

The Democratic Labour Party (DLP) and Bob Santamaria

A talk given by Joe Sampson to The Atheist Society at the Melbourne Unitarian Church on 8 July 2014

Introduction

This talk is on two related topics; the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) and the late Bob Santamaria. Although Bob Santamaria was never a member of the DLP he had a lot of influence on it via his organisations, the Movement and later the NCC (National Civic Council).

Autobiographical Note

I begin my talk on an autobiographical note. I distinctly remember, in 1954, as an eight year old, my father, who was an ALP supporter, saying “Evatt’s gone mad”, after Dr. Evatt, the leader of the ALP Federal Opposition, attacked Bob Santamaria’s Catholic Social Studies Movement (or ‘The Movement’, as it was called) and the related Industrial Groups for what HE called their disloyal influence on the ALP. Shortly after Evatt’s speech members of Industrial Groups left or were expelled from the ALP and formed the DLP; this breakup of the ALP is referred to as The Split.

My father and mother were keen supporters of the DLP. My father subscribed to the News Weekly, the journal of the Movement (and later of its successor National Civic Council (NCC)). My father once stood as a DLP candidate in an election. I read News Weekly pretty well continually from 1954 to 1970. I myself, from 1955, became a keen supporter of the DLP. My father used to get me and my brothers to letterbox DLP pamphlets and hand out DLP how-to-vote cards at polling booths at election time. From 1964 to 1966 I was a member of the YDLA (the Young Democratic Labor Association), the youth branch of the DLP and from 1967 to 1969 a member of the Monash University DLP Club, including being President in 1969 and a full member of the DLP in 1970. Although brought up a Catholic I stopped believing in God in early 1963; this did not affect my support of the DLP. In my experience most members of the DLP were Catholic but there were some Protestants and some nonreligious, myself being in the last group. My being nonreligious did not stop my being President of the Monash DLP Club in 1969. My successor as President was also nonreligious. I supported the DLP in its anti-communist and other policies.

I had met Frank Dowling, secretary of the Victorian DLP, and his assistant, Jim Brosnan, at the DLP Victorian office many times. They were both quite affable; Jim was jovial. Unfortunately, Frank Dowling committed suicide in 1974, in a state of depression – presumably over the DLP’s loss of its 5 senators in 1974. I knew John Foley, a full time

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fundraiser for the Victorian DLP, quite well. I met DLP Senator Jack Little a number of times – he spoke a number of times to the Monash DLP club; he was quite friendly. I met Senator Gair once – he was quite cheerful - and Senator McManus once – he was rather serious. I met Bob Santamaria once – he was quite charming.

I voted for the DLP in the 1967 Senate election, the 1969 Australian House of Representatives election and the 1970 Australian Senate election; also in the 1970 Victorian state election I voted DLP in the lower house and Liberal in the upper house as I did not like the DLP's embracing anti-permissiveness policies. I have not voted DLP since 1970. I was particularly annoyed when the DLP and the coalition parties blocked passage of the ALP's Family Law Bill in the Senate in 1973. At the time I had broken up with my wife. I was involved in court proceedings for access to my son, which my wife had denied me. I felt that I would do better in the court proceedings if the no fault Family Law Bill was passed. I was relieved when all the DLP senators lost their seats in the Federal election and the Family Law Bill was subsequently passed with about half the coalition senators voting with the ALP for the Bill. I gained custody of my son, which was unlikely before the Family Law Act.

In the 1972 Federal lower house election I voted Australia Party and in the 1974 Federal double dissolution election voted ALP. In recent years I have voted Greens or Secular Party, preferencing Greens before any other major party, then preferencing the ALP before the DLP and the DLP before the Liberals. However at the coming Victorian election I intend voting DLP – I have been particularly impressed with DLP Senator John Madigan. The DLP can be characterised as (i) anti-communist (ii) economically left wing and (iii) socially right wing. In general I agree with the DLP in the first two policy areas but not the last although I agree with its anti-abortion stand (a minority of nonreligious are anti-abortion e.g. Christopher Hitchens).

This talk is based partly on my own experiences in the DLP and partly on books and newspaper and internet articles on the DLP and Bob Santamaria.

I know from my own experience that on one DLP matter books by Ross Fitzgerald¹ and David Marr² are incorrect. Fitzgerald asserted that the University DLP clubs (also known as Democratic clubs) were organised by the NCC. Marr gives no source for his claims. Fitzgerald's source is an anonymous publication, which quotes an alleged NCC defector. I know from my own experience that the Monash DLP club was not controlled by the NCC (or DLP). It was independently set up by students who supported the DLP. Strictly speaking, it was not affiliated to the DLP, although we did invite members of the DLP to speak at lectures that we organised. I do remember that in 1969 Bob Santamaria contacted the DLP club and asked whether he could speak to us. We agreed to it and met him at a table in a Monash café. We listened to what he said but did not necessarily agree with him. I am sure that he was reasonably satisfied that we were orthodox DLP supporters, but he did not control us. I found Bob to be a pleasant affable person, not the ogre many people made

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him out to be. Chris Curtis, whom I knew as a member of the Monash Democrats, and who was later in the LaTrobe University Democrats, also rejected David Marr's claims³.

Useful references

As I have already said, in preparing this talk apart from using my own experience I have used lots of references, which are listed in the pdf version of my talk. I found the most useful reference to be "The Democratic Labor Party" by Politics Professor Paul Reynolds; this was published in 1974 when the DLP had its largest federal parliamentary representation of 5 senators. Other useful references include "The Split" by Robert Murray, "The Tumult and The Shouting" by Frank McManus, "The Pope's Battalions" by Ross Fitzgerald, "The Great Labor Schism" edited by Brian Costar et al., "Demons and Democrats" by Gavan Duffy, "Your Most Obedient Servant" by Bob Santamaria and an interview of Bob Santamaria by Robin Hughes.

The Split and the events leading up to it

The Democratic Labor Party (DLP) emerged from The Split in the Victorian ALP in 1955 (on 27 June 2013, the Australian Electoral Commission approved a change in the spelling of the party's name from "Democratic Labor Party" to "Democratic Labour Party"). A number of ALP members formed a breakaway party, the Australian Labor Party (Anti-Communist). Shortly afterwards a number of members were expelled from the Victorian ALP and they joined the breakaway party. In New South Wales some ALP members were expelled and they set up a breakaway party, the Democratic Labor Party (DLP). In March 1957 the two breakaway parties were merged as the DLP. In 1957 Queensland ALP Premier, Vince Gair, was expelled from the ALP, along with a number of other parliamentarians. The expelled people set up the Queensland Labor Part (QLP), which merged with the DLP in 1962.

I will now go into some detail on the Split in the ALP and the events leading up to it. The Australian Labor Party (ALP) was brought into being in the late nineteenth century to represent the interests of the trade unions. The ALP was not the only political party associated with the unions; the other was the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), founded in 1920 and wound up in 1991; the former Socialist Party of Australia, a breakaway from the CPA in 1971, in 1991 renamed itself the CPA.

By 1945 the Communists controlled unions with 23 per cent of the workforce. In the 1940s two events occurred which changed substantially the balance of power in the unions. The first, in 1941, was the establishment of the Catholic Social Studies Movement, or "The Movement" as it came to be called, and the second, in 1945⁴ was the formation of the Industrial Groups, supported by the ALP.

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The Movement was organised by Bob Santamaria, at the behest of the Melbourne Catholic Archbishop, Dr. Mannix. Bob was born in 1915 to Italian immigrants. He had a Bachelor of Laws and a Master of Arts. He was an active Catholic lay person. Bob had been educated by the Christian Brothers at St. Kevins school, where, he said, that the Brothers place a “high premium on the intellectual foundations of both religion and morality”⁵. My reaction to a Christian Brothers’ education was different to Bob’s: I found the arguments the Brothers gave for God’s existence so unconvincing that I gave up belief in God at age 16.

When the Movement was formed Catholics were about 25 per cent of the Australian population and were mainly of Irish ancestry. They were mainly in working class occupations and so were mainly ALP supporters and trade union members. Santamaria first became interested in Communist influence in the unions in 1940 when he attended a lecture on the subject from Dinny Lovegrove, an ex-Communist, and secretary of the Fibrous Plasterers’ Union. Santamaria was taken to the meeting by Bert Cremean, a Catholic and deputy leader of the Victorian ALP. Santamaria was introduced to a number of non-Communist, but not all Catholic, union leaders who were concerned at the increase in Communist influence. They included Vic Stout, secretary of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council, and Percy Clarey, president of the ACTU (Australian Council of Trade Unions).

The result of these meetings was the formation of the Movement, a group of Catholic unionists who organised to replace Communist officials in union elections with their own preferred candidates. The Movement spread its views through a weekly journal, Freedom, which later changed its name to News Weekly; News Weekly is still today being published. Santamaria was also involved in the National Catholic Rural Movement, which looked after the interests of Catholic farmers⁷.

In the first issue of Freedom were named the Twenty Points, which were to be the Movement’s policy⁸. These Twenty Points still influence DLP and NCC policy today. The Points are:

1. Public control of monopolies;
2. Public control of credit;
3. The Institution of Industrial Councils;
4. Assistance to small owners;
5. Part ownership of industry for the workers;
6. Co-operation in all its aspects – producers, consumers, marketing, insurance and credit;
7. The principle of an Adequate Income for all, including a minimum wage that will meet the needs of the family to allow it to provide for the future, attain the to the ownership of property and improve its cultural conditions;
8. Payment of a marriage bonus and payment of adequate family allowance;
9. Wages a first charge in industry before dividends or profit;
10. Equal pay for equal work;

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11. Possession of family homes for all;
12. A strong program of regionalism including spreading all the conveniences of the city to the country home;
13. A national campaign for Family Land settlement;
14. A radical crisis to solve the problem of rural debt;
15. Independent farming as the normal productive policy;
16. Cooperation in agriculture;
17. A fair Return for the farm production;
18. Self-government of agriculture;
19. A National system of education;
20. Recognition of religion as the Basis of education.

All these policies except the last are secular and fairly left wing economically. According to Murray⁹ “The Industrial Councils were envisaged as national regional and local councils of employers and employees in a particular industry, which would decide wages, conditions, prices, production policies and the like.”

In 1945 Industrial Groups were formed in the ALP. According to Reynolds¹⁰ “The chief motivating force on the part of those who formed them in NSW was alarm at the increasing militancy of Communist unions and doubts as to whether the non-Communists would be able to control the 1945 ALP biennial conference. A more implicit fear on the part of some ALP members was the risk that the Communists could infiltrate the Labor Party itself. In the structure of the party the state conferences represent the key to power within the party. The conferences elected delegates to the federal conference and federal executive, as well as the executive and officeholders for the party’s state branches. The trade unions that are affiliated to the ALP provided a substantial majority of delegates to the state conference (around 75 per cent); thus, while the ALP had adopted a rule in 1924 to prevent other than genuine ALP members from attending as delegates, the fear was that Communist union officials could and would instruct the delegates from the unions they controlled (which were still affiliated to the ALP) on how to vote at state conference. For this reason, if the ALP sponsored Groups could wrest control of the unions from the Communists the danger of infiltration or influence would be overcome while, at the same time, Communist power in the unions would be permanently arrested”.

Once the Groups were organised Movement members joined them. According to Murray¹¹ Movement members were 25% of Industrial Group members. According to Santamaria¹² 85 to 95% of IG members were Catholics but the leadership of IGs were non-Catholics, e.g. Laurie Short (Ironworkers Union), Lloyd Ross (Railways Union), Arthur Hursborough (Engineers), George Neale (Miners). Some of the IG members were nonreligious.^{13,14}

According to Santamaria¹⁵ the IGs were a collective effort whereas Evatt alleged that Santamaria was the brains of the IGs. The Communists were convinced that capitalism was near collapse and that it needed a ‘push’ to topple it completely. At this stage the dominant

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communist country was the Soviet Union, ruled by dictator Joe Stalin. Robert Conquest, in his book 'The Great Terror',¹⁶ detailed how brutal Stalin was, murdering millions. It is understandable that many people in Australia, both religious and nonreligious, were concerned at the possibility of Communists taking over in Australia.

The Communists, according to Reynolds, "concentrated on the areas of heavy industry, power and transport, their activity culminating in the long and bitter coal strike of winter 1949, which resulted in the Chifley Labor government sending in troops to break the strike and severely penalising the Miners' Federation." In New South Wales between 1945 and 1949 Communist-led unions had 28% of the membership of the non-Communist led unions but accounted for 88 per cent of man-days lost in industrial disputes.

The IGs and their Movement allies fought protracted battles for control. They were quite successful in the late 1940s and early 1950s. By 1949 only one state TLC (Trades and Labor Council) was left in Communist hands compared with five in 1945 and there was a solid anti-communist majority at the ACTU congress of 1949.

According to Reynolds "the breakthrough for the Groups came in 1950 when their candidates took control of the Victorian branch of the Clerks Union, and this was followed in the next three years by a steady stream of victories in the Federated Ironworkers Association, the Victorian branch of the Australian Railways Union and the New South Wales branch of the Clerks Union." There were gains in other unions that were less permanent.

In the late 1940s the Cold War between the USA and Soviet Union began with Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe. In 1949 the Chinese Communists under Mao Tse Tung won the Chinese civil war and shortly after the Korean war began. The French were fighting a losing battle against the Vietnamese Communists. There was a Communist uprising in Malaya. With all these developments some Australian politicians and opinion leaders wanted to take a harsh line against Australian Communists.

There was friction between IG members and other ALP members, in many cases anti-Communist, who did not always agree on issues. By 1950 a majority of the Victorian ALP executive were Groupers and likewise by the end of 1952 in New South Wales. In South Australia the Industrial Groups had been disbanded at the instigation of Clyde Cameron, MHR, who claimed that they had tried to oust loyal ALP members from the Waterside Workers' Federation. Opposition to the Groupers hardened in the ALP, partly because, according to Reynolds of the "policies which they were fairly forcefully advocating and which sometimes seemed closer to Catholic social teaching, as interpreted by Santamaria and the Movement, than to ALP policy. These included relating wages to productivity; decentralisation; close rural land settlement based on an extensive programme of European immigration; joint union-management consultation; development of northern Australia; a heavy emphasis on defence preparedness and reliance on the ANZUS treaty, coupled with

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non-recognition of Communist China and a foreign policy which enshrined hard-line opposition to Communism, especially in Asia.”

According to Reynolds¹⁷ a further factor which assisted the development of opposition “to the Groupers and the one most directly responsible for the eventual open breach was the Groupers’ growing hostility towards the leadership of Dr. Evatt.” Dr. Evatt, a Church of England adherent and a former High Court Judge, became ALP leader in 1951. Evatt initially supported the IGs, congratulating them on their successes in unions and declaring his own opposition to Communism. Evatt had private consultations with Santamaria before the 1954 Federal election, asking him to help write his campaign speech, which offer Santamaria declined because he was not an ALP member.¹⁸ The Groupers and the Movement saw Evatt as soft on Communism. Shortly before the 1954 election the Soviet diplomat Vladimir Petrov defected to Australia. Evatt appeared before the Royal Commission set up after Petrov’s defection to investigate allegations of a Soviet spy ring in Australia. Evatt appeared before the Commission to answer allegations that two of his staff were Soviet spies. The Groupers were unhappy with Evatt’s appearance before the commission.

In the 1954 Australian election in the Lower House the ALP obtained 50.03% of the vote to the Coalition’s 47.07%. However the Coalition won the election because its vote was more evenly distributed in the electorates.

After the election Evatt, deeply disheartened, began to suspect that either his election campaign had been sabotaged by Menzies with the Petrov affair or by the Industrial Groups. After the election Industrial Group anger at Evatt was increasing.

In a sensational press statement of 5 October 1954 Evatt said in part: “One factor told heavily against us [in the 1954 election] – the attitude of a small minority group of members, located particularly in the State of Victoria, which has, since 1949, become increasingly disloyal to the Labor Movement and the Labor leadership...

“It seems certain that the activities of the small group are largely directed from outside the Labor Movement. The Melbourne News Weekly appears to act as their organ...I am bringing this matter before the next meeting of the Federal Executive..”

This speech was quite extraordinary in its attack on the Movement considering that Evatt had sought Santamaria’s help a few months earlier in the 1954 election.

On December 3 1954 the ALP Federal Executive, by a vote of seven to five, had dissolved the Victorian ALP Executive. On the 27th of March 1955 a crowd of over 3000 attended a rally supporting the dismissed Executive including 18 Victorian state parliamentarians (including 4 cabinet ministers) and 8 Federal Victorian parliamentarians; only one of the parliamentarians was non-Catholic. Of the 26 parliamentarians who attended the meeting 1 was expelled, 24 suspended and 1 had a change of heart and supported the new regime. The ALP Victorian Premier, John Cain Senior, asked the four recalcitrant ministers to resign

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from his cabinet. When they refused he sacked them from the cabinet. The former ministers were so annoyed that they resigned from the ALP and set up a breakaway party called the Australian Labor Party (Anti-Communist) ALP(AC)); this party eventually merged with the DLP, which was originally only a NSW party, to form a new DLP. All the parliamentarians who had been suspended were expelled from the ALP along with 11 members of the old state executive plus a number of others; the expelled members joined the breakaway party. One of the members of the sacked Victorian ALP Executive was Fred Riley, an atheist and rationalist – Fred joined the ALP(AC); while membership of the DLP has always been mainly Catholic it has always had non-Catholic members. Henry Bolte, leader of the Victorian opposition Liberal Party, moved a no confidence motion in the Victorian Parliament. The breakaway party supported the opposition's motion, leading to a state election. The Liberal – Country Party coalition won the election and the breakaway party won only one seat. The ALP(AC) went on to form branches in Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania. In 1956 a number of people were expelled from the ALP in NSW. The expelled members formed a new party, the Democratic Labor Party (DLP). The DLP and ALP(AC) merged in March 1957 as the DLP.

In December 1957 a number of people left the NSW DLP, mainly Protestants; one of them was a founder of the DLP, Alan Manning, who complained about the influence of “die-hard Right-wing Industrial Groups”.

In 1957 ALP Queensland Premier, Vince Gair, was expelled from the ALP along with a lot of his parliamentarians. They formed the Queensland Labor Party (QLP). The QLP merged with the DLP in December 1962. Gair said that in the Queensland split the only member of his Cabinet, nearly half of which was Protestant and about half Catholic, who deserted Cabinet and let him down was a fellow Catholic¹⁹.

The DLP since its formation

The ALP(AC) and later the DLP have been contesting Elections at State and Federal level since 1955. The DLP has won seats in Victorian, NSW and Queensland parliaments. It has won Federal Senate seats but never HR (House of Representatives) seats although it did hold HR seats after the Split. At its height it had 5 Senators from 1970 to 1974. The DLP had senators continuously from 1957 to 1974 and again since 2011. The DLP vote, which had previously been quite strong (it reached its maximum in the 1970 Senate election, winning 11% of the vote Federally and 19% in Victoria) suddenly went into radical decline in the mid-1970s beginning with the Victorian 1973 election when its vote dropped from 13.3% in the 1970 election to 7.8% (i.e. a drop of 5.5%); in contrast the Liberal vote increased by 5.6% and the ALP vote increased by 0.2% so that apparently most of the DLP voters who had changed allegiance had switched to the Liberal Party. In the 1974 Senate election all 5 Senators lost their seats, with the DLP vote dropping from 11.1% to 3.6%. In the 1975 Senate election its vote dropped to 2.7% and in the 1977 Senate election to 1.7%. It is unclear why the DLP vote went into radical decline although various hypotheses have been

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put forward, which I shall discuss later. Whatever the reasons, because of the decline and shortage of finances in 1978 the DLP branches in all states voted to dissolve. Three quarters of the Victorian branch's Executive rejected the vote and continued the party in that state. The DLP continued to field candidates in the Victorian State elections and Federal elections (only in Victoria). The DLP was set up again in the other 5 states in time for the 2007 Federal election at which candidates from all states sat. While the DLP's best Australia wide Senate vote is 11% its best House of Representatives vote was 9% - by 1972 its HR vote was down to 5%. Its best Queensland state election vote was 23% while its best Victorian state election vote was 17%. Nowadays the DLP national vote is down to 1% and its best results are 2% in Victoria and NSW; in individual electorates its results are usually 1% or 2%, occasionally 5%, its best result being 11% in the Lynhurst byelection in Victoria in 2013. The DLP had no members of parliament anywhere in Australia from 1977 until 2006 when Peter Kavanagh won a seat in the Victorian election; this seat was lost in the 2010 election. In 2010, John Madigan won a Victorian Senate seat for the DLP. The DLP has a good chance of winning one or more seats in the 2014 Victorian election.

In the 1950s and the 1960s the DLP was focussed on anti-communism both in domestic and foreign affairs. It supported Australia's military involvement in the Vietnam war, including conscription. In the 1970s the DLP changed direction, focussing on anti-permissiveness, opposing homosexuality, abortion, pornography, divorce law reform and drug use – I suspect that this change of focus was the reason for its drop in vote, with DLP supporters switching to the Liberal Party; former DLP Senator Frank McManus in his autobiography said that some DLP members had suggested that its anti-permissiveness policies may have cost it votes. As communism is now very weak in Australia and the Cold War is over the DLP is now little concerned with anti-communism. Both the DLP and Bob Santamaria were strongly opposed to the privatisation pursued by the ALP and Liberal-National Coalition parties. The DLP wants to bring back the SEC and State Bank in Victoria.

The principal objective of the DLP in the 1950s, 1960s and until the 1972 Federal election was to keep the ALP out of office because of its perceived pro-communist stance. The DLP was pivotal in keeping Labor in opposition federally in Australia from 1958 to 1972. The DLP recommended that its supporters give preferences to the Coalition; about 80% of DLP supporters did this²⁰. For example, in 1958 the Liberals held 16 seats on DLP preferences, 24 seats in 1961 and 17 in 1963. The Coalition narrowly held on to power in 1969 because of DLP preferences. In 1972 the DLP preferences were unable to save the Coalition from defeat. Nowadays the DLP sometimes preferences the Coalition before the ALP and sometimes the ALP before the Coalition.

Bob Santamaria was never a member of the DLP. As a substantial proportion of the members of the DLP in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s were also members of the NCC (80% according to one study²¹), Santamaria had influence on the DLP in this way. Santamaria implied that a large proportion of DLP members were members of the NCC.²² At the 1959

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Victorian DLP State Conference former ALP (AC) MP, Bill Bourke, said that “Santamaria was trying to get control of the DLP and is an incubus on the party”.²³ Bourke quit the DLP soon after, Stan Keon, another former ALP (AC) MP, said “The DLP cannot win an election because many Australians regard it as a Catholic party. Mr. Santamaria’s attempts to gain control of the DLP are responsible for that label. Mr. Santamaria has no right to usurp the role of spokesman for the DLP.”²⁴ Keon remained a member of the DLP. There were also criticisms of Santamaria by members of the Melbourne University DLP Society in 1959 and in the South Australian branch. Ross Fitzgerald remarked (in his book “The Pope’s Battalions”) “these events... showed that the allegations made by the ALP and the Communist Party that the DLP was merely a creature of Santamaria was overly simplistic. If the NCC controlled the DLP, why would Mr. Santamaria need to attempt ‘to gain control’ of the party as Keon alleged? Clearly the relationship between the NCC and the DLP was not a straightforward one. The DLP was a real life political party with an institutional life of its own, and its interests were not always the same as those of the NCC, despite what was obviously a strong overlap of membership – Santamaria himself said that ‘by far the larger part of the work of basic organisation had to be done by NCC members.’ Santamaria may not have had any interest in winning elections or holding office for their own sakes but many in the DLP certainly did.”²⁵

In his autobiography “The Tumult and the Shouting” former DLP Senator Frank McManus said “I wonder how often it has been said that the five DLP Senators were obedient puppets of an outside ‘grey eminence’ – Bob Santamaria. All five Senators were men of at least thirty years in politics, all with strong personalities and strongly individual opinions on many issues. The suggestion that they meekly accepted outside direction was as untrue as it was silly. The more experienced pressmen dropped it, but new recruits to the press gallery regularly trotted out the ‘grey eminence’ line. I am quite sure that Bob Santamaria would not have wished to be held responsible for DLP Caucus decisions: on more than one occasion he strongly disagreed with them. I am also quite sure that if Bob Santamaria’s name had been Smith or Jones he would have avoided many of the attacks made on him. He just happens to possess a name ideally suited to the purposes of those that appeal to racial and religious prejudice – anti-Italian and anti-Catholic.”²⁶ Frank McManus suggested reasons why Santamaria was never a member of a political party: “.. he was an individualist, he couldn't accept a subordinate position; he would never have been able to go into a political party and subordinate his personal views to the views of the party”.²⁷

The DLP adopted Santamaria’s political philosophy of distributism. Under this policy power is to be decentralised as much as possible, with emphasis on cooperatives and small business, as far as possible; however the DLP believes that essential services should be in public hands and has along with the NCC been opposed to the privatisation policies of the ALP and Liberals. The DLP and NCC have opposed both Communism and economic rationalism (laissez faire capitalism) as they see both systems as being undemocratic. The

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DLP and NCC favour decentralising of population, with people encouraged to live in rural areas rather than see the cities become overcrowded. The DLP was the first parliamentary party to oppose the White Australia policy. The DLP has always opposed capital punishment – it opposed the hanging of Ronald Ryan by Victorian Liberal Premier Henry Bolte in 1967. The DLP opposes offshore detention of asylum seekers and believes that they should be settled in Australia. The DLP has always advocated state aid for private schools even when the Liberal Party was indifferent and the ALP hostile. The DLP advocates a strong manufacturing sector and was in favour of the Federal Government subsidising Holden. The DLP has supported human rights in West Papua and Tibet. The DLP is opposed to poker machines.

During the late 1950s and 1960s a lot of the DLP policy focus was on anticommunism, particularly in foreign affairs and defence. The DLP was concerned about the foreign policies of the communist superpowers, the Soviet Union and Communist China, whom it saw as expansionist and ultimately a threat to Australia. It advocated a Pacific confederation of Asian countries including Australia with integrated military commands, foreign policies, trade and mutual assistance. In 1964 the DLP advocated the development of Australian nuclear weapons to counter the Chinese nuclear capacity. The DLP enthusiastically supported Australia's military involvement in Vietnam including conscription.

In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s the DLP was hostile towards the Communist unions and was opposed to "unity tickets" in which ALP and Communist party members stood on joint tickets in union elections, aimed at keeping out DLP candidates. Some unions were affiliated to the DLP from its inception till 1978.

As I already mentioned, in the 1970s the DLP promoted an anti-permissiveness policy opposing homosexuality, abortion, pornography, divorce law reform and drug use. Its 1972 federal election campaign was mainly on anti-permissiveness while most previous campaigns had emphasised anti-communism; anti-permissiveness was first used as an issue by the DLP in the 1970 Victorian state election campaign while in the 1970 Senate campaign little was said about policies in its campaign with the emphasis on personalities with slogans used a lot – e.g in Victoria the slogan was "Vote Mac back" (i.e. vote Senator Frank McManus back) while in Queensland the slogan was "Keep Gair There" (i.e. keep Senator Vince Gair in the Senate). Santamaria had expressed similar anti-permissiveness views to the DLP's on his TV show and in News Weekly in the early 1970s. I remember seeing DLP Senator McManus on TV in the early 1970s attacking humanism. More recently DLP Senator John Madigan has called the humanists "inhumanists".

In McManus's autobiography, "The Tumult and The Shouting", published in 1977, he devoted three pages to criticising humanism. He said "In all recent elections the Democratic Labor Party has been soundly trounced by the media for failing to 'get with it'. We are told that ours is now a permissive society, that old-fashioned standards and values, and

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particularly the Ten Commandments, no longer apply, that inevitably the humanist program based on atheism and materialism must be accepted.

“ The summer 1973 issue of ‘The Australian Humanist’ set out a comprehensive program for achieving the complete ‘humanisation’ of our country. The seven main points in the humanist program, which have been pressed with zeal through the media, which have been heavily infiltrated by persons that favour the humanist cause. They are:

- (i) legalisation of homosexual relations between consenting adults and the social acceptance of homosexuality as a way of life, equal in dignity and humanity to heterosexual normality;
- (ii) legalisation of abortion on demand, leading to the acceptance of the general principle that women have a ‘moral right’ to dispose of their unborn offspring as they choose;
- (iii) legalisation of divorce on the basis that a marriage has ‘broken down’, as a step towards a completely new pattern of sexual relations, involving the elimination of the concept of family life of the traditional kind;
- (iv) legalisation of euthanasia and mercy killing;
- (v) abolition of all censorship and controls on pornography, even for the protection of the young. The idea that there is anything sinful or shameful in giving free rein to sexual instincts is to be discredited, along with the whole concept of ‘indecentcy’;
- (vi) abolition of religious education in schools, which are to become the media for promoting a completely secular way of life;
- (vii) permissive legislation on drugs, enabling soft drugs (like marijuana) to be sold and consumed freely..

“The DLP have been particular targets because we publicly criticised the ever more permissive and promiscuous society...one despaired that 1975 would see a halt to the spate of humanist sponsored ant-social and anti-family legislation. The humanists had the Whitlam government, led by the humanists, in the bag...”

Since these words were written by McManus in 1977 homosexuality and abortion have been legalised . The DLP is no longer in favour of homosexuality being illegal but is against same sex marriage. Surprisingly, Peter Kavanagh, DLP Victorian MLC from 2006 to 2010, advocated gay civil unions. The DLP still opposes abortion. A Newspoll of 600 Victorians conducted in December 2013²⁸ showed that 85% of voters were in favour of abortion, including 78% of religious voters, so the DLP view is a minority view. Abortion is not necessarily supported by all nonreligious. A survey of Australians by a Monash sociology academic, Katharine Betts, showed that 93% of people in the atheist/agnostic category in favour of legal abortion versus 77% of religious people.²⁹ A Gallup poll in the U.S. in 2012 showed 19% of the No Religion group pro-life.³⁰ The late Christopher Hitchens, who was an outspoken atheist, was opposed to abortion; I am in agreement with Hitchens.

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The DLP in the 1950s and 1960s in its election campaigns made anticommunism its number one issue. This changed in the 1970s with the 1972 federal election campaign primarily based on anti-permissiveness. In its TV ads it showed cartoons in which pornography rained from the skies following an ALP election victory. I knew John Foley, who worked full time for the DLP Victorian office in the 1960s and 1970s, who told me that he knew a number of hitherto young DLP supporters who had voted ALP in the 1972 federal election, including himself while working for the DLP election campaign. I suspect that the DLP alienated a number of its younger supporters with its anti-permissiveness campaign. John Foley told me that the anti-permissiveness campaign was originally suggested by Frank Dowling but that Frank McManus was initially opposed to it. McManus did later wholeheartedly embrace it. In his autobiography McManus said "The DLP, and particularly Senator Jack Little and myself, have been particular targets because we criticised the ever more permissive and promiscuous society. We have been told, even by some DLP supporters, that our attitude cost the DLP votes. If that is the penalty for opposing social evil we accept it." What did not help the DLP was that an Age reporter visited Senator Little's newsagency and found that he was selling pornographic magazines, including Playboy. In reply Jack Little said that he had no control over what he sold. DLP Senator Vince Gair was ridiculed for his anti-permissiveness attitudes when he was known to both swear and drink heavily; when he became Australia's ambassador to Ireland he had a reputation for sexually harassing secretaries, with some resigning.

According to McManus³¹ "The House of Representatives election in December 1972 saw a serious decline in the DLP vote in practically every state. Among the reasons suggested were that the big issues on which the DLP had campaigned in other years – defence, foreign policy, Communism in the trade unions – were no longer so relevant. Others held that there was so much dissatisfaction with the Liberal-Country Party Government, and such a determination to remove it from office, that the DLP paid for its support for the Liberal-Country Party over the years. One statement was that the DLP was 'harnessed to a corpse'." While McManus is correct to say that the 5% House of Representatives vote in 1972 was well down on the 11% vote in the Senate in 1970 it was only slightly down on the 6% House of Representatives vote in 1969. As apparently a lot of people voted for the DLP in the 1970 Senate election who did not vote DLP in the 1969 House of Representatives election the result was not disastrous. However in the 1974 Senate election only 4% voted DLP in the Senate election; the DLP lost all its senators – a disastrous result – there would not be another DLP Senator until 2010 with John Madigan's election.

Certainly in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s the DLP membership and vote was predominantly Catholic. A current DLP member told me that today DLP membership is still predominantly Catholic. The majority of Catholics never voted DLP. Former ALP leader Arthur Calwell was a Catholic and a bitter foe of the DLP, who said that the "DLP would wither on the vine"; the DLP has been going since 1955 (i.e. for 49 years) and shows no sign of dying.

While the DLP was predominantly Catholic it did have some leading non-Catholic members including Protestant Senator Jack Little, Protestant national President and federal

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parliamentarian Robert Joshua, Queensland MP Protestant Les Diplock and founding member and President of the Victorian DLP in the 1950s and 1960s, atheist and Rationalist Fred Riley. Melbourne University Psychology lecturer, Dr. Frank Knopelmacher, an ardent anti-communist and atheist, was an outspoken DLP supporter.

McManus said³² “The DLP has never been a Catholic party. We want and welcome all shades of belief. In my time, on the Executive we have had Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, members of the Churches of Christ, Lutherans and even atheists. Yet the Catholic tag has been put on us by the hostile and the ignorant, and we lose more votes than we get by it...”

McManus also said “Others have claimed that we [the DLP] represent a Catholic mafia. In Victoria over 30% of the voting population are Catholics. I estimate we get 4% of that vote, with the Liberals and ALP sharing fairly evenly the other 26%. Each of them, on votes, is at least 3 times more Catholic than the DLP.”

On the DLP website FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section it says that the DLP is not a Catholic party and that the DLP is open to people of any faith tradition or none. Article 14 of the Constitution lists as one of the DLP’s objectives “To establish, under Almighty God, the political, legal, social and economic foundations for a just, free and democratic society and for a self-reliant and secure Australia.” On the one hand the DLP says that people of no faith (i.e. atheist or agnostic) are welcome to join yet talks about God in its constitution, seemingly excluding atheists and agnostics from membership. I have spoken to members of the DLP who assure me that nonreligious are welcome to join the DLP but that inclusion of God in the constitution is a reflection of the fact that most DLP supporters are religious. According to Lyle Allan, an expert on the DLP, “The original Anti-Communist Labor and subsequently DLP Constitution was the ALP Constitution at the time of The Split. There is no mention of religion.” A DLP member told me that there was no mention of God in the 1974 DLP Constitution. So apparently reference to God has been added at a later date. If the DLP wants to be seen as a secular party I think that there should be no reference to God in its constitution. Certainly in my active years in the DLP God was never mentioned; all discussion was about politics. While I was aware that most members were Catholic it had no influence on our politics; non-Catholics including non-religionists were welcome in the DLP.

Warhurst³³ said that “Don Aitkin calculates that in 1966, 88 per cent of DLP voters were Catholics. Later, the figure was lower: by 1969 only 64 per cent of the sample were Catholics. Warhurst, in arguing that the DLP was a Catholic Church party then went on to say that “DLP policies reflected many of the concerns of the Catholic church as a whole and of the Movement in particular. First and foremost, it was anti-communist in both domestic and foreign policies. It was also the party which argued most strongly for government financial assistance to non-government schools.. Furthermore it had a distinctive commitment to decentralisation, a favourite and long-standing policy of B.A. Santamaria and the Movement”.

Reynolds³⁴ summarises results of three polls, each with 1000 respondents, in Melbourne and Sydney electorates in 1971. These polls showed that 55.8% of the DLP vote was Catholic, 33.3% Other Christian, 5.5% Other Religions and 5.5% Agnostic/Atheist. In contrast, of the total vote 26.7% were Catholic, 59.0% Other Christian, 6.2% Other Religions

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and 8.1% Agnostic/Atheist. It shows that Catholics were over-represented in the DLP vote, but nevertheless nearly half the DLP vote was non-Catholic and there was even some Agnostic/Atheist vote. Of the total sampled 13.1% of Catholics voted DLP, 13.4% of Other Christians voted DLP, 5.9% of Other Religions voted DLP, and 4.9% of the Agnostic/Atheist group voted DLP; another interesting result is that 67.0% of the Agnostic/Atheist group voted ALP and 28.1% of the Agnostic/Atheist group voted Liberal. The DLP vote in the survey was 8.0% in Melbourne and 5.1% in Sydney. Nowadays the DLP vote is down to about 2% in both Melbourne and Sydney.

Reynolds then went on to say that “the DLP does not attract the ‘Catholic vote’, but does have an attraction for a specific type of Catholic voter. Mol (on p.185 of his book ‘Religion in Australia’) sheds further light on this by reporting that 66 per cent of DLP voters prayed daily, 68 per cent claimed to have experienced the presence of God, 77 per cent believed absolutely in God, 52 per cent had the majority of their closest friends in the local church and 80 per cent disapproved of sex before marriage. This information reveals the group to be orthodox and devout in their religious beliefs and practices...The DLP is not, and never was, a party of the Catholic Church.”

Reynolds, in 1972, in his Ph.D. thesis on DLP voters, surveyed a sample of 322 DLP voters.³⁵ He found that 77.6 % were Catholic, 24.3 % Protestant, Non-Christian and Agnostic/Atheist respondents scarcely existed. He found that the “core DLP vote was strongly attached to the church, , integrated in its structures, and had most of their friends and associational linkages in church-related organisations...However, about 30 per cent indicated that church-going was relatively unimportant to them, in that they attended infrequently if at all.”

Reynolds³⁶ suggested reasons for the substantial decline of the DLP vote from 1973 on; he said “The most important structural reason for the decline of the DLP came from within the Catholic Church. Vatican II was a climactic event for worldwide Catholicism and brought about a pluralism within its ranks that, hitherto, had been unimaginable. Politically, in Australia, it meant that only the Communist Party was proscribed, yet even then there was dialogue between Catholics and Communists. The orthodoxy propagated by the DLP/NCC axis – that a good Catholic was anti-communist; that the DLP was the only fully anti-communist party; and that the ALP was ‘soft’ on Communism, ergo the good Catholic voted DLP and repudiated the ALP – was now, and for the first time, seriously challenged.

“Contemporaneously, the DLP had never trained or promoted a new and younger generation of leaders to replace the increasingly bitter old men who harked back to the intra-Labor battles of the 1950s (it is noteworthy that no one ever came to prominence in the DLP who was not an ALP member before the Split); nor did it systematically engage its young supporters in its affairs, despite the characteristics of its voting profile. In B.A. Santamaria it had an ideologue who, while enjoying a high rate of recognition, was almost wholly negative in his views and attitudes, singing a one-note song of anti-communism

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which, as the politics of the 1960s gave way to that of the 1970s, looked, and was, increasingly out of touch with reality.

“The DLP had been able to carve out a constituency and a role in the Senate, in large part owing to the three ‘off-year’ half-Senate elections, and had managed to keep Labor from office federally in two states. But when the electorate became polarised by the tumultuous politics of the 1970s, the DLP was swept away. In an act of supreme folly its senators supported the Coalition’s threat to Supply in 1974 and totally miscalculated the cohesiveness and durability of its Senate vote in the three eastern states. By nominating for House Of Representatives seats only in Victoria, it effectively suicided...elsewhere. Even in Victoria McManus’ handsome win of 1970 proved ephemeral. The DLP had become a prisoner of its past. By 1974 it was no longer needed by Santamaria for the anti-communist crusade such as it was then. More importantly the majority of Australian Catholics had never wanted the party in the first place and shed no tears at the DLP’s demise.”

I think that some of what Reynolds said about the DLP is debatable e.g. he said “Santamaria sang a one-note song about anti-communism”; Santamaria was about a lot more than just anti-communism plus Santamaria was not the DLP. Besides, apparently Reynolds did not poll any former DLP supporters to ask them why they quit voting DLP so that the reasons that he gives for former DLP supporters no longer voting DLP are conjecture. In 1974 DLP Senator Vince Gair resigned from the DLP to accept ALP PM Gough Whitlam’s offer of ambassadorsip to Ireland, thus creating a Senate vacancy that Whitlam hoped the ALP would win – this might have been a factor in the decline of the DLP vote.

The DLP’s demise did not quite occur as some of its supporters continued the party in 1978 in defiance of the majority decision to wind it up.

The NCC has not given up on the DLP. The NCC’s support for the DLP helped it gain a Victorian Senate seat in 2010.³⁷

Reynolds³⁸ quotes a survey of voters by Dr. A.H. Hughes in 1966. Hughes developed four scales, each measuring different dimensions of political opinion: Economic Radicalism (ER), Defence Leftism (DL), Conscience Radicalism (CR) and Libertarianism (LIB). DLP voters were radical on ER, conservative on DL and LIB but not noticeably radical or conservative on CR.

Reynolds said that the “DLP position on ER was radical. It included support for government economic and planning controls, nationalisation of some business monopolies, greatly increased spending on education and pensions, increases in child endowment, a willingness to see the government start business enterprises, and a republican Australia. A similar position was adopted by Labor voters, many of these policy points having traditionally been associated with the ALP. However, DLP and ALP voters parted company on the DL and LIB scales.

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“On the LIB scale, covering matters of social morality, DLP supporters were conservative, agreeing with propositions to ban the Communist party and Nazi and fascist organisations, to strengthen ASIO’s powers, to leave unchanged the current powers of censorship, to continue to punish homosexual acts between consenting adults and to enforce conformity on ‘long-haired beatnik types’...

“The evidence from the Hughes survey shows the risks involved in categorising the voters of any party as conservative or radical with reference to only one issue or type of issue. In fact, there are several dimensions of conservatism and radicalism, and it is necessary in order to assess properly the nature of political opinion, to consider all these dimensions. It is not sufficient then to dismiss DLP voters as being right-wing or ‘fascist’, since on the traditional index of attitudes to social welfare and economic matters their stand closely resembles that of ALP voters. The DLP’s adherence to strong and militant defence policies marks them as being conservative, as does their position on matters of social morality.”

I want to now discuss Bob Santamaria. In his book “The Split” Robert Murray had this to say about Bob Santamaria³⁹: “Santamaria was by nature a brilliant and eloquent politician, with all the sense of issues, manipulation, personal destiny and love of power that has typified controversial politicians throughout history. He would have been a senior minister, if not leader, in any government. A mysterious Providence placed him in a curious emotional and somewhat hothouse atmosphere, where he was able to win easily the influence he instinctively sought, at any early age. Of Italian extraction, he was something of an outsider in the mainly Irish Catholic world in which he grew up, but he developed an extraordinary instinct for the prejudices of the Irish-Australian lower middle class. His Catholic faith was of the unquestioning, rarely troubled kind. An easy certainty of being right often seemed to characterise his actions and views. He was something of an autocrat, most at home with his intellectual equals if they agreed with him and shared his clear-cut certainty. Egoism aside, he had many attractive personal qualities with a gracious charm and little malice, bigotry or hate in his nature. His charm, tact, patience and clarity made him unusually persuasive, both in oratory and private conversation. He could be both a vigorous readable popular journalist in News Weekly and a competent writer for the more serious audience. His writing never had quite the eloquence of his speech to a sympathetic audience”.

Having met Bob Santamaria once when he spoke to the Monash University DLP Club I agree that he was personally charming and lacking in hate. In an interview with Phillip Adams in 1996⁴⁰ Bob said that he believed that God existed on the balance of probabilities. Phillip, an ex-Communist, praised Bob for being anti-Communist, saying that Bob got it right and Phillip got it wrong.

Bob Santamaria in his later years wrote a regular column in “The Australian” and presented his regular TV program “Point of View” on Channel 9. Santamaria spoke out against modernist trends in the Catholic Church. He welcomed the election of Pope John Paul II, whom he saw as conservative. Also he welcomed the appointment of George Pell as Archbishop of Melbourne. Santamaria spoke out against the privatisation of government

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bodies and insisted on government control of financial markets. Santamaria, long time opponent of Communism, lived to see the end of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the dissolution of the Communist Party of Australia in 1991. I think that Santamaria was right to oppose Communism and that Australians should be grateful to him for efforts in this area. Santamaria died in 1998. He was given a state funeral.

Long time foe of Santamaria, ALP powerbroker, Clyde Cameron, praised Santamaria after his death⁴¹; he said "It was with the deepest sadness that I learned of the death of Bartholomew A. (Bob) Santamaria, who was the most significant figure in Australian politics in the 2nd half of the 20th Century...Noone in the past 50 years did more to influence the end result in Australian politics than Bob Santamaria. He had by far the greatest political mind; and when a full history of Australian politics over the past 50 years is put to paper his rating will head the list. He was the only writer in the whole country whose regular articles in the Weekend Australian gave vent to the thoughts and hopes of Labor's 'True Believers'

"In ...1990 he told me..that Capitalism and not Communism is the worst enemy. I shared his opposition to the privatisation of our publicly-owned assets. In an article published by The Weekend Australian (February 1995) he referred to the then part-sale of the Commonwealth Bank as being bad enough; but what was worse was the proposal to hand over basic utilities such as power, waste, Telstra, harbours, railways, roads, airlines and even airports to the pirates of private enterprise...

"For the past 18 years Bob Santamaria has been warning that the whole of the Western financial system would face a major crash. He made the point that international banks are not concerned with whether the governments they help are Communist or anti-Communist. Their only concern is with profit not ideology.

" My sad regret is that the death of this quite extraordinary man has prevented me from ever meeting him in this world."

The NCC continues today. The NCC has sympathisers on the executive of Bob Katter's Australian Party and supported John Madigan in his successful bid to become a DLP Senator in 2010⁴². The Weekend Australian of 29 October 2005 reported that "The family of the late National Civic Council founder B.A. (Bob) Santamaria has walked out of the organisation that helped keep Labor out of power for 23 years. The family claims that the NCC has fallen under the influence of the extreme Right and has wasted up to \$1 million in a failed political party, the Australian Family Alliance .. Mary Helen Woods [nee Santamaria] said that her father had been betrayed by his successor as NCC president, Peter Westmore..."

I do not understand why the Santamaria family fell out with the NCC. The policies of today's NCC, listed on its website, seem to me to be the same as those of Bob Santamaria's NCC. On the NCC website it lists its primacies as "the family as the basic unit of society; the small

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unit in agriculture, business, government and unions; the integrity of the individual; patriotism and Judaeo-Christian values.”

Fitzgerald⁴³ says that “many would argue that the revamped NCC has become more hardline since the death of its original founder B.A. Santamaria. Even Santamaria’s family walked out of the organisation, claiming that the extreme Right has hijacked it. The new NCC has an extreme dislike of feminism, gay culture, libertarian sexual lifestyles and adult entertainment and campaigns strongly for censorship in these areas.”

The NCC has branches in every state, with its national office in Melbourne. It runs a bookshop and publishes News-Weekly, which began in 1941, and AD2000, a conservative religious journal. It has associated organisations, the Australian Family Association and the Thomas More Centre, focussing on bioethical issues. While the NCC is a Catholic organisation the DLP, while predominantly Catholic, welcomes non-Catholics as members.

Back in the 1960s I was a member of the Y.D.L.A (Young Democratic Labor Association), the youth branch of the DLP; I knew fellow members John Mulholland and his wife, Mary Mulholland. John was a psychologist for the Education Department. When the DLP voted to disband in 1978, John was one of the few who decided to reject that decision and keep the DLP going. According to Fitzgerald⁴⁴ “the ‘new DLP’ was largely the creation of John and Mary Mulholland, who beteen them stood for federal parliament 13 times between 1977 and 2001.” John also stood as a Senate candidate in 2004 and 2007. He also stood for the Victorian Upper House in 2006; he was initially declared to have won a seat, but lost the seat on a recount. John was secretary of the Victorian DLP from 1983 till 2008. In a close vote in September 2008 John was voted out as secretary by one vote. Since then John has fought numerous court cases claiming that he was unfairly removed as secretary. He has always lost these cases. In January 2010 John was expelled from the DLP. These court cases have cost the DLP thousands of dollars.

I wish now to discuss John Madigan, the sole DLP Senator. John was a blacksmith before he entered Parliament. In an address to the Sydney Institute on 19 February 2013 he said “Fundamental to all DLP policies is respect for the dignity of the human person. This belief is what informs all our policies from the rights of workers through to the right to life of all human beings. It is this I believe that makes our policies appear contradictory in the common political divisions of left and right. We might be correctly assessed as conservative in the area of social policy and progressive when it comes to industrial relations and economics. In the area of workers’ rights we support the role of the trade unions in collective bargaining. It is a great fiction that an unresourced individual worker can engage in bargaining for his or her rights with a richly resourced company that has the services of legal and HR professionals. In other circumstances such a situation would be seen as bullying.”

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In his May 2013 Budget reply speech Madigan said that “The DLP believes our economy is best served by looking after the families and communities first. They are the top of our totem pole, not corporations.” The DLP came out against the recent Abbott Federal 2014-5 budget. John Madigan was reported in The Guardian on June 2014 as calling on the Abbott government “to start a proper dialogue with crossbenchers over its budget measures.” He said that the Coalition was not interested in finding workable solutions or compromising. He said “I challenge the Government tonight. If you are serious about getting the nation back on track, then begin dialogue with the crossbench. Stop using families as a punching bag. Let’s have a meeting. Let’s sit down and discuss common ground more than just a couple of days from when we are expected to vote on legislation.” He said that he was “not prepared to horse trade or to be taken for a fool but willing to negotiate with the government to fund the savings needed to get the budget back in the black. But I will not be bludgeoned into selling out those people who can least afford the cuts. I am not going to sell out the most vulnerable in our society. So far I have a clear impression of the government’s approach to the budget. It is not interested in finding workable solutions and it is not interested in compromise.” Madigan accused the government of resorting to “abuse and derision and threats of a double dissolution.”

Madigan went on to say that he could not understand how the Government thought the proposed Medicare copayments in their current form were reasonable and affordable. He also could not understand how it was reasonable, when calculating the time young people must wait to access Newstart, “not to recognise formal study in higher education as work.” He said “I do not understand how they expect some people to wait six months without unemployment benefits payment, even when they want to work. I do not understand how the Government is prepared to rip out thousands of dollars from families at a time when they are doing it tough. The government wants families to pay more for fuel and for visiting the doctor, all the while expecting an economic downturn with huge predicted job losses across so many sectors. This is impractical, illogical and bizarre.” Clearly John Madigan and the DLP reject the Abbott Government’s harsh economic rationalist policies; this is consistent with the DLP’s left wing economic policies.

Madigan has spoken on the decline of manufacturing in Australia and deplored the Abbott government’s refusal to help Holden. He has spoken out against wind farms, saying that some are noisy for nearby residents. He has criticised the Family Court, saying that it discriminates against men. According to The Age of July 4 2014 Madigan attacked Tony Abbott’s Bill to restore the Australian Building and Construction Commission, a building industry watchdog. He criticised the Bill for singling out unions but not addressing businesses that broke the law. “A corruption commission I would support. But I don’t believe that corruption is only in the union movement – one doesn’t have to look far to find it elsewhere. Will we have a royal commission into the Commonwealth Bank? What’s the difference between white collar crime and blue collar crime?”

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The DLP is in favour of onshore processing of asylum seekers. DLP Senator Madigan gave a speech to the Senate on March 4 2014 in which he criticised the Abbott government's policy on asylum seekers, particularly those from Sri Lanka.

He said "Australia is now a globally infamous human rights abuser; we are possibly seeing that on Manus Island and elsewhere ." He attacked the Abbott government for giving the Sri Lankan government patrol boats to stem the flow of asylum seekers. Madigan said "Australia continues the persecution of Tamils once they arrive on our shores – nearly 50 Tamils now face indefinite detention in Australia because ASIO has given them adverse findings. Additionally, refugee advocates say this government is quietly running a 'screening out' process. Labelled 'economic refugees' , Tamils are denied legal representation and proper protection during interviews. They are then quietly returned to Sri Lanka, with many of them facing certain torture, ongoing harassment and possible death. The Australian public must be clear on one thing. Our international reputation as a country of fairness and compassion is being trashed by sycophancy towards Sri Lanka. We have abrogated our responsibilities as an international citizen. We are siding with a leader who condones torture, enforced disappearance and violence." The DLP is in agreement with the Greens in its policies on asylum seekers.

From July 1 2014 in the Australian Senate, out of 76 Senators, 33 will be Liberal National part coalition, 25 ALP, 10 Greens and 8 micro party senators, including the DLP's John Madigan. As ALP and Green senators are likely to block a lot of the Abbott government's legislation the coalition will need 6 out of the 8 micro parties' votes. John Madigan will support the repeal of the carbon tax and support the Abbott government's Direct Action policy on climate change. The DLP is opposed to abortion, euthanasia and same sex marriage and John Madigan will support Tony Abbott's policies on the latter two matters. The DLP supports government support of chaplains in government schools. When Greens Senator Richard Di Natale recommended abolishing prayers in parliament John Madigan spoke against it. The DLP opposes privatisation and free trade (it wants instead "fair trade")

Before I finish I want to summarise my talk. Bob Santamaria, at the behest of the Catholic Church , in 1941 set up the Movement, which was succeeded by the NCC, fight which fought the Communists in trade unions. The ALP in 1945 set up the Industrial Groups to the Communists in trade unions. Shortly after losing the 1954 Federal election the ALP leader Dr. Evatt unfairly blamed the Groupers, who he said were led by Santamaria, of responsibility for the defeat. Shortly after that, in 1955, in protest some Victorian ALP members quit the ALP and set up a new party, ALP(AC) (i.e. Australian Labor Part (Anti-Communist)), which later became the DLP. A number of other ALP supporters who supported the dismissed Victorian ALP Executive were expelled from the ALP and joined the ALP(AC). The ALP split spread to other states. The DLP gave preferences to the Liberal – Country party coalition and its preferences helped keep the ALP out of power federally till

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1972. The DLP was anti-communist and from 1970 anti-permissive. At its height in Australian elections the DLP received 11% of the vote but today receives only 1% of the vote. At its height in Victorian elections it received 17% of the vote but today receives only 2% of the vote. The DLP membership has always been predominantly Catholic but with some non-Catholics. The NCC, in contrast, is a Catholic organisation. Both the DLP and NCC can be categorised as socially right wing (e.g. opposed to abortion, euthanasia and same sex marriage) and economically left wing, e.g. opposed to privatisation, Workchoices and free trade. They stand up for the underdog, e.g. asylum seekers, West Papuans and Tibetans.

What is the future of the DLP and the NCC? I don't know. They have both been around a long time (the NCC since 1941 and the DLP since 1955) and both organisations contain determined people so I think that it is unlikely that they will go away soon notwithstanding that there have been internal tensions in both groups. The DLP has a good chance of winning seats in both the Australian and State parliaments in future and sometimes holding the balance of power. I think that both organisations have an important role to play in our democracy. Although I do not agree with all their policies I do think they have much to recommend in a lot of their policies. Being nonreligious I think that sometimes the DLP is too pro-religion as is also the case with the ALP and Liberals.

Attendance at my Talk

I was fortunate to have two members of the DLP attend my talk – Michael Murphy, Secretary of the Victorian DLP and Dr. Rachel Carling-Jenkins, who was then office manager for Senator Madigan, later President of the Victorian DLP and later elected to the Victorian Parliament in November 2014. Both contributed lots of interesting information to the discussion that was held after the talk.

Postscript to Talk

There have been two substantial developments in the DLP since I gave my talk and so I have added a postscript to my talk. The first development was the shock resignation of Senator John Madigan from the DLP in September 2014 and the second development was the election of Dr. Rachel Carling-Jenkins as a DLP MP in the Victorian Parliament in November 2014.

Senator Madigan quit the DLP on September 4 2014, despite denying the night before that he had plans to quit the DLP. He said that party officials had been undermining him, particularly singling out Rachel Carling-Jenkins who was a member of his staff, saying that she had run a “campaign of disinformation and disharmony in my office.” Dr. Carling-Jenkins rejected his claims saying that the senator had been struggling in his job and had rebuffed any help. Madigan had been involved in disputes with the party. The party believed that he had moved away from party policies. Madigan had months before his resignation suggested to DLP National President, Paul Funnell, quitting the party. There had been a substantial turnover of Madigan's staff with some pursuing action through Fair

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Work Australia. The DLP were furious at Madigan's resignation and demanded that he resign from Parliament and hand back his seat to the DLP. George Williams, Professor of Law at UNSW, had a discussion about Madigan's and the former PUP Senator Lambie's defections.⁴⁵ Towards the end of the discussion he said: "None of this suggests that Madigan and Lambie should have stayed with their parties. In each case, irreconcilable differences meant that a split was inevitable. However, instead of turning independent, they should have resigned their seats. Madigan and Lambie are only in the Senate because of the efforts and finances of the parties they represented. They have no mandate from voters to sit as independent members. It is their right to leave their parties, and to pursue an independent course. However, if they wish to do so, they should resign and stand as independents at the next election. Unfortunately, taking the honourable course is not commonplace among Senate defectors. Cheryl Kernot resigned her Senate seat in 1997 when she left the Democrats to join Labor. However, her conduct was exceptional, and other defectors have been all too happy to retain their seats, and the perks and power that go with them." There are some in the DLP hopeful of a reconciliation with Madigan.

In the November 2014 Victorian election the DLP contested all 8 regions in the Legislative Council and only 5 out of 88 seats in the LA (Legislative Assembly). The main issues that the DLP campaigned on were: supporting manufacturing and local businesses, expanding palliative care services, funded sports insurance for families, creating and securing local jobs, protecting women and children in society, harm minimisation for problem gamblers and freedom of conscience for medical practitioners. The DLP vote overall in the LC (Legislative Council) was 2.3% (the same as in the 2010 election) and in the LA for the 5 seats contested 1.4%. The best LC regions result was 4.2% in Northern Victoria. The best LA result was 2.3% in Mordialloc. Although the DLP LC vote was the same as in the last election the DLP performed better in the sense that it won 1 seat in 2014 and none in 2010; perhaps it did better because of better preference deals.

Dr. Rachel Carling-Jenkins won the Upper House seat of Western Metropolitan for the DLP in 2014 with 2.6% of the vote. Carling-Jenkins is the first female DLP MP and the first DLP MP with a Ph.D. Her Ph. D. was in Social Policy⁴⁶; her Doctorate was entitled: "Footprints, Wheel Tracks and Stirrings of a Movement: Positioning People with Disability and the Disability Rights Movement in Australia". Carling-Jenkins published a book entitled "Disability and Social Movements: Learning from Australian Experiences" in November 2014. Unlike most former DLP MPs Carling-Jenkins is not a Catholic.

Rachel Carling-Jenkins, in her inaugural speech⁴⁷, said that she will be fighting for people with disability. She spoke out against abortion. She said "I believe in freedoms: freedom from exploitation, freedom to practise religion or to choose not to practise religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom to act according to our beliefs and conscience." She spoke out against pornography and the sex industry and spoke in favour of further restricting them. She spoke out against euthanasia. She spoke in favour of cooperatives, a standard DLP policy. She attacked privatisation saying that "Over the last few decades successive governments have sought to alleviate their economic woes by

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taking short-term, quick-fix approaches, with public utilities and assets being sold off for temporary gains. The usual arguments for selling off an asset owned by the Victorian people are that efficiency will improve, costs will be lowered and the economy will generally benefit. These arguments fall flat in the face of lowering service standards, higher prices and increasing job losses. Money that once flowed from Victorian pockets through these publicly owned utilities into state revenue and was then used to grow and prosper our state, contributing to the construction and maintenance of schools, hospitals, roads and so on, now flows out of Victoria, often out of Australia and into the pockets of overseas shareholders and the grateful treasuries of overseas economies.”

In the Upper House the Labor government holds 14 seats, the Liberal/Nationals 16 seats, the Greens 5 seats and the micro-parties 5 (Shooters and Fishers 2, Sex Party 1, DLP 1 and Vote 1 Local Jobs 1). If the Liberal/Nationals block legislation the Labor government will need the 5 Green votes plus at least 2 micro party votes and hence Carling-Jenkins' vote could be crucial.

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Photographs



Bob Santamaria, leader of The Movement and later the NCC till his death in 1998.



Frank McManus, DLP Senator 1956-1962, 1965-1974



Vince Gair, DLP Senator 1964-1974

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Jack Little, DLP Senator 1967-1974

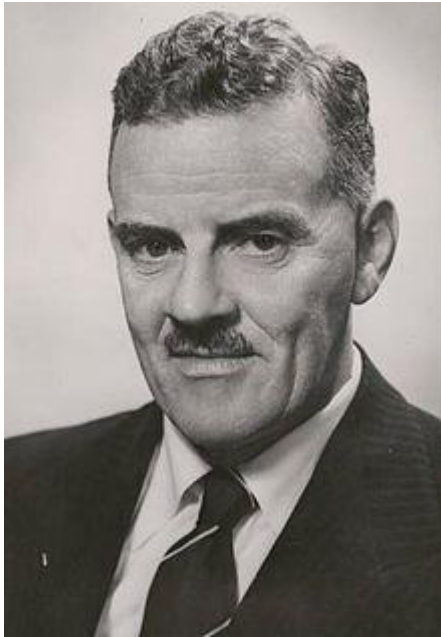


Jack Kane, DLP Senator 1970-1974



George Cole, DLP Senator 1958-1964

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Condon Byrne, QLP Senator 1957-1959, DLP Senator 1968-1974



John Madigan, DLP Senator 2011-2014



Peter Kavanagh, Victorian DLP MP, 2006-2010



Dr. Rachel Carling-Jenkins, Victorian DLP MP, elected for 2014-2018.



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