

Debating a Tiger Cub: The Anti-Socialist Campaign



'This animal is not so fierce as he looks: the Socialist Tiger' portrayed in the *Bulletin*, Dixson Library, State Library of New South Wales.

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Abstract

The anti-socialist campaign was a key moment in Australian history that established the ideological discourse of Australian politics. This thesis will provide the first stand-alone narrative and analytical account of the campaign. It will examine the role the campaign played in the evolution of Australian politics from policy based groupings to permanent ideological parties. It will also analyse the ideological legacy of the campaign for Australian liberalism, as well as looking at the way that the campaign contributed to the development of an Australian national media.

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Introduction

When Australia held its first federal election in 1901, three parties emerged to become the main antagonists of the new parliament. These parties were the Protectionist Party, the Free-Trade Party and the smaller but substantial Labor Party. Apart from Labor, the parties of the first parliament were not formed around a universal ideology, but around an attitude towards a single issue. This issue was the tariff, which was commonly referred to as the fiscal issue. The Protectionists wanted a high tariff to protect Australian industries from competition, while the Free-Traders wanted a low tariff to encourage trade and to keep the price of goods low. The first parliament failed to resolve the fiscal issue, and the 1903 election saw the three parties returned with the Labor Party increasing its share of the votes so that it became roughly equal in representation to the two fiscal parties. With the rise of the Labor vote and moves by some sections of the Labor Party to support the ‘nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange’, some liberals began arguing that the fiscal issue should be put aside so that the perceived ‘socialist threat’ could be dealt with.¹ While it was the Protectionist leader Alfred Deakin who first adopted a ‘fiscal truce’ for the duration of the 1903-6 parliament, it was the Free-Trade leader George Reid who embraced the concept of anti-socialism, believing that the defence of ‘liberal’ freedoms and the ‘genius’ of private enterprise superseded all other political issues.² In late 1904 Reid became Prime Minister with the support of Deakin, and when parliament adjourned Reid launched what the newspapers

¹ Queensland Labor Party objective quoted in Ross McMullin, *The Light On The Hill: The Australian Labor Party 1891-1991* (Melbourne: Oxford university Press, 1991) p55.

² ‘Mr Reid in Sydney’, *Sydney Morning Herald* Monday 1 May 1905 p5.

would dub the 'anti-socialist campaign'; a campaign that would create the ideological boundaries of Australian politics.

The anti-socialist campaign was a watershed moment in Australian political history. Between late 1904 and 1906 George Reid attempted to change the discourse of Australian politics by making socialism the central political issue. Reid's new liberal-socialist dichotomy was meant to replace the tariff based parties which had dominated the federal parliament since its creation. Reid, supported by his lieutenant Joseph Cook, embarked on extensive tours throughout Australia in order to prompt a pervasive national discussion on the merits of socialism. In doing so Reid was trying to emulate the success of Joseph Carruthers who had established a discourse on socialism within New South Wales which had helped him to win the 1904 election. Reid felt that the issue of socialism was more important than the fiscal issue on which his career had been previously based. His campaign was an attempt to make the issue as important to the electorate as it was to him. The campaign would raise a number of questions, forcing Australians to clarify their attitude towards the role of the state. After the fall of the Reid government in July 1905, the division between Reid and Deakin would also force Australian's who considered themselves 'liberals' to ponder what they meant by liberalism. The importance of the campaign lies in the answers to these ideological questions. The campaign changed the discourse of Australian politics and paved the way for the creation of the two party system based on a Liberal-Labor divide. The sheer scale of the campaign would also begin the slow process of nationalising the political discourse of the separate states.

Before the campaign can be analysed a clarification of the terms 'liberal' and 'socialist' needs to be made. The meanings of these terms were and are controversial. Free Trader Bruce Smith and Protectionist Isaac Isaacs both considered themselves 'liberals' yet both had very different 'liberal' beliefs. During the course of the anti-socialist campaign Bruce Smith who felt that 'liberalism' meant a minimum of state involvement would fuel a debate on what it

meant to be 'liberal'. The fact that this debate raged concurrently with the anti-socialist campaign means that it is inappropriate to give a hard and fast definition to the label 'liberal' used in this thesis. As the thesis focuses extensively on Reid's discourse it will use his categorisation of who was a 'liberal', which included the Protectionists he opposed. The label 'conservative' is not used because none of the protagonists would have used it to define themselves. Most of the anti-socialists who felt they were opposing union privileges in the same way they had opposed aristocratic privileges, would have been appalled by the label 'conservative'.³ The term 'socialist' also has a number of definitions based on competing attitudes towards the role of the state. In this thesis the term 'socialist' will be used to describe those whom the anti-socialists felt were 'socialist'. Again this is because the thesis is concerned with Reid's discourse and hence it will use the labels created by his discourse. Reid defined 'socialism' as the 'nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange'.⁴ He differentiated between 'liberalism' and 'socialism' not by the creation of government enterprise itself but by the creation of 'government enterprises' which were 'intended to destroy public enterprise'.⁵

Despite the historical importance of the anti-socialist campaign it has been given little scholarly attention. Though many historians mention the campaign in passing, no one has yet researched and written about the campaign in its own right. Of what has been written, W.G. McMinn's account of George Reid's role in the campaign in his biography of Reid offers the most in depth analysis. Because his interest is biographical, McMinn's focus is on the campaign as a moment in Reid's career, not in the significance of the campaign itself. McMinn's account focuses on Reid's personal relationships neglecting the logistical side of the campaign. Reid's extensive tours are scarcely dealt with and Joseph Cook's central role in

³ George Reid in Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. 49 pp1145-57. & 'Mr Reid in Sydney', SMH Tuesday 14 March 1905 pp5-6.

⁴ 'Final Speech at Maitland', SMH Friday 26 May 1905 p7.

⁵ 'Prime Minister at Perth', SMH Wednesday 19 April 1905 p7.

facilitating the campaign is ignored. While McMinn uses only the most obvious sources in analysing the campaign, picking apart the Reid-Holman debates and the liberal manifesto, this thesis will utilise the hundreds of other speeches given by Reid as part of the campaign.

Other historians who have briefly dealt with the anti-socialist campaign include Gregory Melleuish. In his *A Short History of Australian Liberalism*, Melleuish presents an extremely subjective neoliberal view of Reid and the campaign which fails to take into account the subtleties of Reid's views. Peter Loveday has done some research into the organisation of the parties leading into the 1906 election. His emphasis on the weakness of the Protectionists leads him to exaggerate the strength of anti-socialist organisations. We have no reliable data for these organisations and their strength can only be reliably gauged through election results. Labor party histories are too dismissive of George Reid's 'cynical campaign against the evils of socialism' to offer any useful analysis of it.⁶ Ross McMullin's view is typical of most Labor historians when he dismisses the campaign as being another example of the 'hallowed tradition of conservative scare campaigns'.⁷

Records for the anti-socialist campaign are sadly scarce. We do not have Reid's papers for this period and we are forced to rely on the collections of other prominent protagonists, such as Alfred Deakin and Joseph Carruthers, to find what remains of Reid's correspondence during the campaign. Because we lack Reid's papers his motivations during the anti-socialist campaign can only be hypothesised. This thesis will try to speculate on Reid's possible motivations only with due caution and any such conclusions will be based on the overall picture created by the evidence. The records of the Anti-Socialist Leagues have also not survived. Owing to these deficiencies the main sources for our understanding of the anti-

⁶ Ross McMullin, *The Light On The Hill* p56. Also Al Grassby & Silvia Ordonez *The Man Time Forgot: The Life and Times of John Christian Watson, Australia's first Labor Prime Minister* (Annandale: Pluto Press Australia Ltd. 1999) p94. H.V. Evatt, *Australian Labour Leader: The story of W. A. Holman and the labour movement* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1954) pp126-30. Etc.

⁷ Ross McMullin, *The Light On The Hill* p56.

socialist campaign are newspapers. The *Sydney Morning Herald* in particular supported Reid's campaign and reported almost all of his speeches verbatim. Newspapers also record the various attempts to create anti-socialist organisations, with local meetings and even their resolutions frequently being published. As well as recording speeches and meetings, newspapers also played an active role in the campaign which will be analysed by examining editorial bias. The commonwealth parliamentary debates are also important in not only recording Reid's speeches but those of Joseph Cook and Bruce Smith as well. The nature of the sources available means that only the public side of the campaign may be justly analysed. This is not a major problem as it was in public that the anti-socialist campaign fought its ideological battle to change the discourse of Australian politics.

This thesis aims at providing a narrative and analytical account of the anti-socialist campaign in order to fill a major gap in early federal historiography. It is divided into four chapters. The first chapter covers the historical and political context as well as the impetus for the campaign. The second chapter looks at the section of the anti-socialist campaign which took place while Reid was Prime Minister as well as the collapse of the fiscal alliance. The third chapter surveys the main campaign culminating with the 1906 election. The fourth chapter analyses the ambiguous results of the 1906 election and attempts to gauge the legacy of the campaign for liberals and Australian politics in general. Each chapter will follow the actions of Reid and his supporters Joseph Cook and Bruce Smith, analysing their attempts to establish a pervasive anti-socialist discourse throughout Australia.

Chapter One

‘The Three Elevens’, Context and Causation

The anti-socialist campaign was created and shaped by its historical and political context. Federal political instability fuelled both a mistrust of the Labor Party and a desire to establish a more stable two-party system of government. This political instability was partly a consequence of a historical context where the young nation of Australia was still struggling to unite the independent political discourses of the States. The solution found by Joseph Carruthers to end political instability in his own state of New South Wales would inspire Reid’s campaign to establish a new dichotomous political discourse nationally. Finally changes to the Labor party platform would make socialism appear to many liberals as an immediate threat, sparking their desire to campaign against it.

The complexities of the federal political landscape would shape anti-socialism and force it to confront more than just its ideological enemies. As previously mentioned, the 1903 election had seen the growth of the Labor party to the point where there were roughly three equal parties in the House of Representatives. It was this political situation which prompted Alfred Deakin to deliver his famous ‘three elevens’ speech where he argued that politics like cricket required two teams to battle it out.⁸ The 1903-6 parliament would be one of the most tumultuous in Australia’s history and the anti-socialist campaign was in part a response to the unstable nature of the federal political landscape. This parliament saw the downfall of three successive governments. The Conciliation and Arbitration bill alone defeated the Deakin and Watson administrations. In this unstable political climate it was clear that a majority

⁸ J.A. La Nauze, *Alfred Deakin: A Biography* (Melbourne: Angus & Robertson Publishers, 1979) p322.

government was desirable to ensure the passage of important legislation, and the anti-socialist campaign was partly an attempt to create a majority government by using a liberal ideology to unite the two fiscal parties.

When the Watson Labor government was defeated in late 1904, a Reid government was created by an alliance between the Free-Trade Party and the Protectionist Party. An anti-socialist opposition to amendments to the Conciliation and Arbitration bill moved by Watson brought the two previously divided fiscal parties together. The leaders of the two parties justified their alliance by citing their shared liberal beliefs and the need for stable government.⁹ The new alliance was built on the adoption of a fiscal truce. This fiscal truce meant that, in theory at least, liberals would postpone a debate on tariff issues until after the perceived socialist threat was defeated. The fiscal truce was an attempt to end political instability by bringing the two fiscal parties together. It was the postponement of the tariff debate caused by the fiscal truce which allowed anti-socialism to become a central political issue, paving the way for George Reid's anti-socialist campaign. Thus the political instability of the 1903-6 parliament helped to facilitate the anti-socialist campaign.

Political instability was only one of many historical circumstances the anti-socialist campaign inherited from federation. When the campaign began the 'imagined community' of Australia had not yet established a national political discourse. There had only been two federal elections held, with regional divides enduring and even being strengthened by a national fiscal debate. The former colonies were very fragmented, each with their own distinct political discourse and influential newspapers. In such circumstances Reid could only create a national discourse on socialism by fuelling a debate in each individual state. This was the impetus for Reid's unprecedented national tour. He could not rely on the regionally divided and politically motivated newspapers to report his speeches from Sydney or Melbourne. Reid

⁹ 'Speech by the Prime Minister', SMH Tuesday 30 August 1904 p7.

would have to go to each state and as many towns as possible within each state, using his rhetorical skill to convince the electorate of what he felt were the evils of socialism. In this way he would prompt regional papers to report his speeches and by speaking directly to the people he would bypass any political newspaper wishing to silence his message.

The circumstances Reid would have to deal with in each state were very different. In New South Wales Carruthers had already put anti-socialism on the political map. Reid's home state contained many sitting members who supported his cause as well as a major newspaper, the *Sydney Morning Herald* which was willing to give his campaign extensive coverage. It was not all rosy in New South Wales however. Many free-trade supporters were angered by the burying of the fiscal hatchet and Reid would face a right wing critique of his more amiable policies. The New South Wales liberal movement was also associated with Orangemen and prohibitionists and there thus threatened an outbreak of sectarianism which would taint the campaign and alienate the Catholic voters that Reid felt he could win.¹⁰

Victoria was the most difficult state for Reid. Victorians were predominately protectionists, felt affection for Alfred Deakin and were disinclined to support a New South Welshman. The Kyabram movement and the Australian Women's National League had shown that there was some support for small government anti-socialism within the state.¹¹ It is likely that the existence of these Victorian anti-socialist groups helped convince Reid that anti-socialism had national appeal, spurring him to embark on his campaign. Despite these important organisations, Reid would have difficulty rallying significant support in Victoria as the main liberal newspaper, the *Age*, was vehemently opposed to Reid and his campaign. David Syme's influential newspaper purposefully labelled Reid 'conservative' and dismissed

¹⁰ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p204.

¹¹ D.W. Rawson "Victoria" in *The emergence of the Australian party system* ed. P. Loveday, A.W. Martin, & R.S. Parker (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1977) pp90-91.

anti-socialism.¹² This was mainly because Syme saw anti-socialism as an obstacle to his protectionist dream. The anti-socialist campaign did receive some favourable coverage in the *Argus*. This may have hurt the campaign's image however, since the *Argus* was known as a 'conservative' newspaper so its support helped reinforce Syme's argument that anti-socialism was not a liberal movement. The protectionist media's determined opposition to Reid in the second largest state meant that Reid faced an uphill battle in making anti-socialism a truly national discourse.

Queensland would prove much more fruitful ground for the anti-socialist campaign. Queenslanders were less concerned with the fiscal issue than New South Wales or Victoria and as such Reid was able to unite the liberal supporters of the state behind his anti-socialist banner. This united liberal support meant that he would be given favourable coverage in the State's liberal newspapers; something that Reid was desperately lacking in Victoria. The *Brisbane Courier* in particular supported the anti-socialist campaign, making socialism out to be the only issue of the election.¹³

Western Australia was simply not interested in establishing a national discourse on anything. Faced with a united Labor party, the liberal section of Western Australian society was more concerned with the region's disagreements with the federal government than combating socialism.¹⁴ Reid wisely spent little time in Western Australia where his discourse failed to materialise. In South Australia a local four party system complicated the simple liberal-socialist divide Reid was trying to create.¹⁵ This was exacerbated by the fact that one

¹² Sean Scalmen, "For the Love of a Fight: Free Traders and the Puzzle of the Fusion" in Paul Strangio and Nick Dyrenfurth (eds), *Confusion: The Making of the Australian Two-Party System*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2009) p46.

¹³ R. B. Joyce, "Queensland" in *The emergence of the Australian party system* ed. P. Loveday, A.W. Martin, & R.S. Parker (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1977) p147.

¹⁴ J. Murdoch, "The Western Australian Party in the 1906 Federal Elections: A comment on early federal feeling in the West" *Australian Journal of Politics and History* Vol32. Issue 2. p247.

¹⁵ D. Jaensch "South Australia" in *The emergence of the Australian party system* ed. P. Loveday, A.W. Martin, & R.S. Parker (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1977) p282.

of the 'liberal' parties was governing the state in a coalition with Labor. Finally in Tasmania Reid's supporters were associated with 'conservatism', though the *Hobart Mercury* did give his campaign reasonable coverage.¹⁶

It was the political discourse of New South Wales which would be most important in influencing the campaign. George Reid, Joseph Cook and Bruce Smith were all products of a New South Wales liberal discourse on socialism which helped inspire their anti-socialist beliefs. Joseph Carruthers' 1904 New South Wales election had expanded this discourse so that it became a pervasive part of the political culture of Australia's largest state. Reid would try to export this New South Wales' discourse nationally through his anti-socialist campaign. According to the formulator of his memoirs Joseph Carruthers 'converted his free-traders into a Liberal party, defined it as the main anti-socialist party and relegated his protectionist opponents to oblivion unless they joined him'.¹⁷ This would be exactly what Reid would try to do during his anti-socialist campaign, using the Carruthers' example as a blueprint.

Almost every salient feature of Reid's campaign was borrowed from the exploits of his old friend. Joseph Carruthers established attitudes towards socialism as the prevailing political divide in New South Wales after Federation had buried the fiscal issue within state politics.¹⁸ Reid would follow Carruthers example. He would try to arbitrarily bury the fiscal issue in federal politics through a 'fiscal truce', thereby allowing socialism to become the centre of political debate.¹⁹ Reid would at first try to unite the two fiscal parties as an anti-socialist party and when that failed he tried to make his protectionist opponents irrelevant by keeping the debate focused on socialism. Reid no doubt paid close attention to the results of

¹⁶ Patrick Weller "Tasmania" in *The emergence of the Australian party system* ed. P. Loveday, A.W. Martin, & R.S. Parker (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1977) p367.

¹⁷ Michael Hogan, "Introduction" in *Joseph Carruthers: A Lifetime in Conservative Politics* (Sydney: UNSW Press Ltd. 2005) p8.

¹⁸ Michael Hogan "So manifestly unreal and irrelevant: Confusion in New South Wales?" in Paul Strangio and Nick Dyrenfurth (eds), *Confusion: The Making of the Australian Two-Party System*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2009) pp113-20.

¹⁹ 'Liberal Campaign', SMH Tuesday 19 December 1905 p7.

the 1904 election where the Progressive party were defeated to such an extent that many of them were forced to join Carruthers' Liberals. After being abandoned by Deakin in July 1905, Reid would have wanted to use the anti-socialist cause to replicate the New South Wales results.²⁰ That is not to say that the anti-socialist campaign was opportunistic. Reid's anti-socialist campaign would become far more ideological than Carruthers' had been.²¹ The level of ideological rhetoric delivered by Reid risked alienating voters and the fact that he was willing to take such risks suggests that his campaign was motivated by ideological conviction, not political opportunism.

It was not simply the anti-socialist discourse which Reid would borrow from Carruthers. His Anti-Socialist Leagues and Australian Democratic Union were modelled on the success of Carruthers' Liberal and Reform Association. A newspaper interview with Reid reported soon after the 1904 state election shows he was keenly interested in emulating the electoral success of this organisation at a federal level.²² In the course of the 1904 campaign Carruthers had embarked on an extensive tour of regional New South Wales.²³ The country was the home of the Progressive party's main support base which Carruthers knew he had to win over to govern in his own right²⁴. Reid's campaign tour at a federal level would have to be even more extensive, particularly as a hostile media refused to convey his message in several states, particularly Victoria.

Reid and Carruthers' close friendship was undeniable. Carruthers had been a minister in Reid's New South Wales government and claimed to be the 'closest friend' of his old

²⁰ 'Liberal Campaign', SMH Tuesday 19 December 1905 p7.

²¹ For examples of the ideological nature of Reid's rhetoric see 'Prime Minister at Adelaide', SMH Thursday 27 April 1905 p7. 'Mr Reid at Newtown', SMH Saturday 3 June 1905 p12. 'Mr Reid's Final Appeal', SMH Wednesday 12 December 1906 p9. For Carruthers' less ideological campaigning see 'Liberalism and Reform', SMH Friday 5 February 1904 pp5-6. 'Leader of the opposition at Penrith', SMH Saturday 30 April 1904 p10.

²² 'Mr G.H. Reid's Views', SMH Tuesday 9 August 1904 p7.

²³ 'Mr Carruthers on Tour', SMH Tuesday 17 May 1904 p5. & 'The Cowra Speech', SMH Friday 4 March 1904 p8.

²⁴ Michael Hogan "So manifestly unreal and irrelevant: Confusion in New South Wales?" p113.

chief.²⁵ Reid made public appearances in support of Carruthers in 1904 and he returned the favour in 1906.²⁶ In light of this close friendship and the similarities between the tactics pursued in the two campaigns it is reasonable to assume that the anti-socialist campaign was significantly inspired by the 1904 New South Wales election.

While Carruthers actions were significant in shaping Reid's campaign tactics, it was the actions of the Labor Party that were most significant in triggering the campaign. Bruce Smith admitted that the campaign was a 'reaction' to the Labor Party, publicly declaring his desire for 'reactive' policies to confront a socialist threat.²⁷ As far as the anti-socialists were concerned they were not 'reactionaries' trying to defend conservative privileges but 'reactionaries' who were reacting to a threat to the free and liberal society that they had helped create.²⁸ George Reid, like many other liberals, had initially been on good terms with the Labor party. His successful premiership of New South Wales which lasted from 1894 to 1899 was built on Labor support. His experience as Premier however had hardened his attitude towards the caucus. Early in his reign Labor forced him to drop his local government bill, which they supported in principle, because they could not get everything they wanted out of the bill.²⁹ He had also lost his premiership when the Labor party voted for a censure motion, which was in his eyes an act of betrayal.³⁰

W.G. McMinn has argued that the origins of the anti-socialist campaign lay in Reid's dealings with Labor as Premier.³¹ Such sentiment is misguided. While his time as Premier certainly worsened Reid's attitude towards Labor, it was their changing policy priorities

²⁵ Joseph Carruthers, *Joseph Carruthers: A Lifetime in Conservative Politics* (Sydney: UNSW Press Ltd. 2005) p119.

²⁶ 'Reception of Delegates', SMH Friday 8 April 1904 p4. & 'Mr Reid in Lang', SMH Tuesday 4 December 1906 p7.

²⁷ 'Mr Bruce Smith and the Government Policy', SMH Friday 7 April 1905 p7.

²⁸ 'Liberal Manifesto', SMH Wednesday 24 October 1906 pp9-10.

²⁹ George Reid, *My Reminiscences* (London: Cassell & Co. Ltd. 1917) pp113-4.

³⁰ NSW Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 100 p1152.

³¹ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p122.

which truly sparked his hatred. Reid had allied with Labor when he felt they were both fighting aristocratic privileges. It was when Labor began to fight for privileges to be given to unions that Reid developed an ideological opposition to his former allies.³² Tracing the origins of anti-socialism back to Reid's premiership also exaggerates Reid's role in starting the campaign. While Reid was the figurehead of anti-socialism he was acting as the standard bearer of a larger section of society who were increasingly worried about Labor's objectives and methods. Joseph Carruthers had unfurled the anti-socialist banner before Reid and while he too would have been scarred by the events of 1899 his anti-socialism was more ideological than personal. Joseph Cook's mistrust of socialism grew out his rejection of the Labor party pledge. His refusal to sign the pledge had forced him to leave Labor and join the liberal side of politics.³³ Bruce Smith, a liberal ideologue, was concerned far more about his vision of an ideal society than the defeat of the Reid government. He published *Liberty and Liberalism* in 1887, a clear sign that his anti-socialism predated even the rise of the Labor party.

While attitudes towards the caucus and Labor's lack of pragmatism played their role in sparking the campaign it was the adoption of the 'socialist objective' which really fuelled anti-socialism. Indeed it could be argued that the main difference between Reid and Deakin was their attitude towards the objective. Both men shared a liberal rejection of Labor's pledge and caucus.³⁴ Deakin however trusted Labor leader Chris Watson and did not view attempts by some Labor members to adopt a programme of extensive nationalisation with alarm.³⁵ The anti-socialist panic only truly began when the Queensland Labor party's 1905 conference adopted the objective of nationalising 'the means of production, distribution and exchange'.³⁶

³² 'Mr Reid in Sydney', SMH Tuesday 14 March 1905 pp5-6.

³³ John Rickard, "Sir Joseph Cook" in Michelle Grattan, *Australian Prime Ministers* (Sydney: New Holland Publishers, 2000) p93.

³⁴ J.A. La Nauze, *Alfred Deakin: A Biography* p365.

³⁵ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p234.

³⁶ Objective quoted in Ross McMullin, *The Light On The Hill* p55.

The explicit desire to make Australia socialist expressed by this objective raised the ire of those whose liberal beliefs made them reject the extension of state power. The New South Wales Labor party conference adopted the milder objective of the 'collective ownership of monopolies, and the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the state'.³⁷ In July the interstate party conference adopted the New South Wales objective despite protests from Victoria and Queensland that this did not go far enough.³⁸ This milder objective did not comfort the anti-socialists who felt that it was simply a cover for the Labor party's more extreme goals.³⁹

It was the support of the 'socialist objective' by a large proportion of Labor Party members that acted as the main impetus for the anti-socialist campaign. Reid spent more time denouncing the objective than any other part of the Labor Party's platform. It was the objective which began the ideological war that was to rage in 1905 and 1906. By introducing the prospect of mass nationalisation, the Labor Party had made socialism *an* issue in Australian politics. In response, George Reid would embark on a campaign to make it *the* issue of Australian politics, leaving no room for the fiscal issue which had dominated his political career.

³⁷ Objective quoted in Ross McMullin, *The Light On The Hill* p56.

³⁸ Ross McMullin, *The Light On The Hill* p57.

³⁹ 'Final Speech at Maitland', SMH Friday 26 May 1905 p7.

Chapter Two

‘Raising the Banner’ the 1905 Campaign

The anti-socialist campaign began in earnest when the 1904 parliamentary session ended. The first period of the campaign that would last until the fall of the Reid government in July 1905, consisted of an extensive tour of every state in the country. As Prime Minister Reid felt a desire to tour the country he was now responsible for governing. After the fall of two governments in a single session Reid was also keen to convey his anti-socialist message as the prospect of an early election loomed. In the course of his 1905 tours Reid delivered numerous speeches, keeping to common themes of the dangers of socialism and the illiberal control exercised by Labor’s caucus whilst tailoring aspects of his speeches to suit his audience. The tours would create a discourse on socialism throughout the country but relied on newspaper coverage to keep the anti-socialist message alive after Reid had moved on.

George Reid’s touring of Australia began in Tasmania in February 1905. The visit was prompted by the Hobart Premier’s conference and as such anti-socialism was not Reid’s main concern during the visit. While in Tasmania, Reid received criticism in the *Mercury* for his lack of policy direction. The paper presented a right wing critique of Reid’s anti-socialism which called for the repeal of Labor legislation and for Reid to exercise greater control over his parliamentary colleagues.⁴⁰ Because of the Premier’s conference Reid delivered only one major anti-socialist speech in Tasmania. The speech was performed in front of the Women’s branch of the Tasmanian National Association. Unlike other states where the anti-socialists would have to form new organisations, in Tasmania Reid was able to garner the support of the

⁴⁰ ‘Where is Mr Reid?’, *Mercury*(Hobart) Friday 17 February 1905 p4.

pre-existing Tasmanian National Association. The speech attacked socialism and the Labor party as threats to ‘the industrial fabric upon which he believed true national progress and prosperity depended’.⁴¹ Reid touched on the need for national political parties, which would not promote regional or sectional interests.⁴² Such a statement took a swipe at Labor’s class basis and also showed Reid’s desire to promote a national political discourse.

Reid also argued that if the liberal vote was united he was confident of victory in the next election.⁴³ The belief that a united liberal vote would win the next election was a common theme in his speeches. Since the Labor party had received only 29.7% of the lower house vote in the 1903 election compared to the Free-Traders and Protectionists who combined had polled 64.37%, it is reasonable to assume Reid believed these public assertions.⁴⁴ This was important as such a belief would shape Reid’s tactics during the campaign. Reid’s campaign speeches show that he built his campaign on convincing liberals that a socialist threat was more important than the fiscal issue.⁴⁵ As such the success of his campaign was contingent upon making a discourse on socialism pervasive, thereby making the next election effectively a referendum on socialism where all other political issues would be irrelevant.

After his visit to Tasmania Reid returned to Sydney where he would deliver his first speech as Prime Minister in his home state. The speech emphasised the unity between himself and Alfred Deakin and encouraged people to join him as he raised an anti-socialist ‘banner’.⁴⁶ Tailoring his message to suit his Sydney audience Reid was keen to associate his new campaign with his record as Premier of New South Wales. He argued that ‘just as he stood up,

⁴¹ ‘The Prime Minister at the Town Hall’, *Mercury*(Hobart) Friday 17 February 1905 p6.

⁴² ‘The Prime Minister at the Town Hall’, *Mercury*(Hobart) Friday 17 February 1905 p6.

⁴³ ‘The Prime Minister at the Town Hall’, *Mercury*(Hobart) Friday 17 February 1905 p6.

⁴⁴ Colin Hughes & B.D. Graham, *Voting for the Australian House of Representatives 1901-1964* (Canberra: Australian National University Press 1968) pp10-23.

⁴⁵ E.g. ‘The Fiscal Truce’, *Brisbane Courier* Monday 1 May 1905 p5. ‘Mr Reid at Geelong’, *SMH* Friday 18 May 1905 p7.

⁴⁶ ‘Mr Reid in Sydney’, *SMH* Tuesday 14 March 1905 pp5-6.

and fought the financiers, squatters, and capitalists of New South Wales to a finish, in order to establish a fair system of taxation, so now, in the name of democracy and in the principle of treating every man upon broad principles of common fairness and equality, and in the same old principle of political liberty, he had now to fight the trades unions of Australia'.⁴⁷

Attempts by the Labor party to get trade union privileges inserted into several pieces of legislation prompted Reid's argument that he had to fight trade unions in the name of liberty and equality. In his speech Reid was clearly trying to justify to left leaning liberals that he had not changed his beliefs since he joined federal politics. He was also trying to disassociate himself from a 'conservative' label which his opponents frequently tried to give him. It is interesting that Reid's first speech as Prime Minister in Sydney talks more about liberalism than socialism. Confident that his audience already rejected socialism Reid was trying to highlight his liberal credentials in order to win over the united liberal vote which was the focus of his discourse.

Reid did not spend long at home in Sydney before he embarked on a tour of Western Australia and South Australia in April. The relentless nature of Reid's touring in a time when travelling around the continent was still relatively slow shows the importance Reid placed on public performances to win votes and prompt discussion. Reid was the first Prime Minister to visit Western Australia in an official capacity.⁴⁸ Reid would have to work hard to win over a state that was perturbed by its exclusion from Reid's cabinet.⁴⁹ Australia at the time of the anti-socialist campaign was regionally divided, as the independent political discourses of the states continued to endure the recent federation. Then as now no state was more concerned with its own regional issues than Western Australia, which paid little attention to what was

⁴⁷ 'Mr Reid in Sydney', SMH Tuesday 14 March 1905 pp5-6.

⁴⁸ 'West Australian', *West Australian* Monday 10 April 1905 p4.

⁴⁹ 'West Australian', *West Australian* Monday 10 April 1905 p4.

happening on the East coast.⁵⁰ Reid had to acquiesce to the West's regional interests and as such his speeches in Perth would focus on the trans-Australian railway more than socialism.⁵¹ Reid tried to win over Western Australian voters by showcasing his support for the railway. While Reid clearly needed to address the railway issue as it was of central importance to Western Australians it is arguable that he did not do enough in his nine day visit to prompt a discourse on socialism. Reid did publicly attack socialism for suppressing 'individual enterprise and individual effort' but overall his visit to Western Australia broke with his tactic of making socialism the central political issue throughout Australia. This problem would be exacerbated by newspapers like the *West Australian* which did not give the anti-socialist campaign much coverage once Reid had headed back East. Western Australian political discourse remained fixed on regional issues like the trans-Australian railway. This led to the founding of the Western Australia Party which drew liberal interest away from the anti-socialist campaign.⁵²

When Reid arrived in South Australia he renewed his usual emphasis on the perceived socialist threat. A Victorian influence was strong in South Australia, with the *Advertiser* reporting extensively on meetings of the Protectionist's Association of Victoria.⁵³ This existing protectionist discourse meant that Reid's rhetorical efforts would be directed at grabbing headlines and making a socialist threat seem more urgent than tariff reform. Reid delivered one major speech in Adelaide where he tried to portray his positive vision for Australia, describing the country's four great needs as immigration, development of primary industry, keeping people in the country and the restoration of confidence.⁵⁴ Reid attacked

⁵⁰ P. Loveday "The Federal Parties" in *The emergence of the Australian party system* ed. P. Loveday, A.W. Martin, & R.S. Parker (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1977) p404.

⁵¹ 'Speech by the Prime minister', *West Australian* Tuesday 11 April 1905 p8. & 'Prime Minister at Queen's Hall', *West Australian* Wednesday 19 April 1905 p7.

⁵² J. Murdoch, "The Western Australian Party in the 1906 Federal Elections: A comment on early federal feeling in the West" *Australian Journal of Politics and History* Volume 32. Issue 2. p248.

⁵³ 'The Tariff Commission', *Advertiser*(Adelaide) Monday 10 April p5.

⁵⁴ 'Prime Minister at Adelaide', *SMH* Thursday 27 April 1905 p7.

socialism for driving away investment and therefore tried to show that the election of an anti-socialist government would restore confidence and create economic prosperity. Reid also attacked the Labor party for forcing non-union members to pay higher membership fees. He argued that this was undemocratic as the unemployed who could not join a union were forced to pay more than those with a steady income.⁵⁵ Unfortunately for Reid the *Advertiser* printed an editorial interpretation of his speech rather than the speech itself which was printed in full in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The *Advertiser* argued that South Australian socialists were not as extreme as those in the Eastern states and thereby took the sting out of Reid's rhetoric.⁵⁶

After Reid had completed his Western tour he returned to Sydney to continue to rally the liberal forces of his home state. The first public speech by Reid upon his return was given to a meeting of the Paddington branch of the Women's Liberal League. Women were a major target of the anti-socialist campaign. The large number of speeches Reid gave to women's organisations shows that he saw the newly enfranchised female section of the electorate as an important vehicle for his anti-socialist campaign. This is not surprising as in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland liberal women's organisations had been actively promoting anti-socialism before Reid's campaign had even begun.⁵⁷ As such, Women's organisations had laid the groundwork for the national anti-socialist discourse Reid was trying to create. A large proportion of Reid's speeches were delivered to the Women's Liberal League or its interstate equivalents. Bruce Smith and Joseph Cook also made a number of important speeches to women's organisations. Reid did little to alter the tone or the content of his speeches when he was performing before a female audience. This reflects a lack of

⁵⁵ 'Prime Minister at Adelaide', SMH Thursday 27 April 1905 p7.

⁵⁶ 'Mr Reid in Adelaide', *Advertiser*(Adelaide) Thursday 27 April p4.

⁵⁷ Fitzherbert, Margaret. *Liberal Women: Federation – 1949* (Sydney: The Federation Press, 2004) pp25, 46 & 70.

condescension towards women as well as a desire to use a female audience to promulgate his message.

In his speech to the Paddington branch Reid attacked the Labor party pledge for forcing members to agree to support a candidate before they knew who the candidate was.⁵⁸ Reid also delivered a dire warning as to what he felt would be the results of socialist system of government; ‘it would be a melancholy day for the human race when the incentives to develop human industry and genius were gone’.⁵⁹ The idea that economic incentives drove human industry had been important to classical liberals who viewed the self-interest of individuals as the well-spring of progress.⁶⁰ Reid’s use of this liberal ideal to attack socialism shows the ideological evolution of the classical liberalism he exhibited as Premier to the anti-socialism he was now advocating as Prime Minister. The ideological connection Reid established between liberalism and anti-socialism would be picked up by his successors and become an important aspect of Australian liberalism.

Reid had planned on touring Queensland in May 1905 when an outbreak of dengue fever forced him to delay the trip.⁶¹ Keen to keep propagating the anti-socialist message Reid decided to embark on a tour of regional New South Wales instead. Regional New South Wales had traditionally been a protectionist stronghold though Joseph Carruthers had made significant inroads in the country in 1904.⁶² Though Reid had tried to bury the fiscal issue, its survival in federal politics meant that Reid would have a tougher job winning over country voters than Carruthers had. In order to combat protectionist sympathies Reid would once again try to convince liberal voters that an imminent socialist threat meant that fiscal divides must be put aside. Reid’s tour of the bush lasted eighteen days as he visited such places as

⁵⁸ ‘Speech by Prime Minister’, SMH Tuesday 2 May 1905 p7.

⁵⁹ ‘Speech by Prime Minister’, SMH Tuesday 2 May 1905 p7.

⁶⁰ D.J. Manning, *Liberalism* (London: J.M. Dents & Sons Ltd. 1976) p19.

⁶¹ ‘Queensland Trip Abandoned’, SMH Friday 12 May 1905 p6.

⁶² Michael Hogan “So manifestly unreal and irrelevant: Confusion in New South Wales?” p113.

Casino, Lismore, Tenterfield, Glenn Innes and Maitland. At Tenterfield Reid delivered a deeply ideological speech where he quoted John Stuart Mill and tried to rally people to the defence of liberty.⁶³ In Maitland Reid defended capitalists who had often started from nothing and achieved success through their own enterprise.⁶⁴ He also attacked the New South Wales Labor party for trying to 'hide' the socialist objective in its policy planks as opposed to the Victorians and Queenslanders who were more open about their socialist intentions.⁶⁵

It was during Reid's tour of regional New South Wales that religion was first brought into the anti-socialist controversy. In response to attempts by a number of Labor party members to portray socialism as an extension of Christianity, Reid attacked what he felt were the inherent contradictions of such an association. Reid argued that free will was a gift from God that socialists were trying to constrain through the extension of the state.⁶⁶ He also believed that charity should be given freely and that by trying to use legislation as a means of charity the socialists were robbing charity of its moral value.⁶⁷ When Reid returned to Sydney he continued his critique of 'Christian socialism'. In a speech at Newtown Reid continued to develop his argument that the socialist state would destroy charity; 'the moment man is driven, even to do the best action in the world, by the force of the law, by compulsion, the merit of charity, the merit of religion, the merit of humanity is destroyed'.⁶⁸ He distinguished between socialism which relied on the state and Christianity which 'seeks to work by the love and voluntary sacrifice and good will of the people'.⁶⁹ Reid also tried to associate socialism with atheism, quoting Freidrich Engels 'we have simply done with God' and other statements by prominent socialists.⁷⁰ This religious detour in Reid's anti-socialist discourse shows that he

⁶³ 'Prime Minister in the Country', SMH Wednesday 17 May 1905 p8.

⁶⁴ 'Final Speech at Maitland', SMH Friday 26 May 1905 p7.

⁶⁵ 'Final Speech at Maitland', SMH Friday 26 May 1905 p7.

⁶⁶ 'Something About Christian Socialism', SMH Wednesday 24 May 1905 p7.

⁶⁷ 'Something About Christian Socialism', SMH Wednesday 24 May 1905 p7.

⁶⁸ 'Mr Reid at Newtown', SMH Saturday 3 June 1905 p12.

⁶⁹ 'Mr Reid at Newtown', SMH Saturday 3 June 1905 p12.

⁷⁰ 'Mr Reid at Newtown', SMH Saturday 3 June 1905 p12.

obviously felt compelled to justify the morality of his more laissez-faire vision for the role of the state. He may also have been trying to win over Catholic voters who were becoming ever more wedded to the Labor party. Reid's speeches on 'Christian socialism' show the pervasiveness of Christian discourse during the era of the anti-socialist campaign. Reid's construct of the battle between socialism and liberalism was as much about morality as it was about politics and in 1905 morality and Christianity were inextricably linked in the minds of most Australians.

In early June Reid embarked on a tour of Queensland before the start of the new federal session. The delay caused by the dengue fever outbreak meant that Reid would only be able to spend a short time touring the state. On the tour Reid tried to associate himself with prominent liberal Queenslanders, making appearances with Protectionist Senator James Drake and Premier Arthur Morgan.⁷¹ While in Queensland, Reid received favourable media coverage in the *Brisbane Courier*, which supported the anti-socialist campaign.⁷² During his tour of Queensland Reid had to spend a great deal of time dealing with regional issues, as had been the case in Western Australia. Unlike in Western Australia however Reid was able to successfully re-orientate his deliverances onto anti-socialism once regional issues had been dealt with. Reid made highly publicised visits to sugar refineries and the like to show his empathy with the plight of the Queensland sugar industry.⁷³ Though he was careful to insist that it was not his ministerial responsibility Reid graciously received deputations calling for the extension of the sugar bonus which propped up the Queensland economy.⁷⁴

Having dealt with regional issues like the sugar bonus Reid was able to use his public addresses to direct an attack against socialism. He argued that Plato had been the first socialist

⁷¹ 'Prime minister in Queensland', SMH Tuesday 6 June 1905 p4.

⁷² R. B. Joyce "Queensland" in *The emergence of the Australian party system* ed. P. Loveday, A.W. Martin, & R.S. Parker (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1977) p147.

⁷³ 'The Prime Minister's Tour', *Brisbane Courier* Thursday 8 June 1905 p5.

⁷⁴ 'Address by Mr Reid', *Brisbane Courier* Wednesday 7 June 1905 p5.

and his ideas had been successfully dismissed by Aristotle more than two thousand years ago.⁷⁵ Reid was trying to portray the socialists as the advocates of old and disproven ideas. He also defended himself against criticism that by opposing the Labor Party's policies he was supporting privately owned monopolies, insisting that he was as opposed to monopolies as the Labor party and even linked his free-trade attitudes to a fear of the monopolistic consequences of protection.⁷⁶ This was a rare example of Reid bringing up the fiscal issue in 1905, something he was keen to avoid so that he did not antagonise Deakin and the other Protectionists who kept him in power. The fact that Reid did raise the fiscal question in Queensland suggests that he felt that there was little support for protection in the state, something that he would exploit once his alliance with the Protectionists broke down.

In a speech at Rockhampton , Reid attacked the Conciliation and Arbitration act for disadvantaging non-unionists, even though he had helped pass the bill, because he felt that it went against the principle of equality that underpinned 'British justice'.⁷⁷ Reid's defence of 'British justice' gives an important insight into his liberal beliefs and their relationship to a concept of equality. Reid believed in equality before the law, but not in socialism's equality of outcomes. For Reid equality of outcomes was essentially unfair as it reduced 'the march of the nation to the pace of the slowest and weakest'.⁷⁸ Reid's speeches show that he equated liberalism with opportunity; hence he felt that socialism was inherently illiberal partly because it destroyed opportunity. Reid's argument that socialism was illiberal because it destroyed opportunity was another example of his attempt to connect anti-socialism with liberalism, an ideological connection which would become very important for Australian liberalism.

⁷⁵ 'Address by Mr Reid', *Brisbane Courier* Wednesday 7 June 1905 p5.

⁷⁶ 'Address at Rockhampton', *Brisbane Courier* Friday 9 June 1905 p5.

⁷⁷ 'The Prime Minister's Tour', *Brisbane Courier* Thursday 8 June 1905 p5.

⁷⁸ 'Prime Minister at Adelaide', *SMH* Thursday 27 April 1905 p7.

The ideological attacks against socialism Reid made in Queensland were similar to those made in other states, but unlike in other states Reid was supported by a prominent newspaper. This meant that Reid's rhetoric would be printed without editing, allowing his message to reach beyond his immediate audience. The support of the *Brisbane Courier* also meant that an anti-socialist discourse would be perpetuated in Queensland long after Reid had left. Whether the success of anti-socialism in Queensland was a result of the influence of the *Brisbane Courier* or whether the anti-socialist sentiment expressed in the *Brisbane Courier* was a product of the pre-existing political climate of Queensland is difficult to determine. What is certain is that since newspapers were the only media outlets in the era of the anti-socialist campaign, there existed a strong correlation between newspaper support and electoral success in each state.⁷⁹

After his visit to Queensland, Reid returned to Sydney to attend to some organisational duties before leaving for parliament in Melbourne. While in Sydney a public stoush broke out between Reid and Cardinal Moran. Moran, one of the leading Catholic figures in Australia, had been telling his followers that a Papal encyclical against socialism did not apply to Australian socialism as it was less revolutionary than its European counterpart. Reid used the newspapers to deliver a reply in which he argued that the Labor Party leader Chris Watson did not distinguish between Australian and European socialism and therefore the Pope's encyclical should apply.⁸⁰ Reid quoted extensively from Pope Leo XIII, who had issued the encyclical against socialism.⁸¹ It is easy to see why Reid felt compelled to weigh in on the debate regarding the encyclical. Had it not been for Moran's politically motivated interpretation the Pope's encyclical should have assisted the anti-socialist campaign win

⁷⁹ Conclusion reached by comparing the editorial tone of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Age*, *Brisbane Courier* etc. with election results in Colin Hughes & B.D. Graham, *Voting for the Australian House of Representatives 1901-1964* (Canberra: Australian National University Press 1968) pp24-33.

⁸⁰ 'Reply by Mr Reid', SMH Friday 16 June 1905 p5.

⁸¹ 'Reply by Mr Reid', SMH Friday 16 June 1905 p5.

Catholic supporters. Despite this, Reid's public contribution galvanised Catholics, many of whom may have originally disagreed with Moran's interpretation. Catholics did not take kindly to Reid's public contradiction of Australia's most important clergyman. They also did not like being schooled on interpretations of the Pope's message by a protestant whose party was closely associated with Orangemen. Reid's public interjection into the debate around the encyclical helped rather than hindered the growing association between Catholics and the Labor party, particularly in New South Wales. It created an 'us against them' mentality where internal debate within Australian Catholicism on the question of socialism was stifled by a perceived need to unite against external opposition. By alienating Catholics, Reid had effectively limited the number of votes and seats he could hope to win in his home state.

It was while debating the Pope's encyclical that George Reid first used the tiger cub metaphor that would become emblematic of the anti-socialist campaign. Commenting on Chris Watson's defence of Cardinal Moran's position, Reid argued that Australian socialism was like a 'young and small and kittenish' tiger.⁸² Reid's logic followed that although socialism in Australia was yet to reach the extremes seen in Europe, the tiger cub would grow up and Australian socialism would evolve into the kind of menace Pope Leo XIII had denounced.⁸³ He summed up his argument by saying 'the late Pope denounced and the present Pope denounces socialism as they would denounce a tiger thirsting for human blood, yet Cardinal Moran is helping Mr Watson rear a little one in Australia'.⁸⁴ The image of a tiger cub was picked up by the newspapers and became a favourite of cartoonists who caricatured the campaign. Ironically, almost at the same time as Reid was articulating his metaphor, the Labor Party was taking a step away from doctrinaire socialism. At the annual Labor Party conference, the party chose to adopt the comparatively mild objective of the 'collective ownership of monopolies, and the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the

⁸² 'The Pope's Encyclical', SMH 21 July 1905 p7.

⁸³ 'The Pope's Encyclical', SMH 21 July 1905 p7.

⁸⁴ 'The Pope's Encyclical', SMH 21 July 1905 p7.

state'.⁸⁵ This was a step away from the ideological extreme of the 'nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange' supported by many within the party, and may suggest that the pressure created by the anti-socialist campaign was having an impact on the ideological direction of the Labor Party.

To conclude his 1905 anti-socialist tour Reid delivered two public speeches in Victoria before the parliamentary session began. As previously mentioned, Victoria was the hardest state for Reid to win over because it had a pre-existing protectionist discourse which opposed Reid's free-trade beliefs and the fiscal truce proposed by the anti-socialists. Reid began his brief tour of Victoria with a speech at Geelong, where he emphasised his desire to sink 'fiscal antagonism' in the face of the socialist threat.⁸⁶ Reid also spoke of his desire to retire from political life after he had beaten the socialists at the next election.⁸⁷ Though this may have been Reid's genuine desire his retirement was also being held out as an olive branch to protectionists, as this was meant to show them that his leadership was not a threat to protection in the long term.

Reid's other Victorian speech was delivered at Hawthorn in front of a meeting of the Australian Women's National League. This organisation was already committed to anti-socialism and as such his speech focused less on the sinking of the fiscal issue and more on attacking the Labor party.⁸⁸ Reid also outlined his brief legislative agenda for the coming parliamentary session as well as a warning that he felt that Labor would try to block the house's proceedings.⁸⁹ The brief period of time Reid spent in the second largest state shows the degree to which he was relying on Alfred Deakin's support to win votes in Victoria. Reid may have also feared that an extensive tour may have alarmed protectionist Victorian liberals

⁸⁵ Ross McMullin, *The Light On The Hill* pp56-7.

⁸⁶ 'Mr Reid at Geelong', *Argus* Thursday 22 June 1905 p5.

⁸⁷ 'Mr Reid at Geelong', *Argus* Thursday 22 June 1905 p5.

⁸⁸ 'Mr Reid's Speech', *Argus* Friday 23 June 1905 p5.

⁸⁹ 'Mr Reid's Speech', *Argus* Friday 23 June 1905 p5.

into thinking he was trying to supersede Deakin's importance in the state. The brevity of Reid's Victorian 'tour' meant he was not able to shift Victorian political discourse away from the fiscal issue. This failure would put a strain on Reid's ties with his Victorian allies who were coming under increasing pressure to deal with what was seen in their state as the pre-eminent issue of the day.

Reid's extensive anti-socialist tour formed only part of his 1905 campaign. While the tour was meant to create a national discourse on socialism, an extra-parliamentary organisation was required to perpetuate this discourse and create interest in the campaign. In the days before compulsory voting an effective organisation was vital in getting people out to vote. This was important not only in marginal seats but also in safe seats where low voter turnout often cost parties senate votes. A strong organisation was also required to eliminate vote splitting, so that an anti-socialist candidate received the united liberal support Reid felt was vital if the looming election was to be won. Reid's efforts to establish extensive extra-parliamentary organisations at a federal level would be ground-breaking for the liberals. Ultimately though, the Anti-Socialist Leagues could not offer the unity and efficiency achieved by the Labor party.

Reid had written to Deakin in March outlining his desire to create 'a political organisation reaching all over the commonwealth'.⁹⁰ Peter Loveday has used this as evidence to argue that Reid initially wanted to create only one national anti-socialist organisation and that only when this failed did Reid revert to giving the states organisational autonomy.⁹¹ Loveday's reliance on Deakin's papers has led him to interpret Reid's 'political organisation reaching all over the commonwealth' as a single organisation whereas a study of Reid's wider actions shows that this was meant to be a number of state based anti-socialist organisations

⁹⁰ Alfred Deakin Papers: Reid to Deakin 8 March 1905, National Library of Australia, Canberra.

⁹¹ P. Loveday, "The Federal Parties" in *The emergence of the Australian party system* ed. P. Loveday, A.W. Martin, & R.S. Parker (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1977) pp412-20.

working in unison to achieve electoral success. Loveday ignores the fact that Reid had already been happy to use the pre-existing Tasmanian National Association as a vehicle for his anti-socialist campaign in February, and that while in Tasmania, the only state he had toured at the time of writing the letter, Reid had not announced any desire to create a national political organisation.⁹² Far from planning to usurp the Tasmanian National Association with a new national organisation, Reid publicly declared his desire that the association would grow to help in the upcoming fight over socialism.⁹³ It was only six weeks after Reid sent the letter to Deakin that he declared publicly that the states would be given organisational autonomy.⁹⁴ While Reid desired a national political discourse and the establishment of anti-socialist organisations across the country, his respect for regional animosities meant that he purposefully left the creation and administration of extra-parliamentary organisations up to the respective states.

Reid's tour was meant to create a discourse on socialism in each of the respective states and it was hoped that this discourse would lead to the creation of Anti-Socialist Leagues.⁹⁵ The need for the establishment of an effective organisation was a common theme in Reid's speeches throughout Australia but he left the states to establish this organisation themselves. Some states were more effective than others at creating effective organisations. Victoria had several pre-existing anti-socialist organisation which predated Reid's campaign. These organisations were the ideological successors to the Kyabram movement, a campaign for smaller government which originated in rural Victoria.⁹⁶ One of these Victorian anti-socialist organisations was the Australian Women's National League. As the AWNL supported free-trade it was happy to bury the fiscal issue in protectionist dominated

⁹² 'Mr Reid on the Labour Party's aims', SMH Friday 17 February 1905 p7.

⁹³ 'Mr Reid on the Labour Party's aims', SMH Friday 17 February 1905 p7.

⁹⁴ 'Mr Reid's Campaign', SMH Saturday 29 April 1905 p11.

⁹⁵ See Reid's comments in 'Mr Reid's Campaign', SMH Saturday 29 April 1905 p11.

⁹⁶ P. Loveday, "The Federal Parties" p402.

Victoria.⁹⁷ The AWNL established an anti-socialist discourse in Victoria, though the animosity of the *Age* helped ensure that the tariff issue remained central to Victorian politics. The anti-socialist discourse created by the AWNL would help lead to the establishment of Alfred Deakin's own National league, which was committed to fighting socialism.⁹⁸ Outside of Victoria there were very few pre-existing organisations which would help the anti-socialist campaign. This contrasted with the Labor party which had strong state organisations helping to ensure the success of its federal campaign. Apart from the AWNL the main pre-existing organisation which fought for the anti-socialists was the Tasmanian National Association.⁹⁹ In South Australia and Queensland moves to create organisations were in motion but these would not fully eventuate until after the fall of the Reid government.

While Reid left the other states to set up their own extra-parliamentary organisation he actively led the organisation of the anti-socialist forces in his home state of New South Wales. Though the organisation he set up would have overlapping titles such as the 'anti-socialist league' it was officially known as the Australian Liberal League.¹⁰⁰ This title emphasised the fact that although the league would be based in New South Wales it would be engaging in a national political discourse on socialism. Reid proclaimed that 'the main objective of the proposed league is this: to meet the socialistic organisations by counter organisations, and to endeavour to excite such enthusiasm and support to the new leagues as the socialistic leagues have been endeavouring to do for some time passed'.¹⁰¹ Though he admitted that the Australian Liberal League was set up as a 'counter organisation' to the socialists, Reid distinguished between the two organisations by ensuring his new league had no joining fee

⁹⁷ Fitzherbert, Margaret. *Liberal Women: Federation – 1949* p10.

⁹⁸ 'Mr Reid in Sydney', SMH Monday 1 May 1905 p5

⁹⁹ Patrick Weller "Tasmania" in *The emergence of the Australian party system* ed. P. Loveday, A.W. Martin, & R.S. Parker (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1977) p367.

¹⁰⁰ 'Mr Reid in Sydney', SMH Monday 1 May 1905 p5.

¹⁰¹ 'Mr Reid in Sydney', SMH Monday 1 May 1905 p5.

and that its members would have the freedom to create the league's policy platform.¹⁰²

Though the policy platform would be created by ordinary members, it would not be a binding document for anti-socialist parliamentarians, as any binding pledge like that taken by Labor party members would be viewed as illiberal. Reid was actively involved in the Australian Liberal League at several levels. He organised a day of mass meetings to form branches of the new organisation and sent letters to those forming branches, setting forth his main arguments against socialism.¹⁰³ Despite the organisational exertions of Reid and others, the Australian Liberal League did not endure the fall of the Reid government in July. The short tenure of the organisation suggests that it was created in preparation for an early election, and when this did not occur its organisers let it quietly fade away.

The creation of the Australian Liberal League saw the major entry of Joseph Cook into the anti-socialist campaign. Cook had been left out of Reid's cabinet to make room for the Protectionist members who were essential to the anti-socialist's parliamentary majority.¹⁰⁴ Though Reid had left Cook out of his cabinet he believed Cook to be a man of considerable talents and when the ALL was established Reid appointed Cook deputy chairman.¹⁰⁵ This position meant that Cook would be responsible for the administration and organisation of the ALL while Reid was away on his long campaigns. Cook used the newspapers to try to sell the ALL and drive up membership. In the *Sydney Morning Herald* Cook appealed to liberals to join in the new organisation, 'the people are asked to come in and control the whole movement'.¹⁰⁶ He went on to explain that the organisation would have individual branches which elected members to a central council with equal representation.¹⁰⁷ Cook's role in the 1905 campaign was not purely organisational; he delivered public speeches and manufactured

¹⁰² 'Australian Liberal League', SMH Friday 19 May 1905 p8.

¹⁰³ 'Anti-Socialism', SMH Monday 1 June 1905 p6. & 'Anti-Socialism', SMH Tuesday 13 June 1905 p5.

¹⁰⁴ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p210.

¹⁰⁵ John Murdoch, *Sir Joe: A Political Biography of Sir Joseph Cook* (London: Minerva Press, 1996) p67.

¹⁰⁶ 'Anti-Socialism', SMH Friday 19 May 1905 p8.

¹⁰⁷ 'Anti-Socialism', SMH Friday 19 May 1905 p8.

debates to keep anti-socialism in the public discourse. On one such occasion he debated Chris Watson on socialism's connection to Christianity and atheism through a series of newspaper interviews.¹⁰⁸ Cook's role was indispensable as he allowed Reid to take his long campaign tours while relying on his deputy chairman to run the ALL and fuel an anti-socialist discourse in the Sydney media.

While Joseph Cook supported the 1905 anti-socialist campaign from within, Bruce Smith took the role of the outsider critiquing Reid's pragmatic approach on a number of issues. Smith publicly called on Reid to end his campaign of 'passive resistance' to socialism's spread and instead to actively repeal Labor legislation.¹⁰⁹ He refused to attend a meeting of New South Wales' anti-socialist members of parliament organised by Reid.¹¹⁰ Smith also publicly criticised the White Australia policy, which Reid supported despite criticising the impact its implementation was having on immigration levels.¹¹¹ Smith's criticisms forced Reid to distance himself from the rogue member, stating publicly that 'there has never been any close political sympathy between Mr Bruce Smith and myself'.¹¹² It is easy to see why Reid would be uncomfortable with Smith utilising his liberal right to disagree with his leader. Smith's attitudes towards the White Australia policy and the Conciliation and Arbitration bill called for a debate on what Australian liberalism was and what it should be. Smith was calling for a small government approach that rejected not only socialism but also the extensive use of the state for ostensibly 'liberal' goals. This was exactly the kind of divisive internal discourse that Reid wanted to avoid as he struggled to present a united liberal front for the next election.

¹⁰⁸ 'Mr Joseph Cook in reply to Mr Watson', SMH Friday 21 April 1905 p9.

¹⁰⁹ 'Mr Bruce Smith and the Government Policy', SMH Friday 7 April 1905 p7.

¹¹⁰ 'Mr Bruce Smith and the Government Policy', SMH Friday 7 April 1905 p7.

¹¹¹ 'Anti-Socialism', SMH Thursday 18 May 1905 p6.

¹¹² 'Summary', SMH Monday 1 May 1905 p1.

Despite the divisions between Smith and Reid, Smith's actions helped fuel the anti-socialist campaign. By publicly criticising his leader Smith garnered newspaper attention which he used to promote an anti-socialist discourse and to call for more liberal legislation. Like Cook, Smith also delivered public campaign speeches and used newspaper interviews to debate prominent Labor politicians. While Cook had debated Labor leader Chris Watson, Smith debated Billy Hughes keeping the anti-socialist issue burning on the pages of the *Sydney Morning Herald*.¹¹³ Despite his previous intransigence Bruce Smith also helped establish four branches of the Australian Liberal League in his electorate.¹¹⁴ These actions suggest that Smith was trying to shape the direction of the anti-socialist campaign, not undermine the campaign itself.

The 1905 anti-socialist campaign was expected to culminate in an early election which would take place after parliament sat and took care of some non-contentious legislation.¹¹⁵ Deakin did not look favourably on the prospect of an early election which would force him to continue his association with Reid and further delay the settlement of the fiscal issue. In a speech delivered at Ballarat Deakin criticised anti-socialism for being too vague, attacked talk of an early election and demanded that the fiscal issue be put before the people at the next election.¹¹⁶ In parliament a few days later Reid reacted to Deakin's speech, viewing it as 'the withdrawal of the spirit of frank co-operation, which makes my position and that of my colleagues in this house intolerable'.¹¹⁷ A debate broke out in which Joseph Cook positioned himself as the faithful deputy coming to the defence of his leader.¹¹⁸ After the debate the Reid government was defeated on a vote to amend the address in reply to the governor general's

¹¹³ 'Socialism, reply to Mr Bruce Smith', SMH Friday 9 June 1905 p8.

¹¹⁴ 'Anti-Socialism', SMH Wednesday 14 June 1905 p6.

¹¹⁵ 'Organise! Organise!' SMH Wednesday 17 May 1905 p6.

¹¹⁶ 'Mr Deakin at Ballarat', SMH Monday 26 June 1905 p7.

¹¹⁷ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXV p54.

¹¹⁸ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXV p123.

speech.¹¹⁹ Deakin moved the amendment which brought down the Reid government and despite Deakin's lead some Protectionists such as Allan McLean voted with the government.¹²⁰

What caused Alfred Deakin to withdraw his support for the Reid government is of little concern to this thesis. What does matter is the impact that Deakin's Ballarat speech and the proceeding parliamentary session had on the anti-socialist campaign. The end of Reid and Deakin's association and the downfall of the Reid government ended the prospect of an early election and effectively brought the 1905 anti-socialist campaign to a close. The second campaign which would begin in late 1905 and culminate in the 1906 election would be fundamentally different to that which preceded it. Reid now had to oppose the Protectionists while still attacking socialism. The importance of establishing a pervasive discourse on socialism became even greater as Reid needed to capture protectionist liberal votes by convincing the electorate that the socialist threat was more important than the fiscal issue. The loss of Alfred Deakin's support and the gravitas which it lent the campaign would dramatically alter the chances of the anti-socialists in Victoria and many other states. To have any chance of success Reid now had to embark on an even more extensive tour to establish a national discourse on socialism. It was this tour which would form the basis of the 1906 anti-socialist election campaign.

¹¹⁹ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXV p133.

¹²⁰ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXV pp73-133.

Chapter Three

‘An Absolute Majority’, the 1906 Campaign

It took a while for George Reid and the anti-socialist campaign to recover from the fall of the Reid government. The opening of a new parliamentary session meant that it was hardly the time for campaigning, while the anti-socialists themselves needed time to regroup and assess the new political situation in which the movement now had to operate. The period following the Reid’s defeat in parliament on the thirtieth of June was characterised by personal attacks on Deakin and his supporters. A common theme in parliament and in the newspapers was for Reid to quote statements made by Deakin rejecting the Labor party and its caucus methods.¹²¹ Reid’s attacks were made partly as an emotional response to what had happened and partly for electioneering reasons. Reid genuinely felt betrayed by Alfred Deakin, a feeling that had not dissipated by the time Reid wrote his memoirs in 1917.¹²² At the same time the use of Deakin’s own words against him was an opportunity for the campaign to show the hypocrisy of the new Prime Minister and remind people that Deakin himself had admitted that the socialists were illiberal. There is some evidence to suggest that Reid’s emotional attacks were effective in discrediting his new opponent. Deakin’s own National Liberal League passed a resolution forfeiting its confidence in him, showing that even a number of Deakin’s own liberal constituents were perturbed by his actions.¹²³ Later on in the campaign when emotions had died down these quotes were still being used by Reid as a way of attacking Deakin and the Protectionists without engaging in a fiscal discourse.

¹²¹ ‘The Labour Conference’, SMH Monday 17 July 1905 p7.

¹²² George Reid, *My Reminiscences* p245.

¹²³ ‘Mr Deakin and his constituents’, SMH Monday 17 July 1905 p8.

Reid used the 1905 parliamentary session to portray the ‘socialism’ of the legislation being introduced by the new Labor supported Protectionist government. The main object of his attacks was the union label provision of the Trade Marks Bill. This provision allowed a union label to be attached to any product produced by union labour under ‘liveable conditions’.¹²⁴ In order to be eligible for the label all of the workers employed by the manufacturer of the product had to be union members. Reid argued that this was an attempt to pressure people into joining unions or threaten non-union jobs, as employers would seek the benefit of attaching the union label to their products.¹²⁵ In parliament Reid used fiery rhetoric to portray his message; ‘of all attempts to create monopoly, I think the most cruel is the attempt of working men to create a privilege and a monopoly against their fellow industrialists’.¹²⁶ Reid’s attacks were meant to show the urgency of the socialist threat. If the Labor party could pass legislation which was ‘socialist’ when it was not even in power the consequences of a Labor government would, according to Reid, be dire. Reid’s logic followed that the only way to stop socialist legislation was to vote for his anti-socialists, not the Protectionists who allowed Labor to exercise power without responsibility.¹²⁷ Hence Reid was trying to convince liberals that only the anti-socialists and not the Protectionists could protect liberalism from the perceived socialist threat.

In late August Reid left the Parliamentary session in Melbourne to return to Sydney. This was largely for financial reasons as his income had been greatly reduced when he lost the Prime Ministership.¹²⁸ Reid’s absence from parliament was enabled by the parliamentary skill of his new deputy opposition leader, Joseph Cook. Cook had been elected deputy in late July to replace Dugald Thomson who like Reid was also having trouble attending parliament.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXV p588.

¹²⁵ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXV p591.

¹²⁶ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXV p591.

¹²⁷ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXVII p2714.

¹²⁸ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p232.

¹²⁹ ‘Federal Government policy’, SMH Saturday 29 July 1905 p11.

Cook's role would be of central importance to the anti-socialist campaign. He would act as opposition leader in the house for the remainder of the campaign, effectively critiquing the government and Labor while Reid was away working or touring. Without Cook's effective leadership Reid's tours, particularly the long and highly successful tour of Queensland in 1906, would have been impossible. Reid managed to visit far more of Australia and deliver far more speeches than his opponents Watson and Deakin because of Cook's efforts. In his memoirs Reid praised the essential role of his deputy in facilitating the anti-socialist campaign; 'the able and devoted services of Mr Joseph Cook, as deputy leader of the opposition, were the main factors in making my position tolerable. Had he been less able, or less loyal, or less devoted than he was, a leadership so long and so often suspended as mine could not have lasted for a single session'.¹³⁰

Cook's parliamentary efforts for 1905 centred on his opposition to the Australian Industries Preservation Bill. Though the bill was not protectionist in itself, as it relied on a government body rather than tariffs to prevent competition from cheap imports, it certainly raised the fiscal issue. This issue was exacerbated by Bruce Smith who raised regional animosities by objecting to 'Victorian legislation in the Commonwealth parliament'.¹³¹ In such circumstances it was a tactical move to have Cook rather than Reid lead the attack on the bill as it allowed Reid to disassociate himself from the fiscal issue while he was trying to woo Protectionist liberal voters. Cook's speeches also attracted less media attention than those delivered by Reid. This meant that Cook's opposition was less likely to ignite a fiscal discourse in the newspapers, something Reid was keen to avoid as a fiscal discourse would undercut his attempts to make the upcoming election a 'referendum' on socialism.

An important figure in the volatile parliament was Allan McLean. McLean was a major asset to the anti-socialist campaign. As a Victorian protectionist who had refused to

¹³⁰ George Reid, *My Reminiscences* p255.

¹³¹ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXX p6820.

follow Deakin in accepting Labor support, McLean lent real credence to the anti-socialist cause in Victoria. He was also a Catholic who had acted as Reid's deputy when he was Prime Minister and hence his association helped to alleviate the sectarian cloud that had followed Reid since his stoush with Cardinal Moran. Mclean did not join Reid's anti-socialist party due to his protectionist beliefs but his tacit support of Reid could often be relied upon both inside and outside of parliament¹³². McLean defended the nature of the Reid government against attacks from Deakin and in doing so reinforced attacks Reid had made on the new Prime Minister's credibility.¹³³ McLean also criticised the union label, again providing a voice for protectionist opposition to legislation labelled 'socialist', something which was of great benefit to the anti-socialist cause in Victoria.¹³⁴ The value of McLean's support was weakened by the *Age*, which refused to give a voice to the protectionist face of anti-socialism and thus robbed the campaign of a great opportunity.

When the parliamentary session was almost over Reid took the time to publicly announce his plans to continue the anti-socialist campaign into the new year. Reid reiterated that despite the new political circumstances his electoral intentions had not changed; 'I intend at the next election to challenge the socialism of the Labor party'.¹³⁵ He was also keen to stress that despite his conflict with Alfred Deakin he still supported a fiscal truce to avoid splitting the liberal vote. It was during this announcement that Reid made it clear that he was no longer seeking the assistance of Deakin and his party but required 'an absolute majority against both the parties'.¹³⁶ W.G. McMinn has argued that Reid's anti-socialist campaign was an attempt to re-shape the political divide in order to bring about a merger of the two fiscal parties.¹³⁷ While this may have been true in early 1905 by December Reid was making it clear

¹³² 'Mr Allan Mclean's Campaign', SMH Friday 26 October 1906 p7.

¹³³ 'Federal Politics', *Mercury*(Hobart) Friday 4 August 1905 p7.

¹³⁴ 'The commonwealth parliament', *Advertiser*(Adelaide) Wednesday 6 September 1905 p8.

¹³⁵ 'Liberal Campaign', SMH Tuesday 19 December 1905 p7.

¹³⁶ 'Liberal Campaign', SMH Tuesday 19 December 1905 p7.

¹³⁷ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p219.

that he intended to win an anti-socialist majority that did not require the support of Deakin and his followers. What Reid sought was not a ‘merger’ of equal parties; he wanted the inferior remains of a shattered Protectionist party to be consumed by a new two-party system. He boasted that ‘the Deakin party at the next elections will be absolutely shattered and the members of it must be prepared to make their election between the Labor party and the National party’.¹³⁸ Joseph Carruthers had achieved similar results in 1904, shattering the Progressive party so that several of its remaining members were forced to join his Liberal party.¹³⁹ Reid would have been fully aware of Carruthers’ success and that awareness suggests that Reid’s boasts were not simply wishful thinking, but that they reflected a genuine plan to dismantle the Protectionist party by emulating the success of the New South Wales Premier. Reid’s rhetoric shows that he hoped to achieve this by creating a pervasive discourse on socialism which made Deakin and his supporters politically irrelevant. While Reid had already been trying to establish this discourse the new political circumstances made his individual efforts even more important as the campaign now had to compete with the much respected Deakin. As such Reid planned to spend 1906 conducting ever more extensive tours to fuel a debate on socialism.

Reid spent January 1906 holidaying in Colombo.¹⁴⁰ He used his return trip to re-ignite the anti-socialist campaign in Western and South Australia. During a short stop over in Fremantle, Reid used an interview with the *West Australian* to attack the Labor party. Reid cited the recent Western Australian election results as evidence that the working class were questioning what Labor had done for them.¹⁴¹ He also critiqued the record of the Deakin government, claiming that Deakin was well spoken but ‘fails when he is called upon to do

¹³⁸ ‘Liberal Campaign’, SMH Tuesday 19 December 1905 p7.

¹³⁹ Michael Hogan, “So manifestly unreal and irrelevant: Confusion in New South Wales?” pp120-2.

¹⁴⁰ ‘Return of Mr Reid’, SMH Friday 2 February 1906 p6.

¹⁴¹ ‘Mr George Reid’, *West Australian* Friday 2 February 1906 p7.

anything'.¹⁴² The anti-socialist campaign had been struggling to gain traction in the Western Australian media so Reid's physical presence acted as a significant boost to the anti-socialist discourse within the state. In Adelaide Reid continued his personal attacks on the Prime Minister, claiming that as Deakin could never hope to merge with the Labor party he was intentionally keeping alive the three party system he has so recently criticised.¹⁴³ These personal attacks were a campaign tactic that allowed the Protectionist's to be rebutted without debating the fiscal issue. Though this was a strategy commonly utilised by Reid, it was particularly important in South Australia where the protectionist influence was strong.

After another short stop-over in Melbourne Reid returned to Sydney where he was to face increasing criticism from free-traders who disagreed with his fiscal truce. The Sydney press, particularly the *Sydney Morning Herald* had largely embraced the anti-socialist campaign and had avoided pushing the fiscal issue. It was Bruce Smith who pressed Reid on his free-trade principles. In a letter to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* Smith attacked the fiscal truce, claiming that protectionism was the most immediate form of socialism.¹⁴⁴ He also questioned the logic of the truce, arguing that since Protectionists had a vested financial interest in raising the tariff they would never put protection on hold in order to fight the socialists.¹⁴⁵ Despite his direct intention to avoid fuelling a fiscal discourse Reid was forced to react to Smith's critique. Reid publicly professed that he had not abandoned his free-trade principles but felt that the imminent socialist threat was greater than the economic dangers of a high tariff.¹⁴⁶ He also argued that the Labor party was taking advantage of its own fiscal

¹⁴² 'Mr George Reid', *West Australian* Friday 2 February 1906 p7.

¹⁴³ 'Mr G.H. Reid', *Advertiser*(Adelaide) Tuesday 6 February 1906 p6.

¹⁴⁴ 'Free-Trade and Anti-Socialism', SMH Wednesday 7 February 1906 p7.

¹⁴⁵ 'Free-Trade and Anti-Socialism', SMH Wednesday 7 February 1906 p7.

¹⁴⁶ 'Where the real fight lies', SMH Thursday 22 February 1906 p7.

truce, allowing it to avoid socialist vote splitting and that the only way for the liberals to combat this was to do the same.¹⁴⁷

Reid was not significantly damaged by the criticism heaped upon him by other free-traders. This was mainly because there was no alternative leader for the free-traders to support.¹⁴⁸ Reid remained the de-facto leader for free-trade liberals for whom a party supporting a fiscal truce was preferable to one which proposed to increase the tariff. Some in the New South Wales Labor party tried to rebrand their party as the real representatives of free-trade.¹⁴⁹ Such efforts failed as the Labor party's association with Alfred Deakin and a growing support for new protection made any assertion to be guardians of free-trade seem implausible. While Reid was not leaching free-trade votes Bruce Smith's criticisms did reignite interest in a fiscal discourse. Again this did not hurt Reid as the discourse was only being fuelled in firmly free-trade New South Wales.

A certain degree of fiscal discourse was actually desirable for the anti-socialists in New South Wales as it reminded free-trade voters of the dangers of Deakin's party and by association the Labor party which kept them in power. Reid did not want to lead the attack himself as his speeches were likely to be reproduced interstate to fuel the fiscal discourse. Instead Reid once again used his deputy Joseph Cook, who was well respected within New South Wales but whose opinion mattered less interstate. Cook led the attack on the Protectionists' policy of increasing the tariff and in particular the association between the Protectionists and the Labor party. He argued that there was an inherent contradiction in the association of Deakin, who wanted to protect private enterprise through tariffs, and Watson, who believed 'private enterprise was an evil to be extirpated'.¹⁵⁰ Despite their inherent free-trade ideology, these attacks were meant to damage Labor more than the Protectionists. This

¹⁴⁷ 'Where the real fight lies', SMH Thursday 22 February 1906 p7.

¹⁴⁸ 'The Commonwealth', SMH Monday 22 January 1906 p7.

¹⁴⁹ 'Free-Trade Party', SMH Tuesday 23 January 1906 p7.

¹⁵⁰ 'Mr Joseph Cook at Ashfield', SMH Wednesday 7 March 1906 p9.

was because free-trade was so widely supported in Sydney that the Protectionists could not garner many votes while many Labor supporters, like Billy Hughes, believed in free-trade. The hope was that if the association between protection and the Labor party could be established a significant number of people who generally supported Labor would vote for Reid in order to avoid a tariff increase. The 1906 election results for New South Wales suggest that this was not a highly successful tactic. It is likely that the failure of this tactic was a direct result of the pervasiveness of Reid's own discourse on socialism in his home state. If this was the case, it also suggests that in New South Wales federal politics was progressing towards an ideology based two-party system faster than elsewhere in the country.

In order to achieve his goal of establishing a dichotomous political discourse, Reid was not above resorting to campaign 'stunts'. Hence in early April 1906 a public debate between Reid and William Holman was organised, to take place in Sydney over two nights. The debate would be fought on 'The Principle of Socialism as Defined in the Objective and Platform of the Labor Party', with Holman acting as Labor's authorised spokesperson.¹⁵¹ The debate was an opportunity for Reid to organise all his various critiques of socialism into one unified argument. In essence Reid's argument was that socialism destroyed man's enterprising spirit, hurt the economy and converted 'a condition of liberty and free choice.....into the condition of perpetual official authority and subjection'.¹⁵²

The debate also saw Reid portray his ideal alternative to the socialist state. Reid defined the ideal state as 'A community of highly educated men and women enjoying the fullest measure of personal liberty, but under no compulsion to do their duty to their neighbours and to the State.'¹⁵³ He went on to describe the ideal government as 'a government whose power is ever exercised to improve the opportunities of the people and never exercised

¹⁵¹ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p235.

¹⁵² 'Mr Reid in Reply', SMH Wednesday 4 April 1906 p9.

¹⁵³ 'Mr Reid in Reply', SMH Wednesday 4 April 1906 p9.

to interfere with their personal liberty so long as they abstained from wrongdoing.’¹⁵⁴ Reid’s positive ideological constructions of the ideal state and government were largely a response to attacks by Deakin which labelled anti-socialism a ‘necklace of negatives’.¹⁵⁵ They were also a response to Bruce Smith’s discourse on liberalism, which forced Reid to define his attitude towards the role of the state. In defining his beliefs Reid allowed ‘the doing by the government of every necessary and good thing which people cannot do for themselves, or which smooths the path of private enterprise’.¹⁵⁶ Reid’s ideological construction thus allowed an active role for government as long as this role did not seek to destroy private enterprise. This definition was less laissez-faire than Bruce Smith’s idea of liberalism and would have a lasting resonance within Australian liberalism.

The Reid-Holman debate was one of the anti-socialist campaign’s most successful attempts to establish a discourse on socialism. Though the debate had not been the anti-socialist’s idea, the medium of a public debate got the Labor party to actively engage in the discourse on socialism, allowing Reid to garner a much greater degree of media attention. The debate filled the pages of the *Sydney Morning Herald* for days, ensuring that socialism remained the political hot topic in Australia’s largest city. More importantly for the campaign, the Reid-Holman debate was widely reported far beyond New South Wales, fuelling a discourse in those states in which the anti-socialist campaign was struggling to gain traction. The arguments Reid presented in the debate were printed in the *West Australian*, the *Argus* in Melbourne, the *Advertiser* in Adelaide and the *Mercury* in Hobart as well as in many other newspapers throughout the country.¹⁵⁷ Despite this initial success the Reid-Holman debate was conducted too far out from the 1906 election to have a major impact on voter’s decisions

¹⁵⁴ ‘Mr Reid in Reply’, SMH Wednesday 4 April 1906 p9.

¹⁵⁵ ‘Prime Minister’s Policy’, *Argus* Monday 26 March 1906 p9.

¹⁵⁶ ‘Mr Reid in Reply’, SMH Wednesday 4 April 1906 p9.

¹⁵⁷ ‘Reid-Holman debate on socialism’, *Advertiser*(Adelaide) Tuesday 3 April 1906 p5. ‘Socialism. The Reid-Holman debate’, *Mercury*(Hobart) Friday 6 April 1906 p6. ‘A debate on socialism’, *West Australian* Tuesday 3 April 1906 p7. ‘Federal campaign’, *Argus* Wednesday 4 April 1906 p7.

on Election Day. The success of this one off stunt did not prompt the organisation of other public debates which would keep the socialist issue alive in the newspapers, and thus Reid was not able to repeat his success.

Reid followed up the success of his public debate with William Holman by embarking on another tour of regional New South Wales. The amount of time Reid spent touring regional New South Wales shows the importance Reid placed on securing a united liberal vote in his home state. This was probably an acknowledgement of his electoral chances in the southern states. Reid knew that without the support of Alfred Deakin, his electoral prospects were limited in Victoria. The influence of Deakinite John Forrest in Western Australia also meant that his state was likely to yield few anti-socialist votes. In such circumstances Reid concentrated on winning overwhelming victories in New South Wales and Queensland, while making some gains in the other states, in order to achieve a national parliamentary majority. Hence Reid's split with Deakin had made wooing the Protectionist stronghold of regional New South Wales an even greater imperative for the anti-socialist campaign.

George Reid's tour of regional New South Wales in April 1906 was meant to popularise anti-socialism and drive up membership for local anti-socialist leagues. Reid visited Dubbo, Orange, Parkes, Forbes, Molong, Bathurst, Wagga Wagga and Goulburn, using his oratorical skill to try to win over new supporters. A key theme of the tour was the importance of the fiscal truce. Reid implored regional liberals to fight the socialists as part of a 'solid phalanx' rather than dividing over the less imperative fiscal question.¹⁵⁸ Reid was attempting to use the fiscal truce as a way to avoid leaking votes to the Protectionists in regional New South Wales. To convince his audience that a fiscal truce was necessary Reid had to portray the immediacy of a 'socialist threat' and hence his speeches in regional New South Wales also focused on Watson's control of the Deakin government. He argued that

¹⁵⁸ 'Gathering of reform representatives', SMH Friday 13 April 1906 p3.

since Alfred Deakin relied on Labor support he could not pass protectionist legislation without surrendering to the socialists on other important issues.¹⁵⁹ The 1906 election results show that the Protectionist vote in New South Wales dropped significantly from 22.48% in 1903 to 10.04% in 1906.¹⁶⁰ While many of the votes the Protectionists lost went to the Labor Party, these results suggest that Reid was successful in convincing regional New South Welshman that the issue of socialism was more imperative than the fiscal question. This is further evidence that New South Wales acted at the vanguard of the development of a federal two-party system inspired by Reid's ideological discourse.

As previously mentioned, Reid's Australian Liberal League had been allowed to quietly decay after the fall of the Reid government ended the prospect of an early election. With the 1906 anti-socialist campaign intensifying Reid looked to re-establish an extra-parliamentary organisation in New South Wales. Instead of reviving the Australian Liberal League, Reid created a new organisation called the Australian Democratic Union that quickly absorbed the remnants of the ALL.¹⁶¹ The ADU managed to bring together the Liberal and Reform Association, the People's Reform League, the Women's Liberal League, the Women's Political and Social League and the ALL.¹⁶² The fact that Carruthers' Liberal and Reform Association helped in the formation of the ADU in preparation for the 1906 election is of particular importance. Peter Loveday has argued that Joseph Carruthers had a tenuous relationship with Reid and that letters written by Carruthers urging a merger of Reid and Deakin's parties represent a reluctance to support Reid outright.¹⁶³ The actions of the LRA and later Carruthers himself show that this was not the case. Carruthers wrote to Deakin urging him to join Reid in June 1905 and was thus writing in support of the existing Reid

¹⁵⁹ 'Increased country support', SMH Monday 30 April 1906 p7.

¹⁶⁰ Colin Hughes & B.D. Graham, *A Handbook of Australian Government and Politics 1890-1964* pp292-7.

¹⁶¹ P. Loveday, "The Federal Parties" p423.

¹⁶² 'Organising the forces', SMH Thursday 5 April 1906 p6.

¹⁶³ P. Loveday, "The Federal Parties" p418.

government.¹⁶⁴ Given that at the time newspapers were postulating over Deakin's support for the government in advance of his 'notice to quit', Carruthers letters seem like a timely attempt to buttress the Reid ministry. Though Carruthers' urged Deakin to 'fall into line, not with Reid, but with the fight for a Liberal Policy versus a Labor-Socialist Policy', he was not going against Reid, but merely appealing to Deakin in the way he felt would be most effective.¹⁶⁵ After the fall of the Reid government, Carruthers stepped up his support for the anti-socialist campaign by allowing the LRA to be involved in the ANU and also by appearing on stage with Reid in support of an Anti-Socialist candidate.¹⁶⁶ The evidence thus suggests that Carruthers did all he could to support Reid without risking alienating the Prime Minister Alfred Deakin, with whom he had to maintain a working relationship.

While Reid was busy campaigning and organising the ADU he sent Joseph Cook on a tour of Victoria, which was to be completed before parliament began in June.¹⁶⁷ The use of Cook effectively allowed Reid to be in two places at once, as Reid could rely on his deputy to produce speeches that were the rhetorical equal of his own. Cook's tour was relatively extensive, taking in a number of country towns as well as the major centres such as Melbourne and Geelong. During the tour Cook attacked Deakin for his ambivalent response to the socialist question, thus turning Deakin's attack that Reid was ignoring the fiscal question on its head.¹⁶⁸ Cook also tried to portray Labor's proposed land tax as an immediate socialist threat to rural Victorians.¹⁶⁹

While Cook was touring Victoria Reid also sent the opposition whip William Wilks to tour Western Australia.¹⁷⁰ On his tour Wilks repeated Reid's arguments that Australia needed

¹⁶⁴ Carruthers to Deakin 7, 13 June 1905 in Personal Papers of Alfred Deakin in the National Library, Canberra.

¹⁶⁵ Joseph Carruthers quoted in *The emergence of the Australian party system* ed. P. Loveday, A.W. Martin, & R.S. Parker (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1977) p418.

¹⁶⁶ 'Mr Reid in Lang', SMH Tuesday 4 December 1906 p7.

¹⁶⁷ 'Anti-Socialist Organisation', SMH Wednesday 6 June 1906 p4.

¹⁶⁸ 'Federal Politics', *Argus* Friday 25 May 1906 p5.

¹⁶⁹ 'Federal Politics', *Argus* Thursday 31 May 1906 p5.

¹⁷⁰ 'Federal Politics', *West Australian* Saturday 5 May 1906 p13.

a two-party system and that the socialists posed a threat to individual liberty.¹⁷¹ It was hoped that the tour would reignite a discourse on socialism in the West, where an independent political culture paid little attention to the debates raging on the Eastern seaboard. The tour was also meant to prompt the formation of an anti-socialist organisation in West Australia, something it failed to achieve. Wilks' tour shows that the anti-socialist campaign was willing to mobilise a considerable number of its parliamentary supporters to fuel the debate on socialism.

Reid viewed the 1906 parliamentary session as a practical nuisance. This is proven by the fact that Reid spent less than three weeks in parliament before leaving Melbourne to continue the anti-socialist campaign. With the support of the Labor party the Deakin government had a clear majority in both the houses of parliament so Reid left Cook to debate legislation while he toured the country. Reid did receive some criticism for his long absences from parliament.¹⁷² Despite these criticisms Reid felt his absences were a great opportunity to speak to the electorate while Deakin and Watson were tied down by the necessities of their legislative agenda. The 1906 parliamentary session opened on the seventh of June. By the twenty-sixth of June Reid was already in Sydney delivering a week of campaign speeches before embarking on an extensive tour of Queensland.¹⁷³

George Reid's 1906 tour of Queensland was possibly the most successful phase of the anti-socialist campaign. Reid's Queensland excursion was one of the longest and most extensive tours of the entire campaign. The tour lasted for the entire month of July, with Reid visiting every major town and city in the state. The amount of time Reid dedicated to Queensland demonstrates the importance he placed on winning votes in the state if he was to win government. This was a tactical move as Queensland did not have a strong protectionist

¹⁷¹ 'Federal Politics', *West Australian* Saturday 5 May 1906 p13.

¹⁷² Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXXII p2287.

¹⁷³ 'Mr Reid at Newtown', *SMH* Tuesday 26 June 1906 p7.

supporter base and there were few influential Deakinites in the state. Because of this Reid accurately predicted that, on the back of an extensive tour, he would have a much greater chance of capturing a united liberal vote in Queensland than elsewhere in the country.

Apart from its length, the Queensland tour stands out from the rest of the anti-socialist campaign because of Reid's successful attempt to combine anti-socialism with current political issues. During the tour Reid seized upon Labor's proposed land tax as an example of what he believed was Labor's creeping introduction of socialism.¹⁷⁴ He argued that the tax was the first step towards the nationalisation of land. Reid quoted the Queensland Labor party's objective to nationalise 'the means of production, distribution and exchange' to back up his warnings about the threat of creeping socialist legislation.¹⁷⁵ During a speech in the working class town of Charters Towers Reid also used the issue of the union label to attack what he argued was the inequality of socialist legislation.¹⁷⁶ These arguments show how Reid was using his anti-socialist ideology to interpret individual political issues. One of the key legacies of the anti-socialist campaign would be the evolution of Australian political parties, from groups formed around an attitude towards a single issue, such as the fiscal question, to permanent parties formed around ideologies that informed member's attitudes towards numerous issues. The arguments Reid used during his Queensland tour show that he was beginning to ground his anti-socialist/liberal ideology in practical politics, thereby laying the foundation for a more permanent anti-socialist party which would emerge as the Commonwealth Liberal Party in 1909.

Despite its importance McMinn's biography of George Reid only mentions the Queensland tour in passing.¹⁷⁷ McMinn argues that as the anti-socialist campaign wore on Reid was forced to talk more about specific political issues because his ideological attacks

¹⁷⁴ 'Enthusiastic reception at Laidley', SMH Thursday 26 July 1906 p6.

¹⁷⁵ 'Mr Reid's Tour', *Brisbane Courier* Friday 6 July 1906 p5.

¹⁷⁶ 'Mr Reid at Charters Towers', SMH Monday 16 July 1906 p8.

¹⁷⁷ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p236.

were alienating voters.¹⁷⁸ It is interesting that McMinn begins to argue that Reid's speeches may not have been effective in winning over swinging voters at the same time he is mentioning Reid's Queensland tour, the most electorally rewarding part of the campaign.¹⁷⁹ The increasing attention Reid gave to specific political issues in the second half of 1906 was not an acknowledgement that the anti-socialist message may not have been effective at winning swinging voters; it was a reaction to the changing political circumstances of the campaign. The 1905 campaign could hardly focus on socialist legislation when Reid was in government. It was the accumulation of pieces of what Reid believed was 'socialist' legislation over the life of the new Deakin government which prompted Reid's new focus. This is shown by Reid's constant attempts to draw a link between his critiques of specific pieces of legislation and that legislation's connection to a socialist ideology.¹⁸⁰ McMinn's argument also stems from a fundamental misinterpretation George Reid's campaign tactics. Reid was never trying to win over the 'genteel swinging voters' described by McMinn.¹⁸¹ The ideological focus of Reid's hundreds of campaign speeches suggests that his aim was to win over convinced liberal voters and get people out to vote.¹⁸² As McMinn has argued, the ideological content of these speeches was likely to alienate swinging voters.¹⁸³ The continual presence of this alienating ideological content, beyond when McMinn suggests it was purposefully toned down, proves that Reid's speeches were intended to convince ideological liberals of the imminence of a socialist threat and not to appeal to swinging voters.¹⁸⁴ Reid

¹⁷⁸ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p236.

¹⁷⁹ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p236.

¹⁸⁰ 'Mr Reid at Charters Towers', SMH Monday 16 July 1906 p7. 'Enthusiastic reception at Laidley', SMH Thursday 26 July 1906 p6. 'Meeting at Forbes', Monday 16 April 1906 p6.

¹⁸¹ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p236.

¹⁸² See 'Mr Reid in Queensland', SMH Wednesday 4 July 1906 p4. 'Mr Reid at Botany', SMH Wednesday 30 May 1906 p9. 'Mr Reid's Programme', SMH Friday 26 April 1906 p7. 'Where the real fight lies', SMH Thursday 22 February 1906 p7. 'Liberal Campaign', SMH Tuesday 19 December 1905 p7. Etc.

¹⁸³ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p236.

¹⁸⁴ E.g. See Reid in 'Mr Reid at Ballarat', SMH Wednesday 31 October 1906 p9. 'Mr Reid's final appeal', SMH Wednesday 12 December 1906 p9.

maintained that the 'silent majority' supported anti-socialism and if he could get them to vote through his tours and organisation he would win the election.¹⁸⁵

When Reid completed his Queensland tour he returned to Melbourne to make an appearance at parliament. After his long trip away Reid only appeared in parliament fleetingly and within a week of arriving in Melbourne he had already travelled to Adelaide to deliver yet another campaign speech. In Adelaide Reid attacked Deakin's proposed tariff increase, claiming that it only benefitted the big manufacturers in Melbourne and Sydney while hurting the rest of the country.¹⁸⁶ Reid had started to become more vocal about opposing the new tariff while touring Queensland. This was a major tactical shift for Reid, as he began to portray his fiscal truce as essentially opposed to the introduction of protection. Reid argued that a protectionist tariff would drive away imports, thus hurting the states that relied on the duties levied on imports as a major source of income.¹⁸⁷ Reid's attacks were meant to shield him against criticism directed against him by free-traders. They were also meant to harness the power of anti-federal sentiment, which was so strong that the Premiers of New South Wales and Queensland had privately suggested that their states would vote for secession if given the chance.¹⁸⁸ While Reid never abandoned his fiscal truce, the need to differentiate himself from Deakin had forced him to engage in a fiscal discourse, severely weakening his chances of capturing the united liberal vote he had always claimed was essential to an election victory.

With Reid only intermittently attending parliament in August and September Joseph Cook was again left to lead the opposition. The key debate in parliament during this period was over Deakin's tariff proposal and Cook was left with the difficult task of opposing the

¹⁸⁵ 'Mr Reid in King Division', SMH Tuesday 5 June 1906 p4.

¹⁸⁶ 'Mr Reid at Adelaide', SMH Tuesday 7 August 1906 p5.

¹⁸⁷ 'Mr Reid in Queensland', SMH Thursday 5 July 1906 p7.

¹⁸⁸ Correspondence with Arthur Morgan 16 November 1905 in the Personal Papers of Sir Joseph Carruthers, Mitchell Library Sydney.

legislation without alienating protectionist anti-socialist supporters. Cook's task was not helped by Bruce Smith who maintained his free-trade ideology, refusing to support the party's fiscal truce. During the debate on the tariff Smith began arguing openly with Cook, who was nominally his leader.¹⁸⁹ The incident marked the low point of the relationship between leaders of the anti-socialist campaign with the maverick Smith. Interestingly the incident seems to have acted as a turning point for Smith, who by the beginning of October was willing to put his free-trade principles to the side and appear on a platform with Allan McLean.¹⁹⁰ Without the personal papers of Smith it is difficult to determine what caused the change of heart but for the rest of the campaign he lent his oratorical skill to the anti-socialist cause, campaigning in Victoria, Sydney and regional New South Wales.¹⁹¹

Reid spent October touring regional Victoria, in a last ditch attempt to woo voters in the country's second largest state.¹⁹² The focus on regional Victoria, as opposed to Melbourne, was a tactical move as the country had been the traditional home of free-trade sentiment in Victoria and the small government Kyabram movement had also originated there.¹⁹³ While the loss of Deakin's support had forced Reid to rely on New South Wales and Queensland for the majority of his seats, Reid still appreciated the need to win over at least some of Victoria if he were to achieve an outright parliamentary majority. For this reason Reid not only toured Victoria himself, but he sent his parliamentary colleagues to campaign in the state as well.¹⁹⁴

In Victoria Reid repeated the same arguments against socialism he had been espousing throughout the country. This was largely a response to the necessities of an under developed national media. Reid could not rely on arguments he put forward in one state being

¹⁸⁹ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXXIII p2877.

¹⁹⁰ 'The Federal elections', SMH Monday 1 October 1906 p7.

¹⁹¹ 'The Federal elections', SMH Monday 1 October 1906 p7. 'South Sydney', SMH Thursday 1 November 1906 p9. 'Mr Bruce Smith at Wagga', SMH Friday 7 December p7.

¹⁹² 'Mr Reid's movements', SMH Thursday 4 October 1906 p7.

¹⁹³ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p204.

¹⁹⁴ 'The Federal elections', SMH Monday 1 October 1906 p7. 'Mr Joseph Cook's tour', SMH Wednesday 30 May 1906 p9.

transmitted through the media to other states and as such he was forced to constantly repeat large portions of his speeches. The irony was that this repetition made newspaper outlets less likely to report on his interstate speeches. While papers which unashamedly supported Reid published his speeches even when their repeated content made them seem less than newsworthy, more neutral news outlets simply waited for the anti-socialist bandwagon to roll into town before giving Reid's campaign adequate coverage. This was especially true for small regional newspapers, which often held a virtual monopoly over the news that was received in small country towns.

One argument that was developed by Reid, rather than simply repeated, during his Victorian tour was his critique of Labor's support for union privileges. In a speech at Colac Reid argued that since union members formed only one eighth of the workforce union privilege represented a tyranny by a minority.¹⁹⁵ He also believed that since some legislative provisions introduced by Labor put pressure on people to join unions they conveyed the 'old spirit of persecution' which Reid claimed he had always opposed.¹⁹⁶ Through these attacks Reid was obviously trying to win over working class voters. He was also trying to defend himself against attacks by Labor newspapers which portrayed him as a tool of big business and enemy of the working class.¹⁹⁷ These attacks hurt Reid, whose political career had begun in an era before the Labor party when liberals were seen as the main supporters of working men.¹⁹⁸ Hence Reid's attacks on union privilege were more than simple electioneering; they were another attempt to justify anti-socialism as a natural product of Reid's liberalism.

Reid took time out from his Victorian tour to return to Sydney to deliver his election manifesto. While the manifesto was generally labelled by newspapers as Reid's manifesto or the anti-socialist manifesto, the *Sydney Morning Herald* published it under the title 'Liberal

¹⁹⁵ 'Mr Reid on tour', *Argus* Wednesday 10 October 1906 p7.

¹⁹⁶ 'Mr Reid on Tour', *Argus* Wednesday 10 October 1906 p7.

¹⁹⁷ 'In no Hurry', *Worker* (Brisbane) Saturday 18 March 1905 p1.

¹⁹⁸ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* pp16-40.

Manifesto', a clear attempt to portray Reid and the anti-socialists as the only true liberal candidates for the coming election.¹⁹⁹ The *Sydney Morning Herald* was following Reid's own lead, as the manifesto began by insisting that the anti-socialist party was essentially 'liberal and democratic'.²⁰⁰ The manifesto then went on to attack Deakin and the Labor party, before outlining Reid's own policies.

The policies presented in Reid's manifesto were aimed at pleasing the various groups the anti-socialists were relying on to win government. Hence the manifesto professed the need for a fiscal truce before proceeding to attack Deakin's tariff proposals and preferential trade.²⁰¹ Reid had been juggling between making anti-socialism seem safe for protectionists and his desire to win the votes of those who opposed the tariff increase ever since his 1906 tour of Queensland. In his manifesto Reid decided to gamble by vigorously attacking Deakin's tariff proposals at the risk of alienating his protectionist supporters. It is likely that Reid's decision to quickly brush over the fiscal truce was probably influenced by his audience, as the manifesto was delivered as a speech in Sydney. Unlike many of his other Sydney speeches however, Reid's manifesto presentation was widely reported interstate and hence would have raised the ire of protectionist groups, particularly in Victoria.

Reid's manifesto also attempted to satisfy regional demands. Reid's long tours had exposed him to the importance of state-based issues for federal politics, particularly in Western Australia and Queensland. In response to this Reid professed his support for the construction of the transcontinental railway as 'the least possible thing we can do in justice to the grand state and enterprising people of Western Australia'.²⁰² He also expressed his support for the repatriation of the Kanakas who worked on Queensland's sugar plantations.²⁰³ To

¹⁹⁹ 'Liberal Manifesto', SMH Wednesday 24 October 1906 p9.

²⁰⁰ 'Liberal Manifesto', SMH Wednesday 24 October 1906 p9.

²⁰¹ 'Liberal Manifesto', SMH Wednesday 24 October 1906 p9.

²⁰² 'Liberal Manifesto', SMH Wednesday 24 October 1906 p9.

²⁰³ 'Liberal Manifesto', SMH Wednesday 24 October 1906 p9.

satisfy discontent in New South Wales Reid also demanded an 'immediate settlement' of the capital site issue.²⁰⁴

The final month of the anti-socialist campaign was characterised by a frantic attempt to visit as many places as possible before election day. After delivering his manifesto, Reid returned to Victoria where he was to campaign for the first half of November. He then embarked on a whirlwind tour of Queensland to consolidate the support he had won in July. During this period Reid's speeches shifted focus as he attempted to win support for specific local candidates.²⁰⁵ To win support for one particular candidate, Reid enlisted the support of Joseph Carruthers who made a public appearance with Reid at Rockdale Town Hall. After attesting to the credibility of local candidate W. E. Johnson, Carruthers attacked the Deakin government over its handling of the capital site and the administration of immigration restriction laws.²⁰⁶ Here Reid was trying to use the support of a popular Premier and friend to ignite regional animosities to help him defeat a Victorian Prime Minister. Carruthers was not the only prominent liberal utilised by the campaign during the frantic last weeks before the election. Joseph Cook was sent to tour regional New South Wales before going to Queensland to deliver a major campaign speech in Brisbane.²⁰⁷ Meanwhile Alan McLean continued to tour Victoria, desperately trying to take votes away from the Deakinites.²⁰⁸

Reid delivered his final appeal to voters on election day, the twelfth of December. Through the pages of the *Sydney Morning Herald* he argued that 'the real choice is one between socialism and liberalism, between force and freedom'.²⁰⁹ Reid urged people to get out and vote, keen to ensure that the Labor party's ability to mobilise its supporter base would

²⁰⁴ 'Liberal Manifesto', SMH Wednesday 24 October 1906 p9.

²⁰⁵ 'West Sydney', SMH Saturday 1 December 1906 p13.

²⁰⁶ 'Mr Reid in Lang', SMH Tuesday 4 December 1906 p6.

²⁰⁷ 'Mr Cook in Brisbane', SMH Thursday 29 November 1906 p8.

²⁰⁸ 'Mr Allan Mclean's Campaign', SMH Friday 26 October 1906 p7.

²⁰⁹ 'Mr Reid's final appeal', SMH Wednesday 12 December 1906 p9.

not cost him the election.²¹⁰ Finally he appealed ‘to all lovers of freedom, to every believer in free, industrial opportunities for all, to stand side by side with me in resisting the avalanche of selfishness and socialistic tyranny which threatens to overwhelm the freest, brightest, most loyal, and progressive community on the face of the earth to-day’.²¹¹

²¹⁰ ‘Mr Reid’s final appeal’, SMH Wednesday 12 December 1906 p9.

²¹¹ ‘Mr Reid’s final appeal’, SMH Wednesday 12 December 1906 p9.

Chapter Four

‘Liberal Settlement’

Results and Legacy of the Anti-Socialist Campaign

Deciphering the results of the 1906 election is no easy task. Outside of Labor, party loyalties were often difficult to determine and many sources disagree on who should be classified as an anti-socialist member.²¹² This was exacerbated by regional groups, such as the Western Australia party, which do not easily fit in with either the Protectionists or the anti-socialists. George Reid’s memoirs claim that there were twenty nine opposition members elected while McMinn argues that there were thirty two members who could be classified as anti-socialists²¹³. What is certain is that the anti-socialists failed to win a majority, and that a Labor supported Deakin government remained in power following the election.

The survival of the Deakin government clearly shows that the anti-socialist campaign failed to achieve its primary goal of winning government. While the campaign failed, the extent of this failure was and is debateable. In a newspaper interview given two days after the election Reid claimed that with the anti-socialists and the Protectionists a majority of the members returned to the house were opposed to socialism.²¹⁴ The anti-socialist M.P. Dugald Thomson argued that if the electorates were of equal size the anti-socialists would have won three more seats in New South Wales.²¹⁵ Using senate results to estimate results in

²¹² ‘Mr Reid’s views’, SMH Friday 14 December 1906 p5. W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p239. George Reid, *My Reminiscences* p251. Colin Hughes & B.D. Graham, *A Handbook of Australian Government and Politics 1890-1964* (Canberra: Australian National University Press 1968) p296.

²¹³ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p239. George Reid, *My Reminiscences* p251.

²¹⁴ ‘Mr Reid’s views’, SMH Friday 14 December 1906 p5.

²¹⁵ ‘Minority rule’, SMH Wednesday 19 December 1906 p9.

uncontested seats Thomson claimed that in New South Wales the anti-socialists received 186 254 votes, Labor received 137 334 votes and the Protectionists received 33 971.²¹⁶ According to these figures the anti-socialists received more than half the votes in New South Wales yet only won eleven of twenty six seats. This discrepancy between the votes the anti-socialists received and the seats they won was apparent throughout the country, as the anti-socialists received 38.17% of votes for the House of Representatives, yet only won 34.67% of the seats (not including the independent protectionists who supported Reid).²¹⁷ In the senate the anti-socialists received 46.53% of the vote, suggesting that a large number of people who voted for a Protectionist in the House voted for the anti-socialists in the senate.²¹⁸ This may mean that people with anti-socialist beliefs often voted for sitting Protectionist members, or that many people who wanted a Protectionist government voted for the anti-socialists in the upper house in the hope of blocking the passage of ‘socialist’ legislation.

The reasons why the anti-socialist campaign failed to produce an election victory for Reid are also debateable. McMinn has argued that the sectarian issue cost Reid four seats in New South Wales and that the anti-socialist party was too heterogeneous to succeed elsewhere.²¹⁹ There is a great deal of truth in McMinn’s argument. The anti-socialist campaign certainly failed to win seats in New South Wales where sectarian feeling was so strong that the *Catholic Press* explicitly told its readers not to vote for Reid.²²⁰ Ultimately though, it was the failure of Reid’s attempt to make anti-socialism the national political discourse which cost him the election. The creation of this discourse was vital if Reid was to achieve his two main electoral goals of capturing a united liberal vote and getting people out to vote. The election of a number of Protectionist members, albeit fewer than in 1903, shows that Reid failed to unite liberal voters behind the anti-socialist cause. The voter turnout for the

²¹⁶ ‘Minority rule’, SMH Wednesday 19 December 1906 p9.

²¹⁷ Colin Hughes & B.D. Graham, *A Handbook of Australian Government and Politics 1890-1964* p296.

²¹⁸ Colin Hughes & B.D. Graham, *A Handbook of Australian Government and Politics 1890-1964* p297.

²¹⁹ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p238.

²²⁰ W.G. McMinn, *George Reid* p239.

House of Representatives election in 1906 was only 51.48%.²²¹ While this represented a 1.21% increase over the voter turnout achieved in 1903, it was well short of the 56.71% of electors who had voted in 1901.²²² This is a clear indication that Reid's appeal to constituents of all political persuasions to cast their ballot also failed.

The anti-socialist campaign failed to establish a truly pervasive discourse on socialism because of the endurance of other political issues. The survival of issues such as protection and sectarianism meant that the 1906 election was not the 'referendum' on socialism George Reid hoped it would be. Reid himself acknowledged that he had been most successful in Queensland where the protectionist issue had been least important.²²³ It was not simply a matter of the fiscal issue being greater than the issue of socialism that led to Reid's defeat. A series of competing discourses prevented Reid from making socialism the pervasive issue he wanted it to be. While in Victoria the main competing discourse was fiscal, elsewhere other issues eclipsed anti-socialism. In Western Australia regional issues dominated the political landscape, as John Forrest's West Australia party fought with Labor over who advocated the needs of the state the best.²²⁴ In New South Wales, fiscal and sectarian discourses endured despite the efforts of the *Sydney Morning Herald* to support Reid's electoral bid.

Political discourse is both shaped by and reflected in the media. Newspapers played a central role in influencing the result of the 1906 election by shaping the political discourse in each of the respective states. In New South Wales one of the main reasons anti-socialism failed was that despite the onslaught of Reid's anti-socialist rhetoric, fiscal and sectarian debates continued to garner newspaper coverage, even in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. In

²²¹ Australian Electoral Commission, *Voter Turnout for Referendums and Elections 1901-Present* http://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/australian_electoral_history/Voter_Turnout.htm accessed 6/5/2012.

²²² Australian Electoral Commission, *Voter Turnout for Referendums and Elections 1901-Present* http://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/australian_electoral_history/Voter_Turnout.htm accessed 6/5/2012.

²²³ 'Mr Reid's views', SMH Friday 14 December 1906 p5.

²²⁴ J. Murdoch, "The Western Australian Party in the 1906 Federal Elections: A comment on early federal feeling in the West" p249.

Victoria one of the main reasons anti-socialism failed was that David Syme's *Age* was able to shape the state's political discourse to focus on the tariff. This was especially the case after Deakin broke with Reid, meaning that the paper could portray the Protectionists as a united front of 'liberals' determined to oppose the 'conservative' Reid.²²⁵ In Western Australia the newspapers reflected their readers' interest in regional issues and therefore helped keep anti-socialism off the election agenda. In Queensland anti-socialism succeeded because the *Brisbane Courier* and the *Worker* were willing to engage in the kind of ideological debate Reid was propagating throughout the country.

The failure of Reid's discourse facilitated by the newspapers helped cause the anti-socialist extra-parliamentary organisations to fail. These organisations needed to establish an enthusiastic membership base if they were to achieve electoral success. Reid's tours were meant to establish a pervasive discourse on socialism which would drive people to join anti-socialist leagues, and these leagues were then meant to help fuel the discourse. Hence the lack of success experienced by these extra-parliamentary organisations was caused largely by the failure of Reid's discourse and helped Reid's discourse to fail. Despite the great number of branches established by the Australian Liberal League and later the Australian Democratic Union, Reid lost a significant amount of ground in New South Wales. Reid blamed this on the enthusiasm of grassroots Labor members, something he felt the anti-socialist leagues had failed to match.²²⁶ Outside of New South Wales, few anti-socialist leagues managed to get off the ground. After withdrawing its support for Alfred Deakin, the National League failed to establish itself as an effective force capable of opposing Labor and the Deakinites in Victoria. In Tasmania, the Tasmanian National Association failed to win any seats they did not already hold.

²²⁵ Sean Scalmen, "For the Love of a Fight: Free Traders and the Puzzle of the Fusion" p46.

²²⁶ 'Mr Reid's views', SMH Friday 14 December 1906 p5.

While it is difficult to determine the results of the anti-socialist campaign, it is even more difficult to dissect the complexities of its legacy. The most obvious and most often repeated legacy of the anti-socialist campaign was the endurance of Reid's rhetorical discourse on socialism. Paul Strangio is typical of many historians when he briefly argues that Reid was able to 'transform the focus of political discourse to a debate about the acceptable limits of state intervention'.²²⁷ Such assertions are common as it is easy to make a connection between the anti-socialist rhetoric of Reid and Menzies with only a fleeting understanding of the anti-socialist campaign. While the anti-socialist campaign did leave a discursive legacy, this thesis has shown that this discourse failed to fully take hold in 1906. In many ways the anti-socialist campaign produced a belated discourse, in which Reid's arguments only began to take hold after other political issues like protection and the outbreak of particularly feverish sectarianism began to die down. Reid's attempt to create a national discourse relied on state based media outlets that in 1906 were still focused on regional issues. While regional issues were to endure, the progressive establishment of a national political discourse would eventually allow a two-party system to take hold.

With a fuller understanding of the anti-socialist campaign, it is possible to speculate on the wider history of the establishment of the Australian party system. It does not appear surprising that it was Joseph Cook and not Alfred Deakin who managed to achieve the first (and only) electoral victory for the Commonwealth Liberal Party. When the Anti-Socialist and Protectionist parties merged in 1909, Deakin became the leader of the new party. Under his leadership, the Commonwealth Liberal Party suffered a significant defeat in the 1910 election, allowing Labor to form Australia's first federal majority government. Deakin, who had spent his whole political career campaigning for protection, was not able to convincingly deliver an anti-socialist message, despite his oratorical skill. The anti-socialist discourse may

²²⁷ Paul Strangio, 'Introduction: From Confusion to Stability' p11.

not have survived the 1910 election had it not been for Joseph Cook. The Commonwealth Liberal Party had been convincingly defeated while campaigning against socialism in 1910 and may have looked for another political issue on which to fight if Joseph Cook had not been elected the party's new leader. When Cook became leader he was effectively able to espouse the anti-socialist ideology that had been developed by Reid's anti-socialist campaign. It was Cook's victory in the 1913 election which cemented anti-socialist discourse within Australian political culture as it proved to liberals that an election could be won by combating the extension of state power. Hence the discursive legacy of the anti-socialist campaign was as much Cook's legacy as it was Reid's, a point ignored by historians who focus on the fusion as the central event in establishing the Australian party system.

The anti-socialist campaign is most often mentioned by historians who are analysing the fusion of the liberal parties in 1909 and who try to weigh up the competing importance of Deakin and Reid in non-Labor politics. Because these historians are not primarily concerned with the anti-socialist campaign they have often spent little time researching it. Normally when historians mention historical issues their work is not directly concerned with, they are able to form conclusions by drawing on a pre-existing historiography. Because this historiography does not exist for the anti-socialist campaign, historians are often forced to make sweeping statements about Reid, the campaign and its legacy.²²⁸ Peter Loveday makes a common assumption about the ideology of the campaign when he argues that Reid and the anti-socialist campaign embodied laissez-faire liberalism while Alfred Deakin supported a statist interpretation of liberal values.²²⁹ According to this line of interpretation Reid's anti-socialist legacy is the enduring small government ideology common in some sections of the

²²⁸ Peter Loveday 'The Liberal's image of their party' in Cameron Hazelhurst, *Australian Conservatism: Essays in twentieth century political history* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1979) p249. See also Gregory Melleuish, *A Short History of Australian Liberalism* (St. Leonards: Centre for Independent Studies Ltd. 2001), Judith Brett, *Australian Liberals and the Moral Middle Class* (Melbourne: Cambridge University press, 2003)

²²⁹ Gregory Melleuish, *A Short History of Australian Liberalism* p24. Peter Loveday 'The Liberal's image of their party' 249.

modern Liberal Party. In recent years this interpretation has been rebutted by Frank Bongiorno who has emphasised Reid's support for the statist measures like the Arbitration Act and the discontinuity between early federal and modern support for free-trade.²³⁰ Bongiorno argues that the only enduring legacy of the anti-socialist campaign was Reid's discourse.²³¹ Both these interpretations need to be re-examined on the basis of the new research presented in this thesis.

The anti-socialist campaign was not a laissez-faire campaign for truly small government. As the analysis of the Reid-Holman debates presented in this thesis showed, Reid's ideological construct allowed for an active role for the state as long as that role did not destroy private enterprise²³². Hence the ideological difference between Deakin and Reid over the role of the state has been exaggerated, as both men allowed the powers of the state to be used productively within a liberal-capitalist framework.²³³ It was Bruce Smith who ideologically opposed any interventionist role for the state and because of this he was ostracised from the leadership of the anti-socialist campaign. Even Gregory Melleuish, perhaps the most partisan of all the liberal historians who have written about the early federal era, tacitly admitted the ideological shortcomings of Reid. In his *A Short History of Australian Liberalism*, Melleuish pays far more attention to Bruce Smith than to George Reid because Reid, unlike Smith, fails to live up to Melleuish's small government beliefs.²³⁴

While Reid was not the laissez-faire ideologue some try to portray him as, his liberal opposition to the growth of government must also be acknowledged. Though Reid did help pass the Arbitration Act, he did so in an act of political pragmatism when two governments

²³⁰ Frank Bongiorno 'What Happened to Free Trade Liberalism?' in Paul Strangio and Nick Dyrenfurth (eds), *Confusion: The Making of the Australian Two-Party System*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2009) pp249-274.

²³¹ Frank Bongiorno 'What Happened to Free Trade Liberalism?' p250.

²³² 'Mr Reid in reply', SMH Wednesday 4 April 1906 p9.

²³³ For Deakin's attitude towards the role of the state see Alfred Deakin 'Liberal Differences with the Labor Party' in Graeme Starr, *The Liberal Party of Australia: A Documentary History* (Richmond: Heinemann Educational Australia Pty. Ltd. 1980) p13.

²³⁴ Gregory Melleuish, *A Short History of Australian Liberalism* pp1-25.

had already fallen over the bill. Reid's anti-socialist ideology did not exclude the use of government to achieve that which could not be done by private enterprise but that does not mean that the campaign did not oppose the extension of the functions of the state. Reid's willingness to give up his fight for free trade to pursue the anti-socialist campaign shows the importance he placed on preventing what he saw as a socialistic growth in government control over people's lives. As this thesis has shown, Reid's ideological rhetoric centred on a liberal suspicion of the expansion of the state and the restrictive nature of socialist equality. Hence Reid was ideologically small government without being laissez-faire, a pragmatic compromise typical of his political career.²³⁵ This position was not the embodiment of laissez-faire liberalism presented by Loveday, but it certainly implied an ideological attitude towards the role of the state not acknowledged by Bongiorno. While there is no evidence it was electorally contrived, the 'pragmatic compromise' was necessary for Reid's position, as it was ideological enough to form a party around, yet not so doctrinaire that it would be incompatible with mainstream politics.

The concept of a pragmatic compromise is central to understanding the ideological legacy of the anti-socialist campaign. The campaign saw for the first and only time Victorian and New South Wales liberals facing off against each other in an election campaign, fought not only over fiscal divides but over socialism. As Bruce Smith had implied in his attacks on the socialism of protection, the very concept of opposing socialism should have required a justification of what liberalism was.²³⁶ Both sides were hesitant to give a definition of liberalism. For Deakin this was logical as he was trying to create a fiscal discourse and hence was trying to avoid debating concepts of socialism and liberalism. For Reid, defining liberalism was an inconvenience that risked alienating those supporters who did not agree with his definition. When Smith and the circumstances of the campaign finally forced Reid to

²³⁵ For examples of Reid's political pragmatism see W.G. McMinn, *George Reid*

²³⁶ 'Free-Trade and Anti-Socialism', SMH Wednesday 7 February 1906 p7.

define his liberalism, he offered a definition that was a pragmatic compromise between laissez-faire and interventionist ideologies.²³⁷

The idea of a pragmatic compromise would become central to the modern Liberal Party's definition of liberalism. Like Reid, the Liberal Party is loath to define liberalism because in doing so it risks alienating its supporters. When liberals have defined the ideology of their party they have generally reflected Reid's concept of an active if limited role for the state.²³⁸ This pragmatic compromise definition allows the Liberal party to accommodate supporters of interventionist Keynesian economics while also accommodating conservatives who advocate the use of the functions of the state for socially moral purposes. The Liberal Party and its predecessors have always contained laissez-faire liberals like Bruce Smith, or indeed interventionist liberals like Isaac Isaacs who would not agree Reid's definition. What the anti-socialist campaign did was to ensure that these opinions remained marginalised. The anti-socialist campaign was probably the most ideological election campaign fought in Australian political history. The fact that a doctrinaire definition of liberalism was not able to take hold of centre-right politics in such circumstances all but ensured that a pragmatic approach would dominate non-Labor for the next century. As such, the anti-socialist campaign not only precipitated the founding of the 'Australian settlement', it saw the creation of a 'liberal settlement' in which the extremes of laissez-faire and extensive government intervention were marginalised in non-Labor politics.

While this 'liberal settlement' was a pragmatic compromise which purposefully marginalised laissez-faire beliefs, it is important not to exaggerate the amount of state intervention which the anti-socialist campaign advocated. The discursive legacy of the campaign left a distinct ideological mark. For most of the twentieth century non-Labor would

²³⁷ 'Mr Reid in reply', SMH Wednesday 4 April 1906 p9.

²³⁸ See Robert Menzies defining liberalism as opposed to communism and 'ruthless competition' in 'Liberal system in politics', SMH Saturday 30 October 1943 p11.

try to portray itself as the defenders against an enlarged socialist/communist state, echoing Reid's rhetoric.²³⁹ Reid and his successors' attacks on big socialistic government meant that interventionist interpretations of liberalism were even more marginalised than laissez-faire beliefs. Like Reid, Australian liberalism has for the most part advocated an ideology that is small government without being laissez-faire. Hence the 'liberal settlement', while pragmatically allowing for the huge differences of opinion that are common within the modern Liberal Party, continued to suggest a limited role for the state.

²³⁹ E.g. See Robert Menzies, '1946 Liberal Party Policy Speech' in Graeme Starr, *The Liberal Party of Australia: A Documentary History* (Richmond: Heinemann Educational Australia Pty. Ltd. 1980) pp132-6.

Conclusion

The anti-socialist campaign was a pivotal point in Australian political history, which has often been lost in an early federal liberal historiography in which the 1909 fusion of the non-Labor parties dominates. This trend of neglect has been exaggerated by the long Victorian domination of the modern Liberal party, which has led many historians to trace the origins of the Liberal party back to Alfred Deakin, paying little attention to Reid and his anti-socialist campaign.²⁴⁰ George Reid himself did not receive a biography until 1988 and although interest in Reid and the anti-socialist campaign did spike during the Howard era, little of what has been written has been backed up by in depth historical research.²⁴¹ This thesis represents the first time the anti-socialist campaign has been researched in its own right and thus fills a significant gap in Australian political historiography.

Although the historiography has given it little attention, the anti-socialist campaign was an important watershed in Australian political history. The anti-socialist campaign precipitated the founding of an ideologically based two-party system that has endured relatively intact until the present day. As this thesis has shown, George Reid's discourse tried to make ideology the central issue of Australian politics. This discursive objective was not achieved in 1906, but when competing issues like the tariff were settled, the belated effects of Reid's discourse helped to change the foundation of Australian political parties from policy to

²⁴⁰ Judith Brett, *Australian Liberals and the Moral Middle Class* (Melbourne: Cambridge University press, 2003) p23. Yvonne Thompson, George Brandis et. al. *Australian Liberalism: The Continuing Vision* (Victoria: J.G. Holmes Pty. Ltd. 1986)

²⁴¹ See Norman Abjorensen, "Three Perspectives on John Howard: The Reid Legacy, NSW Exceptionalism and the Fulfilment of Liberal Prophecy" Paper delivered at the John Howard Decade Conference, Canberra, March 2006 & Gregory Melleuish, *A Short History of Australian Liberalism* (St. Leonards: Centre for Independent Studies Ltd. 2001)

ideology. While the fiscal based parties carried with them an ideology which shaped their understanding of the tariff issue, this ideology was not transferable to other issues. Anti-socialism on the other hand implied an attitude towards the state and towards business that could influence all aspects of government. Only with this ideological basis could a permanent party system take hold as policies, like the fiscal issue, were transient and could be settled while an ideological battle over opposing world views is permanent.

The Labor party had been formed around a class based ideology from the very beginning and it is likely that this has helped it endure far longer than the other parties represented in the first parliament. Though it always maintained an ideology, chapter one showed that in many ways it was the Labor party's own shift from policy based pragmatism to the socialist ideology embodied in the 'nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange' which prompted the anti-socialist campaign.²⁴² Given this and the pre-existing anti-socialist discourse espoused by Bruce Smith, Joseph Carruthers and the Australian Women's National League we must be careful not to exaggerate George Reid's importance in creating an Australian anti-socialist discourse. While Reid did not create it, his exertions during the anti-socialist campaign popularised the issue. While Deakin was able to keep the issue of protection alive in Victoria and elsewhere, the success of Reid's campaign made it increasingly clear that once the fiscal issue was settled, an ideological restructuring of the parties would take place.

This ideological restructuring would create a two-party system which required a more united national discourse than that which Reid had to deal with during the anti-socialist campaign. While the creation of the political entity of Australia would probably, in time, have forced the states to join together in a reasonably coherent national political discourse it is likely that Reid's long tours sped up this process. Chapters two and three showed that Reid's

²⁴² Objective quoted in Ross McMullin, *The Light On The Hill* p55.

tours, unprecedented in their scope, prompted a national discussion on the issue of socialism. Even when people, like Deakin, dismissed the anti-socialist campaign, they were still engaging in a national discussion created by Reid. This national discussion also accelerated the slow growth of a national media, as even with their differing emphasises, newspapers from Brisbane to Perth were still reporting on Reid and anti-socialism. The greatest irony of the Reid's campaign is that it led to the destruction of the very things that made the campaign fail. The anti-socialist campaign failed because of a lack of a national discourse, the endurance of policy based parties and an underdeveloped national media yet it ultimately destroyed the policy based fiscal parties and helped to develop a national discourse and a national media.

It was this legacy that would ultimately be inherited by Reid's deputy Joseph Cook, who was able to engage in a national discourse, through a developing national media, to win the first popularly elected Liberal majority government in the federal Australian parliament. The origins of the modern Liberal party lay in the anti-socialist campaign as an evolved form of its ideological discourse continues to form the core belief set of most Liberal members. While Menzies and others would echo many of Reid's arguments, the Liberal party's anti-socialist legacy is not just discursive. The extra-parliamentary organisation established by the campaign and analysed in this thesis has been inherited by the modern Liberal Party. Though the Australian Liberal League and Australian National Union did not survive the campaign, their membership would form the basis of the extra-parliamentary organisation of the Commonwealth Liberal party, then the National Party, the United Australia Party and ultimately the modern Liberal Party.²⁴³ Importantly the anti-socialists organisation was far more developed than the Protectionists so when the parties fused the anti-socialist organisational legacy was far greater.

²⁴³ James Walter, 'My Heart Bleeds: Personalities, ideas and the drama of fusion' in Paul Strangio and Nick Dyrenfurth (eds), *Confusion: The Making of the Australian Two-Party System*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2009) p46.

Although the anti-socialist campaign saw New South Wales and Victorian strands of liberalism facing off against each other, the campaign's legacy has much to do with bringing liberals from different states together. As chapter one argued, the campaign was inspired by the New South Wales anti-socialism of Joseph Carruthers but may not have taken place without the Victorian anti-socialism of the Kyabram movement and the Australian Women's National League. It was these Victorian based organisations which had helped convince Deakin to support a Reid government and it was these Victorian organisations which were probably responsible for Reid's belief that he could win government in his own right in 1906. Allan McLean's support for the anti-socialist campaign is symptomatic of the way that the campaign's ideological basis brought together many who sat on opposite sides of the fiscal fence. The coming together of Victorians and New South Welshmen in support of the anti-socialist liberal ideology was embodied by Bruce Smith, who had once objected to 'Victorian legislation in the Commonwealth parliament' but by the end of the campaign was appealing to voters in Victoria alongside Allan McLean.²⁴⁴

Bruce Smith's exclusion from the leadership of the anti-socialist campaign also embodied the ideological conclusion of Reid's discourse. While the anti-socialist campaign opposed an increase in the functions of the state, which it saw as despotic, the campaign did not accept dogmatic laissez-faire beliefs. This would be important for the Commonwealth Liberal party and its successors, as though men like Smith have been tolerated within the Liberal movement, they have rarely been allowed to reach positions of power. While the ideological discussions prompted by the anti-socialist campaign within Australian liberalism led to the rejection of doctrinaire beliefs, the same may be said for the Labor party. As the second chapter of this thesis argued, it is possible that the popular backlash of the anti-socialist campaign ensured that the Queensland Labor Party's objective of the 'nationalisation

²⁴⁴ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXX p6820. SMH Monday 1 October 1906 p7.

of the means of production, distribution and exchange' was not adopted nationally.²⁴⁵ The milder and more pragmatic objective of the 'collective ownership of monopolies, and the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the state' represented a curtailment of extreme ideology on the left of Australian politics, comparable to that which occurred on the right.²⁴⁶ It is highly likely that the criticisms of the anti-socialist campaign helped to prompt the adoption of the milder objective, though the extent of this causation we will probably never know. If the anti-socialist campaign did help prompt the adoption of the milder objective then the campaign not only set up Australia's dichotomous political discourse, it also helped to establish its mainstream boundaries.

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²⁴⁵ Objective quoted in Ross McMullin, *The Light On The Hill* p55.

²⁴⁶ Objective quoted in Ross McMullin, *The Light On The Hill* p56.

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