ALP. He said he and others were fighting the opponents of Labor, namely the Liberals and Communists, before the renegade Tasmanian delegates were ever heard of in the Labor movement<sup>34</sup>.

On March 24th, Senator Cole was re-elected to the Federal Executive of the ALP, while Wilmot MHR, Gil Duthie, lost his seat, and was replaced by Jack O'Neill, the powerful longtime secretary of the Hobart Trades Council. While Duthie, a former Methodist minister, was a strong anti-communist and a

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<sup>32</sup> *Advocate*. 5th November 1955. p.2 and *Examiner*. 5th November 1955. p.4

<sup>33</sup> These men were the three key Anti-Communist Party leaders in Victoria; Standish Michael Keon, MHR for Yarra, and Jack Mullens, MHR for Gellibrand, were the two leaders of the breakaway group in the Federal Parliament while B.A. Santamaria was the eminence grise behind the Movement.

<sup>34</sup> *Mercury*. 19th March 1955. p.17



staunch member of Moral Rearmament, he was also passionately committed to Labor unity, while O'Neill was a supporter of Cole and Morgan. While sympathetic to Cole and Morgan, O'Neill also believed strongly in Labor Party unity and his influence was strong enough to stop others leaving at the time of the Split<sup>35</sup>.

Following the defeat of the Anti-Communist Labor Party M.Ps in the Victorian State Election on March 28th, the Tasmanian ALP State Executive met in Burnie on April 1st and voted to accept the decision of the Federal Conference. On 30th May, the State Executive of the ALP suspended Cole and Morgan pending the hearing of charges against them<sup>36</sup>. Cole later told the Senate that the Tasmanian Executive had waited until after the Victorian election to suspend him<sup>37</sup>. On 3rd June, the Executive moved against both men, though as one political observer noted, there were fifteen others who absented themselves from the Federal Conference. According to the same commentator, Tasmania had evidently been chosen by the pro-Evatt forces as the place where an attempted purge was to start<sup>38</sup>.

Senator Cole then said he was considering his resignation from the ALP after the State Executive suspended him and Morgan till the next State Labor Conference, which was not due to be held until February 1956<sup>39</sup>. Jack O'Neill, the powerful secretary of the Hobart Trades Hall Council from 1927 to 1967, except 1958-62 when he suffered from ill health, then

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<sup>35</sup> This point was made by Tom Errey in an interview in Hobart on 14th November 1995. He added that in a small society like Tasmania, the influence of individuals like O'Neill could be very powerful.

<sup>36</sup> *Mercury*. 31st May 1955. p.1

<sup>37</sup> Cole told the Senate on 24th August 1955, "They were not game to come straight out and expel me. Instead they suspended me with the idea that I would remain quiet and not say or do anything until the next State Conference; otherwise I would be expelled automatically at the next State Conference." Robert Murray. *The Split*. Melbourne. 1970. p.267

<sup>38</sup> The *Mercury's* political observer. 4th June 1955. p.20

<sup>39</sup> *Mercury*. 28th June 1955. p.1

announced that he would resign from the State ALP Executive in protest against the decision<sup>40</sup>.

Not all ALP branches supported the action of the Executive and the Moonah branch protested against the decision<sup>41</sup>, as did the Denison branch, the largest branch in the state, along with the Burnie branch<sup>42</sup>. Unions were critical of the decision too, and the Tasmanian branch of the Federated Clerks Union considered breaking with the ALP over the suspension of its delegate, Virgil Morgan<sup>43</sup>.

After the Executive dismissed appeals from Cole and Morgan, Senator Cole said he would probably resign from the ALP and join the Labor (Anti-Communist) Party<sup>44</sup>. On 14th July, Cole finally made the break and said he was joining the new party. The Devonport branch of the ALP, where Cole lived, also passed a unanimous resolution criticising the State Executive<sup>45</sup>. Having resigned from the ALP, Cole was now appointed leader of the new party in the Senate<sup>46</sup>, although he was the only non-Victorian among eight members of the Anti-Communist Labor Party in the Federal Parliament.

Virgil Morgan having resigned from his position on the staff of Thomas D'Alton MLC, rejoined the Commonwealth Public Service and was seconded to Senator Cole as his secretary<sup>47</sup>. A few days later he announced that he would be a Senate candidate in the forthcoming Federal Election<sup>48</sup> while the Labor Party

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<sup>40</sup> *Mercury*. 29th June 1955. p.1

<sup>41</sup> *Mercury*. 30th June. p.2

<sup>42</sup> *Mercury*. 5th July 1955. p.3 and *Advocate*. 5th July 1955.

<sup>43</sup> *Mercury*. 31st August 1955.

<sup>44</sup> *Mercury*. 13th July 1955. p.1

<sup>45</sup> *Mercury*. 15th July 1955. p.3

<sup>46</sup> *Mercury*. 24th August 1955. p.3

<sup>47</sup> Exclusive announcement made in the *Examiner*, 13th October 1955.p.1. Also the *Mercury*, 24th October 1955. p.2

<sup>48</sup> *Mercury*. 29th October 1955. p.15

(Anti-Communist) announced that it would endorse candidates for the election right through Tasmania<sup>49</sup>.

Already there were accusations of church involvement in the new political force. In reaction to the joint pastoral letter on the dangers of communism issued by the Catholic bishops of Australia in 1955, Evatt had attacked Church interference in the Labor Party, arguing that a faction led by B.A. Santamaria had created a secret party within the Labor Party by using the Communist method of a secret cell in order to gain gradual control<sup>50</sup>.

Reacting to this allegation, Father Clem Kilby told the first annual reunion of the southern branch of the St. Patrick's Old Collegians Association that statements that the Catholic Church was trying to form its own political party had no real foundation, "The point was that the industrial groups had been disbanded and no suitable substitute for them had been found. The groups had been the only effective means so far of combatting Communism."<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> *Mercury*. 24th October 1955. p.2

<sup>50</sup> *Examiner*. 2nd May 1955. p.1

<sup>51</sup> *Examiner*. 30th May 1955. p.3

## CHAPTER TWO. THE NEW PARTY TAKES SHAPE IN TASMANIA.

### The Anti-Communist Labor Party in Tasmania, 1955-57.

On the mainland, the Anti-Communist Labor Party was initiated by dissident ALP Members of Parliament with Victoria taking the lead. In Tasmania, Senator George Cole had aligned himself with the new grouping in July 1955<sup>52</sup>. Morgan did not formally join the new grouping till a little later. Both men always kept strong links with Victoria<sup>53</sup>.

The initial meeting of the Tasmanian branch of the Anti-Communist Labor Party was at Heathorn's Hotel - when a provisional executive was formed - with later meetings held at the RSL Club in Macquarie Street, the Carlton Club Hotel and in an office belonging to Ab Lovell's wholesaler's off Elizabeth Street<sup>54</sup>. Key figures in the new committee as well as Virgil Morgan included Kevin Sainsbury and Jack Mahoney.

The group announced election plans on October 23rd and organised their first rally in the Hobart Town Hall for November 7th<sup>55</sup>. They invited a number of speakers from the mainland to address the meeting, Robert Joshua, the leader of the new party in Victoria, and Messrs. Keon, Mullins, Bourke and Andrews<sup>56</sup>. The crowd at the meeting "filled the greater part of the auditorium" and there were a small minority of hecklers present. Keon attacked H.V. Evatt as "the defender of Communism, the defender of Communists and one who would sell Australia to the ideology he believes in," while Joshua attacked John Burton for promoting Communists in the Department of External Affairs<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>52</sup> *Mercury*. 15th July 1955. p.3

<sup>53</sup> Eric Reece said in an interview on 14th October that he often saw Morgan and Cole being met by priests at Melbourne Airport when he and Duthie travelled with them on their way to Canberra.

<sup>54</sup> Conversation with Jack Mahoney. 29th September 1995.

<sup>55</sup> *Examiner*. 24th October 1955. p.1.

<sup>56</sup> *Mercury*. 1st November 1955. p.11

<sup>57</sup> *Mercury*. 8th November 1955. p.2

A few days earlier, the executive had announced their team for the Federal Election which had been called for 10th December. The Senate team would consist of Virgil Morgan, Edward Vickers and Lawrence O'Keefe, while there would be candidates in three Lower House seats : Harry Roberts in Franklin, Les Duke in Bass and Owen Doherty in Wilmot<sup>58</sup>.

Edward Vickers (47) had been born in the UK but lived in Tasmania since 1922. He was an engineer's clerk for the HEC and had joined the ALP in Scottsdale in 1926. Later he was a member of the Alanvale and Queenstown branches while by 1955, he was a member of the Warrane branch. He had resided and worked at St Helen's, Scottsdale, Rosebery, Rossarden, Conara, Launceston and Hobart. As well as being a former AWU organiser for the Southern District and for the West Coast, he was a member of the Federated Clerks Union and was a territorial Justice of the Peace<sup>59</sup>. Vickers had originally applied for ALP endorsement and when he was passed over, joined the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) team<sup>60</sup>. Lawrence O'Keefe (41) was the headmaster of Highclere State School. He had been educated at the University of Tasmania and was formerly in the Forestry Department as well as being a naval radar operator in the Second World War<sup>61</sup>.

Standing in the seat of Franklin, Harry Roberts (23) of Cradoc was an orchardist and interested in the Junior Farmer Organisation<sup>62</sup>. The Cygnet area in the Huon was always a stronghold for the Anti-Communist parties with a large Catholic population. Their priest from 1939 to 1962 was Frank Kent, who established the National Catholic Rural Movement there<sup>63</sup> and was formerly editor of the *Catholic Standard*, had educated his flock in the dangers of extremism. As Monsignor Philip Green saw it, Father

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<sup>58</sup> Mercury. 5th November 1955. p.4

<sup>59</sup> Advocate. 5th November 1955. p.2

<sup>60</sup> Mercury. 10th January 1956. p.11

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> W.T. Southerwood. *Planting a Faith in Tasmania*. Publisher unknown. Hobart. 1977.

Kent's ministry meant that the sons of orchardists became good thinkers and organisers<sup>64</sup>.

In Bass, Les Duke (43) was a resident of Launceston, secretary of the Launceston Bookmakers Club and proprietor of the Launceston Press Agency. He was a past president of the Church of the Apostles branch of the Holy Name Society and a well-known charity worker, Vice-President of the Police and Citizens Boys Club, secretary of the Parents and Friends at St Patrick's College, secretary of the bookmakers club and secretary of the St Vincent's Hospital Auxiliary. He had served in the RAAF for three years<sup>65</sup>. Owen Doherty was a Scotsman who had lived in Tasmania for eight years. He was a fitter at ANM in Boyer and a former mill representative of the AEU. He had served in the Navy during the war.

The Anti-Communist Labor Party was lucky in the draw as they came out first on the Senate ballot, generally reckoned to give them a substantial number of extra votes - the donkey vote. In allocating preferences, the Liberals gave the new party their second preferences ahead of the ALP while the ALP gave no choice of preferences. The Anti-Communist Labor Party was also given a regular press column in the *Mercury* prior to the election and Cole used these columns to justify the split in the Labor Party and to attack Evatt. He argued that the call for a united ALP was impossible under Evatt as he was hostile to the Industrial Groups. Nor did the Evatt party have an alternative to fighting communism<sup>66</sup>. In other columns, he dealt with his view of the origins of the split in the ALP<sup>67</sup> and later covered the presence of communists in trade unions and the role of the

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<sup>64</sup> Conversation with Monsignor Philip Green. 15th September 1995. Harry Roberts in a phone interview on 29th November 1995, said that he was strongly influenced as a young man by Father Kent, who often delivered powerful sermons against communism. A group of them used to meet at Father Kent's house every Friday and they were encouraged to read a lot. Though he was persuaded to stand in the election, most young people weren't interested in politics and the DLP in Cygnet was largely made up of older people.

<sup>65</sup> *Advocate*. November 5th, 1955. p.2      *Examiner*. November 5th, 1955. p.4

<sup>66</sup> *Mercury*. 28th November 1955. p.4

<sup>67</sup> *Mercury*. 30th November 1955.

Industrial Groups. He added that the communists were now coming back<sup>68</sup>.

During the election campaign, another leading ALP figure quit the party, when Tim Healy, a railway repairer and ex-farmer and president of the Ulverstone general branch of the ALP for fourteen years, resigned. He criticised the party that defended communists and attacked the Catholic Church<sup>69</sup>. His resignation brought forth a bitter attack from P.J. Street, president of the Braddon Divisional Council, who said that the branch utterly repudiated the statement that Evatt was sympathetic to communists or communism, nor had he made an attack on Catholic archbishops<sup>70</sup>.

In the General Election, Virgil Morgan got 13,094 votes and his party got a total of 16,075 votes compared to 64,818 votes for the Liberal team and 55,947 votes for the ALP team. For a while, it looked as if Morgan might get a Senate seat but in the cut-up, the preferences of Wedd, the Independent candidate, mostly went to Senator Wardlaw, so he retained his seat and defeated Morgan by 3,211 votes. The figures indicated that many of the official Labor supporters gave preferences to the Liberal Party after voting for the ALP group. The Communist Party candidate in Denison, Max Bound, got 2,003 votes. Overall, the Anti-Communist Labor Party got 3.86% of the vote in the Lower House seats and 10.97% in the Upper House vote. This compares with 5.17% and 6.10% respectively in Australia as a whole.

As a result of these four ALP members - Morgan, Vickers, O'Keefe and Doherty - standing for the Anti-Communist Labor Party, the ALP Executive expelled them<sup>71</sup>. In the following month, February, twelve members of the Moonah ALP branch resigned after an attack on three of their members by the ALP State Secretary, R.H. Lacey. Lacey had charged Messrs. Bresnehan, Mahoney and Stokell with having assisted the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) at the December election. The twelve members included two Vice-

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<sup>68</sup> *Mercury*. 2nd December 1955.

<sup>69</sup> *Mercury*. 3rd December 1955. p.3

<sup>70</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>71</sup> *Mercury*. 10th January 1956. p.11

Presidents and foundation members, J. Kennedy and J. Mahoney, and two executive members, A. Scott and D. Sainsbury. Stokell said he had come to the meeting to explain his reasons for acting on behalf of the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) and to resign from the ALP. He and other members who resigned said they could no longer support the party, which had become "undemocratic, decidedly pro-Communist in its foreign policy, and banned industrial groups, and supported communist-Labor unity tickets in union elections." They would work for unity but only return to the ALP when it had revised the pro-Communist part of its policy<sup>72</sup>.

However the branch secretary, B.K. Miller, said the three men had been expelled for working against true ALP candidates in the election. Stokell in particular had been an executive member of the Anti-Communist Labor Party while masquerading as a member of the true ALP<sup>73</sup>.

The new party now set about creating branches around the state. The first branch, with a financial membership of thirty, was Wayatinah which Cole attributed to the presence of several members who knew from bitter experience what could happen in Australia if communist ideology replaced "our Christian way of life."<sup>74</sup> The next branch was set up in New Norfolk and then in February, 1956, Cygnet. Harry Roberts, the defeated election candidate for Franklin, was the first President, with Messrs. B. Lynsky and C. Halton as vice-presidents, T. O'Rourke

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<sup>72</sup> *Mercury*. 7th February 1956. p.2

<sup>73</sup> *Mercury*. 9th February 1956. p.7 Also interview with Jack Mahoney on 29th September 1995, who showed me the expulsion letter, signed by Lacey, and dated 20th August, 1956. The letter said that he had contravened Rule 80 of the Platform Constitution and Rules.

<sup>74</sup> *Mercury*. 9th December 1955. p.7

In the results of the election, "moderately good support was given to the Labour Party) Anti-Communist)". While all the Lower House candidates lost their deposits, Senator Wardlaw took a long time to pull away from Virgil Morgan who got 13,094 votes, and as a total, the party got 16,075 votes, compared to 64,818 for the Liberals and 55,947 for the ALP.



as secretary, and Miss W.M. McSherry as treasurer<sup>75</sup>.

Virgil Morgan, as the State President of the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) said that his party would vigorously organise genuine Labor branches throughout Tasmania and support candidates in State and Federal elections. Following a report from Sydney of secret moves to unite industrial group supporters and the Evatt faction, Morgan told a general executive meeting of the Anti-Communist Labor Party in Hobart on 6th April, that unity in the ALP could be won only if true Labor principles were restored. This entailed the resumption of Labor's active fight against Communism through industrial groupers; a return to Labor's traditional constitution protecting the rights of individual members and State branches from Federal tyranny; restoration of the late John Curtin's "new model" foreign policy for Australian defence, recognising that Australia could not be safe if an aggressive Power dominated Asia; justice for the victims of Dr. Evatt's aggression and a return to Labor's traditional policies of industrial and social reforms<sup>76</sup>.

The Political Observer of the *Mercury* commented that given the deep bitterness in Tasmania and the widening gulf between the two groups, any move towards unity would have little chance of success<sup>77</sup>.

The split now spread to the North West coast, where the President of the Burnie Trades and Labour Council, S.R. Richardson, resigned on 8th April and the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association, which he represented, withdrew its affiliation with the Council. Richardson said he resigned because of the council's action in February in rescinding the section of the constitution which stated that no known communist would be accepted as a delegate. The Waterside Workers Federation and the AEU branches had moved that the section be rescinded. Richardson added that the AWU would also withdraw its affiliation<sup>78</sup>.

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<sup>75</sup> *Mercury*. 9th February 1956. p.32

<sup>76</sup> *Mercury*. 7th April 1956. p.5

<sup>77</sup> *Mercury*. *ibid.* p.20

<sup>78</sup> *Mercury*. 9th April 1956. p.1

He was commended for his action by Senator Cole who said that infiltration was understood on the mainland but because of Tasmania's isolation, this infiltration - by the Communists and their sympathisers - was not realised by the rank and file Labor members in the state, adding that, "Communists and under-cover Communists have now taken charge of the Burnie Trades and Labour Council and the Burnie branch of the ALP<sup>79</sup>."

The first branch in the North West of the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) was formed in Ulverstone on 15th April, when Tim Healy presided over a "well-attended meeting." Healy told the audience why he had left the Ulverstone branch of the ALP of which he had been president for several years. Senator Cole, who represented the State Executive, said it was the object of the party to ensure by firm opposition that the Evatt Party be made to see the error of its ways and return to the former policy of not allowing the infiltration of Communists into the party or of following a policy dictated by a few Communist led unions. Cole also told the meeting that a State Conference would be held in a few months when the constitution and platform would be reviewed and brought up to date, and officers were elected for the new branch, with Tim Healy as the President<sup>80</sup>.

A letter to the *Advocate* alleged that Healy had been expelled from the ALP on a previous occasion, that he stood as an Independent for State Parliament and was reinstated with the help of Senator Morrow. The writer then referred to the Anti-Communist Labor Party as "a pro-Fascist religious organisation."<sup>81</sup>

When the new party attempted to form a branch in Burnie, the meeting was far less orderly and the police had to be called in. There were two groups of about twenty people present at the meeting and the disorder started when Senator Cole walked in. In the end he obtained the signature of ten members and the branch was formed<sup>82</sup>. Cole moved on to help start a

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<sup>79</sup> *Mercury*. 10th April 1956. p.7

<sup>80</sup> *Mercury*. 16th April 1956. p.2

<sup>81</sup> *Advocate*. 24th April 1956. p.4

<sup>82</sup> *Mercury*. 21st April 1956. p.3    *Examiner*. 21st April 1956. p.1

new branch in his home town of Devonport on 24th April where he took the line that while the nineteenth century was a fight against capitalism, the twentieth century was a fight against communism, which he saw as a more deadly evil. He went on deal once more with suggestions for reunification of the ALP with the Anti-Communist Labor Party, saying that it would only be on their terms. He was elected secretary for the branch with Jack Doody as President<sup>83</sup>.

The next branch was inaugurated in Launceston three days later when the new president, C. Pollington, attacked the Evatt Labor Party and referred to the Socialist International which on April 7th said that Socialism and Communism have nothing in common. He told the meeting that the Evatt Labor Party was actively cooperating with the Communist Party in the trade unions, Labor Party branches and at the shop and factory level to destroy the anti-communist opposition of the industrial groups<sup>84</sup>.

To stimulate interest in the Anti-Communist Labor Party, the State Executive invariably had to bring over speakers from the mainland, usually from Victoria. In June, Virgil Morgan announced at an Anti-Labor Party Executive meeting that Senator Frank McManus of Victoria would be speaking around the state between July 6th and 13th in his first official interstate engagement<sup>85</sup>.

McManus came over in the company of J. Neill, a former secretary of the Victorian Railways Union. They addressed sixty people at the Launceston Public Library on 6th July where McManus spoke for fifty minutes, asserting that: "We are more Labor than the people who call themselves Labor"<sup>86</sup>. He went on to

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<sup>83</sup> *Examiner*. 25th April 1956. p.5

<sup>84</sup> *Examiner*. 28th April 1956. p.7

<sup>85</sup> McManus started his term in the Senate on 1st July 1956, where he held the balance of power with Senator Cole. He said in his autobiography that he naturally conceded the leadership to George Cole because of his six years experience in the Senate. McManus succeeded Cole as the leader of the DLP following Cole's defeat in the 1964 Federal election. McManus, *The Tumult and the Shouting*. p.91

<sup>86</sup> *Mercury*. 7th July 1956. p.4

attack Evatt for "refusing to join the fight against Communism in Asia," arguing that unless the Labor Party got rid of Dr Evatt and his Communist friends and linked with the Anti-Communist Labor Party, Mr Menzies would be able to do as he pleased during the indefinite period he would be in power<sup>87</sup>.

The speakers, with Virgil Morgan, who chaired their meetings, went on to Bell Bay, Georgetown, Wayatinah, New Norfolk, Hobart (9th July) Ulverstone (10th), Devonport (11th) and Burnie (12th). In Hobart, they faced a running fire of interjections, which they answered forcefully. At the meeting in the Lord Mayor's Room, McManus told the audience that Labor unity would be restored when Evatt was removed from office, the party made a complete break with the Communists and its members joined with the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) in forming one party<sup>88</sup>.

The meeting prompted an ALP activist and inveterate letter writer, Jim Brosnan, to say in a letter to the *Mercury* "that Tasmania had been group-free and there have never been unity tickets in the State. However, the Victorian-groupers, ex-Communists and all, try to make out that Tasmania is infested with the evils of Communist domination<sup>89</sup>." This issue was certainly a problem for the DLP in Tasmania. Much as they tried to raise public awareness about the industrial and political situation in the eastern States by bringing over speakers from Victoria to tell people about it, the voters of Tasmania were more likely to be influenced by local factors and in particular by personalities<sup>90</sup>.

A few days later, in Burnie, at least a dozen people

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<sup>87</sup> *Examiner*. 7th July 1955. p.3

<sup>88</sup> *Mercury*. 10th July 1956. p.23

<sup>89</sup> *Mercury*. 12th July 1956. p.6

<sup>90</sup> Senator Cole recognised this factor and spoke about it after his defeat in the 1964 election, when he observed that in Tasmania, personalities and not policies win elections. *Examiner*. 31st October 1966. Cole himself had benefited from this Tasmanian tradition of voting for personalities as well as "a stormy petrel who has proved himself a political rebel and a strong individualist." *Examiner*. 21st January 1962.

had to be ejected from another noisy meeting being addressed by McManus and Neill.

The tour also triggered off a correspondence in the columns of the *Examiner* and raised the spectre of religious sectarianism again with critics jeering at the low turnout at the meetings and accusing the DLP of being "the militant branch of the Roman Catholic Church who seek to dominate Australia as Franco has in Spain"<sup>91</sup> as well as having an avowed policy of supplanting "genuine Australian Labor with one government from Rome."<sup>92</sup> Predictably DLP supporters responded by denying this and referring to some of the Protestants in the ranks of the DLP, like Laurie Short of the Federated Ironworkers and the Victorian DLP leader, Robert Joshua<sup>93</sup>.

### **The 1956 State Election.**

On 20th September, Cosgrove announced that a State election would be held on October 13th and the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) immediately called for applications for endorsement<sup>94</sup>. It was not an easy task for the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) - or its successor, the Democratic Labor Party (DLP) - to find good candidates in Tasmania<sup>95</sup>, and in the end three candidates were endorsed for each of the five state seats<sup>96</sup>.

In Bass, the candidates were Virgil Morgan, now state president of the Labor Party (Anti-Communist); Clement Pollington, textile worker, and president of the Launceston branch; Clevedon Sandilands, an army staff officer and foundation member of the local

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<sup>91</sup> *Examiner*. 13th July 1956. p.2

<sup>92</sup> *Examiner*. 8th August 1956. p.2

<sup>93</sup> Phil Bresnehan in an interview said that most members in the South of the State were Catholics as were the DLP candidates but Harry Scoles and Percy Senior were both Protestants. 2nd July 1995.

<sup>94</sup> *Mercury*. 21st September 1956. p.1

<sup>95</sup> This point was made to me by a number of former Tasmanian DLP members whom I interviewed.

<sup>96</sup> *Mercury*. 26th September 1956. p.1 and 27th September 1956. p.3

branch. He later withdrew for business reasons and the party had no time to endorse another candidate<sup>97</sup>.

The three candidates in Braddon were Jack Doody, officer in charge of the Stevedoring Industry Board, and president of the Devonport branch; Alban Galpin of Burnie, a former engineer in the mercantile marine and now a machinist at APPM; and Tim Healy, ARU representative at Ulverstone, a member of the Ulverstone Hospital Board and a former Life Member of the ALP since 1909.

In Franklin, the DLP team was Alfred Harrold of Moonah, an electrical contractor and ex-RAAF; Frank Hursey of Warrane, a wharfie, who was later to become the central character in the Hursey case between 1957 and 1959, and Harry Roberts of Cradoc who had stood for Franklin in the Federal Election and was president of the Cygnet branch.

In Wilmot, the ticket was headed by Owen Doherty of New Norfolk, a fitter at ANM at Boyer and formerly in the Royal Navy and mercantile marine. He had contested Wilmot at the last Federal election. There was also Cyril Maloney, a hotel proprietor in Westbury, who was a former squadron leader in the RAAF and active with local sporting associations, and John Reidy, proprietor of the Bush Hotel in New Norfolk, a local New Norfolk Council member and a former president of the New Norfolk F.C.

In Denison, the candidates were Jack Bartholomew of West Hobart, state secretary of the U.L.V.A., ex-secretary of the Ballarat and Hobart RSL and an ex-member of the AIF and CMF; Cyril Marshall, clerk/salesman from Lenah Valley, ex-member of the AIF, a former investigating officer of the Repatriation Department and pre-war employee of the Tasmanian Government Railways, and Anthony Orpwood, a business consultant and retired public servant from Newtown. A Territorial J.P. for Tasmania and returned serviceman from the First World War, he had also been a teacher and customs officer and was awarded the OBE for outstanding work with ex-servicemen.

Morgan opened the campaign at the Mechanics Hall in Launceston - sharing the platform with two Victorians, Robert Joshua, the party's Federal President and Jack Little, MLC, the party's leader in

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<sup>97</sup> Examiner. 27th September 1956. p.1

Victoria - and launched a full state programme, including a five year plan for the erection of a new university and the establishment of a fair rents court. Morgan told the seventy people present at the launch that he confidently expected members to be elected in several divisions. "The Labor Party (Anti-Communist) would be willing to accept the reins of Government in Tasmania if it were the wish of the electors<sup>98</sup>." The ALP were more realistic and knew that the Anti-Communist Labor Party would be struggling to find enough candidates, although they realised that Morgan and Healy could get a more sizeable vote as they were both well-known in their communities<sup>99</sup>.

Two Victorian trade unionists were also brought over as part of the election campaign and thirty people were present at a meeting in Launceston to hear Victorian Motor Transport Union Secretary, John Walters, and organiser of the Victorian Federated Clerks Union, W.T. Lloyd, speak alongside Virgil Morgan and Clement Pollington<sup>100</sup>.

John Little, speaking in Launceston, criticised Jack Stanistreet who had attacked the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) and come out in support of Cosgrove and the ALP candidate in Bass, R.C. Taylor, at a lunch hour address to railway workers. Little said he wasn't concerned by the attacks of a Communist sent from the mainland by the Communist Party to take over the Railways Union in Tasmania, "The fact that Mr. Stanistreet was stating policy for a Labor candidate supporting Mr Cosgrove indicated the decline of Labor. Such things never happened when true Labor was led by Mr. Chifley and Anti-Communist Labor candidates will go on fighting until they cleanse the Labor movement of its Communist influence<sup>101</sup>."

Anti-Communist Labor candidates and letter writers to the *Examiner* continued to try and drum up election support on this issue, while an editorial commented, "Apparently the idea is that the Leftist cause would

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<sup>98</sup> *Mercury*. 29th September 1956. p.2

<sup>99</sup> Political comment by "The Roundsman" in the *Examiner* p.2, 29th September 1956.

<sup>100</sup> *Examiner*. 12th October 1956. p.4

<sup>101</sup> *Examiner*. 5th October 1956. p.3

be best served by keeping the Cosgrove Government in office - and then complete its subversion. One of the strange aspects of this campaign has been that the Red element, numerically small but active and influential, is working for the return of the Cosgrove Government after having showered it with abuse for the last couple of years<sup>102</sup>."

The Labor Party (Anti-Communist)'s election comment continued to stress the split, with George Cole writing in the *Mercury*: "There were many in the Labor Party who stood by true Labor principles and who, when they could no longer in conscience be dominated by the Left-wing, joined the ALP (Anti-Communist), not as a new party, but as a continuation of the Labor Party as it was before Dr Evatt and the Communists brought it to the pitiful state it is today<sup>103</sup>."

Although many of their candidates were former members of the ALP, and several of long standing, the new party was now starting to present itself as an alternative to the two major parties, and a lot of energy went into developing a full policy platform<sup>104</sup>. Senator Cole said in his party's election column that they were tied neither to socialists nor capitalists<sup>105</sup> and that the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) was the only party free from control by either big business on the right or communism on the Left<sup>106</sup>.

Despite the optimism expressed during the campaign, the party polled badly on election day. Eleven of

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<sup>102</sup> *Examiner*. 11th October 1956. p.2

<sup>103</sup> *Mercury*. 6th October 1956. p.5. The "Mercury" gave a column every day to each of the three parties for election comment.

<sup>104</sup> Conversation with Phil Bresnehan at Kempton on 2nd July 1995. PB was active in the Moonah branch (as well as the National Civic Council) from 1955, when he was working in the Public Service in Hobart, up till the time he went to Europe in 1959. He left the DLP around 1968-69, after failing to get elected to the State Executive.

<sup>105</sup> *Mercury* 10th October 1956. p.5

<sup>106</sup> *Mercury*. 12th October 1956. p.5



their fourteen candidates lost their deposit and altogether, the party only obtained 5,522 votes. Morgan was the only candidate to poll reasonably well; he obtained 1,228 votes in Bass out of 33,718 votes cast. His preferences, with those of his fellow candidate, Clement Pollington, went 737 to the ALP and 529 to the Liberals. The *Examiner* commented that Morgan had a strong influence on the representation of Bass as a result of distribution as Beattie (Liberal) was then elected after getting 156 preferences from the DLP while Madden (ALP) got 503 but lost his seat. This meant that 42% of people who voted DLP, then gave the preferences to the ALP.

The Anti-Communist Labor Party got its best result in Bass with 4.4% of the primary votes cast; in Braddon it got 4.2%; in Wilmot 3.8%; in Franklin 2.8% and in Denison 2.6%. The average total was 3.46%. In the aftermath of the poll, Morgan tried to sound optimistic: "We are undaunted by the result of the election," he said in Launceston on 14th October. "Should the need to alert electors remain, my party will contest future elections much better prepared because of this lightning campaign<sup>107</sup>."

The *Mercury*, having earlier observed that this election was the shortest ever known in Tasmania and probably one of the most apathetic<sup>108</sup>, noted that the highlights included the rout of the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) candidates<sup>109</sup>. A few days later, it commented that, "The Labor Party (Anti-Communist) failed badly. Because of the poor support it received, it is unlikely to develop into a major political force in State politics. It polled a total of only 5,522 votes and the majority of its candidates will lose their deposits<sup>110</sup>."

The *Examiner* made the same observation but showed its own colours by adding, "The small vote received by the Anti-Communist Labor Party candidates compared with the support they received in Tasmania at the last Federal elections, and the slowness of the decline in the ALP candidates percentage of the total

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<sup>107</sup> *Mercury*. 15th October 1956. p.5

<sup>108</sup> *Mercury*. 12th October. p.6 Editorial.

<sup>109</sup> *Mercury*. 15th October 1956. p.1

<sup>110</sup> *Mercury*. 19th October 1956. p.1

vote by comparison with the 1955 State election figures, suggest that the awakening of the people to the dangerous movement that has taken place in this island towards Evatt-type extremism and impossibility will be a slow process until the Leftists who are already the real Labor bosses begin to show their hand more clearly, through the thinning screen of Cosgrove Labor<sup>111</sup>."

The Hobart Trades Council now took action against Virgil Morgan and charged him with having acted contrary to trade union principles by standing as a candidate in Bass. His actions were viewed as "detrimental to and constitute a grave and serious menace to the trade unionists and workers throughout Tasmania<sup>112</sup>." The following month, November, the Trades Hall Council asked Morgan to resign as a delegate of the Federated Clerks Union. If he didn't, they would ask the union to replace him. The vote was 48 to 16<sup>113</sup>. Morgan responded by forecasting that two unions were about to be liquidated at Communist instigation, "Apparently, despite the Soviet barbarities in Poland and Hungary, in certain political and industrial circles the unforgivable sin is to attack Communism or expose those who cooperate with it<sup>114</sup>."

At the beginning of December, the Anti-Communist Labor Party held its annual meeting in Launceston and Virgil Morgan was re-elected as State President. Clement Pollington from Launceston was elected as Vice-President; Jack Doody of Devonport as Treasurer; the General Executive was Kath Doherty of Burnie, Mary Lane from Devonport, Tim Healy from Ulverstone, Brian Bresnehan and Ian Stokell from Moonah. The meeting also voted to call a Federal conference of all State Labor movements opposed to the Evatt party and decided to advocate voluntary voting for elections<sup>115</sup>.

The new executive then appointed a full-time

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<sup>111</sup> *Examiner*. 15th October 1956. p.1

<sup>112</sup> *Mercury*. 26th October 1956. p.2

<sup>113</sup> *Mercury*. 16th November 1956. p.2

<sup>114</sup> *Mercury*. 17th November 1956. p.2

<sup>115</sup> *Mercury*. 2nd December 1956. p.2

organiser to be based in Launceston, B.T. Deegan. He would be engaged in the development, expansion and coordination of branch activities. The new organiser was educated in Hobart but had lived and was well known in many Tasmanian centres<sup>116</sup>. Morgan said that the secretary was expected to operate more economically and efficiently from the Northern Centre<sup>117</sup>.

### **The rise of the Democratic Labor Party.**

In the meantime on 29th August 1956, the Democratic Labor Party (DLP), had been set up in Sydney<sup>118</sup>. In February 1957 there were moves afoot to make it a national political party and the President, Alan Manning, from Sydney, was invited by the Labor Party (Anti-Communist) to visit Tasmania as well as Melbourne and Adelaide. He was to visit Launceston on Sunday 17th February as well as Hobart<sup>119</sup>.

Manning, a stalwart of the Chifley administration<sup>120</sup>, spoke at a public meeting in Hobart on 15th February on the theme of the need for migration to maintain security<sup>121</sup>. Having met him in Launceston, the Anti-Communist Labor Party executive decided to become the Tasmanian branch of the DLP. Virgil Morgan said that formal amalgamation on a national basis would become effective on the adoption of a formal constitution later in the year<sup>122</sup>. Manning said that the DLP was a permanent third party equally opposed to the Evatt Labor Party and the Liberal Party. The objective was to form governments in both State and Federal spheres. He was particularly buoyed by the Burwood by-election result in Sydney<sup>123</sup>.

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<sup>116</sup> *Mercury*. 19th January 1957. p.10

<sup>117</sup> *Examiner*. 19th January 1957. p.5

<sup>118</sup> Robert Murray. op. cit. p.305

<sup>119</sup> *Mercury*. 5th February 1957. p.3

<sup>120</sup> Manning left the DLP in February 1958 after a bitter political row with Jack Kane, another of the party's founders in NSW.

<sup>121</sup> *Examiner*. 16th February 1957. p.4

<sup>122</sup> *Mercury*. 18th February 1956. p.3

<sup>123</sup> *Examiner*. 18th February 1957. p.1

Senator Cole returned from Canberra during the winter recess to undertake a tour of the south of Tasmania. He started in New Norfolk where he spoke to a party meeting, then went on to Hobart, Moonah, Cygnet, the Huon Valley and the University of Tasmania. The tour included visits to factories and the Senator was available for deputations at the DLP rooms<sup>124</sup>. At New Norfolk he returned to the theme of a need for a third party in Australia with the alternative being a stagnation by the Liberal Party or socialism by the Evatt Party. The Liberals had ceased to govern effectively because the Evatt Labor Party as an Opposition had ceased to exist. He also announced that the DLP would endorse candidates in all Lower House seats in the next Federal Election as well as putting up a full Senate team<sup>125</sup>.

Speaking in Hobart on 8th July, he returned to an attack on Communist led unions by stating that the DLP would not permit Australia's economy to be jeopardised by shipping combines or the Communist-led Waterside Workers Federation. He said that the WWF had lost more than 100 million pounds in wages in the past five years because of disputes. In Moonah he spoke about housing<sup>126</sup> and in Cygnet he addressed the issue of the economy and pensions, and the same day spoke to the University branch about the situation of students in Hungary and China<sup>127</sup>. At the end of his tour he spoke about the growth of the DLP in Hobart, the Huon and other Southern districts<sup>128</sup>.

In August, he returned to the Huon to attend the fifth dinner of the Huonville Football Club Old Players Association where 140 people were present, and recalled how he had led Huonville to its first premiership in 1933<sup>129</sup>. Somewhat optimistically, he told a Devonport meeting a week later that "in the not too far distant future" the Australian Democratic

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<sup>124</sup> *Mercury*. 6th July 1957. p.6

<sup>125</sup> *Mercury*. 8th July 1956. p.8

<sup>126</sup> *Advocate*. 10th July 1957. p.7

<sup>127</sup> *Advocate*. 13th July 1957. p.25

<sup>128</sup> *Advocate*. 20th July 1957.p.7

<sup>129</sup> *Mercury*. 14th August 1957.

Labor Party would be occupying the Government benches<sup>130</sup>.

The party then endorsed him as its No.1 Senate candidate for the Federal Election due in 1958, and the political commentator for the *Examiner* commented that Cole was likely to be delighted by the Senate endorsements as it gives him virtually an "open go" on his home ground - the North West coast. The North West Coast is Democratic Labor's stronghold in Tasmania and Senator Cole has always had a strong personal following in the area. He is also assured of a majority of the Catholic vote. The Groundsman went on to note that Official Labor's decision to run Dr John Frank Gaha, another Roman Catholic and an MLA for Denison from 1950 to 1964, as its Southern Senate representative, was clearly aimed at taking some of the church vote away from Senator Cole: "It is unfortunate, but nevertheless true, that in the coming months sectarianism is likely to appear more often in the Tasmanian political scene."<sup>131</sup>

The issue did reappear in the letter columns of the *Examiner* in November, when a correspondence developed over Archbishop Young's attack on the Chinese Government for expelling Catholic missionaries<sup>132</sup>. When the correspondence developed into a commentary on the role of the Catholic Church in Tasmanian politics, one writer party commented, "The DLP is no more Roman Catholic than any other. One of its executive members is a Church of England minister and many of its staunchest supporters are active laymen in various Protestant denominations."<sup>133</sup>

Jim Brosnan returned to the fray by throwing in the assertion that Senator Cole once used to attend meetings of the Communist Party in Devonport, adding that certainly there were a few Protestant "front men" in the DLP but they were all Catholics who started the push to take over the ALP, even as far back as the days of the late Messrs Curtin and Chifley<sup>134</sup>. Cole said this was completely untrue and

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<sup>130</sup> *Advocate*. 22nd August 1957. p.10

<sup>131</sup> *Examiner*. 12th August 1957.

<sup>132</sup> *Examiner*. 2nd November 1957.

<sup>133</sup> *Examiner*. 7th November 1957. p.2

<sup>134</sup> *Examiner*. 12th November 1957.

proposed to take action against the assertion<sup>135</sup>.

Nearer the elections, another correspondent - WATCHFUL - tried once again to fan the flames of sectarianism: "Now that elections are in the air, would it not be a good idea for the DLP to say what it really is - the Roman Catholic Party ? If it has nothing to hide, why the secrecy ?"<sup>136</sup>

The Federal DLP Conference was held in late August in Canberra<sup>137</sup> and Robert Joshua was elected as President of the DLP. He came back to speak on the North West coast at a DLP rally in the Gaiety Theatre, Ulverstone, on October 26th, organised by Tim Healy. Morgan, Cole and other DLP luminaries were also there<sup>138</sup>. The State secretary, John Doody, announced a series of regional conferences, with the first to be held at St George's Hall, Invermay<sup>139</sup>.

More than 100 delegates attended the DLP second annual state conference in Launceston on February 7-9, 1958, as planning continued for the forthcoming Federal election<sup>140</sup>. A Braddon divisional council was created to form branches in the North West, and a DLP weekly radio session and monthly paper would start in April that year<sup>141</sup>. They continued to work on one of their major concerns by launching the Democratic Cooperative Building Society at a public meeting in Launceston on 7th March, and backed by the DLP, the new organisation acquired an initial capital loan of 150,000 pounds from the Agricultural Bank<sup>142</sup>.

Robert Joshua again came over from Victoria in April

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<sup>135</sup> *Examiner*. 14th November 1957. p.3

<sup>136</sup> *Examiner*. 17th September 1958. p.2

<sup>137</sup> *Examiner*. 26th August 1957. p.4

<sup>138</sup> *Advocate*. 12th October 1957 p.7 and 29th October 1957.p.5

<sup>139</sup> *Advocate*. 23rd December 1957.

<sup>140</sup> Photo in the *Examiner* on 10th February 1958. p.3.  
*Mercury*. 6th February 1958.

<sup>141</sup> *Advocate*.

<sup>142</sup> *Examiner*. 8th March 1958. p.3

to build support for the DLP but a meeting he addressed in Hobart was nearly broken up by an organised group that included people who the *Mercury* described as well-known Communists. Police finally escorted eleven men from the meeting, with one forcibly removed by two police sergeants<sup>143</sup>.

Senator Cole toured again in June, visiting Ulverstone, Hobart, the Huon, Burnie, Circular Head, Devonport. Election candidates went with him and there were public meetings in Cygnet and Lenah Valley. In late July he was on the West Coast, visiting Queenstown, Rosebery, Zeehan, Strahan and Gormanston. Frances Lane and Bruce Dilger went with him<sup>144</sup>.

### **The 1958 Federal Election.**

In August, the Government finally made the announcement about the election date which would be on November 22nd<sup>145</sup>. The major controversy was initially over the Federal ALP's decision that State Labor branches should give their second preferences to the DLP candidates, rather than allowing for the usual practice of letting State branches decide for themselves. This was seen as an attempt to persuade rank-and-file DLP supporters to give their second preferences to the ALP to avoid an overwhelming defeat<sup>146</sup>. Evatt later offered to resign in return for DLP preferences and Senator Cole, as party leader in Canberra, posed five questions for him to respond to before the DLP would consider his offer. Not surprisingly, the proposal came to nothing, and the DLP Tasmania gave its preferences to the Liberals and then the ALP after the Federal Executive said it was up to each State to decide. On the Senate ticket, the DLP directed its preferences to the independent candidate, C.C. McShane, then the Liberals before the ALP. Where a Communist candidate ran - Max Bound in Denison - he came last.

Senator Cole opened the Federal DLP campaign at the Olympic Swimming Pool in Melbourne where over 6,000

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<sup>143</sup> *Examiner*. 12th April 1958. p.5

<sup>144</sup> *Advocate*. 24th July 1958. p.11

<sup>145</sup> *Mercury*. 21st August 1958. p.1

<sup>146</sup> *Mercury*. 15th August 1958. p.3

people heard him criticise H.V. Evatt for not mentioning communism in his campaign launch speech. Nationally, the election was considered to be a dull affair with Evatt standing against Menzies once again, and playing down foreign policy<sup>147</sup>, while the result was a foregone conclusion. However, the polls were giving the DLP 7% of the vote, indicating the importance for the Liberal Party in getting DLP preferences.

In Tasmania the question was whether George Cole would be returned to the Senate<sup>148</sup>, and what sort of vote other DLP candidates would command. The DLP had plenty of time to select its candidates. George Cole was naturally to head the Senate team with Bruce Dilger from Queenstown and Virgil Morgan on the ticket with him. In Bass, Leslie Arnold was the candidate; in Braddon, Frances Lane was standing; in Denison, Harold Senior; in Franklin, Henry Scoles; and in Wilmot, Francis Lillas had replaced P. Sulzberger when he resigned to join the Australian Antarctic expedition<sup>149</sup>.

Bruce Dilger was the council clerk in Queenstown where he had lived for 25 years. Prior to that, he had been secretary to the general manager of the Mt. Lyell Mining and Railway Company, and was also a J.P. and secretary of the West Coast Municipal Association as well as the local Red Cross. He was also the President of the DLP Queenstown branch<sup>150</sup>.

Leslie Arnold was a wood machinist from Mowbray and a northern sporting identity. He had been a member of the Textile Union for nineteen years and was a Life Member of the Tasmanian Motor Cycle Club, northern delegate to the Tasmanian AAA, secretary of the Newstead Harrier Club and a past president of the northern branch of the Wireless Institute of Australia.

Frances Lane came from a strong ALP family as she was the daughter of Henry Lane who had been an ALP MHA for Darwin for twelve years and Minister for Mines

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<sup>147</sup> *Mercury*. 18th October 1958. p.4

<sup>148</sup> *Mercury*. 1st November 1958. p.1

<sup>149</sup> *Mercury*. 1st November 1958. p.2

<sup>150</sup> *Examiner*. 26th November 1957. p.5



from 1943 to 1946. He died in 1955. Frances had been to Our Lady of Lourdes, the Catholic school in Devonport run by Josephite nuns, with the daughters of Dame Enid Lyons and then went to St Mary's as a boarder before going to the University of Tasmania for two years. She had accepted an invitation from Dame Enid to become her secretary in 1951-52 after Dame Enid had become a Minister in Canberra<sup>151</sup>. Her younger sister, Mary, was Senator Cole's secretary, and had organised a youth branch of the DLP on the North West coast.

Harry "Percy" Senior, one of the DLP's more prominent Protestant members, had been a resident of Hobart for seventeen years and lived in Lenah Valley. He was an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries and a Licensed company's auditor<sup>152</sup>. In Franklin, the DLP evidently had difficulty finding a local candidate as Henry Scoles was a Hobart builder<sup>153</sup>. He was also an ex-Navy man while his sporting credentials were being secretary-treasurer of the Amateur Cycling Union for eight years and a committee member of the Glenorchy F.C.<sup>154</sup> On the North Coast, the DLP regarded Francis Lillas, a lawyer from Devonport, as a catch because of his educational qualifications. He had a B.Econ. degree and was also the secretary of the Democratic Housing Cooperative Society.

Senator Cole set out around the state to campaign in late October. He went to Huonville, then Moonah, and spoke at the Good Neighbour Council conference at Burnie. There was a DLP rally in Ulverstone on November 25th then he was back on December 2nd to visit the Devonport show before going on to the West Coast where he was in Queenstown on December 4th,

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<sup>151</sup> Interview with Frances Lane in Devonport on 16th September 1995.

<sup>152</sup> Advocate. *ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> Another DLP member at the time said that Scoles was a poor public speaker. This was a frequent criticism of DLP candidates in Tasmania, particularly in comparison to the visiting Victorians. When political parties still relied on public meetings or local radio to stir up interest at election time, this could be a serious problem.

<sup>154</sup> Advocate. *ibid.*

then New Norfolk on the 5th, Launceston on the 6th, Burnie Town Hall on the 7th and the North West Coast on the 8th.

There were 50 people at the meeting in the Town Hall at Burnie and as usual it was a rowdy meeting with the police having to remove one interjector. Cole spoke about the conditions under which the DLP would consider recommending second preference votes for individual Labor candidates. In his words, to do so, they must clearly and publicly repudiate the six policies which the DLP rejected : Socialism, recognition of Red China, opposition to industrial groups in the trade unions, cooperation between ALP members and Communists in trade union elections, repeal of the clean ballots legislation, and hostility to our Allies in the Pacific<sup>155</sup>.

Once again, Senator McManus came over to speak with John Little, this time at the Ulverstone rally, along with Cole and other candidates. In the party's election column in the *Mercury*, Mary Lane reiterated the argument that the DLP was presenting a third choice, tied neither to the ultra conservative policies of Liberalism nor to the suspect socialism of Evatt Labor. To prove her point, she argued that if the DLP's negative aim was its only policy then they would only be running candidates in the swinging seats. Instead they were standing a full ticket<sup>156</sup>. The DLP also attacked unity tickets in its election columns and advertisements<sup>157</sup>.

The DLP was lucky because they had drawn top spot on the Senate ballot paper, ahead of the ALP and Liberals. Nonetheless, apart from Cole, who got more support in Denison and Franklin than in the other electorates, DLP candidates fared badly. Overall, there was a swing away from the Liberals in Tasmania, especially in Braddon, where DLP preferences surprisingly drifted to the ALP candidate, Ron Davies, and gave the seat to the ALP for the first time in 41 years since the days of King O'Malley.

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<sup>155</sup> *Mercury*. 7th November 1958. p.2

<sup>156</sup> *Mercury*. 10th November 1958. p.7. *Examiner*. 3rd November 1958. p.4

<sup>157</sup> *Mercury*. 18th November 1958 p.6, and 21st November 1958. p.9

Frances Lane had polled 2,789 votes for the DLP but of these, 1,609 went to the Liberal candidate and 1,177 to Ron Davies. Davies required only 27% of the preferences but got 42% so won the seat with a majority of 286 votes<sup>158</sup>, to the surprise of commentators.

Immediately after the election, the *Examiner* noted that Senator Cole would have a struggle to retain his seat and that other members of the DLP team polled poorly. Lillas received 1592 votes after a brief campaign and was likely to lose his deposit in Wilmot. In Bass, the DLP had maintained its position, much the same as in 1955. Scoles in Franklin had got just enough votes to save his deposit<sup>159</sup>. In the Senate vote, George Cole and his team got 16.98% of the total ; some 25,922 votes compared to 62,616 for the ALP team and 61,130 for the Liberals (2,972 were ungrouped). After preferences were distributed, Cole retained his seat. Overall the DLP got 7.88% of the vote in the Lower House seats (the national figure was 9.41%) while the Senate vote was much higher than the national percentage because of Cole's large personal vote (the national figure was 8.42%).

#### **The 1959 State Election.**

By early 1959, attention was turning to the next State election. Both the ALP and the Liberals had been studying the impact of the DLP vote in the Federal election to see how it might affect the State election. They realised that the DLP could affect the result in certain electorates, probably Bass, Denison and Franklin, as polls indicated that this is where the DLP vote was strongest. The Liberals were hoping that the DLP might swing enough votes away from the ALP to allow them to win a fourth seat in Denison and Franklin at least<sup>160</sup>.

An article in the *Mercury* in March, referred to the forthcoming DLP State Conference in Launceston on the 14th of that month. The writer noted, "that the DLP got minor support in 1956 and does not appear to have gained much ground since. However its preferences

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<sup>158</sup> *Examiner*. 3rd December 1958. p.6

<sup>159</sup> *Examiner*. 24th November 1958. p.3

<sup>160</sup> *Examiner*. 31st January 1959. Article by the Roundsman. p.2

could play an important role in the results of the elections. The DLP is likely to give them to the Liberals. Although there will now be seven seats, past results hold out little hope of success for the DLP."<sup>161</sup>

There were also reports of divisions in the DLP in Tasmania, with resentment amongst the rank-and-file members directed at the control of the State Executive over the party's choice of candidates. Two of the leaders were at loggerheads over their prospective seats while some members still hankered after the idea of sinking their differences with official Labor. It was well known that many Tasmanians voted for a party in the Federal election but for personalities in State elections<sup>162</sup> and the DLP never managed to attract any really well-known Tasmanian figures to its banner, apart from Cole. Lingering suspicion of church control was always a factor as well<sup>163</sup>.

By April, the DLP had nominated thirteen candidates, indicating that it was having difficulties in finding people to stand for them. In Denison, Harry Senior was standing again, with Brian Bresnehan and Rex McShane. In Bass, Leslie Arnold was also running once more, while in Franklin, Morgan was heading the ticket along with Henry Scoles and two new candidates, John Dwyer and Allan Powell. In Wilmot, the DLP could only put forward the name of Harold Hill, who actually lived in Lenah Valley in Hobart, while in Braddon, Jack Doody, Frances Lane and Alban Galpin were standing once again, along with Anthony Cameron. Doody subsequently withdrew.

Of the new candidates, Rex McShane was sales manager for a large firm of importers and merchants, and was a member of the CTA and the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania. Dwyer was a school teacher from a well-known Huon family and Powell was a Commonwealth public servant. Harold Hill was a Hobart accountant who had earlier been employed in many parts of Wilmot

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<sup>161</sup> *Mercury*. 13th March 1959. p.4

<sup>162</sup> This comment was also made by Monsignor Philip Green in the interview on 15th September 1995.

<sup>163</sup> These ideas were summarised in an article in the *Mercury*. 28th March 1959. p.2

while Cameron was a Burnie insurance agent<sup>164</sup>. Frank Hursey, a DLP candidate in 1956, and by 1959 at the centre of a long running legal dispute with the WWF, nominated late as an Independent in Franklin, although he said he was still a member of the DLP<sup>165</sup>.

An *Examiner* editorial said that the DLP aim was to win enough seats to gain the balance of power<sup>166</sup> but the party this time decided not to allocate preferences<sup>167</sup>. Again there was a feeling that although the DLP was putting up candidates in all seats, they would not get enough votes to secure representation but their preferences might play an important part in determining close contests. Though the party favoured an exchange of preferences with the Liberal Party, there was always a drift to Labor, and most of its followers were former Labor voters<sup>168</sup>.

In the event, on 2nd May, the DLP once again got its best vote in Bass with 4.2% of votes cast. In Braddon it was 4.1%; in Wilmot 3.7%; in Franklin 2.8% and in Denison 2.5%. Overall the party obtained 8,510 votes or 5.39% of the total votes cast, an improvement on their previous vote in the 1956 State election. However they only stood 12 candidates for the 35 seats in the House of Assembly, compared to 14 candidates for 30 seats in 1956.

Harold Senior, while admitting that his party's vote was disappointing in some areas, said it had shown a marked increase in Southern Tasmania<sup>169</sup>. The DLP did score one major upset when Virgil Morgan's preferences in Franklin went almost exclusively to the Liberal Party so that they won a fourth seat there after a lengthy distribution of preferences<sup>170</sup>. This affected the overall result because in the new House of Assembly the ALP now had 17 seats, the

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<sup>164</sup> *Examiner*. 13th April 1959. p.3

<sup>165</sup> *Examiner*. 13th April 1959. p.3

<sup>166</sup> *Examiner*. 21st April 1959. p.2

<sup>167</sup> *Examiner*. 22nd April 1959. p.3.

<sup>168</sup> *Mercury*. 17th April 1959. p.4

<sup>169</sup> *Examiner*. 4th May 1959. p.1

<sup>170</sup> *Examiner*. 9th May 1959. p.1

Liberals had 16 seats and the balance was held by two Independents, Wedd and Turnbull. In the end, the ALP maintained itself in office for the next five years but it took some weeks of manoeuvring before the next Parliament could settle down to business.

The DLP had found it hard going through these election campaigns. Branch meetings met monthly and they raised money in various ways : house parties, where everyone brought a plate, and they paid a nominal entrance fee and played board games or cards or took a truck down the Huon and loaded it up with apples to sell in Hobart<sup>171</sup>. They sometimes organised 5 pound sweeps and "a lot of ALP blokes bought tickets".<sup>172</sup> There was a lot of discussion about policy<sup>173</sup> but attendance at branch meetings was never very high; up to ten or twelve at the larger branches like Moonah<sup>174</sup>, Cygnet<sup>175</sup> or Devonport. Sometimes they organised meetings for speakers like Senator Cole or one of the Victorians on tour, and they tried hard to educate new members on policy and issues<sup>176</sup>. There was a good attendance for the annual State Conference<sup>177</sup>.

Many Catholic members were also members of the National Civic Council and they encouraged new people to get involved in the DLP<sup>178</sup>. The NCC was formed in 1957 after a split in The Movement a year earlier, resulting from a difference in views between the diocese of Sydney, represented by Cardinal Gilroy and the diocese of Melbourne, where Archbishop Mannix held sway. As a result of a vote by the Episcopal

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<sup>171</sup> Interview with Brian Bresnehan, Devonport. 16th September 1995.

<sup>172</sup> Interview with Jack Mahoney. Lenah Valley. 29th September 1995.

<sup>173</sup> Interview with Phil Bresnehan. Kempton. 2nd July 1995.

<sup>174</sup> Interview with Brian Bresnehan. op.cit.

<sup>175</sup> Harry Roberts said there was a good attendance at the Cygnet branch during the time he was involved, from about 1956 to 1964. 29th November 1995.

<sup>176</sup> Interview with Jack Mahoney. op.cit.

<sup>177</sup> Interview with Frances Lane. op.cit.

<sup>178</sup> Interview with Phil Bresnehan. op. cit.

Committee of the Catholic Social Studies Movement (CSSM) in favour of the "Sydney view" which gave the local bishop the veto power over Movement activities in his own diocese, B.A. Santamaria and other full-time officials of the CSSM resigned and set up a new organisation, the Catholic Social Movement.

The new organisation was allowed to operate in the diocese of Hobart but it did not get official support in Sydney, where there were bitter divisions in the Catholic church. Cardinal Gilroy and other bishops who supported him "had decided that the Church should not precipitate a split in the Labor Party and were determined to exclude Mr Santamaria's new organisation from their dioceses"<sup>179</sup>.

Cardinal Gilroy had then called a meeting in October 1956 which decided to send a delegation of three to Rome to seek an authority ruling from the Vatican on the dispute. The commission of Cardinals met late in 1956 and sent a letter to Dr Mannix in Melbourne with an instruction that its general contents were to be made known to all Australian bishops. A second letter followed in July 1957, which in effect "stripped Mr Santamaria's new organisation of any claim to connection with the Church."<sup>180</sup> Mannix appealed against the decision but was over-ruled.

The instructions were to the effect that the Movement had to be reconstituted as a lay association for the 'formation of the social and moral conscience of Catholics, with special attention to the battle against Communism' and be under the effective control of the local bishop; that it must not intervene directly or indirectly in unions or political parties: and that any organised lay action in politics could in any sense be in the name of the Church<sup>181</sup>.

The National Civic Council was formed in December 1957 by B.A. Santamaria and his supporters to continue the anti-Communist work of the Movement. It was active in Tasmania and its crusading newspaper

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<sup>179</sup> *The Movement*. Paul Ormonde. Thomas Nelson (Australia) Ltd. 1972. p.103-104.

<sup>180</sup> The second letter from the Congregation of Propaganda Fide was dated 25th July 1957.

<sup>181</sup> *The Movement*. op. cit. p. 197

*News Weekly* was sold outside many Catholic churches in the State. The central point for NCC members in Hobart was St. Mary's where the Archbishop came to address the organisation and B.A. Santamaria also visited on occasions, about once or twice a year<sup>182</sup>. Father Lalor was another regular speaker. Bert Green, secretary of the Hospital Employees Union No. 1, was the paid official of the NCC and they had an office in Liverpool Street above the Easy Walkin' shoeshop<sup>183</sup>.

There was a lot of overlap between the NCC and the DLP. Phil Bresnehan described the NCC as "a ginger group for the DLP"<sup>184</sup> and said they also worked on union elections and organised finance drives as well as selling Santamaria pamphlets and holding lectures. Later there were differences between the NCC and the DLP in Tasmania which came to a head in 1964, and led to a number of individuals drifting away from one or both organisations.

Initially most DLP members were Catholics and formerly in the ALP but there was a lot of effort trying to recruit new members after the establishment of the Anti-Communist Labor Party/DLP<sup>185</sup>. A lot of people were anti-communist but didn't know anything else. Others were sympathetic but nervous about being seen as DLP<sup>186</sup>.

Although there was a core group in the party, it was difficult to hold new members, and many of them just paid their dues and did nothing else<sup>187</sup>. Many of the branches existed only on paper<sup>188</sup>. The Young Democrats

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<sup>182</sup> Interview with Phil Bresnehan. He was approached to join the NCC after he returned from England in 1955 and joined the NCC Moonah group which met at St Theresa's Church hall.

<sup>183</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>184</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> Interview with Phil Bresnehan. *op.cit.*

<sup>186</sup> Interview with Jack Mahoney. *op. cit.*

<sup>187</sup> Interview with Brian Bresnehan. *op. cit.*

<sup>188</sup> Interview with Phil Bresnehan. *op.cit.*



did not really function beyond Devonport<sup>189</sup> and although there was an attempt to form a Women's Branch, that never really took off either. The party membership in Tasmania was estimated to be 500 in 1959-60<sup>190</sup>.

The State Executive chose candidates<sup>191</sup> but they were often hard to find, and a close look at the domicile of candidates over the years indicates that sometimes they did not live in the constituency. Morgan ran in Bass and Franklin rather than Denison which usually polled the least votes for the DLP in State Elections. Lack of finance too, often made it impossible to run a full ticket, especially in state elections.

At election time, the DLP ran newspaper advertisements in the main daily papers, and used the local radio stations, but they could never compete effectively with the two major parties. The press however gave them a daily column alongside the Liberals and the ALP in the run-up to elections.

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<sup>189</sup> Interview with Frances Lane. op. cit. Her sister did a lot of the youth organising in Devonport, and was particularly active in getting young people out doorknocking at election times.

<sup>190</sup> *The Democratic Labour Party*. P.L. Reynolds. The Jacaranda Press. 1974.

<sup>191</sup> Interview with Brian Bresnehan. op. cit.

### CHAPTER THREE. THE GENERAL CLIMATE OF ANTI-COMMUNISM IN TASMANIA, 1955-59.

The Communist Party of Australia (CPA) was never very strong in Tasmania and there were only a handful of CPA members in key positions in the trade union movement. The two prominent ones in the late 1950's were Tas Bull in the Waterside Workers Federation (he was a CPA member from 1951 to 1959<sup>192</sup>) and Jack Stanistreet of the Australian Railways Union who worked in the railway workshops in Launceston. Max Bound, as the local Communist Party secretary in Hobart, stood as a candidate in Denison but he never got many votes. His best result was in the Federal Election in December 1955 when he got 2,003 votes, while in November 1958 he got 1,249 votes. In 1953, he had got 408 votes. No Communists stood in the State Election in February 1955<sup>193</sup> but in 1956, Max Bound got 91 votes in Denison.

The Catholic Church brought a number of speakers to Tasmania to warn the faithful about the horrors of communism. Sometimes the speakers were exiles or more often they were Columban fathers who had been imprisoned in China and then expelled. One Columban priest who had been expelled from China was Father Philip Crosbie, author of "Pencilling Prisoner", who was at St Virgil's until 1951 while Archbishop Young brought Harold Lalor, a Jesuit, to head the Lay Institute in Sandy Bay. He was a strong speaker against Communism and was nicknamed "One Minute to Midnight" Harold<sup>194</sup>. He left for Melbourne in 1961.

Archbishop Young frequently spoke out about the dangers of Communism. As Coadjutor-Archbishop on 27 February 1955, he addressed a rally of about 500 Catholic men in Launceston and stressed the need for Catholics to fight the menace of Communism. He made a call to Catholics in industry and those who held power to stop Communists taking over. The social problem of communism was fundamentally a religious and a moral problem, "The Pope could exhort but

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<sup>192</sup> Interview with Tas Bull. Sydney. 8th September 1995.

<sup>193</sup> The *Mercury* commented, "For the first time in some years the Communist Party did not nominate a candidate." 26th January 1955. p.5

<sup>194</sup> Interview with Monsignor Philip Green. op.cit.

Catholic men must act."<sup>195</sup> Later that year, on 30th September, he succeeded Archbishop Tweedy who resigned for reasons of health.

On April 29, 1955, the Catholic Bishops of Australia issued a Joint Pastoral Letter concerning the communist threat and expressing alarm at the disbandment of the industrial groups<sup>196</sup>. Archbishop Young reiterated the Bishops warning when he addressed the students at St Patrick's College and St Virgil's College at the end of the school year, telling them that Communism was a ruthless foe of God.

He went on to defend the Catholic Bishops, "It was a lamentable fact that some highly-placed public men were blind to the great issue involved in the present upheaval. They did not seem to realise that they were forwarding the interests of Communism. The Bishops pointed out that there was one outstanding issue for the nation and the Church, and that was the immediate Communist threat to the security of the people and to the freedom of religion in Australia."<sup>197</sup>

After the massacre at Poznan on June 28th, 1956, Archbishop Young held a special mass at St Mary's in memory of those who died, attended by more than 600 Polish migrants<sup>198</sup>. The Polish community also organised protest marches about the massacre in Hobart and Launceston, where the mayor presided over the meeting afterwards<sup>199</sup>.

Another controversial issue in early 1956 was over the visit to Tasmania of Professor Joseph Hromadka, dean of the Comenius Faculty of Theology at the

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<sup>195</sup> *Mercury*. 1st March 1955. p.8. *Examiner*. 1st March 1955. p.3

<sup>196</sup> *Mercury*. 30th April 1955. p.2. The strength of the wording in the document was attributed to Archbishop Young and the Bishop of Ballarat. B.A. Santamaria. *Daniel Mannix. A biography*. Melbourne University Press. 1984.

<sup>197</sup> *Mercury*. 22nd November 1955. p.3

<sup>198</sup> *Mercury*. 9th July 1956. p.3

<sup>199</sup> *Mercury*. 30th July 1956. p.1. 20th August 1956. p.2

University of Prague and vice president of the World Presbyterian Alliance, from 17-21 February 1956. He spoke in Burnie<sup>200</sup> and Launceston then went to Hobart on Sunday 19th February where he spoke at the evening service at Wesley Church. He then addressed a public meeting in City Hall on the Monday evening - where there was a demonstration against him organised outside<sup>201</sup> - as well as speaking to almost 100 people at a United Nations Association forum. Dr Hromadka told his listeners that he was not a Communist and never had been one<sup>202</sup> but hecklers and letter writers to the editor accused him of being a collaborator and an apologist for the Communists<sup>203</sup>.

The visit was organised by the World Conference of Churches, following a conference in Sydney, and to counter the meeting, the International Council of Christian Churches brought Carl McIntire from the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingwood, New Jersey, over from the United States in his capacity as President of that body. He stated that the Communists were deliberately using the World Council of Churches for propaganda and that Professor Hromadka was "the mouthpiece in the churches for the Communist Party line and he was the Number One Protestant defender of Communism. Such men as Professor Hromadka were conditioning the West to a softer attitude towards communism." The local executive of the World Council of Churches countered the fierce criticism by putting out a statement signed by Bishop Cranswick, and representatives of the Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists and Quakers: "The World

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<sup>200</sup> *Advocate*. 14th February 1956. p.4 and 18th February 1956. p.1 and 2

<sup>201</sup> The *Advocate* carried a report that Bishop Cranswick had spoken to the demonstrators beforehand, noting that they were mostly Czechoslovaks, 20th August 1956. p.2, while Rev. K.B. Skegg, chairman of the Tasmanian branch of the World Council of Churches had said that many of those who took part in the demonstration and the heckling at the service "smelt strongly of liquor." 21st February 1956. p.7

<sup>202</sup> *Mercury*. 18th February 1956. p.2

<sup>203</sup> The *Catholic Standard* quoted the *Sydney Catholic Weekly* which called Dr Hromadka a pawn of the Soviet-established Religious Cominform. 17th February 1956. p.2

Council of Churches delights to have fellowship with their fellow-Christians in these countries."<sup>204</sup>

There were a considerable number of letters about his visit in all the daily papers, including some from Czechoslovak migrants. Among the missionaries who had been imprisoned in China after 1949 was Geoffrey Bull who was the first British missionary to enter Tibet and then served three years in jail. He spoke at a public meeting in the Town Hall in Hobart in September 1956<sup>205</sup>.

Another visitor in October that year was Rev. Kate Hutley, a Congregationalist minister from the London Missionary Society, who had served over thirty years in China. She lectured on China and the secret Christians there in Hobart, the Huon, Devonport and Launceston<sup>206</sup>.

In June. Father E. D'Arcy, Chaplain of the Social Studies Movement<sup>207</sup>, addressed the Hobart Catholic Men's Club Social Night on the theme of "Crisis of our Times" and told them that the greatest enemy of the Church today is atheistic communism "and the battleground they have chosen is the trade union movement." He quoted Lenin, "without the trade unions, revolution is impossible."<sup>208</sup>

Archbishop Young celebrated a special mass at St Mary's in August for the repose of the souls of Poles who died in the massacre of Poznan in July and between 600 and 700 members of the Polish community took part. In November, he offered another mass at St Mary's for the Hungarian nation<sup>209</sup>.

Mrs H.J. Flanagan spoke in Hobart to the Catholic Women's League Conference in October on "Women and

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<sup>204</sup> *Mercury*. 11th February 1956. p.2

<sup>205</sup> *Mercury*. 1st October 1956. p.2

<sup>206</sup> *Mercury*. 6th October 1956. p.12

<sup>207</sup> Eric D'Arcy became Catholic Archbishop of Hobart in 1988.

<sup>208</sup> *Catholic Standard*. 15th June 1956. p.10-11.

<sup>209</sup> *Catholic Standard*. 9th November 1956. p.1

Communism."<sup>210</sup>

At the end of 1956 another controversy sprang up over the visit of a delegation of Anglican clergy to China for five weeks which included the Bishop of Tasmania, Rt. Rev. Dr. G.F. Cranswick<sup>211</sup>. The Bishop said people had freedom of worship but the Church in China was now free from foreign domination and able to administer its own affairs. He had also noticed a great deal of social improvement<sup>212</sup>. The *Mercury* then ran a series of articles about the visit, written by Francis James, a layman who took part in the tour by the delegation<sup>213</sup>.

There were letters to the editor of the *Mercury* and *Examiner*<sup>214</sup> criticising Bishop Cranswick right through into the New Year and Archbishop Guilford Young told the congregation at the opening of St Joseph the Workman Catholic Church in Wayatinah that ecclesiastics who made "silly and mischievous utterances " on communism should be prayed for<sup>215</sup>.

Several more meetings were held early in 1957 at the same time as nationally there was a push for increased trade with China as well as a call for diplomatic recognition.

Mr D. Wright and B.A. Santamaria, as director of the National Catholic Rural Movement, both spoke on Communism and the Mythical Body of Christ to the University Catholic Federation 15th Annual Conference in January, while in April, the Rev. D. Fitzgerald - a Columban missionary in China from 1946 to 1952 -

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<sup>210</sup> *Catholic Standard*. 12th October 1956. p.10

<sup>211</sup> The delegation was led by Archbishop Mowll, Primate of Australia.

<sup>212</sup> *Mercury*. 18th December 1956. p.3

<sup>213</sup> The series started in the *Mercury* on 10th January 1957. p.6

<sup>214</sup> One letter to the *Examiner* on 19th December 1956 was from an ex-Communist who had converted to Christianity. T.G. Matthews criticised the Bishop for his comments, saying that the Communist Party wanted the complete extinction of religion.

<sup>215</sup> *Mercury*. 24th December 1956. p.3

was invited by the Newman Society at the university and addressed a packed meeting in the Hobart Town Hall. He attacked the Chinese communists for putting the State before the family.

In March, two Columbans, Father Hennessy and Father Fitzgerald, spoke on "China under Communism" to the Hobart Catholic Men's Night, and before the meeting began, Archbishop Young offered a Mass at St Mary's for Chinese people suffering under Communism and especially for the Catholic Church in China. Both the visiting Columbans had served in China<sup>216</sup>. Father A.M. McGrath from Ireland spoke in Launceston in July as part of a tour of Australia at the request of the Legion of Mary. As a member of the St. Columban's Foreign Missionary Society, he had been jailed for three years in Shanghai and released in 1954. He told his audience that 6,000 Catholic priests, brothers and nuns had been expelled from China or imprisoned and gave details of mental torture inflicted by the Chinese Communists<sup>217</sup>. He himself had been in China since 1930 and had set up the Legion of Mary from 1948 till 1951 when it was banned and he was arrested<sup>218</sup>.

The British and Foreign Bible Society took the line that it was fighting a battle of words with Communism among Asia's new literate<sup>219</sup> while the Salvation Army annual state congress was told by Commissioner Lord - who had almost died in a Chinese camp in North Korea - that although Communism had stopped the Salvation Army during the Korean War, a better conquest for the Christian cause had followed those critical days and the Salvation Army in South Korea was stronger than it had ever been<sup>220</sup>.

When Archbishop Gawlina, protector to the Poles-in-exile, arrived in Hobart in May 1958, 200 people met him at the airport where he told them that Communist persecution had strengthened religion in Poland and

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<sup>216</sup> *Catholic Standard*. 15th March 1957. p.6

<sup>217</sup> *Examiner*. 27th July 1957. p.3

<sup>218</sup> *Catholic Standard*. 5th July 1957. p.1

<sup>219</sup> *Mercury* 14th February 1958. p.14

<sup>220</sup> *Mercury*. 12th April 1958. p.3. *Examiner*. 24th April 1958. p.3

Archbishop Young said that the Church was the greatest bulwark against communism in the world. Archbishop Gawler celebrated a mass for nearly 600 people from the Polish community at St Theresa's in Moonah and went on to Wayatinah and Launceston as part of his Australia-wide tour<sup>221</sup>. Some 200 Poles were at Wayatinah and 250 at the mass in Launceston.

Dr Fred Schwarz, a Sydney doctor and executive director of the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade, came to Launceston for five days in August 1958. Dr. Schwarz had made an intensive study of Communist doctrines and methods and now devoted most of his time to warning free people of the dangers of Communism, according to the editor of the *Examiner*.<sup>222</sup> He had told the US House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities that the Communists had more or less set a world conquest deadline for 1973 and would control the world, including Australia, by then if present infiltration went unchecked.

John Orchard wanted him to debate with Jack Stanistreet on the motion "That Communism is the greatest enemy of the workers,"<sup>223</sup> and he did manage to address 300 railwaymen in their lunchbreak<sup>224</sup> as well as speaking to 80 women in the ANZAC Hotel and then the Launceston Rotary Club<sup>225</sup>. The Mayor chaired a public meeting for him at the National Theatre when he spoke on the theme of "How and when the Communists propose to conquer Australia without firing a shot<sup>226</sup>." Four hundred people attended the rally. He then went on to Devonport where he told a public

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<sup>221</sup> *Mercury*. 10th May 1958. p.5. *Examiner*. 12th April 1958. p.4 and 14th April 1958. p.5. *Catholic Standard*. 2nd May 1958.

<sup>222</sup> *Examiner*. 13th August 1958. p.2

<sup>223</sup> *Examiner*. 18th August 1958. p.2. Letter from John Orchard, Liberal MHA for Bass.

<sup>224</sup> Jack Stanistreet's absence at these meetings was noted by a letter writer - ADVANCE AUSTRALIA FAIR - to the *Examiner* on 4th September 1958. p.2. "So wake up, workers, before it is too late, or your blood and the blood of your children will run in the gutters of Launceston."

<sup>225</sup> *Examiner*. 21st August 1958. p.10

<sup>226</sup> *Examiner*. 22nd August 1958. p.19 advertisement.



meeting that the communist strategy was to isolate Australia from its helpful allies first<sup>227</sup>.

Another exile to visit was the Lithuanian Bishop V. Brizgys who came to Hobart for three days in March 1959. The Bishop met about a hundred Lithuanians at Moonah Catholic Church and lectured there as well as being welcomed by the Mayor at the Town Hall<sup>228</sup>. He also visited Launceston<sup>229</sup>. In the same month, the Ukrainian Catholic Apostolic Exarch to Australia, the Most Rev. Ivan Prasko, conducted a mass in Launceston where he prayed for Ukrainians living under Communist domination in their own country then spoke to the Ukrainian community at a dinner at ANZAC House<sup>230</sup>.

At the end of the year, Canon H.W. Arrowsmith, the Australian secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society and a Sydney alderman, told a general meeting of all Protestant denominations at Christchurch in Launceston that the whole of Asia would be Communist controlled within fifteen years and that Christians had to send Christian scriptures costing equal the amount of money allotted to communist literature being distributed in Asia by Moscow<sup>231</sup>.

Other sections of the community were also warned of the dangers of communism. Several Liberal Members of Parliament made a point of dealing with the Red menace, both within Australia and from overseas. Senator Reginald Wright (Liberal) who represented Tasmania from 1949 to 1978, and in his legal capacity defended the Hurseys in 1958 and 1959, told a meeting at Lindisfarne in December 1955 that his main objective in the new Parliament would be to rid the waterfront and shipping of communists. Senator Robert Wordsworth (Liberal), who represented Tasmania from 1949 to 1959, and was an original ANZAC and member of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs, Trade and Defence Committee, opening the Liberal Women's Conference in Launceston in May 1956, told his audience that: "Communism was growing in Australia and the

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<sup>227</sup> *Examiner*. 23rd August 1958. p.8

<sup>228</sup> *Mercury*. 11th March 1959. p.7

<sup>229</sup> *Examiner*. 11th March 1959. p.3

<sup>230</sup> *Examiner*. 30th March 1959. p.4

<sup>231</sup> *Examiner*. 1st December 1959. p.5

Australian people were doing nothing about it.... I am appalled at the apathy of the Australian people on the subject of Communism ....It was time the Liberal Party took the matter up and did all in its power to abolish the Communist Party in Australia." <sup>232</sup> In July he told the Legacy annual dinner at the Hotel Metropole that Russia had not changed her aim of world domination but the hydrogen bomb had made her change her plans. "Russia had a lead in nuclear weapons which would be lost if the democracies continued their experiments. Therefore Russia wanted an end to nuclear experiments." <sup>233</sup>

The RSL always provided a receptive audience for attacks on communism and when its Annual Federal Congress met in Hobart in October 1957, they decided to seek a new referendum on the outlawing of the Communist Party. They also called on the Federal Government to inform the public on the methods, techniques and tactics of Communists. However one acting Tasmanian delegate from Tasmania, John Gunn, said the motion would achieve nothing as the Communist Party still existed <sup>234</sup>.

The *Examiner* described the Governor's address to the National Congress of the RSL as "Churchillian and perhaps the most brilliant in his term as governor."

Sir Ronald Cross had told the gathering that communism and our free and natural way of life could never be reconciled <sup>235</sup>.

Even the Girl Guides were not immune to warnings on the subject and Colonel G.A.D. Youl, speaking in Longford in November 1957, told supporters of the Girl Guide Movement from all over Australia that their movement, with its law of goodwill, was one of the most vital forces against communism and evil <sup>236</sup>.

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<sup>232</sup> *Mercury*. 7th May 1956. p.7

<sup>233</sup> *Mercury*. 30th July 1956. p.5

<sup>234</sup> *Mercury*. 31st October 1957. p.3

<sup>235</sup> *Examiner*. 29th October 1957. p.4

<sup>236</sup> *Mercury*. 11th November 1957. p.12

#### CHAPTER FOUR. THE D.L.P. IN DECLINE.

There appears to have been a hardcore DLP vote throughout the period of its existence in Tasmania, but the heart really went out of the organisation after Senator Cole lost his seat in the December 1964 Senate election. His most ardent supporters, like Mary Lane and Jack Doody, drifted away, and others had gone after the split at the State Conference in 1964.

At the Federal level in December 1961, the DLP, having put up nineteen candidates, got 7.49% of the vote in Lower House seats in Tasmania but only 5.53% of the Senate vote. In November 1963, when there was an election only for seats in the Lower House, the DLP got 6.41% of the vote, but in December 1964 when George Cole stood again for the Senate the DLP got 13.47% of the vote but not enough for him to retain his seat there. It was only a narrow defeat and he contemplated legal action to challenge the result but decided not to pursue the case. By then he was already a sick man and although he stood again in 1967, he only polled 8.61% of the vote, and two years later he died<sup>237</sup>.

The party doggedly ran candidates even after his defeat, although most of them were new to the hustings. At the Federal level, in November 1966, they got 5.97% of the Lower House vote, but by October 1969, this had dropped to 4.31%. In November 1970, the DLP only ran two candidates on the Senate ticket and got 3.93% of the vote, but in 1972, when the ALP was returned to office under Gough Whitlam, they contested all five Lower House seats and got 4.80% of the vote. The last time they stood candidates was in May 1974 when the DLP nationally polled 3.56% of the Senate vote and lost its remaining Senators but the two Tasmanians obtained only 0.84%.

At State level, it was a real struggle to find good candidates<sup>238</sup> and in May 1964 they could only put up

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<sup>237</sup> His daughter, Jill O'Keefe, said he suffered heavily from stress which affected his blood pressure and he had a lot of headaches. In the end, he died from renal failure. Phone conversation with the writer, 30th October 1995.

<sup>238</sup> This point was made by Tony Kearney and Jack Mahoney.

nine altogether, polling 2.40% of the vote. In May 1969 they managed to stand ten candidates but their overall vote dropped again to 1.71% and they did not put any candidates forward in 1972. One major reason for this decision was that after 1969 the right wing trade unions who supported the DLP felt that they just weren't getting anywhere<sup>239</sup> as it was quite clear that the DLP was not going to affect the Labor Party's policies. The unions also transferred their support in Senate elections to the Independent, Brian Harradine, after 1975<sup>240</sup>. At the national level, the DLP had lost all its Senators in the 1974 Federal Election and the Gair affair<sup>241</sup> had disillusioned many DLP voters in the same year, so there was no energy to raise money or contest elections after that. The party organisation hung together until 1975 or 1976<sup>242</sup> when like all the other branches of the DLP on the mainland - apart from Victoria - it was dissolved.

There were a number of reasons why the DLP made such little impact in Tasmania. Principally the issues at stake did not have much relevance for most of the voters. The great industrial battles within the union movement had been fought mainly in the eastern states in earlier years and although the press gave coverage to the international events of the Cold War, they still appeared remote to the electorate in Tasmania.

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<sup>239</sup> Comment by Wayne Williams, one of the last DLP State secretaries in Tasmania, in an interview on 6th November 1995.

<sup>240</sup> Brian Harradine, who came from the Federated Clerks Union, had moved - some say was sent - to Tasmania from Melbourne in 1959 to become secretary of the newly-formed Hobart Trades Hall Council and was later expelled from the ALP by those who saw him as a front-man for the DLP and the National Civic Council. He stood as an Independent in 1975 and has been re-elected on every occasion he has stood since then.

<sup>241</sup> Senator Vincent Gair from Queensland had been replaced by Senator Frank McManus as DLP leader in October 1973 and angry at what he saw as the party's shabby treatment, he accepted the offer of a post as Australian Ambassador to Ireland in March 1974, made by the Labor Government in power at the time.

<sup>242</sup> Interview with Wayne Williams. op.cit.

The Labor Party in Tasmania is traditionally very conservative<sup>243</sup> just as the Tasmanian community is a conservative community<sup>244</sup> and although the DLP and the press tried to portray the Tasmanian ALP as in the hands of "the Left" and "fellow travellers" after 1955, the voters of Tasmania clearly did not see it that way<sup>245</sup>. Richard Davis put it succinctly when he commented, "with Cosgrove in power, the DLP was unnecessary."<sup>246</sup> In the view of two prominent ALP politicians of the period, Lance Barnard<sup>247</sup> and Eric Reece<sup>248</sup>, the DLP was seen as a negative organisation and an attempt by the Victorians to implant it from the mainland so the best strategy was to ignore them which is what they did.

As for the Communist threat, as Jack Mahoney commented<sup>249</sup>, many Tasmanians knew they were anti-communist but they didn't know much about the issues. The Communist Party only attracted a small number of votes in elections<sup>250</sup> and no-one could really see the small and fragmented trade unions in a conservative state as in the hands of the Communists. Jack Stanistreet was an able speaker and organiser in Launceston<sup>251</sup> but the railway workers were organised

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<sup>243</sup> Comment made by Wayne Williams. Interview. op.cit. George Cole, having lost his seat in the Senate, said in 1966 that the ALP in Tasmania was right wing and knew that any militant measures would be knocked back by the Legislative Council.

<sup>244</sup> This point was made by Eric Reece. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>245</sup> Philip Green commented that many Catholics would vote ALP at State level but DLP at the Federal level. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>246</sup> Richard Davis. op.cit. p.52

<sup>247</sup> Interview in Launceston. 13th July 1955.

<sup>248</sup> Interview. op.cit.

<sup>249</sup> Interview on 29th September

<sup>250</sup> Max Bound, the Communist candidate, got 86 votes in 1950, 91 in 1956, 126 in 1959 and 92 in 1964 (0.3%) when he stood in Denison while his running mate in 1959 only got 18 votes.

<sup>251</sup> Max Bound, who was the perennial CPA candidate in Denison for many years, commented that Stanistreet

in two unions and the Right had the numbers. Tas Bull was in a similar position in Hobart where he was the only CPA member on the WWF Executive and left both the Communist Party and the state in 1959.

Archbishop Young spoke out strongly against communism but his main political preoccupation was with the issue of funding for non-state schools and there was no equivalent in Tasmania of Archbishop Mannix and B.A. Santamaria. Catholics were more of a minority than they were on the mainland and many clearly maintained their loyalty to the ALP, sharing the perceptions of Cardinal Gilroy in Sydney rather than Archbishop Mannix in Melbourne.

At the internal party level, there had been differences in the Executive after 1959, and matters came to a head at the DLP State Conference in 1964 when George Cole denounced the influence of the National Civic Council. The *Examiner* columnist<sup>252</sup> observed that Cole had won undisputed control of the Tasmanian branch of the DLP after a prolonged struggle for power within the Santamaria-inspired National Civic Council. The defeat was marked by the transfer of the State president of the NCC, John Cotter, to their Melbourne headquarters. This heralded the end of a bitter three year campaign, backed by the registrar of the University of Tasmania, D.A. Kearney, and the Professor of English, Professor James McAuley. Some critics felt that the NCC goal was a party modelled on the Christian Democrats in Europe but this appealed to few Catholics, let alone the general population.

Although the basic aim of the two organisations were similar, Cole had always regarded NCC interference as a political liability at elections. Some of Cole's supporters were even in favour of directing preferences to the ALP at recent State elections. The NCC had vigorously opposed the move.

This view was dismissed by Anthony Kearney<sup>253</sup> who said

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had a good tongue but no real base. Interview. 8th June 1995 in Devonport.

<sup>252</sup> Harry Holgate, later ALP Premier of Tasmania, so hardly an objective source. *Examiner*. 29th September 1964. p.1

<sup>253</sup> Interview on 15th October 1995 in Kingston.

that the NCC was very careful not to be seen as taking over the DLP. He said the problem had been over the Executive deciding to give DLP preferences to the Independent candidate, Dr. Reginald Turnbull in 1959. Turnbull was well known as the abortion doctor of Tasmania so ostensibly complete anathema to Catholics. Jack Doody said that they were a political party and not a court of morals<sup>254</sup>. When Kearney and Cotter, as Executive members, objected to the direction of preferences to Turnbull, Cole's group on the Executive was outvoted and they had to destroy the How to Vote cards.

Both Kearney and Cotter were summoned before the DLP State Executive in Launceston but no charges were made. Kearney then went overseas for six months and when he came back to Hobart in June 1964, he became Registrar at the University so pulled out of active politics. In his opinion, the Executive was controlled by Cole and his admirers who did not like being rolled by their critics over the Turnbull preferences, so Kearney and Cotter were the scapegoats<sup>255</sup>.

Although the Hare-Clark system does benefit smaller parties and Independents, the DLP never got enough votes to get anyone elected to the House of Assembly. The United Tasmania Group (UTG) was to face a similar uphill battle when it fielded candidates after the dispute over Lake Pedder, taking over from the DLP in 1972 as a potential third party in Tasmanian state politics. The UTG just missed a seat in Denison in that year but although the party never won a seat, the issues it campaigned on were taken up by the Australian Democrats and the Green Independents who finally overcame the electoral hurdle to get seats in the Tasmanian House of Assembly (1980) and the Federal Senate (1984)<sup>256</sup>.

While the DLP failed to impress an electorate that

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<sup>254</sup> Interview with Brian Bresnehan. op.cit.

<sup>255</sup> Interview with Tony Kearney. op.cit.

<sup>256</sup> Norm Sanders entered the House of Assembly as a Democrat and representative for Denison in 1980 while Bob Brown for the Green Independents, succeeded him in 1983, after he resigned his seat. Norm Sanders then stood for the Senate for the Australian Democrats and was elected in 1984.

saw no room for a third party between the Liberals and the ALP<sup>257</sup>, the Green Independents, or after 1992, the Tasmanian Greens, did manage to capitalise on the same situation, as voters were then becoming cynical about the lack of difference between the two major parties and began to see the Greens as the real opposition. The DLP, given its origin and rationale for existence, could never fulfil such a role<sup>258</sup>.

As for the DLP in Tasmania, in contrast to the party at the national level, it eventually just lost heart. This was particularly because of the failure of George Cole to retain his Senate seat in 1964, but the ill-health of both Cole and Morgan meant that the party was also weakened at the organisational level. It had never been easy to get good candidates<sup>259</sup> and from the number of those who stood from 1964 onwards, many of whom were new to electoral politics, there is a distinct impression that the DLP was struggling just to remain in existence.

Both Frank McManus and other members of the DLP have noted the failure of the party to build an organisation in Tasmania, as neither Cole nor Morgan were of the same calibre as organisers as some of their colleagues in Victoria<sup>260</sup>. Commenting in retrospect McManus observed, "In Tasmania a branch (of the DLP) was formed round George Cole and Virgil Morgan. A problem here was that George relied on a personal vote and believed traditional organisation

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<sup>257</sup> Even Senator Cole recognised this. *Examiner*. 31st October 1966.

<sup>258</sup> Right to the end, there were members like John Chapman Mortimer who were still in favour of developing the DLP as a third party - mentioned by Wayne Williams, interview. op.cit. - rather than recognising that its only real function was to divert preferences to the Liberal Party and keep the ALP out of office, what Tony Kearney called the roadblock strategy. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>259</sup> Phil Bresnehan said that Cole and Morgan would suggest candidates but that they were often short of names in some areas. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>260</sup> Jill O'Keefe, Cole's daughter, said that she had the impression that McManus was also somewhat jealous of her father, perhaps because of the ease with which he held his seat. Phone conversation with the writer, 30th October 1995.



to be unnecessary. He had taught all over Tasmania, and had been a champion footballer and captain of the State team. At the 1958 election he was easily re-elected. Eventually, the failure to set up an organisation caught up with him, and he was defeated in 1964<sup>261</sup>."

The DLP always had trouble raising money for funding to run election campaigns, compared to the two main parties. In addition, it could not convince the voters of the need for a third party in Tasmania and ideologically there was little to choose between Liberals and Labor anyway. The DLP posed no real alternative, unlike the Tasmanian Greens today, as its only real differences lay in areas of foreign policy and defence, which raised little interest amongst Tasmanian voters. While the significance of the DLP on the mainland was primarily aimed at keeping the ALP out of office through the direction of preferences to the Liberal Party, the DLP in Tasmania never had any profound effect on any election results in Tasmania. Morgan's preferences to the Liberal candidate in Franklin in 1959 helped them win a surprising extra seat but the ALP was to remain in office for the next five years, despite the 15-15 seats overall result.

Nor did the DLP ever really develop the strategy of putting up candidates with names which came early on in the alphabet, although Lance Barnard said they did it in Bass where Les Arnold ran in 1958 and 1959<sup>262</sup>.

Malcolm Mackerras looked at a number of Tasmanian election results to see what happened to the preferences but came to the overall conclusion that once the ballot position is taken into account, over a third of distributed DLP preferences leaked to the ALP in those cases where the DLP candidate was on top, followed immediately by the ALP candidate. Where the DLP did not draw top position on the ballot paper, there was only a 15% leakage. To him this proved that a goodly proportion of DLP voters were not ideologically motivated and DLP "left" wingers preferred Labor to non-Labor after their first vote had gone to the DLP<sup>263</sup>.

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<sup>261</sup> *The Tumult and the Shouting*. Frank McManus. op.cit. p.98

<sup>262</sup> Lance Barnard. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>263</sup> Malcolm Mackerras. *DLP Preference Distribution*

Even when their position on top of the ballot paper helped the fledgling party in Tasmania with the donkey vote, it was not enough to get Anti-Communist Labor Party or DLP candidates into State or Federal Parliament and in the end with no successes under its electoral belt, the DLP in Tasmania finally lacked the heart to go on.

## CHAPTER FIVE. THE HURSEY CASE.

The Hursey case seemed to epitomise the polarisation in the Tasmanian community in the late 1950's and certainly achieved prominence as an issue way beyond the state although the issues at stake were far from clearcut. Francis and Denis Hursey, father and son, were two waterside workers from Warrane who took a stand against paying a compulsory levy to the ALP at election time. They represented their stand as one of principle; the right to work and support your own choice of religion and politics<sup>264</sup>, whereas the Waterside Workers Federation (WWF) perceived it as an attempt to break union solidarity, motivated by political considerations and the sheer bloody-mindedness of Frank Hursey.

The issue was compounded by the branch's feeling of betrayal because they had threatened industrial action on Frank Hursey's behalf in 1955 when the employers had opposed his re-registration, following eight years off work after an injury. He had been a member of the union since 1935 but when he reapplied for registration, the shipowners local committee and the Stevedoring Industry Board had asserted that they were dissatisfied about certain aspects of his compensation case in 1947. The WWF had not only been prepared to take stoppage action but they had been prepared to cancel \$28 of back dues which Frank Hursey could not pay at the time. During the Supreme Court hearings, Frank Hursey told the court that he could not recall being advised that the branch was giving him full support in his attitude with the A.S.I.A. nor could he recall having been told that a stopwork meeting would be held if a favourable answer was not reached from the A.S.I.A. within fourteen days<sup>265</sup>.

The younger Hursey was usually seen as the silent partner throughout the proceedings, although he himself denied this and said he had thought the issue out independently of his father<sup>266</sup>. George Brown, who

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<sup>264</sup> Interview with Denis Hursey in Stanley. June 8th, 1995. He said that they were trying to prove that the WWF never had the power to impose a compulsory political levy.

<sup>265</sup> *Mercury*. 24th July 1958. p.10

<sup>266</sup> Interview with Denis Hursey. op.cit.

worked with Reginald Wright on the case for the Hurseys, said that although Denis was illiterate he had an incredible memory and every evening when the defence team went over the case together in Wright's office, Denis could remember every point, coming up with ideas on how to follow them up next day<sup>267</sup>. Denis also claimed during the Supreme Court hearings that he had no knowledge of the political levy when he joined the union in March 1955<sup>268</sup>.

When the issue went before the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice, Sir Stanley Burbury, found in the Hurseys favour after eight weeks of hearings. The WWF appealed to the High Court which met in Melbourne and reversed or amended several of the earlier judgements, including the key one, the legitimacy of the political levy.

The confrontation began as a result of the 1956 State Election when Frank Hursey sought endorsement as a candidate for the ALP. He had been a member of the ALP's Saltwater branch till 1954 then moved to Warrane in 1955 and applied to join the ALP branch there. He was refused endorsement as a candidate by the ALP State Executive and the Warrane branch of the ALP declined to admit him to membership. He appealed to the Party Executive to review the decision but without success. According to *Pix* magazine<sup>269</sup>, as well as his son, Denis, the Warrane branch of the ALP was led by Doug Parrish who was personally hostile to him<sup>270</sup>. Frank Hursey then joined the Anti-Communist Labor Party in August 1956 and was endorsed as a candidate for Franklin for the State Election on 28th September<sup>271</sup>. He obtained 133 votes.

Frank and Denis Hursey were both present at a WWF stopwork meeting in City Hall on 2nd October which

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<sup>267</sup> Interview with George Deas Brown in Battery Point on 22nd November 1995.

<sup>268</sup> *Examiner*. 5th August 1958. p.7

<sup>269</sup> *PIX* magazine. July 12th, 1958. p.9

<sup>270</sup> Interview with Denis Hursey, op.cit.

<sup>271</sup> According to Denis Hursey, his father was talked into standing for the Anti-Communist Labor Party by Virgil Morgan who was a family friend. Interview. op.cit.

voted to strike a levy of ten shillings for each member of the union to assist the ALP to win the election. The motion was proposed by George Shelly, who in moving the resolution agreed that he was member of the Communist Party, but the union saw the election as a crucial event, coming after the Bramich Affair<sup>272</sup>, and viewed the re-election of the ALP as a priority<sup>273</sup>. Neither Frank Hursey or Denis spoke out against the motion, though Hursey later stated that the only reason he had not spoken out against it, was that he was afraid. He agreed that he had spoken at the same meeting earlier in the evening but added that although he had not opposed the motion on the levy later on, he had made it clear to branch officers earlier that day, that he opposed the levy<sup>274</sup>.

Under union rules, the Hurseys were duty bound to pay the levy, and union members who were known to support political parties other than the ALP still accepted it was the union's right to do so. As the Hobart branch president, Vivian "Paddy" Williams later noted, in their initiation as members of the WWF, the Hurseys had pledged themselves to observe all resolutions and rules of the federation<sup>275</sup>. The question was whether 948 members at the port of Hobart were correct in accepting the rules and whether two were right in rejecting them. The Branch had previously imposed levies and made donations to different committees and organisations, ranging from flood victims and crippled children's associations to

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<sup>272</sup> Tasnor Ivan Bull. *Politics in a Union. The Hursey Case*. Alternative Publishing Co-operative Ltd. Sydney. 1977. p.5-6

<sup>273</sup> Carol Bramich was Acting health minister in the Labor Government while Dr. Turnbull was away but he quarrelled with Thomas D'Alton and Eric Reece over an appointment to the Queenstown Hospital Board and felt that Cabinet had been ignoring his advice on various matters so on 11th September 1956 he resigned from Cabinet and the ALP to cross the floor and join the Liberal Party. Cosgrove appealed for a dissolution of Parliament and a new election which he won under the deadlock provision after both parties obtained 15 seats.

<sup>274</sup> *Mercury*. 24th July 1958. p.10

<sup>275</sup> *Mercury*. 4th May, 1958. p.10

financial support for its own members who were absent through sickness.

The matter came to a head in April 1957 when officers of the Hobart branch of the WWF sought the dismissal of the Hurseys because they had refused to pay the levy<sup>276</sup>. Nearly 600 members of the union attended a meeting when the branch president, Vivian Williams, told the men that the Federation's secretary, Cyril Pelham, had been instructed to notify the local representative of the Australian Stevedoring Industry Authority, Mr. W. Weaver, that it had been recommended that the Hurseys be excluded from membership of the branch. Endorsement would be sought from the Federal Council. Vivian Williams also said that before the meeting, the Vice-President of the local federation, Bill Johnson, had invited Hursey to attend the meeting and had guaranteed him every opportunity to put his case to the members. Frank Hursey had refused to attend but agreed that he had been asked to speak. He had asked for the request to be put in writing but no-one had come to give him one<sup>277</sup>.

The WWF had initially fixed 31st March, 1957, as the due date for payment of the federation's annual dues but the Hobart branch extended the day for payment by a fortnight. On 11th April, Frank Hursey called at the union office to pay his annual dues, but said that acting on legal advice, he would not pay the political levy. He paid a second visit on 17th April, and then on 26th April called for an interview with branch officers - Vivian Williams, Bill Johnson, Cyril Pelham and John Morrison.

By then the branch had been in touch with their Federal headquarters in Sydney which advised that the Hurseys retained their membership of the union in a legal sense until the end of 1957. Early in the following year, James "Big Jim" Healy, the Federation's general secretary, came down from Sydney and gave the Hurseys till the end of January to pay their dues. After that, the Stevedoring Industry Authority was advised by the union that the Hurseys were no longer union members but the Authority refused to remove them from the work roster. The Hurseys were then rostered for work on 5th February.

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<sup>276</sup> *Mercury*. 30th April 1958. p.6

<sup>277</sup> *Mercury*. 2nd May 1958. p.4

The confrontations on the wharf that followed as well as the hearings in the Supreme Court and the High Court were given extensive media coverage and were the subject of a number of speeches and questions in both the State Parliament and the Federal Parliament. As the Left saw it, "The Hursey Case ranks second only to the Petrov case in the sad chronicle of provocations launched since the Second World War against the Australian Labour Movement. The Hursey Case would not have been possible were it not for the media's manipulation of opinion, whipping-up of prejudice, emphasis by corrupt headlining, distortion and misrepresentation by omission were the lifeblood of the media in this incredible confidence trick<sup>278</sup>."

Manning Clark put it just as bluntly, "The conservatives in society, aided and abetted by some intellectuals who saw themselves as the saviours of mankind from union tyranny, rushed to the defence of the Hurseys. The Labor Movement defended the Union<sup>279</sup>."

Liberal State Members of Parliament saw the case as a chance to embarrass the Labor Government and argued that the Hursey case represented a serious infringement of the political freedom of Australian citizens<sup>280</sup>. Liberal M.Ps took up the issue in Canberra as well, giving a chance to the Minister of Transport, Harold Holt, to make political capital out of the issue. Within Tasmania, the three major daily papers all supported the Hurseys, with the *Mercury* arguing that "such interference with political freedom is a grave abuse of unionism<sup>281</sup>." At the national level, the *Sydney Telegraph*, owned by Sir Frank Packer, came out strongest in support of the Hurseys and in June 1958 launched what became known as the "Freedom is Not Dead Fund" to raise money for the Hursey family. Ironically, Denis Hursey, commenting on the attitude of the press, described

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<sup>278</sup> Bull, op.cit., p.1

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> This was the line taken by Joseph Dixon, MLC for Derwent from 1955 to 1961 (and later 1967 to 1979), speaking at New Norfolk on 7th May 1958. *Mercury*. 8th May 1958. p.6

<sup>281</sup> *Mercury*. 8th May 1958. Editorial p.6

the *Mercury* as least supportive of their case while the *Telegraph* gave the best coverage<sup>282</sup>.

The *Mercury* certainly gave ample coverage to the confrontation on the wharf which began on February 5th, 1958, at 8 a.m. The story was frequently on the front page, often with photographs, and the legal hearings at the Supreme Court as well as the cases at the Petty Sessions were given full coverage. In the first week of confrontation, hundreds of men gathered on the wharf, and union members refused to work with the Hurseys. On 8th February, the *Mercury* headline was "MAJOR BOIL-OVER ON WHARVES IN HOBART" and the report started, "Hobart waterside workers yesterday staged one of the most hostile demonstrations in the history of the port."

The union then reassessed its tactics and from then on an elaborate charade was played out during the next phase of the daily confrontation which lasted from 12th February until 25th March. The Hurseys approached the wharf and Federation members blocked the entrances to the pier. The Superintendent of Police, T.J. Marshall, would announce, "This is a public place. This man wants to go to work. I want you to make way. " The watersiders maintained a stony silence, following their leaders instructions: "Use no violence, no bad language - just silence." Anyone stepping out of line was pulled back by fellow unionists. Frank Hursey would lean lightly against each man in the front rank in a "formal" attempt to pass and report for work, and appeal to his fellows: "Gentlemen. I want to pass and report to the work to which I have been allocated." When no-one moved, he would ask the nearest police officer for an escort through the lines to his job but the officer would decline. The Minister of Police took the line that police would not intervene unless they saw the law was being broken. Finally, the Hurseys were marked "failure to report" then re-rostered for the next appropriate day's work.

The watersiders did not try to stop James "Jock" Coleraine from working, except on one occasion on February 12th, because although he supported the Hurseys and like them, was a member of the DLP, he had paid the levy for the ALP in the 1956 State election. He had originally stayed behind with his neighbours, the Hurseys, when eight gangs refused to

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<sup>282</sup> Interview with Denis Hursey. op.cit.



work with them and walked off the freighter, "Warringa", in early February<sup>283</sup>.

The union line was that the Hurseys had failed to pay a union levy for ALP funds, so they were no longer financial members of the union and they would continue their human barricade tactics until the Hurseys did not attempt to report for work<sup>284</sup>. Union discipline was tight despite the anger of the men, and a Federal organiser of the union stated that, "The union executive has given strict instructions that there is to be no violence towards the Hurseys..... If there is violence on the job, the Union's discipline committee will deal with it severely."<sup>285</sup>

It was an approach which offered an interesting parallel with the nonviolent tactics of the Wilderness Society on the Franklin in 1982-83, where the blockaders, like the waterside workers, knew that if they resorted to violence they would lose the moral case and the media would use it against them to discredit their case, but while the WWF maintained its discipline in strongarm hierarchical fashion, the Wilderness Society worked through consensus and prior training in nonviolent action techniques. The savage irony was that almost thirty years later, the unions were almost all aligned with the Liberal Government against the dissidents, while politically it meant that the Green Independents could break through the state election barrier whereas the DLP never achieved that goal.

Whereas the Wilderness Society's members courted arrest, the WWF sought to minimise its defiance of the law and when Frank Hursey took out an injunction against picketing in June, they fell back on the Pinkenba tactics which were explained by James Healy to the Supreme Court in his evidence. He told the court that the term derived from an industrial dispute in Brisbane in the Pinkenba wheat sheds and was seen as a way of handling a dispute so that the minimum number of men would be concerned. Instead of the whole of the men refusing to work with the Hurseys, the refusal was confined to the two winch

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<sup>283</sup> *Mercury*. 15th February 1958. p.1

<sup>284</sup> *Mercury*. 18th February 1958. p.2

<sup>285</sup> *Mercury*. 14th February 1958. p.2

men on the ship and that in effect made the gang unworkable<sup>286</sup>.

Predictably, the Liberal Party and the DLP, along with the three main daily papers in the state, all rushed to the defence of the Hurseys. They took the line that it was a question of political freedom and a man's right to work. The *Mercury* criticised the police for standing by and doing nothing and demanded that, "The public should be told whether action is to be taken against those who committed an unlawful act, or whether instructions to the contrary have been given from higher up."

The State Executive of the Liberal Party took up the same line and decried the "inactivity of the police" in the dispute where men were prevented from working, and sent their recommendations to the Federal Government for a solution<sup>287</sup>.

Seeking to make political capital and embarrass the government, the Leader of the Opposition, William Jackson, said that the dispute was a grave reflection on the administration of the state by the Cosgrove Government, with the police obviously instructed not to interfere and so allowing a type of mob rule<sup>288</sup>.

Several other Liberal M.Ps spoke out strongly on the issue in State Parliament. William Hodgman, MHA for Denison from 1955 to 1964, submitted a Bill to prevent persons from hindering others carrying on their employment or business, by providing for an amendment to the Police Offences Act, with heavy fines or imprisonment as penalties for disobeying the law<sup>289</sup>. John Breheny, MHA for (Darwin) Braddon from 1951 to 1972, accused watersiders of hunting the Hurseys "like a pack of mongrel dogs" and, "white with anger", called the watersiders "riff raff," "a pack of curs," and "a treacherous, disloyal mob." Echoing a familiar line throughout the case, he went on to claim that their conduct was being dictated by a Moscow agent named Healy ... a paid traitor, a tool of the Kremlin, a vile creature, a professional

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<sup>286</sup> Bull, op.cit. p.31

<sup>287</sup> *Mercury*. 17th February 1958. p.14

<sup>288</sup> *Mercury*. 19th March 1958. p.3

<sup>289</sup> *Mercury*. 12th June 1958. p.11

agitator, and a very successful one."<sup>290</sup> The *Mercury* gave his attack banner headlines, "HURSEYS BEING HOUNDED BY DOCKERS, SAYS M.P."

Two strongly anti-communist MLCs, Joseph Dixon (Derwent) and John Orchard (Cornwall), sought to get at the Labor Government by criticising the behaviour of the police when they went down to the waterfront on 18th June and then claimed that a very senior police officer had abused them and been offensive to them.

Virgil Morgan, President of the State DLP, was down on the wharf with the Hurseys early on as they tried to cross the picket line while the Victorian DLP Executive condemned "the attempt by Evatt party members and Communists in the Waterside Workers Federation to deprive workers of their livelihood because of their political views"<sup>291</sup>. The DLP also made sure that Wright had a permanent pair when it came to a vote in the Senate as Morgan, who was Senator Cole's secretary, kept in close touch with the case<sup>292</sup>.

On the other side of the fence, the wharfies were supported by the Seamen's Union and the Hobart Trades Council, with thirteen unions represented at a meeting which decided unanimously that any person who did not meet his financial obligations to his trade union was to be condemned and that his action could not be condoned. They asserted that the trade union movement of Tasmania censured the action of shipping employees, the ASIA and the Commonwealth Government for the "unfair tactics adopted" and the endeavours to create an industrial dispute by supporting and giving favourable treatment to unfinancial unionists<sup>293</sup>. The WWF and other unionists around Australia who supported the principle at stake gave both moral and financial support to the Hobart branch.

The Hurseys doggedly continued to turn up for work as the ASIA said they were still registered waterside

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<sup>290</sup> *Mercury*. 20th June 1958. p.1

<sup>291</sup> *Mercury*. 15th February 1958. p.1

<sup>292</sup> George Deas Brown. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>293</sup> *Mercury*. 7th February 1958. p.2

workers although the WWF said they weren't financial members because they hadn't paid the union levy for ALP funds<sup>294</sup>. Frank Hursey was already taking note of individuals who harassed him and from January 1958 onwards, various men were being summoned by the courts to hear charges of abuse ranging from spitting and use of foul language to trying to run the Hurseys over in the street.

Caught in the middle, the Labor Government tried to keep its distance, with the Minister for Police stating that "the police have been guided by their actions on the waterfront by the opinion of the Crown Law Department."<sup>295</sup> The problem for the State government was that it had no jurisdiction over waterfront disputes but the economy of the state could be affected seriously should the dispute involve overseas ships at a time when a record fruit export season was expected<sup>296</sup>.

Cosgrove's only intervention was when he tried a "verbal oil" compromise in June, suggesting the possibility of the union accepting Denis on the waterfront while Frank would be given a position within the public service<sup>297</sup>. The Premier also had to deny that the Hurseys were being victimised by the Housing Department after the Hursey family had been given notice to quit their State home by July 21st for failing to keep up with the rent<sup>298</sup>. They were saved from eviction by anonymous sympathisers who put up enough money to pay their arrears<sup>299</sup> and the *Mercury* regularly passed on sums of money sent by wellwishers who registered their support through Letters to the Editor.

By July, the *Mercury* was running the line that the Hursey case would help the Federal Government by alienating the Labor supporters of the DLP, making

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<sup>294</sup> *Mercury*. 18th February 1958. p.2

<sup>295</sup> *Mercury*. 18th February 1958. p.2

<sup>296</sup> *Mercury*. Comment by our Political Observer. 14th February 1958. p.4

<sup>297</sup> Tas Bull, op.cit. p.67

<sup>298</sup> *Mercury*. 24th June 1958. p.1

<sup>299</sup> *Examiner*. 25th June 1958. p.1

the point that public feeling would be running at a high level over the issue in October whereas by December the electoral value would have diminished. "Having this in mind, an influential group of Liberals are calling for an early Federal election rather than waiting till December when the elections are actually due."<sup>300</sup>

As for the police, the Hurseys continued to argue that they were biased against them<sup>301</sup>, although there were clear differences of opinion in the force. When Police Superintendent T.J. Marshall retired in the late 1960's, he said in his farewell message that the "police had to be absolutely neutral and, as was proven when the final decision was handed down by the Full High Court, this was the correct position for us to take."<sup>302</sup> On the other hand, Detective-Sergeant Southern of the wharf police was seen as actively supportive of the Hurseys<sup>303</sup>, and it was only later discovered that half his salary was paid by the Commonwealth police<sup>304</sup>.

On 25th March, the Hurseys were granted leave of absence until 8th June. During this period they were invited to Sydney by Jack Kane, later a Senator, and the New South Wales branch of the DLP. Arrangements were made for them to speak on the Domain and at a number of meetings. One characteristic of the Hursey case was that they received greater support from interstate than they did in Tasmania<sup>305</sup>, although

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<sup>300</sup> *Mercury*. 1st July 1958. p.1

<sup>301</sup> Denis Hursey claimed that the government kept the police out of the action. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>302</sup> *Politics in a Union*. Op.cit. p.127

<sup>303</sup> Interview with Roger Jennings. 24th September 1995. Kingston. Roger Jennings also saw Police Superintendent Marshall as "straight down the middle."

<sup>304</sup> Interview with Leo Brown, former secretary of the WWF Campaign Committee during the dispute. Hobart. 14th September 1995.

<sup>305</sup> This point was made by Eric Howard (father of Amanda Lohrey) in an interview on 15th September 1995 in Hobart as well as by Leo Brown in an interview in Hobart on 14th September and Max Bound, former CPA secretary in Tasmania at the time of the Hursey case,

Denis Hursey stressed that a lot of individuals would greet them in the streets one day<sup>306</sup> but next day would be on the picket lines. In his opinion they were afraid to buck the system<sup>307</sup>. Others he just saw as men who did not understand the issue and took the line that the union was always right for them.

In New South Wales, their cause had been adopted for clear political reasons by conservative forces seeking to capitalise on the confrontation with what they sought to portray as a Communist-led union. The *Telegraph* in particular had trumpeted the cause of the Hurseys and set up its Fighting Fund to assist them. At the same time, it refused to publish the union's side of the dispute, and the WWF spent thousands of dollars printing special editions of the *Maritime Worker* to make their point of view known<sup>308</sup>. The next stage in the struggle, was when the Hurseys returned to work in June and the WWF resorted to the Pinkenba tactics when an injunction was taken out against their use of picket lines to stop father and son from reporting for work. When the branch sought an injunction to restrain the ASIA from rostering the Hurseys for work, Sir Stanley Burbury ruled that the matter would be dealt with in the main case.

The Supreme Court case opened on 21st July and was to last for eight weeks. There were three actions : Matter No. 1363 of 1967 and Matter No. 578 of 1958, both writs issued by the Hurseys, with the latter including a claim for \$28,000 damages to the Hurseys, and Matter No. 496 of 1958 which was the claim on

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in Devonport on 8th June 1995.. Leo Brown made the point that Frank Hursey was well known locally in a small town like Hobart and at first got more support in Launceston, where Leo Brown went with Jack Stanistreet to address unionists and brief them, so they got the other side of the case. Stanistreet said that until then the Hurseys were getting support there.

<sup>306</sup> Phone interview with Tom Errey. 14th November 1995. Hobart. Tom Errey was a CPA member from 1941 until the execution of Imre Nagy in Hungary after the 1956 rebellion there, though regarded as something of a dissident in the party.

<sup>307</sup> Interview with Denis Hursey. Ibid.

<sup>308</sup> Interview with Tas Bull in Sydney. op.cit.

behalf of five watersiders and others, who held the ASIA had wrongfully rostered the Hurseys for work.

The politics of the case were apparent from the start. The plaintiffs had secured the services of Liberal Senator Reginald Wright<sup>309</sup> who came straight from the chairmanship of a Senate inquiry into the maritime unions. Roger Jennings, who represented the Hobart WWF branch and its secretary, Cyril Pelham, as well as the WWF in the case, said that Wright took up the case as a "cause celebre" and was really in it for the sheer glory and because it gave him a chance to get at the communists. He missed being made a judge because of it<sup>310</sup>.

Roy Fagan, who appeared for Vivian Williams and Cyril Pelham in their personal capacity, had been Attorney-General in the State Government and later went back to the position. Not so clearly aligned was Mervyn Everett who represented the ASIA, and was later Attorney-General and Minister for Health in the Reece government before becoming a Senator in 1974.

Presiding over the court was the autocratic figure of

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<sup>309</sup> Writing about the origins of the case, Tas Bull said, "Later it emerged that Hursey had sought a legal opinion from Senator Wright "who was not slow in recognising the political potential for himself and his party in a clash with the WWF." George Brown said that Wright saw it as a chance to have a go at Labor and enjoyed a political case where he could also represent the underdog. Interview. op.cit. Bull also made the point that during the Supreme Court case, Hursey was unable to state at which point he decided to refuse to pay the levy, implying that he had been put up to it later by someone else. *Politics in a Union*. op. cit. p.8

<sup>310</sup> Interview with Roger Jennings in Kingston. 24th September 1995. op.cit. There were some differences about how much money Wright made from the case. Eric Howard said that he got a lot of money. Interview. op.cit. Jennings said he didn't get much. Denis Hursey said he took the case on with no money. Interview. op.cit. Jack Mahoney said that Frank Hursey claimed that Wright got all the money that came through the various donations. Interview. op.cit. This seems doubtful as the Hurseys clearly had enough money to move to another property and set themselves up in fishing when they left the wharf in 1959.

Sir Stanley Burbury who had become Chief Justice in August 1956 and when the Governor, Sir Ronald Cross, went on leave before a new governor replaced him, Burbury also acted as the Administrator. The Hursey case was one of his first as Chief Justice.

The politics of the case can be evidenced from the fact that much of the rhetoric that crept into the trial centred on the affiliation of some of the witnesses to the Communist Party. Of the total of thirty witnesses called, only three were identified by their political affiliation. All three were members of the Communist Party<sup>311</sup>. Reginald Wright made a particular point of cross-examining Tas Bull on his involvement with the Communist Party of which he had been a member since 1952. Tas Bull told the court that he was the only Communist on the watersiders' executive and about fifteen members of the branch were Communists<sup>312</sup>. Under further cross-examination, Tas Bull said that the policy of the Tasmanian Communist Party was not exactly synonymous with international policy of the Communist Party in Russia, but agreed that the party did support a united front with the ALP in order to maintain the interests of the working class<sup>313</sup>.

Reginald Wright also pushed the issue when James Healy, as Federal Secretary of the WWF<sup>314</sup>, spent almost a day in the witness box. Healy said quite categorically that the Hursey dispute would have arisen irrespective of what political belief the person had, and that the central issue was about unionists not working with non-unionists.

Frank Hursey's comment after the judgement in his favour was that the decision was one that marked the start of a crusade against Communism in Australia, while Sir Robert Menzies as Prime Minister said, "This is a day of mourning for Communists and of joy for all trade unionists opposed to Communism<sup>315</sup>."

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<sup>311</sup> Bull. op.cit. p.107

<sup>312</sup> *Mercury*. 14th August 1958. p.1

<sup>313</sup> *Mercury*. 15th August 1958. p.6

<sup>314</sup> George Deas Brown commented that although Wright loathed Healy's politics, on principle he still admired a man who obtained the Military Cross, as Healy had. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>315</sup> *Mercury*. 8th November 1958. p.2



In his judgement, which covered 260 pages, Sir Stanley Burbury referred to four broad issues, but the essence of his judgement lay in the words, "I hold, therefore, that the imposition of the levy is not within the expressed or implied scope of the objects of the union." The other judgements followed, including those which covered extensive damages awarded to the Hurseys, but Sir Stanley did note that he rejected much of the account of the events given by the plaintiffs, commenting on one particular incident, "This I regard as an example of the plaintiffs' lack of candour and his tendency to reconstruct incidents in accordance with his ex post facto interpretation of them<sup>316</sup>." Burbury treated the case as an action for the rights of the individual and dealt at some length with the relevant history of English Law which deals with this subject<sup>317</sup>.

Not only in Hobart but even in Sydney, the Hurseys relationship with their backers was not exactly comfortable<sup>318</sup>. Though Bull argues that Hursey was probably set up in the first place by the Anti-Communist Labor Party as the issue would result in much publicity for them<sup>319</sup>, Roger Jennings, who acted for the Hobart WWF branch in the court case before Sir Stanley Burbury, did not think it was a conspiracy<sup>320</sup>. Frank Hursey was seen more as a strong individualist, very committed to the Catholic Church<sup>321</sup>, but a man who liked to be at the centre of things<sup>322</sup>, and who liked to pretend that he was well-

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<sup>316</sup> The incident referred to concerned events around the "Empire Star" in April.

<sup>317</sup> Comment by George Deas Brown. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>318</sup> Amanda Lohrey also implies this in her novel, *The Morality of a Gentleman*. Alternative Publishing Co-operative Ltd. Sydney. 1984. p.178

<sup>319</sup> Bull. op.cit. p.7

<sup>320</sup> Interview with Roger Jennings. op.cit. Leo Brown also considered that Hursey was working for himself. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>321</sup> Interview with Roger Jennings. Ibid.

<sup>322</sup> Interview with Tas Bull. Ibid.

educated with a university education<sup>323</sup>.

He was certainly well-known in Hobart<sup>324</sup> and according to Bull, was sometimes referred to as "Gandhi."<sup>325</sup> This may not have been entirely appropriate, because Frank Hursey's relationships with his fellow-workers was never very smooth. James Morrison, the local WWF Vigilance Officer, testified in court on 15th August 1958 that Hursey had admitted the personal issue between him and "Paddy Williams" at Macquarie Wharf No. 4. Morrison had questioned Frank Hursey about this because he had heard discussed, "If it wasn't between Paddy and Gandhi" this wouldn't be happening. He added that he did not know what the basis of the hostility was and he had not seen any personal hostility between the two men<sup>326</sup>.

It was not just his fellow workers either for although he received support from both the Catholic Church and the DLP, Frank Hursey managed to quarrel with both of them as well. In June 1958, he bitterly attacked the Catholic Church, charging it with having neglected his family. The Archbishop had made no statement<sup>327</sup>, their parish priest had ignored them, and Catholics had written to them telling them to submit to the WWF, he said. This obviously upset the Archbishop as his secretary, Father Quinn, wrote to him, expressing surprise at his statement and asking him if the views expressed in the press report represented what he actually said<sup>328</sup>.

Hursey obviously had his differences with the DLP as well, because he announced he would stand as an Independent in the 1958 Federal Election. He was still a member of the DLP but he said that the party had so far given him no real support for his stand

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<sup>323</sup> Interview with Eric Howard. op.cit.

<sup>324</sup> Interview with Leo Brown. op.cit.

<sup>325</sup> Bull. op.cit. p.11

<sup>326</sup> Mercury. 16th August 1958. p.8

<sup>327</sup> Denis Hursey said that a lot of clergy supported them in Sydney but not in Tasmania, and Guilford Young would not go public through the pulpit. Interview. op.cit.

<sup>328</sup> Examiner. 5th July 1958. p.1

against the WWF. "For the last twenty years I have fought the Communists as a trade unionist in the industrial sphere ... I'll go it alone if necessary as long as I can upset some of those Communist-inspired ALP roosters. I want to fight Communism from every possible angle."<sup>329</sup>

Although he didn't stand in that election, he did run as an Independent in Franklin in the 1959 State election. When asked why he had not nominated for the DLP as in 1956, he said that although a party's policy might be good, it was not much use a person making individual promises and then in Parliament being subject to a party machine. It was therefore his intention to exercise the right of an individual with an independent mind. He added that he had not sought endorsement from the DLP nor had he resigned from it. The publicity he had earned over the previous two years apparently did little to obtain him votes, as he only got 119 altogether, and most of his preferences went to the other two Independents rather than the DLP.

The WWF decided to appeal to the High Court and the hearing began in Melbourne in March 1959. During the period after the Supreme Court judgement, the WWF had allowed the Hurseys to work on the waterfront. Handing down its judgement on 16th September, the High Court found in favour of the WWF on the question of whether the political levy was validly imposed and whether the Hurseys ceased at any time to be members of the WWF and the Hobart branch of the Federation. The other judgements went against the Federation or amended those of the Tasmanian Supreme Court, in particular reducing the level of damages awarded to the Hurseys<sup>330</sup>.

Finally, on 29th October 1959, the Hurseys handed in their resignations and left the waterfront.

In essence then, the issue had been satisfactorily

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<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

<sup>330</sup> George Deas Brown said that in his opinion the High Court was not prepared to take on the complex issues dealt with at such length by Burbury and gave it short shrift in a very brief judgement. While Burbury had given priority to the rights of the individual as had Wright, the High Court judges clearly had different priorities. Interview. op.cit.

resolved in favour of the union's right to order a levy, although Tas Bull estimated that the case cost them almost \$40,000. Passions had run high during the case and there was a great deal of bitterness but the union felt that their stand was vindicated.

Frank Hursey was a passionate individualist and very bitter about what he saw as his rejection by the ALP, but wherever the idea of not paying the levy came from, there can be little doubt that the issue was seized on by those who sought to use it for political ends. Hursey was a difficult man to work with but he was stubborn enough to see the case through despite the hostility he generated for himself and his family. Although he got more support from interstate, little of which was personal but rather political, he had the tenacity of belief to go on with what he saw as his cause where others would have given in.

Like many other events in history, the Hursey case was indeed a case for its time.

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