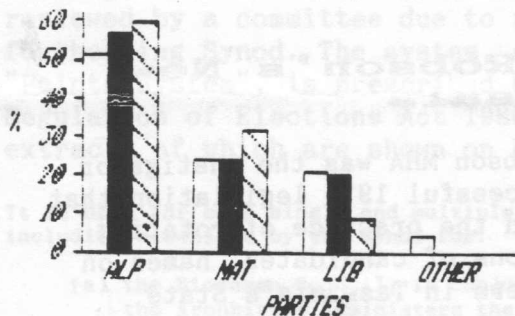


PR Would Have Averted Qld. National Party's Long Overdominance

QLD. ASSEMBLY 1989

Blank: VOTES, Solid: PR SEATS, Diag.: ACTUAL SEATS



QLD. 1989

PERCENTAGES

	ALP	NAT	LIB	OTHER
1ST PREF. VOTE	50.8	23.7	21.0	4.5
PR SEATS	56.2	23.6	20.2	0.0
ACTUAL SEATS	59.5	31.5	9.0	0.0

This month's election has changed the players in the Queensland Parliament, but not the system that elected them. Under that severely malapportioned single-member electoral district system, the ALP was remarkably lucky to have obtained an absolute majority of Assembly seats with such a small absolute majority of the total first preference vote.

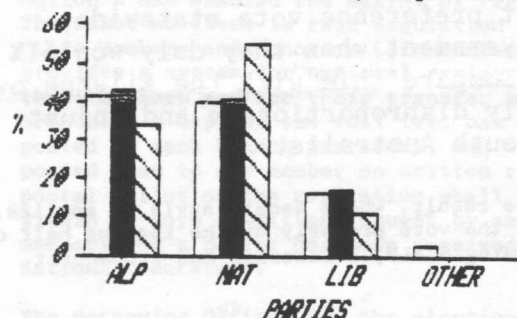
With such a margin, a PR system would have much more predictably given the ALP an absolute majority of seats, but more importantly it would, in the preceding elections, have denied the National Party the gross over-representation that allowed them to govern for so long either alone or in coalition with a greatly under-represented Liberal Party. That distortion fuelled the corruption, and also removed the means of publicizing and remedying it sooner.

The graphs and tables for the 1989 and 1986 elections are based on figures supplied by our N.S.W. Vice-President, Mr Ed Haber, who visited Brisbane to study the election.

The PRSA's Queensland Branch will use these figures in the submission, mentioned in the last "Quota Notes", that it will make to the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission.

QLD. ASSEMBLY 1986

Blank: VOTES, Solid: PR SEATS, Diag.: ACTUAL SEATS



QLD. 1986

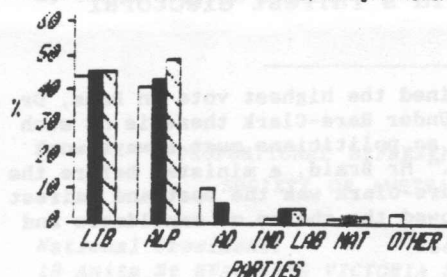
PERCENTAGES

	ALP	NAT	LIB	OTHER
1ST PREF. VOTE	41.1	39.6	16.5	2.5
PR SEATS	42.7	40.4	16.9	0.0
ACTUAL SEATS	33.7	55.1	11.2	0.0

SA Vote-deficient Grouping Again Wins a Majority of Seats

S.A. ASSEMBLY 1989

Blank: VOTES, Solid: PR SEATS, Diag.: ACTUAL SEATS



S.A. 1989

PERCENTAGES

	LIB	ALP	AD	IND	LAB	NAT	OTH.
1ST PREF. VOTE	43.7	40.6	10.1	1.6	1.2	2.8	
PR SEATS	44.9	42.9	6.1	4.1	2.0	0.0	
ACTUAL SEATS	44.7	48.9	0.0	4.3	2.1	0.0	

S.A. Branch Secretary, Mr Deane Crabb, reports that for up to 4 years from last month's election a grouping of the ALP and 2 Independent Labor MHAs will hold 53% of South Australia's Lower House seats, yet their two main opponents, the Liberals and the Democrats, together received 54% of the first preference vote statewide.

Remember the media fuss created earlier this year when Tasmania's grouping of the ALP and 5 Independent Green MHAs, who won about 51% of the first preference vote statewide, formed a Government when they duly won 51% of the seats? Compare this with the silence over the blatantly disproportionate and unjust result in South Australia.

The Upper House result, where Senate-style PR applies, should reflect the vote properly by the ingoing half of the House becoming 5 ALP, 5 Liberals and 1 Democrat.

Liberals Committed to Hare-Clark for the Lower House

A motion debated at the recent State Conference of the Tasmanian Division of the Liberal Party sought to make it Party policy that Tasmania's longstanding Hare-Clark electoral system should be replaced by a system of single-member electoral districts.

The opposition to the motion was led by the person that had lost the most significant office in the 1989 election - the former Premier, Mr Robin Gray. He described Hare-Clark as "the world's fairest electoral system".

The candidate that gained the highest vote in Bass, Dr Frank Madill, said, "Under Hare-Clark there is no such thing as a safe seat, so politicians must always work hard to be re-elected." Mr Braid, a minister before the election, said that Hare-Clark was the best and fairest system because it allowed the choice of candidates and the choice of members.

Each of these speakers showed great integrity in not blaming the system for their party's defeat. Each had been a member of the former government, and could have been tempted, as some Conference delegates were, to look for a scapegoat. Instead they put democracy, and Tasmania's fine electoral tradition, first.

The former Deputy Premier, Mr Ray Groom, a one-time Victorian footballer and Fraser Government Environment

Minister, irreverently nicknamed "Gray Room" by his Canberra staff, raised familiar complaints - that Hare-Clark favoured minorities, created intra-party rivalry and could act as a disincentive for members to stand against leading candidates from the same party. Of course all the parties at elections these days tend to be minorities - few exceed 50% of the vote. Intra-party rivalry affects all parties alike, and allows the voter to choose within parties.

The motion to abandon the party's commitment to Hare-Clark was defeated 32-53.

Neil Robson's New Proposals

Mr Neil Robson MHA was the instigator of the successful 1979 legislation that established the practice of rotating the positions of candidates' names on ballot-papers in Tasmania's State elections.

He is now reported to be proposing legislation to require that the positions of the party columns be similarly rotated to further nullify the effects of "donkey voting".

Mr Robson is also said to be considering proposing amendments to the Electoral Act that would take effect in any case where a party won an absolute majority of first preference votes statewide but failed to win an absolute majority of seats in the Assembly.

Although this is theoretically possible (because there are 5 electoral districts rather than a single statewide electoral district) it is likely to be rare and to occur only with extremely slim majorities. Mr Robson's cure this time may be worse than the malady. He is said to be considering that in such cases the seventh seat in each electoral district should be awarded to the party receiving the absolute majority of first preference votes statewide.

Such a proposal moves towards emphasizing the election of a government and then ensuring that the government so elected has a parliament to suit it. Let us hope that some Liberals have not become so accustomed to Parliament being rigidly controlled by the Government that they feel uncomfortable when the written constitutional realities emerge as at present in Tasmania, i.e. Parliament deciding who governs.

It is noteworthy that official figures from 1959, when the number of seats per electoral district was increased from 6 to 7, show that, in the 5 out of 9 elections from then in which

there was a statewide absolute majority of first preference votes for a single party, that party always gained an absolute majority of Assembly seats.

The PRSA will examine the Robson proposals much more closely if they see the light of day.

Review of Synod's "Points System"

The system used for elections by the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne is being reviewed by a committee due to report to the forthcoming Synod. The system, a modified "Points System", is prescribed by the Synod's Regulation of Elections Act 1980 relevant extracts of which are shown on Page 4.

It is used for both single and multiple vacancies including elections by the Synod for:

- (a) the Diocesan Council, in conjunction with which the Archbishop administers the Diocese,
- (b) the Board of Nominators (9 lay members and 9 clerics) elected under the Archbishop Election Act 1988 to present a shortlist of 3-6 candidates from which the Synod fills any vacancy (as exists at present) in the office of Archbishop, and
- (c) the position of Archbishop.

The review was prompted by concerns about the fairness of the Points System. Three examples by Enid Lakeman indicating major weaknesses in the system are shown on Page 4.

The "parties" she refers to are not Political Parties but are voters and candidates with similar views or causes. It is well recognized that such groupings occur in Synod elections. The General Synod of the Church of England in England and its predecessors have used quota-preferential PR for elections since 1920.

The "Points System" is a set of rules without an inherent rationale. Its approach is negative as it serves to rule out candidates strongly disliked by a core of voters. It then causes the residue to be elected by default. By contrast PR is positive and allows each quota of votes to identify the wanted candidate and to elect that candidate. The residue are unelected.

The PRSA has provided advice to Synod members on why PR should be adopted in the Melbourne Diocese.

PR Society Notices

The Returning Officer for the recent Constitutional Referendum, the National Secretary, Mr Andrew Gunter, has reported that all 3 motions were carried, the valid votes for Motions A, B and C being 47-0, 45-1, and 47-0 respectively.

Motion A has resulted in the establishment of our newest Branch, the Proportional Representation Society of Australia (Australian Capital Territory Branch). It is hoped that the Branch's first Office-bearers can be announced in the next "Quota Notes".

Motion B has enabled the making of regulations. The first of these is PRSA Regulation No. 1, "Life Members and Honorary Life Members". It provides a system for national registration of these members and for their transfer between branches. A copy of the full text has been posted to each Branch Secretary, and will be posted free to any member on written request. A postal ballot on the regulation shall be held if within 90 days a written request by any two members for a ballot has been received by the National Secretary.

The Returning Officer for the election of National Office-Bearers for 1990-91, the SA Branch Secretary, Mr Deane Crabb, has declared the following elected unopposed:

President:	Geoffrey Goode
Vice-President:	David Higbed
Secretary:	John Alexander
Treasurer:	Leonard Higgs

The newcomer is John Alexander, the NSW Branch Secretary. The Society is grateful to the outgoing National Secretary, Andrew Gunter. He was the subject, complete with large handsome photograph, of the main feature article in the "Mercury" of 12th February 1986 when he represented the PRSA at the State election tally room. He also joined the President in meeting the Territories Minister, Clyde Holding, to put the PRSA case against Machiavellian d'Hondt for the ACT. Andrew was recently elected President of the Victorian Branch.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

National President: Geoffrey Goode
18 Anita St BEAUMARIS VICTORIA 3193

National Secretary (1988-89): Andrew Gunter
177 Victoria St BRUNSWICK VICTORIA 3056

National Secretary (1990-91): John Alexander
5 Bray St MOSMAN NEW SOUTH WALES 2088

Telephone: (03) 589 1802, 3877325; (02) 960 2193

AN ACT

To consolidate and amend the Law for the Regulation of Elections by Synod.

BE IT ENACTED by the Archbishop, the Clergy and the Laity of the Church of England in Australia within the Diocese of Melbourne in Victoria duly met in Synod according to law as follows:

1. This Act may be cited as the Regulation of Elections Act 1980.

2. The Regulation of Elections Act (Number 3 of 1888) as amended by any Act and the Act Number 2 of 1907 as amended by any Act are hereby repealed provided that all persons, things and circumstances appointed or created by or under those Acts or existing or continuing under those Acts immediately before the commencement of this Act shall under and subject to this Act continue to have the same status operation and effect as they respectively would have had if those Acts had not been repealed.

21. The results of any Election shall be ascertained according to the rules in Schedule C.

SCHEDULE C

Where a voter has written a numeral opposite the name of one at least of the candidates named on a voting paper the numeral opposite the name of a candidate and a blank opposite the name of a candidate shall represent a number of votes against that candidate ascertained by the following rules:

1. A blank opposite the name of a candidate shall be deemed to be the numeral higher by one than the highest numeral written on the voting paper by the voter.

2. The number of votes to be counted against a candidate shall be determined by the formula

$$a + \frac{n+1}{2}$$

where

a is the number of candidates opposite whose name or names the voter has written a numeral lower than the numeral written opposite the name of that candidate,

and

n is the number of candidates opposite whose name or names the voter has written a numeral the same as that which is written opposite the name of that candidate.

The candidate against whom the lowest number of votes is cast shall be the candidate or the first candidate elected as the case may require and the candidate against whom the next lowest number is cast shall be the second candidate elected and so on until the required number is elected.

Points System

EXAMPLE I

Best candidate may be defeated
Two to elect out of five candidates

	Candidates and Preferences				
	A	B	C	D	E
No. 1 Voter	1	2	3	4	5
No. 2 "	1	3	2	4	5
No. 3 "	1	3	4	2	5
No. 4 "	5	1	2	3	4
No. 5 "	5	3	1	2	4
Total	13	12	12	15	23

The elected candidates are B and C, with a value of 12 each, but A, who polled three first preferences, could defeat either on a straight fight by three votes to two.

EXAMPLE II

No security for fair representation
Four to elect out of five candidates

	Candidates and Preferences				
	A	B	C	D	E
No. 1 Voter	1	2	3	4	5
" 2 "	1	2	3	4	5
" 3 "	1	2	3	4	5
" 4 "	4	1	2	3	5
" 5 "	4	1	2	3	5
" 6 "	4	1	2	3	5
" 7 "	3	4	1	2	5
" 8 "	3	4	1	2	5
" 9 "	3	4	1	2	5
" 10 "	2	3	4	1	5
" 11 "	2	3	4	1	5
" 12 "	2	3	4	1	5
" 13 "	2	3	4	5	1
" 14 "	2	3	4	5	1
" 15 "	2	3	4	5	1
" 16 "	2	3	4	5	1
Total	38	42	46	50	64

E has the support (first preferences) of four voters out of the sixteen. Under a proportional system he is entitled to be elected as one of the four representatives. But party ABCD, by voting according to plan, can ensure E's defeat. In the example, the total value of preferences for A, or B, or C, or D is less than the total value of preferences for E.

EXAMPLE III

The representation obtained by a party depends on the way its voters distribute their preferences among that party's candidates—a highly disciplined party, which can arrange that approximately equal numbers of first preferences go to each of its candidates while the other party's candidates are marked in roughly the same order, may get more seats than a larger party whose voters follow their own inclinations—especially if this larger party has one outstandingly popular candidate.

There are three to be elected and each of two parties puts up three candidates. The party with three voters elects candidates A and C; the party with four voters elects only candidate D.

	Candidates and Preferences					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
No. 1 Voter	1	2	3	4	5	6
" 2 "	2	3	1	4	5	6
" 3 "	3	1	2	4	5	6
" 4 "	4	5	6	1	2	3
" 5 "	4	6	5	1	2	3
" 6 "	6	5	4	1	3	2
" 7 "	5	6	4	1	3	2
Total votes	25	28	25	16	26	27