IN THE INTERESTS OF EDUCATION
A HISTORY OF EDUCATION
UNIONISM IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ADRIAN VICARY

ALLEN & UNWIN
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**Introduction**

We are fortunate in South Australia in having a number of good histories of education in published books and articles, as well as in many unpublished theses, and Colin Thiele's *Grains of Mustard Seed* provides a history of the Education Department from 1875–1975. In writing this centenary history of permanent teacher unionism in South Australia, we have been able to draw on this body of published and unpublished work.

Our focus in this book is the work of the organisation which has acted on behalf of teachers in South Australia since 1896. Originally constituted as the South Australian Public Teachers' Union (SAPTU), the organisation changed its name to the South Australian Institute of Teachers (SAIT) in 1951 following a merger of SAPTU with the Women Teachers' Guild (WTG). The Guild was formed in 1937 following a walkout from SAPTU by women dissatisfied with the Union's approach to representation of women in its decision-making bodies and with the Union's approach to issues which affected women. Of particular concern to women was the Union's attitude towards, and action (or lack of it) on equal pay. Although the break occurred in 1936, the tensions between male and female teachers had long simmered in the Union. In the merger agreement, which allowed reunification, women obtained equal representation on the committees of SAIT and a harmonious relationship between men and women seemed assured for the future of teacher unionism in this state.

There were in fact organisations representing teachers in South Australia before 1896, but they were small, short-lived and unrepresentative. We will discuss them as precursors to SAPTU and its descendants, but they are not the parents or grandparents of the later organisations. Permanent teacher unionism was established in South Australia with the formation of SAPTU shortly before the federation of the Australian colonies, and its centenary is only the second of teacher union 'anniversaries' in Australia. The first was that of the Queensland Teachers' Union in 1989. South Australian teachers were, therefore,
progressive in their decision to form an organisation which has, though not without division, represented them and those who have followed them since 1896.

Unionism was something of a fledgling in the nineteenth century among those workers who regarded themselves as somewhat distinct from their manual brothers and sisters. Teachers, bank officers, insurance clerks and other ‘white-collar’ workers were reluctant to form unions along the lines of manual workers until the closing years of the century. These organisations were established on a permanent basis only in the 1880s. However, this was an uneven development and teachers did not establish an uninterrupted line of unionism in South Australia until 1896.

The formation of a union for teachers, as for other workers, was a painstaking process. To discuss the South Australian case, we have utilised the
framework developed by Andrew Spaull to explain the origins and growth of teachers' unions. This framework consists of three elements: change in the work situation of teachers both in material conditions and in the control of work; a socio-political climate favourable to the development of a union for teachers; and a leadership able to promote the 'union cause' among teachers.

One of the striking characteristics of a historical analysis of teachers as an occupational group is the dynamic relationship between class and gender in both the structure of the workplace and of the work that teachers do. This relationship, however, has been underplayed in much of the analysis of teachers' work and of teachers' organisations; this history will show that the relationship has been of fundamental importance in shaping the nature of unionism among teachers, their policy determination and their response to state initiatives in education. Alongside this relationship, other tensions, such as those between primary and secondary teachers and between city and country teachers, have been critical to the development of the Union.

The form of occupational organisation developed by teachers reflects the contradictions inherent in their ambiguous class situation—it was at the same time a trade union and a form of professional association, but in the latter capacity it was devoid of collegial responsibility for determination and control of the labour process. As an organisation influenced by state control of the occupational group, SAIT and its predecessors have been affected by the practices and assumptions of the dominant class. This in turn renders teachers vulnerable to calls to be responsible, and, in particular, to the prescription of political neutrality, a term which has a number of meanings in the practice of teachers. It is a function of this doctrine to brand political commitment as irresponsible and incompatible with the professional task of teachers. The doctrine is observed by teachers as long as they believe that they achieve sufficient reward through it.

Political neutrality does not mean that teachers' organisations are non-political. As representatives of workers, they are developed as political instruments in class conflict and are engaged in attempts to achieve higher rewards and greater control over the labour process. But the ideology of professionalism shapes the character of the struggle and the level at which it is conducted on behalf of teachers. This preoccupation with unity was a significant force in diverting teachers' unions from a concern with the social, economic and political forces which shape education and its relation with other structures to a concern with developing policies and strategies that are acceptable within a consensus on the proper role of teachers' unions. The doctrine of political neutrality was the source of the tactic which falsely equated collaboration with professional conduct.

South Australian teachers voted in 1950 to form a single representative
organisation by a merger of SAPTU and WTG. Since 1951, the South Australian Institute of Teachers has acted as the sole representative body of teachers in this state, growing from a membership of 2500 teachers in 1951 to over 15,000 education workers in 1996. During this period the composition of the teaching force has grown in diversity at the same time as the education system has become more complex, both in terms of practice in schools and the character of their political and bureaucratic administration. Through SAIT, teachers in South Australia, like other organised groups of workers, have sought to influence conditions under which they work and the state policies which determine the functions they perform in their daily practice. How they have done this, and the constraints under which they have acted, are the subject of this book.

Teachers' organisations in Australia are the subject of a growing body of literature in a number of disciplines, although little attention has been paid in published material to South Australian teachers in the second half of the twentieth century. Perhaps this is because of what has been described as their 'politically conservative' character. Teachers have traditionally described themselves as non-political and continue to do so. But by 1968 teachers were threatening to adopt militant action through what they called the 'withdrawal of their professional services'. As with many other white-collar workers, teachers appeared to be shedding their cloak of 'responsibility', attending, for the first time in their history, mass meetings at which they publicly condemned the government of the day. What was striking about these meetings was not the antipathy expressed towards political authorities, since teachers throughout Australia had long been engaged in a campaign to convince the commonwealth government to commit funds to education. Rather, their significance lay in the solidarity expressed by teachers in their refusal to be continually ignored by political authorities who had traded on their moderation for decades. But, unlike some other teachers in Australia, South Australian teachers did not withdraw their 'professional services' in the late 1960s. Instead, they continued to negotiate in the manner to which they were accustomed, although by then they were more politically aware of the potential strength of their organisation.

In an important sense, the militant expression of this period was an expression both of the strength and weakness of SAIT. From earlier years, it had inherited a concern for unity among teachers, a concern which was to ensure that sectional divisions did not lead to fragmentation such as SAPTU had experienced earlier, or as had occurred in Victoria. This concern has also been shared by more militant teachers, whose work in SAIT over the years in the interests of unity culminated in the solidarity expressed in the mass meetings. But while SAIT has not suffered fragmentation, the preoccupation with unity has at times diverted it, not only from militant action, but also from
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developing a depth and range of policies, whose implementation could more
directly and forcefully influence the politics of education in South Australia.
Political conservatism or, more precisely, political 'neutrality', has by preventing
division, been an internal support for unity as well as a public articulation of
the responsibility of teachers.

Political neutrality—or the assertion of it—and unity are essential compo-
nents of the claim of teachers' organisations to professional status. The model
on which such a claim is based is derived from a limited number of occupations,
particularly medicine and law, but it is one which has exerted enormous
influence over the goals and actions of teachers. From their beginnings in the
late nineteenth century, teachers' organisations have adhered to this model,
despite their obvious differences on a number of counts from the occupational
groups they have sought to emulate. But their pursuit of professional status has
also created a distance—between teachers and other sections of the workforce.

By the exclusion of the unqualified, the traditional professions monopolised
their licence to practice and guaranteed for themselves political power and social
status. Social closure by exclusion, sanctioned by the state, guaranteed for the
traditional professions an estate-like status in pre-capitalist society, which was
transferred to a form of privilege akin to property in capitalism. In nineteenth-
century Australia school teachers had no corporate status which provided them
with control over the labour process. One of the pressing aims of early associ-
atations of teachers in South Australia was to raise the general educational level
of their members in order to raise the status of teaching. Starting from humble
 beginnings, various attempts were made along these lines so that teachers could
justify a claim to knowledge and, after some training, to skills in passing on
their knowledge to their pupils.

Teaching as a mass occupation has resulted from state control of education,
the political basis of which was the South Australian Education Act of 1875.
Lacking any prior form of occupational autonomy, teachers were immediately
subject to the bureaucratic and political direction of the state. From the state's
point of view, teachers were the agents in providing what began as elementary
and rudimentary schooling for the working class. Subject to control at work,
and institutionalised in their work conditions, teachers have more closely
resembled other sections of the workforce than the professional model to which
they aspire. However, in their relationship to the social structure, teachers have
not counted themselves as members of the working class, preferring to offer
their 'services' rather than their labour. Yet unlike the 'fee for service' and
control over their labour process which characterise the 'traditional' professions,
what teachers are paid for is the sale of their labour. In this they share a common
condition with the working class.

But if teachers were members of the working class, they could be expected
to display a greater sense of trade unionism than they have done. While they have struggled almost continuously since the inception of their organisations to achieve better conditions, they have done so in a form which has been moderated by concern for their 'professional position'. All teachers' organisations in Australia have experienced an inherent tension between unionism and professionalism, a tension which became a source of national division among teachers in the late 1970s. When, in 1979, the Australian Teachers' Federation (ATF) joined the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), SAIT, after an acrimonious debate and sharp internal division, withdrew from the Federation of which it (and its predecessor, SAPTU) had long been an active constituent. SAIT was joined only by the Tasmanian Teachers' Federation in the withdrawal.

However, SAIT remained in the industrial wilderness only for a short time, as the decision to withdraw from ATF was reversed in the early 1980s when SAIT also joined the South Australian United Trades and Labour Council. The policies and actions of SAIT underwent a marked cultural change in the 1980s as the union struggled to find ways of responding to the economic philosophies and policies of state and commonwealth governments and to the new strategies of managerial control exercised in both the public and private sectors of education. In the course of this struggle SAIT developed new ways of meeting the needs of members and created innovative approaches to educational politics.

This book is in three parts. The first traces the origins of teachers' unions and the formation of what was to become a permanent teachers' union at the end of 1896. This part of the book examines the divisions that led to the schism of the late 1930s and eventual reconciliation in 1951. The second part outlines themes in the history of teacher unionism from 1951 to the end of the 1970s and their influence on the work of the union. Finally, part three presents an account of the 'new unionism' from the beginning of the 1980s. After one hundred years of permanent teacher unionism in South Australia, SAIT became a member of the national union for education workers at the beginning of 1997.
Part One

To 1951
Chapter 1

The Beginnings of Teacher Unionism in South Australia, to 1896

In 1851, five years before the establishment of responsible government in the colony of South Australia, the Legislative Council passed an Education Act which abolished state aid to denominational schools and established a Central Board of Education to assist secular schools. In South Australia, rejection of state aid and support for the 'voluntary principle' was stronger than in the other colonies. The Board was able under the Act to license teachers and pay them a stipend, subsidise local communities to establish schools, and authorise inspection of schools by district councils. These 'national' schools varied in the quality of their premises and of their teachers, as well as in the extent of community support, and it was the task of Dr William Wyatt, Chief Inspector of Schools, to oversee standards in the schools. To assist Wyatt in this task, the Central Board could provide a building subsidy of £200, an amount not sufficient to meet the demands created under the Act. Centralisation was not the goal of this Act; 'it was based on the judicious intervention by a semi-government authority in a basically independent education market', where teachers were seen as 'independent contractors'.

The first effort to establish an association of teachers in South Australia was that of self-employed teachers early in 1851, who called themselves the South Australian Preceptors Association. Twelve men attended the inaugural meeting and elected W. A. Cawthorne as secretary. The aims of this society, whose members, it was proposed, would include tutors, assistants and governesses, as well as those teachers receiving a government stipend, included mutual improvement in the art of tuition and the establishment of an educational library. Through the achievement of such aims it was envisaged that the status of both teachers and education in the colony would be raised. Although they spoke about the poor conditions under which country schoolmasters taught, the
founders of this body did not consider industrial goals to be within their purview. Members heard lectures at their meetings on topics such as corporal punishment and the progress of improvements in education. In forming this association, South Australian teachers were influenced by the efforts at professionalisation by elementary teachers in Britain and by the actions of other occupational groups in the colony.

With a limited membership and lacking wide support, the Preceptors Association did not continue beyond the end of 1851. In 1857 an effort to revive the Association occurred with the establishment of the Educational Journal of South Australia. The inaugural meeting of the second, and more ambitious, Preceptors Association was held on 22 June in the Pulteney Street schoolroom with 60 men and women teachers present. Prior to the formation of this association, Chief Inspector Wyatt had suggested that it would be a good idea and that many teachers were in favour of it. Recognising that forming an association was an expensive business and that teachers’ incomes were limited, the Chief Inspector gently suggested that the government might consider some support from the Education Grant. The following year, the Chief Inspector was able to report that the Association had been successfully re-established and that the Governor was in favour of it. Again, he urged some support from public funds.

The second Preceptors Association had concerns wider than those of its predecessor. Its object was the same—to elevate the standard of education in the colony—but it proposed to attempt this through monthly meetings and wider dissemination of ideas about educational methods, as well as advocating the collection of educational statistics. It argued for the representation of ‘practical teachers’ on the Board of Education, and was at times very critical of the Board.

The Association also argued for the training of teachers to obtain a greater uniformity in teaching and a higher educational standard, as well as the classification of schools into infant, elementary and grammar. It sought the introduction of a system of competitive exams open to all schools. When the Association made suggestions regarding the presentation of annual reports, and submitted a timetable for use in schools, the Chief Inspector implied that the Association should not be attempting to dictate policy on matters it knew little about. In his 1859 Annual Report, Wyatt was pleased that the proceedings of the Association had allowed teachers to make contact with each other and, through reciprocal visits, to learn from and help each other in matters of teaching and examinations. ‘Self-complacency’ among teachers was thereby prevented as they were able to compare and improve.

In their aim to improve the standard of education in the colony the Preceptors Association and the state were at one. However, the Association was
unable to influence the course of policy in crucial areas. Teachers were held to be responsible for their own development and the state would accept an association which promoted self-improvement, but would not accept it crossing the line into policy or political agitation. Dominated by Adelaide schoolmasters, the Association did not attract widespread support and this weakened its attempts to exert influence on the state. In 1860 there were some two hundred licensed teachers in Adelaide and others in nearby districts. But a mere 40 of these were Association members and only half of them were financial. In 1862 the Association lapsed.\(^{13}\)

The failure of the two Preceptors Associations, formed in the 1850s to achieve either a strong and enduring membership or significant changes in the material conditions and status of teachers, meant that relations between teachers and the Central Board of Education remained unmediated by a trade union for most of the 1860s and the first half of the 1870s. Educational conditions in South Australia continued under the provisions of the 1851 Act until the Education Act of 1875. Following two abortive attempts in 1871 and 1873, Parliament passed this Act which heralded the beginnings of compulsory, free and secular education in the colony. These principles were the subject of widespread and intense debate in the colony, as they were in the other colonies at the time. Compulsion was opposed by voluntaryists, and free education by those who believed that if parents cared sufficiently for the education of their children they would pay for it. The voluntary arguments featured again in arguments about bible reading in schools.

Teachers, of course, had an interest in these principles and their implementation. On 30 September 1870, a meeting of some thirty teachers was held in Adelaide at the Hotel Europe 'for the purpose of considering in which manner our education system may be best improved'.\(^{14}\) Mr Nadebaum\(^{15}\) of Lobethal moved a resolution 'That it is the opinion of this meeting that our education system will be most improved by making the attendance of children from seven to fourteen years of age to a certain extent compulsory, say at least eight months out of twelve'. Compulsory attendance and well-qualified teachers were both necessary for improvement in schools. The meeting eventually resolved in favour of 'absolute compulsion'. It also resolved to support secular education, but accepted optional reading of the bible during school hours, some teachers having argued that their workload was already heavy enough without such a reading after school hours.

A lively discussion of methods of financing education, and the method of appointment and payment of teachers took up the rest of the meeting. Teachers, it was argued, wanted security of tenure, independence from the personal politics of school boards and a salary sufficient to attract talented people to teaching. Echoing the dominant assumptions of the time, Mr Small asked with a rhetorical
flourish: 'Would it not make a wonderful difference in ten years in the province whether the teachers of the rising class were talented, high-minded, earnest, active men, with their souls in the work, or half-educated, feeble, vacillating creatures, with little other aim than the obtaining of the quarterly stipend?' At the conclusion of the meeting it was agreed to petition the Parliament with the views expressed in the resolutions.

Through these arguments teachers were seeking to improve some of the conditions of their work. Compulsory education would mean that their clientele was guaranteed and an improvement in salaries would go some way towards compensating them for their arduous work as well as attracting talented people to teaching. The status of teaching, they hoped, would be raised by more adequate training. The Bill for an Act to Provide Public Education in South Australia, which was introduced in June and assented to in October 1875, appeared to address some of the concerns that teachers had in relation to their conditions and their status. The Act also created a new Council of Education which centralised the administration of education in the colony and this, in turn, led to new concerns and issues for teachers. Their status was transformed from that of 'independent contractors' or 'private [educational] entrepreneurs', into employees of the state. Regulations under the Act 'dealt with teacher qualifications and training, courses of instruction, appointments, dismissal, classification of schools and teachers [as well as] limited payments for good school examination results—the notorious 'Results Examination' as it came to be called'. However, the Act did not enforce compulsory schooling, nor did it abolish fees for schooling; it thus provided for an increase in state power but no increase in citizen entitlement in education. Early in October 1875 the South Australian Public Teachers' Association was launched at a meeting in the Adelaide Town Hall.

The South Australian Public Teachers' Association (SAPTA)

In the absence of a teachers' organisation since the lapse of the second Preceptors Association in 1862, teachers' interests were taken up by groups of teachers in correspondence or deputations to the Central Board of Education. By 1875 that body was dominated by John Anderson Hartley, a Board member and headmaster of Prince Alfred College since 1871. At this time Hartley was demonstrating the characteristics for which he was later to become even more famous, or infamous—'thoroughness, efficiency, dedication, a hard-edged fairness and, above all, a stern sense of duty'. Thomas King, headmaster of Port Adelaide school, wrote to the Board in 1875 pressing the necessity of a provision for teachers who were incapacitated for work by reason of age or infirmity, and
The Beginnings of Teacher Unionism in South Australia, to 1896

followed this with a deputation to the Board where he was joined by Lewis Madley (headmaster of the Grote Street Model School), L. S. Burton and John Millard. This deputation suggested that teachers should be classified as civil servants as they would then be entitled to a payment on retirement. The Board was sympathetic to the arguments of the deputation and recommended to the Minister that teachers receive a retiring allowance. Although the Minister replied that a retiring allowance would be considered, it was again necessary for King to write to the Board on behalf of a committee of licensed teachers pointing out that no such allowances were provided for in the new Education Act. 21

A provision for retirement was clearly of material concern to many teachers in the colony and was one of a number of issues which prompted the formation of another teachers' association. SAPTA was more active than earlier associations in promoting the interests of teachers, both in their day-to-day work and in their material concerns. The 1875 Education Act centralised the administration of education and installed Hartley as President of a new Council of Education which replaced the Board. This Act gave the state broad powers to regulate education and the work of teachers. Indeed, the Act was the political basis for the creation of teaching as a 'mass occupation'—it subjected teachers more directly to the bureaucratic and political direction of the state and reduced the scope of their autonomy at work. SAPTA was a reaction to new state direction in education.

In its structure the new Association was city-based and country 'branches' were loosely connected to it. When the Kapunda Branch wrote directly to the Council in 1876 asking that textbooks for the next pupil teacher examination be stated and that the pupil teachers' examination papers be returned to the teacher after the exam, Hartley replied that the Council would receive communications only through the central committee of the Association. This provided a filter through which Hartley was informed of teachers' grievances. Mary Mackay of Gambiertown threatened to apply to the Council through the Teachers' Association if she did not receive a satisfactory reason for her pupil teachers not being required to attend the recent examination. Asked by Hartley to withdraw the threat, she indicated in another letter that she refused to comply. Hartley then ordered her to withdraw both letters 'unreservedly before next Monday'. When she did withdraw, Hartley wrote that 'Council will now consider any statement Miss Mackay may desire to make'. 22 Having withdrawn her threat, Mary Mackay did not put support from the Association to the test.

Thomas King again represented teachers at a deputation to the Council in January 1876, this time as a representative of the newly formed SAPTA. He was joined by Charles Webb, the Association secretary; John Millard, John Peale and Thomas Niehaus in an attempt to demonstrate to the Council that the
salaries of teachers under the new regulations would be lower than they were before the Act. The Association wanted a higher rate of fixed salaries and an increased amount to be paid for passes in the Results Examinations.

With the compulsory clauses of the Act not able to be enforced properly, the Northern Branch of the Association in 1878 requested that an allowance be made for teachers in purely agricultural districts when the bonus for passes in the Results Examinations was being calculated. This request was turned down by the Council.

Hartley encouraged the work of the Association provided that it did not attempt to interfere in policy or act in ways which he considered political. The Association was obedient and respectful in its dealings with him, even in matters such as the frequency of returns on attendance, which added to the teachers' already heavy task of teaching. Council was 'respectfully requested' to consider an item the Association wished to raise, and letters were signed 'Yours Obediently'. Such practices were more than mere formality—they were a reflection of the subordinate position of teachers in a system where the Chief Inspector distrusted them and demanded compliance from them. Hartley encouraged the Association because he saw it as a means of the self-improvement of teachers rather than a political organisation. A combination of the regulations and a compliant teachers' organisation would control teachers. In keeping with this view, the members of the Association expressed their desire to cooperate with the Council.

In 1878 discussion on a proposed modification to the Act, designed to improve the effectiveness of those clauses dealing with compulsory attendance, concluded with a restructuring of the educational administrative apparatus and created the Education Department with Hartley as Inspector-General. This move consolidated Hartley's control of school curricula and his ability to regulate the work of teachers.

Hartley and his inspectors continued to encourage the formation of teachers associations. In his Annual Report of 1879, Inspector Burgan said that

The formation of teachers associations throughout the district, which should hold monthly meetings for the discussion of educational matters, would be of immense advantage to many teachers. The mental friction that would thus be given by the discussion of methods, etc., would be of great value, and would quicken the intellectual life of the schools. There is much greater necessity for such associations in a country district than in the city, and I hope that my suggestions will not be thought worthless, but will be acted on and bear fruit.

By 1881, criticism of Hartley's methods by influential public figures and by teachers led the government to establish an enquiry into the working of the
Act. At the 1881 annual meeting of SAPTA the headmaster of Willunga school, Thomas Noye, delivered a highly critical paper on the topic of 'Education in South Australia', in which the Inspector-General and his methods were satirised. Despite the efforts of the Departmental officials, the teachers' associations were not always compliant. During the course of the hearings of the Select Committee (later a Commission of Enquiry) from 1881-83, the Association gave evidence of the difficulties teachers faced in labouring under Hartley's administration. This merely reinforced Hartley's view that the Association should deal only in professional matters—that is, in the improvement of teachers and teaching. His administration was vindicated by the Enquiry which praised his commitment to 'the education of the children of the people'.

Following the Enquiry, inspectors were again promoting the formation of teachers' associations for the purposes outlined by Burgan in 1879. Inspector Clark in 1884 reported that meetings had been held at Quorn, Gladstone and Orroroo to discuss the draft of the new education regulations; by the time these regulations were gazetted, associations had also been formed in other country areas.

In 1885, the South Australian Education Gazette was instituted by the Department with two of its purposes being to inform teachers and to promote their self-development. Hartley said that in that year he had visited most of the associations at least once and had found his meetings with them very valuable. The inspectors similarly praised the formation of associations and Inspector Stanton suggested that the increased number of associations was an outcome of the establishment of the Education Gazette. However, various difficulties confronted teachers in the formation of associations in some districts; for example, Clark noted the problems posed in organising meetings in the Far North because of new railway timetables. Unable to influence policy to a significant extent and lacking widespread support, this Association lapsed after it had presented evidence to the Enquiry. This was despite the worsening physical conditions in schools. Dominated by Adelaide teachers, it had not established cohesive links with the country associations. Nevertheless, after the demise of SAPTA there was a revival of interest in teachers associations.

The formation of the South Australian Teachers' Association (SATA), 1885

The draft regulations which were discussed at the various teachers' association meetings were gazetted in 1885 and provided a catalyst for the formation of a new South Australian association of teachers. On 4 July 1885, a meeting of teachers was held at the Grote Street school with J. A. Cockburn, Minister of
Education, in the chair. Hartley read a paper on teaching arithmetic, and the headmaster of Salisbury school, Mr Wittber, demonstrated a counting board. A provisional committee of fourteen male teachers was formed.

In August, the affairs of the old SAPTA were wound up, and on 25 September officers for a new South Australian Teachers' Association were elected at a meeting, again at the Grote Street school. Seven ladies were reported as being among the 37 teachers present, but the office-bearers and committee members elected were all males, many of them headmasters. It was noted that the attendance was poor and city teachers were absent because the meeting was held in the middle of the holidays to allow country teachers to attend. There was a better attendance at the November meeting where sixty teachers were present.

Elections for new officers in 1886 saw the election to office of J. T. Smyth as president, C. B. Whillas as vice-president, C. Charlton as treasurer and R. Gamble as secretary. Each of these men was later to become an inspector. Of the nine committee members elected, Miss Downing was the only woman. W. L. Neale was later to become Director of Education in Tasmania and J. A. Plummer a South Australian inspector. In its composition this committee continued the previous pattern of the dominance of headmasters from city schools in the affairs of the Association. Again, the objects of this Association were framed in terms of the development of teachers through lectures, discussions and the establishment of a library, as well as 'to bring teachers into closer union and social intercourse with each other'. Those who took part in the leadership of the Association often went on to pursue higher career paths in the Education Department.

Like its predecessor, SATA was established under Departmental patronage. This had the effect of attaching the prestige of teachers to the goals of the Department and placing teachers in a position of dependence on their patron. In its preference for professional self-development and social intercourse among teachers over political and industrial goals, SATA embodied the advice given by Hartley in the pages of the Education Gazette. There he stated that a teachers' association should not have political aims and should not be established for the airing of petty grievances. Its main aims should be mutual help and self-improvement through papers on educational subjects, demonstration lessons and exhibitions of school work and teaching appliances. The greatest good would come from social intercourse, which was particularly necessary for country teachers. Hartley also felt that it was appropriate for him to advise on Association membership and frequency of meetings.

In Hartley's hands, the Gazette was a powerful medium. As an article in the Teachers' Journal was later to point out:

In its early days, the Gazette attempted the dual role of presenting a forum...
for the discussion of professional matters, as well as being a medium for the dissemination of official notices and pronouncements. Although produced by a committee consisting mainly of teachers, it was published at Government expense, and the bias tended more and more towards administrative need rather than teachers' news and views.44

Until the establishment of an independent teachers' journal in 1915, the Gazette reported on the meetings of local associations.45 In the late nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth century, Departmental influence in the establishment, activities and perspectives of teachers' associations was facilitated by the centralised medium of the Gazette.

Associations of teachers were formed in country areas often with the support of inspectors who, in many cases, held the position of association president. However, SATA did not succeed in creating a united organisation of all teachers in the colony. Its structure was not one of a central organisation with branches, but a city-based one with attendance by some country associations at its meetings.

The first annual picnic of SATA, in February 1887, attracted 40 people to Wether Station Farm at Balhannah in the Adelaide hills, where they gathered blackberry and fern and the more sporting amongst them played tennis and croquet.46 However, after the flurry of activity around the new Regulations and Courses of Instruction, announced in 1885, had subsided, attendance at Association meetings also began to subside.

Eleven associations were listed in the Gazette in 1886,47 but disaffection with the structure of SATA was beginning to be expressed by 1887, particularly among country associations where it was felt that the Association was city-based and isolated from the interests of country teachers. Although a 'South Australian Teachers' Associations Union' was formed in 1887, it was city-based and did not lead to a permanent union organisation.48 Country associations such as the Moonta Association argued that there should be a union of teachers in the colony, a proposal which was supported by the Barossa and Gladstone associations, but this was simply referred to a SATA subcommittee.49 In 1888, at the SATA annual meeting, the president expressed regret at the small attendance at meetings, a point which was repeated at the 1889 annual meeting, where it was reported that only 39 teachers had paid their subscription for that year.50

Despite the dwindling interest in SATA, at least in the city, the officials pursued some matters of material importance to teachers, particularly head teachers, including the classification of schools and the superannuation fund. The effect on salaries of the free education bill was a concern in 1891 and 1892, particularly as some teachers had suffered considerable reductions.51

A reduction in salaries was a material problem which further compounded the effects of the financial depression of the 1880s and 1890s on teaching
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conditions, including substandard and overcrowded schoolrooms. Thiele notes an ‘innovative’ response in 1885 by the Minister of Education to the cost of school buildings: 'by employing unmarried teachers only, and reducing the size of the building accordingly, school accommodation can be provided for an average attendance of twenty children at a cost of £250, instead of £450'. Such a policy further entrenched the position of single women as isolated teachers who were subject to the goodwill of the community for accommodation. The conditions of provisional teachers, mostly women, were even worse, but the Association demonstrated little concern about their conditions. Yet, faced with all these difficulties, teachers did not give their support to the Association. Their lack of support was a reflection of their accurate perception that SATA was an association which reflected the interests of mainly male head teachers.

In 1889, there were 1076 teachers employed by the Education Department, 62 per cent of whom were female; of the 258 head teachers, only 47, or 18.2 per cent, were female; and of 288 provisional teachers in the same year, 71.2 per cent were female. Female teachers outnumbered males in South Australia from 1876. Although the affairs of the Association were conducted primarily by men, women did not remain silent about their conditions. As we have seen, Mary Mackay was prepared to argue with Hartley about the treatment of her pupil teachers in 1876, and others acted in the same manner.

In 1891 a SATA meeting of 'lady teachers only', the first such meeting of women in the Association, was held to discuss matters affecting the conditions of women teachers. These were the impending abolition of the position of headmistress in girls and infant schools and the extra work in school required of female pupils in relation to sewing. A subsequent monthly meeting of SATA endorsed a proposition from the meeting of lady teachers that there be no reduction in the highest salary available to female teachers. It also agreed that, on account of the extra work required of girls for sewing, the standard expected of them in arithmetic should be lowered as compensation.

SATA and the Teachers’ Guild, 1892

A South Australian branch of the Teachers’ Guild of Great Britain and Ireland was formed in 1881 and amalgamated with the Collegiate Schools Association in 1889, the latter body being representative mainly of secondary teachers in the private colleges. Although the members list of the Association from 1893 to 1904 contained a number of public school headmasters, this list in the main was a 'who's who' of elite private schools in Adelaide. Madeline Rees George from the Advanced School for Girls was an active member of the Association as were Maughan, Williams and Mueller.
In October 1891, Mr Grashy argued that the teachers' associations in the colony should unite into a guild while still retaining their separate associations. In November the following year, Mr Sunter, a friend of Hartley from Prince Alfred College, addressed a SATA meeting on the benefits of a teachers' guild in South Australia. Using the examples of doctors, lawyers and clergymen, Sunter argued that a body uniting all ranks of teachers was a precondition for teachers to obtain the status and authority of a learned profession. Distinctions between teachers in the various branches, he argued, were not fundamental but were a matter of degree:

The guild aims at breaking down this distinction by welding all grades of teachers into one organised body of fellow-workers, and by degrees to raise the whole idea of education from the mere trade level to the height of a profession whose members shall glory in devoting their talents and their lives to a noble cause.57

One of the objects of the parent guild was to obtain a professional status for teachers by encouraging the training of all teachers and by taking the necessary measures which would lead to the registration of teachers of all grades.

The inaugural meeting of the Teachers' Guild of South Australia was held at the Advanced School for Girls in May 1893, where Professor Bragg was elected president, M. M. Maughan treasurer, and Mueller and Whillas were elected to the committee. Later in the year the Collegiate Schools Association was reconstituted and Madeline Rees George continued to play an active role in it.58 With the exception of Maughan though, the male public teachers who were previously active in the Association were no longer involved. Although it adopted the objectives of the parent body, the Guild was not successful in achieving either registration or its goal of a 'united profession'. However, it did open up the discourse of professionalism which was later to become an important component of the aims of teachers' associations.

Discussions between SATA and these other organisations were a conversation between city-based teachers with little relevance to teachers in the country.59 Inspector Plummer's 1892 Annual Report contained the view that meetings in the north were few and far between. He speculated that the vitality of such associations may be influenced positively by the presence of the inspector, given the work of his predecessor in establishing such associations, but it was his belief that meetings should be held without the inspector. Plummer may have been attempting to establish a distance between the associations and the Department as a means of promoting their independence from Departmental patronage. In the following year he reflected on their role: 'In these days of unions and societies it might fairly be supposed that the associations of teachers would take a leading place', but he found too few associations to have any influence.60
But it was not long before vigorous meetings in the country occurred. While the headmaster-dominated, city-based Association was struggling to maintain

Sir Langdon Bonython was president of the Teachers' Association before the formation of the SA Public School Teachers' Union. He was an active supporter of public education and teachers in the Education Department for a period of over forty years. He and Lady Bonython entertained teachers during annual conferences. In December 1923 Sir Langdon Bonython was presented with a very handsome rose bowl bearing the following inscription:

'To Sir Langdon Bonython K.C.M.G., from the South Australian Public Teachers' Union.
In appreciation of the many kindnesses received from him and Lady Bonython by the teachers of South Australia during a period of forty years, and of his many services to the State in the cause of education, December 20, 1923.'

The presentation was made by a deputation which comprised Mr. W. Bennett (the president of the Union), Inspector T.H.S. Nicolle (the past president), Mr. H.M. Lushey (treasurer), Mr. H. Tuck (headmaster of the Unley School), Mr. J. Gerlach (president of the Male Assistants' Association), Mr. C.M. Gordon, M.C. (representing the younger teachers), and Colonel T.H. Smeaton (general secretary).

(SA Teachers' Journal)
membership, vitality and identity, associations of teachers in the country held regular well-attended meetings—subject to factors beyond their control such as the weather and changes in railway timetables. By the early 1890s, when the effects of the financial depression were being keenly felt, some of these associations were asking questions about the form and relevance of SATA. These associations regarded SATA as isolated from the interests of the great majority of teachers. Country teachers found it difficult to attend SATA meetings because of the time and expense involved in travel to Adelaide, and little appeared to be done to facilitate their involvement in SATA. Gumeracha delegates to the SATA conference held in the Michaelmas holidays in 1891 reported to their association `that the conference might as well not have been held as the practical result was nil'. By 1894, the Gumeracha association had decided that in future it would not send delegates to SATA as the meetings were not beneficial, and that a more satisfactory form of cooperative society among teachers was necessary.

In the same year that Gumeracha was questioning the relevance of SATA, the Gladstone association discussed the question: 'Why are teachers' associations not a greater success?' Some of the reasons suggested were the looseness of organisation; the absence of defined rules; a lack of clarity about the purpose and scope of meetings; the airing of individual grievances, the monopolisation of offices by teachers in the larger schools; and selfishness of teachers. To overcome these difficulties it was proposed that there should be a common set of rules; a limit on the holding of office to two successive terms; carefully prepared agenda for meetings; a closer union between the associations and affiliation with a central body; an annual teachers' congress; and more enthusiasm for an association from teachers. The discussion was continued the following year when it was argued that a reduction in train fares was essential to deal with the difficulties and expense involved in travel to meetings.

Perhaps influenced by its contact with the Guild, SATA attempted in 1893 to elevate its public image by deciding to appoint to the position of president 'a gentleman not connected with the Education Department'. This gentleman was J. Langdon Bonython. The 'advisability of departing from our customary method of electing a president from amongst the Head Teachers of our schools' was questioned by George Gill, headmaster of North Adelaide school, but there appears to have been no strong opposition to the move. Gill's question was presumably prompted by presidential ambitions of his own.

In August 1895, new rules for the Association were proposed and accepted, and in October it was agreed that they would come into force in January 1896. Under these rules SATA became the Adelaide Public Teachers' Association. By this time meetings were infrequent and the committee appears not to have been meeting between general meetings. Even an official luncheon held by Mr
Bonython for the teachers and attended by leading academics and such notables as the Minister of Education, the Premier and J. A. Hartley, who as well as being Inspector-General was also Vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide, did not seem to generate enthusiasm for the Association. Although Lewis Madley, principal of the training college, in a toast at the luncheon described teachers as ‘captains of the great army of democracy’, the Association did not create a feeling of democratic organisation amongst teachers as a whole.

The emergence of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union (SAPTU), 1896

Gladstone association was not alone in its criticisms of existing structures, and it was clear by the end of 1895 that a more general movement for a restructuring of teachers' associations in the colony was under way. New associations were being formed in country districts and there seemed to be a revival of interest in the associations. Melrose proposed a northern association and this was supported by Orroroo, while Balaklava, nearer to Adelaide, preferred a union of all the South Australian teachers' associations to meet in Adelaide. Teachers were becoming aware of the successful organisation of teachers in Britain and, much closer to home, in the neighbouring colony of Victoria, where the second Annual Congress of the Victorian State School Teachers' Union was held at Ballarat in the Easter week of 1896. Teachers were now beginning to use the language of 'union' and they felt that combination and cooperation would benefit them in their endeavour to improve their conditions and to raise the level and status of education. A letter dated 8 July 1896 and signed by Lewis Madley, Milton Maughan, Alfred Williams, J. S. Gold, Allen Pettit, Ruth Fraser and W. Hand was circulated in schools to generate interest in a general meeting of teachers, the purpose of which would be to establish an annual conference of teachers. A committee consisting mainly of 'leading headmasters' was subsequently established to arrange a program and, with the support of the Inspector-General, a meeting went ahead.

In Trades Hall in Grote Street on 28 September 1896, 'the first conference of public school teachers of South Australia, held with the idea of forming a union and holding annual conferences', launched the South Australian Public Teachers' Union (SAPTU). The chairman of the committee which worked out the agenda, and the chair of the conference, George Gill, described it as 'the largest gathering of teachers he had ever seen in the colony'. But before the meeting proceeded with its business, Gill referred to the untimely death of Inspector-General Hartley as a result of an accident some three weeks before the conference, a 'sad calamity which has cast a shadow of gloom over all of
us . . . an irreparable loss to us as teachers, to our school children, to the cause of education generally, and, indeed, to the whole colony'.72 Hartley was to have addressed this conference as he had done earlier in the year in Victoria at the teachers' union conference there.

Hartley's shadow hung over the meeting. Reference was made by a number of speakers to his fine personal and administrative qualities, and a large amount of time was devoted to a consideration of the most appropriate way in which teachers could contribute to a memorial to the former Inspector-General. But, more importantly, Hartley's influence was present in shaping the goals and purposes of the Union. Gill stated in his address that the Union would neither take on the character of a political organisation nor would it be used for airing petty grievances, but rather that it would be devoted to the 'mutual improvement and intellectual advancement' of teachers in order to provide 'better facilities for discussing important matters connected with our school work and the cause of education generally'.73 These sentiments were an echo of Hartley's earlier prescriptions for associations of teachers.

Dr Cockburn, Minister of Education in the Kingston government, congratulated teachers on their efforts to form a union, and spoke of the importance of the teacher as the 'gardener of humanity'.74 Similarly, the Register praised the teachers for their efforts in pursuing professional concerns through a union based on the experiences and models of British and Victorian teachers.75 The newspaper gave less praise to Cockburn, accusing him of attempting to woo the support of teachers for the Kingston ministry which, although apparently in favour of cooperation, really harboured the desires of 'Fabianistic socialism and State-controlled industry'.76

By 1896 there was a favourable socio-political climate for the formation of a union of teachers in South Australia. In October and November several associations discussed the September conference and the new union, and agreed to join it.77 But what kind of union was envisaged and what did teachers mean when they talked about a union? The various country associations which argued for a union of teachers in the early 1890s used the term 'union' to mean a more coherent and structured collection of associations than was offered through the city-based and headmaster-dominated SATA to which they had only a loose affiliation. These associations believed conferences of SATA to be a waste of time, effort and expense. SATA itself was poorly supported even in the city and did not have an impact on education policy in the colony. Its title was always a misnomer as it represented teachers in the city and was not truly South Australian in scope and coverage; the belated recognition of this occurred in late 1895 when SATA changed its name to the Adelaide Public Teachers' Association. To the country associations, union meant strength, representation of their interests and a voice for the majority of teachers who worked in small, isolated country towns.
The fact that the September 1896 conference was held at Trades Hall was of symbolic importance as it appeared to associate the interests of teachers with the trade union movement in the colony. However, the movement towards a union for teachers contained contradictions and the conference highlighted some of them. Along with the formal proceedings of the conference, social events were held which seemed to demonstrate the separation of teachers from other workers. On the afternoon of the first day of the conference, the Governor held a garden party at Government House for the teachers attending the conference and in the evening Professor Bragg gave a special lecture at the University. At the conclusion of the second day, a concert, social and dance was held, albeit at Trades Hall. The conference was addressed by the Minister and an inspector, and was run by headmasters. All up, it was an affair of social significance and portrayed an image of teachers as people with accepted status in the colony and as an occupational group which commanded respect.

The conference accepted the view expressed by Gill that the union of teachers about to be formed would be non-political. Yet the broader aim of the trade union movement was to bring about change in the interests of working people, and this necessarily meant political action. However, this was to be a union principally concerned with raising the status of teachers and teaching. In his speech to the conference, Inspector Whitham referred to the recent Bill introduced into the Westminster Parliament to provide for a register of teachers of all grades in England and Wales to be maintained by a Teachers' Registration Council on which, he was pleased to point out 'for the special information of [his] esteemed fellow workers of the fair sex', women were qualified to sit as members. He saw the Bill as a further sign of the increasing social and professional status of British teachers. There was no doubt a message here for colonial teachers as to the direction of their efforts.

Structurally, the new union was a break from the smaller and looser associations which teachers had formed in the past. SAPTU was to be state-wide with associations affiliating with it. A general committee would comprise the office holders and representatives from affiliated associations on the basis of their size, and an executive committee would consist of the office holders and six members elected from among their number by the general committee members. Although the activities of the union would be shaped by the general committee, the objectives of the union were broad—'To consider questions affecting all teachers in the service of the Education Department, and to arrange for an annual conference of all teachers'. In agreeing to this structure, the conference laid the basis for permanent teacher unionism in South Australia. Gill became the first president of the new Union.
Members of the new Union entered the first year of its activities with a spirit of optimism and a strong belief in the power of local teachers' associations united in one body. A general committee met between conferences to conduct the affairs of the Union and to represent the interests of teachers. At last teachers in South Australia had created a structure which enabled them to conduct their affairs locally and to unite for their general interests in one body which was representative of all teachers, not just those in the city. An adequate supply of school books, so as not to burden the teachers with further expense, and the promotion of children through school grades were matters on which the general committee deliberated and pressed for action in 1897.

The twenty local teachers' associations which were affiliated with the Union were more or less active in its first year with their activities reported from time to time in the *Education Gazette*. The Port Lincoln association reported that some teachers travelled over 100 miles to attend meetings. In Gladstone, the association voted to affiliate with the Union. It also resolved that inspectors should be appointed from the ranks of Class 1 headmasters and that the practice of appointing assistant inspectors should not be continued. In the words of the association, change in the method of appointing inspectors would mean that all teachers might obtain promotion. Association meetings often concluded with social activities such as tennis, chess or sailing.

In other activities, the Union organised a collection for Miss Nancarrow of Magpie Creek when she lost all her personal and household items in a fire, and this kind of assistance to individuals was to be provided many times in the future. However, the committee in 1897 spent much of its time on preparation for the first annual conference in September. By the time of the conference,
the first president of the Union, George Gill, had resigned his position, having been appointed as an inspector, and he was replaced by Milton Maughan. Such a movement from the presidency of the Union to positions in the Department, particularly that of inspector, was to become almost a matter of course.

The 1897 conference was opened on Monday 20 September by the South Australian Governor. Delegates from the Victorian Teachers' Union were present at the conference and delivered papers. A paper was also delivered by Dr Torr, principal of Way College, on 'Suggestions as to the Influence that may be Exerted by an Organised body of Teachers', in which he argued that it may be unwise to deny the Union a political role, such denial having been vigorously expressed at the conference of 1896. Dr Torr also foresaw the day when teachers would be able to take 'their proper place in society' as respected professionals whose training was based on a university degree. Social activities during the conference included a visit to the Fire Brigade Station, a visit to Roseworthy College and a
The Establishment of Permanent Teacher Unionism, 1896–1915

'conversazione' at Adelaide University. These conventions of a vice-regal conference opening, the delivery of papers by invited guests and a range of social activities, including contact with the University of Adelaide and the School of Mines, were to be features of the annual conference for many years to come. (Until 1966, Adelaide University was the only university in South Australia.)

During 1898, the Union executive considered establishing a teachers' newspaper, but concluded that it would be too expensive and negotiated instead for space in the Australian Schoolmaster, an interstate newspaper. However, this idea did not engender a wide response from South Australian teachers, and it was not until 1915 that the Union was able to publish a teachers' journal independent of the Department. Sixteen associations were affiliated with the Union in 1898: Balaklava, Barunga, North-Eastern, Petersburg, Salisbury, Hills, Hawker, Carrieton, Encounter Bay, Orroroo, Hamley Bridge, Light, Willunga, Melrose, Midland and Eyre's Peninsula. During the year the Union approached the Minister of Education on the unsatisfactory state of teachers' residences and met with the Board of Inspectors on matters to do with readers, copybooks and spelling in schools.

The Hamley Bridge association asked the Union to negotiate with the Board of Inspectors for certificates for provisional teachers after seven years of service, and the Gladstone association also communicated with the executive on provisional teachers. At its November meeting, executive recognised that the position of provisional teachers was unsatisfactory and that 'some encouragement' should be given to those who did good work, but executive was also anxious that there not be undue competition with other teachers. Although provisional teachers were the most numerous in the Department, they were also the most marginalised. As with the other colonies, South Australia used 'provisional', or unclassified, teachers to staff one-teacher schools in sparsely populated rural areas and provided trained teachers for the larger public schools in the towns and cities.

By 1899 other associations were making representations to the Union executive on the position of provisional teachers in the Department. Hawker teachers discussed the status of provisional teachers, believing that the difficulties of this group of teachers were unknown to public teachers. There was also discussion in the north of the state about holding a northern teachers' conference in June. This proposal for a regional conference came from the Quorn and Port Augusta associations and may have been the product of dissatisfaction with the annual conference in Adelaide in the same way that dissatisfaction was expressed about the old South Australian Teachers' Association (SATA). Gladstone, an association which had fought hard for a 'union of teachers' with an annual conference in the early 1890s, opposed the idea of a regional conference on the grounds that it would affect attendance at and the utility of the
September conference in Adelaide. Differences among teachers as to the purposes and utility of the Union were already beginning to emerge. There was difficulty in sustaining even a one-page South Australian supplement in the *Australian Schoolmaster*, with the debts having to be paid by special collections from the associations.

The annual conference in 1899 was again primarily a social affair. At this conference, opened by the Governor, Lord Tennyson, the president of the Adelaide Teachers' Association, Sir Langdon Bonython, proprietor of the Adelaide Advertiser, held a garden party in Adelaide for 800 guests, including over 400 teachers. In addressing the conference, Charles Kingston, the new Liberal Premier of South Australia, said that he approved of the Union and supported moves for a federation of unions from the states. In his address, C. B. Whillas who had succeeded Milton Maughan as president in 1898, noted the progress that had been made towards the proper recognition of teaching through the University of Adelaide course of study for teachers and he believed that the federation of the Australian colonies would have benefits for South Australian children by creating a public sentiment that it was necessary to give 'such facilities here as are afforded to the children of the neighbouring colonies'.

The tone of Whillas' address was sharper than the quiescent tones of addresses to earlier conferences: he described the economies effected in education in South Australia as 'evil' and unfavourably compared the political climate in relation to education with that of Victoria. It was not only the work of teachers that was affected by rigid economies—so also was the work of inspectors, particularly in the area of advice and assistance. Whillas' criticisms were directed towards the government of the day rather than the Board of Inspectors who, he assured the conference, always met delegations from the Union with kindness. Following his term of office as president, Mr Whillas became an inspector in 1900.

No headway on the question of provisional teachers was made at the conference. A minimalist motion—namely, each year to promote into public schools three provisional teachers who had seven years of good reports from teaching in provisional schools—was lost. Such a move, it was argued by its opponents, would be an injustice to pupil teachers and would give provisional teachers an undue advantage. However, a motion to draw up a scheme for a sick fund to cater for teachers with illnesses longer than two weeks was passed.

In an editorial on the annual conference of 1899, the *Register* reminded its readers that on the formation of the Union in 1896 the newspaper had suggested that one of the Union's first duties was to 'demand a general improvement' in the status of teachers. It concluded that by 1899 this had not yet happened and that the state exacted more work from the teachers and it gave them less remuneration.
Teachers' interest in the Union and its constituent associations was not consistently high. Attendances at meetings of the associations were often small and were affected by weather, distance, sometimes scarcity of horses and, it was admitted by office holders in some associations, lack of interest. However, from the perspective of Inspectors Plummer and Neale in their annual reports for 1900, the meetings were well attended and they were valuable for the development of teachers. This was, after all, their original purpose as conceived by Inspector-General Hartley, and in the absence of an adequate provision for teachers' professional development, they would still have to perform this function. But some associations wanted more from the Union. When the Salisbury association requested that business matters be dealt with first at the annual conference, Union president John Harry told the teachers of Salisbury that the social aspect of the conference was often of more value to them than the mere passing of resolutions. He also told them that he thought it would be a good idea if 'up-country' associations were represented by a town headmaster rather than have no representation at all.

Harry's address to the 1900 annual conference contained none of the sharp tone that had characterised Whillas' address the year before. Harry attributed the success of the Union in its dealings with the Department to the approach taken by both, and urged teachers to continue to be moderate in their aims. As retiring president he made a plea for the Union to take a national and not a parochial stand, to look at things from the Department's point of view, not to separate the interests of city and country teachers, to be above grumbling, and to encourage the participation of younger teachers in the Union, since present decisions and changes would 'influence the lives of younger men for years'. He commended the University of Adelaide course of training for teachers which would lead to modifications to the pupil teacher system, but believed that it would be necessary for female students 'to omit some branches of the course in order to be specially fitted to teach infants and to give instruction in subjects such as domestic economy'. Harry congratulated Whillas on his appointment as inspector, but in welcoming Mrs Hills who replaced Miss McNamara as an inspector on the death of the latter, Harry thought it necessary to draw attention to the 'difference of opinion' that existed among teachers 'as to the wisdom or the need of a lady inspector'.

Harry's successor, Mr J. Donnell, spoke to the 1901 conference in the same terms as Harry had in 1900, praising the cordial relations between the Union and the Board of Inspectors and mentioning very little about the work of the Union. Donnell noted that the school leaving age had been raised from thirteen to fourteen and that attendance had been raised from 35 to 40 days per quarter, both matters which had been pushed for by some associations. He also gave a brief report on a federal educational congress which had recently been held in Melbourne.
New regulations force change

By the time of the annual conference in September 1902 changes to the regulations had led to significant changes in South Australian schools, including a reduction by 110 of the number of teachers. These changes prompted A. H. Neale, in his presidential address, to warn teachers of the need to remain united in the face of increased stresses at work brought about by curriculum pressures and financial policies of the state. These changes gave some urgency to a theme which Harry developed in 1900—the coincidence of interest between teachers in city and country. Neale believed that teachers were about to enter 'a year of strenuous exertion, when wise leadership and closed ranks [would be] more necessary than ever, and when the failure to obtain these or the defection of any will seal the doom of the Union'. This was not the language of harmony. Despite these changes during 1902, Neale and the Union corresponding secretary, Alfred Williams, travelled extensively to address many teachers' associations particularly on the value of 'summer schools' which had recently been introduced in Victoria. When Williams became Director of Education in 1906, one of his first acts was to introduce 'schools of instruction'.

The full force of the 1902 regulations were felt in schools the following year. Wages for teachers were cut, and although this affected all teachers, provisional teachers were particularly hurt. Despite Neale's injunction to unity, the Gilbert association met at Saddleworth school on a wet February day in 1903 to pass a motion that sparked sharp responses from other associations. Inspector Plummer was present at the meeting to 'chat' about the new regulations, and after some two hours of discussion, the meeting came to the conclusion that although reductions brought about by the new regulations were severe, they were justified by 'the financial state of the country'. The meeting 'unanimously' passed a motion that

this meeting is of the opinion that teachers will do well to refrain from making any attempt at any alteration in the new regulations, severe as the recent reductions are, and we request the executive of the Teachers' Union to support this view, and to make no attempt to induce either the Government or Parliament to again alter the regulations, as any such attempt will be fraught with the greatest danger of an immediate saving of £15,000 to £20,000 being made by immediate and further reductions.

A number of other associations, including Booleroo Centre, Hills, North-Eastern and Burra expressed their strong opposition to the sentiments of the Gilbert association. A special meeting of the Hills association in March, attended by Union executive members Burnard, Charlton, Neale and Harry, protested against what it saw as the Gilbert association's attempt to usurp the
functions of the executive. Barossa teachers protested against the salary reductions on the material grounds that country teachers had a great many expenses which they were expected to meet in addition to their normal costs of living. These extra expenses, the Barossa teachers argued, included feeding swagmen, making donations to charities and other local affairs, and losses incurred on obsolete books and materials for manual work. Teachers paid for the books and then tried to recover the costs from the students to whom the books were distributed. Furthermore, a reduction of salaries would mean, in their view, a reduction in the social status of teachers.

As was to be expected, the regulations were the 'burning issue' of the 1903 conference. The president, Mr R. T. Burnard, opened his remarks to the conference with some thoughts on the legacy bequeathed to education by 'the late Mr Hartley's masterly and resourceful genius'. Burnard gradually warmed to the question of the regulations and to the great dissatisfaction which, he said, had been created by the reduction of salaries and positions. He hoped, though, that with the breaking of the drought the state would soon be in a more prosperous position and that

the classification scheme may be so revised that the emoluments offered to the teachers and the opportunities for promotion may be such as to restore hopefulness and ambition to our young men now in the service, and also to attract into our ranks that desirable class of teachers so essential to the future success of this land.9

For his part, though, Inspector-General Stanton addressed the conference without a mention of the regulations. The Minister of Education, John Gordon, was politely received with applause and spent the first part of his speech justifying the economies which had been brought about by the regulations and which he recognised would be criticised at the conference. One speaker pointed to the severity of the regulations in relation to the salary of provisional teachers (the majority of whom were women), while others referred frequently to the curtailment of 'enthusiasm and zeal' among young (men) teachers caused by the block in promotions. The Male Assistants' Association was admitted to the Union in 1903.10

Some voices of dissent

At its first meeting for 1904, the Gladstone association heard a paper by its president, S. H. Warren, in which he suggested that the time was right for the various teachers' associations to be subject to a policy direction rather than spend time in discussions which had little bearing on matters which affected
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education. There was, he suggested, a lack of awareness on the part of younger members and an apathy amongst the older members which needed to be thrown off. (Warren was to become Union president in 1914–15, from which position he would resign to become an inspector.) The report of the treasurer at the 1904 annual conference, which pointed out that less than half of the teachers in South Australia belonged to the Union, appeared to vindicate Warren's argument. One group that still remained disadvantaged, despite the existence of the Union, was the provisional teachers, and Inspector-General Stanton in 1904 was not about to change their conditions by turning provisional schools into public schools.

Alfred Williams, headmaster of Norwood school, was re-elected as Union president for a second term in 1904–05, the first time this had occurred. In his address to the 1905 conference, Williams defended the Union's actions on behalf of teachers, arguing that 'it had been in the main unusually robust and thoughtful, wise perhaps beyond its years'. Williams spoke with fondness of 'the lonely bush teacher on the outposts of civilisation' and of the Union's aim of bringing together teachers at the annual conference in order to revive their sense of vocation. His speech was notable for its attack on the new examination system introduced by Inspector-General Stanton and about which Stanton had addressed the conference the previous day. The main thrust of Williams' critique of the Stanton scheme was that it demonstrated a distrust of teachers, reinforced 'a mechanical spirit in teaching at the expense of real mental training and discipline, and accentuated the results system'. As Tom Raggatt later said, Williams 'delivered a trenchant, yet constructive criticism of the methods of inspection at that time in vogue, and roundly condemned the methods of exemption and "stocktaking by sample", as he called it'. Raggatt regarded Williams' speech as the 'most outstanding utterance in the history of the Union' to that point.

Not entirely convinced by the eloquent arguments of Williams that the Union was doing all it could do to influence education and the conditions of teachers, S. H. Warren again treated the Gladstone association to a paper on his views of the Teachers' Union in October 1905. This time he argued that the Union had not become the power that it could be for two main reasons: first, there was a lack of coordination of the Union's affairs; and second, taking up the point he had raised the year before, the Union lacked definite aims and was not consulted by the press and others about the views teachers may have on important matters. Warren argued a strong case for a teachers' newspaper as a means of uniting teachers and of keeping the public informed. Looking at this period more than twenty years later, Raggatt believed that although the Union had achieved much, it had not 'distinguished itself by its fearlessness, or by shrewd diplomacy' in its first ten years, but it had to be recognised that at
that time ‘all unions were regarded with more or less suspicion’. Perhaps Warren’s views on teachers’ unions were those of a vanguard.

In January 1906, Williams was appointed as the first Director of Education in South Australia and Stanton was moved sideways to the position of Secretary to the Minister. Early in the year, Williams addressed many teachers’ associations throughout the state on topics such as ‘The Mission of the Public School’, and was ‘loudly applauded’ for his ‘stirring’ addresses. At around the same time, some associations, Gladstone and Gilbert amongst them, discussed ways of widening the influence of the Union and of making association meetings more ‘lively and worthwhile’.

Addressing the annual conference of 1906, Williams, now Director, spoke again about the mission of the schools, and said that he believed that the Teachers’ Union had ‘more at heart’ the object of supporting the democratic mission of the schools ‘than the establishment of a wall behind which it might protect the rights and privileges of the teacher’, a statement for which he was applauded by his audience.¹⁴

Women teachers begin to make themselves heard

On the third day of the 1906 annual conference, Miss Lizzie Hales moved a historic motion: ‘that greater inducements be offered to lady teachers to remain in the service’.¹⁵ This was the first time women teachers had actually aired their grievances or stated their position at an annual conference, although in earlier years there had been motions about the salaries of provisional teachers, most of whom were female. Miss Hales was strongly supported by Miss Carter, who seconded the motion. Both women spoke of the injustices in terms of lower salaries and fewer promotion opportunities for women in teaching in South Australia, and Hales claimed that the Western Australian and South African governments had offered inducements which had been sufficient to take some of the best women away from the state. There was little opposition to this motion.

The Women Assistants’ Association which was affiliated to the Union changed its name late in 1906 to the Women Teachers’ Association in a bid to widen its potential membership. Adelaide Miethke of Le Fevre Peninsula school was the association’s secretary. This association represented trained women teachers in urban and large country schools. For the first time in 1906, provisional teachers, who formed the vast majority of women teachers, also organised industrially by forming their own association within the Union. Whereas in 1906 there were around 200 trained women teachers, there were over 350 provisional women teachers. In November the Women Teachers’
Association contacted the Union executive to ascertain what had been done about the conference resolution on women's salaries. They were informed that the executive had already decided in October to take no action as 'the tendency of the administration has been in the direction of securing some of those inducements for which the resolution provides'.

At the same time as there was inaction on women's salaries, SAPTU officials continued to move into inspectorial positions. In December, the president, C. Charlton, and the minute secretary, A. H. Neale, both resigned for this reason.

South Australian Public Teachers' Union Conference 1909


(SAIT photographic collection and SA Teachers' Journal)
and were replaced by William Cherry as president and J. Fairweather as secretary.

At the annual conference of 1907 inaction on salaries of women teachers prompted a further motion by Miss Hales and Miss Jeffers, again stressing the injustice of unequal salaries for the same work. In the words of Lizzie Hales: 'women had the same devotion to their work as had men, and felt strongly that if a woman possessed the required qualities for filling an equal position well she should be worthily paid'.

Conference re-elected Cherry as president in 1907 and for the first time elected a woman, Miss Hales, to the Union executive; Hales remained a member of the executive until she resigned and was replaced in 1911 by Adelaide Miethke. During the year the executive was pulled into line by the Acting Director, Milton Maughan, a former Union president, for giving the impression, by the way in which requests were expressed, that it was attempting to dictate to the Department.

Before the 1908 conference executive made a concession to the presence of a woman amongst its membership by deciding not to hold the usual pre-conference 'smoke social' but instead to have an evening at Miss Martin's Old Exchange Cafe in Pirie Street where women teachers could be present. Despite this concession, the purpose of the evening was to farewell three inspectors—Burgan, Whillas and Gill—all of whom had previously been associated with the Union since its foundation, Gill having been its first president.

The Women Teachers' Association expressed further dissatisfaction with the position of women teachers in 1909, this time because some teachers did not receive the classification they expected after passing through the University Training College. The teachers were advised, after a long discussion by executive, that they should see the Director individually. This may have been one of the matters to which the corresponding secretary referred at the 1909 conference when he said that

> it is appropriate to remind you of what has before been stated—that, while your executive is always anxious to assist members in their difficulties, it is not able to deal with cases sent on by individuals—only with those which are forwarded through an association.

But this issue had been forwarded through an association. However, the secretary went on to say that

> I may remind you also of a long established principle of the union—that it cannot consider the grievances of teachers in which the administration of the Department is involved. This would be invading a domain quite beyond its jurisdiction.
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No wonder, then, that the year had been, in the words of the secretary, 'uneventful'. Even so, the Union treasurer, Victor Pavia, took the opportunity of the conference to urge teachers to move out of what he described as their 'indifference' to the affairs of the Union and to take a more active part in them. During the year the Provisional Teachers' Central Association attempted to gain representation on the union executive committee, but was not successful. Indeed provisional teachers were not represented on the executive until 1911.

Salaries—a continuing issue

Salaries were again an issue in 1910, both at the conference and in the dealings of the executive with the Minister. At the conference the headmaster of Thebarton school, Mr J. Donnell moved

that this conference, in view of the great difficulty in obtaining suitable candidates for the service, and the greatly increased cost of living, respectfully requests the Minister controlling the Department that the salaries throughout the service be raised so as to fall in line with the necessities of modern requirements.

These 'modern requirements' now included a high school in South Australia and it would be necessary to attract good, qualified teachers. Mr Donnell pointed out that teachers in South Australia were earning less in 1910 than they had been 30 years previously. The Director also received less for greater responsibility. Referring to the recent illness of Alfred Williams, Donnell said that

the salary of the first head of the Education Department was £800, and then £900. The present Director—with a wider sphere of work, greatly increased responsibility, and a larger annual grant of money to apportion—got £700 a year, and his efforts had nearly killed him.

The year 1911 was yet another successful year for a number of members of the executive who were promoted to the position of inspector. Early in the year Messrs Charlesworth and Robinson resigned from the executive, and shortly afterwards John Harry resigned as president for this reason. Harry was succeeded by C. Bronner as president for the remaining months of his term of office. There was an ever-increasing awareness among members of the executive of the necessity for the Union to be widely representative of all teachers in South Australia, particularly since Victor Pavia had spoken strongly at the 1910 conference on the need for all teachers to be members. Pavia spoke at the conference of 'a flourishing state of affairs, both in regard to associations and membership' in 1911.
Lizzie Hales, speaking at executive for the Women Teachers' Association, was keen to point out that recent correspondence in the daily press in relation to the attitude of women teachers to head teachers and the Department should not be seen as representing the views of the women teachers, who, she said, placed confidence in their head teachers and were loyal to the Department. In pursuing these points, Miss Hales was demonstrating to the members of the Union that the Women Teachers' Association was not engaged in personality arguments; rather the dispute with the Department and with men in the Union was one about the structures of inequality.

There was some salary satisfaction for all teachers in 1911. However, a number of women assistants were debarred from the salary increases because they had completed their training prior to 1900. The Women Teachers' Association sought an increase in salary for those with the qualifications for higher classification. In seeking this increase, the Association conducted an extensive survey of its members which was supported by individual letters from about 270 teachers. In these letters, teachers stated their training, qualifications and generally extensive professional development. Emma Andrewartha stated that ever since the bonus for successful teaching had been discontinued, she had actually received £8 per annum less than she did in 1888. Marianne Rigby said her pay had increased only by £10 per annum since school fees were abolished in 1891, and that in 1911 her salary was £116. Eva Langsford graduated in 1880, had 'given her life's service to the children of her age', and believed that she deserved a salary increase. Many commented that they were in charge of the largest classes in their schools and simply could not undertake extra study at university because of their heavy teaching load. Some of these women continued to be unfairly classified in the view of the Women Teachers' Association and representations continued by the Association on their behalf.

The annual conference of 1911 passed motions which demonstrated that teachers were attempting to gain more control over their own labour. Among these, Hales successfully moved a resolution that the curriculum, which was too crowded, should be reduced. Another motion objected to the subservience of teaching to inspectors' annual examinations. Mr Donnell, a vice-president, read a paper prepared by executive on 'Opinions, Aims and Ideals of the Union', which appeared to be the beginnings of a Union policy statement.

Victor Pavia, who had worked hard to boost the number of Union members, became president when the incumbent, T. W. Cole, resigned in January 1912 in the now familiar pattern of becoming an inspector. On his assumption of the presidency Pavia received strong indications of support from many associations. It seems that there was a marked change in sentiment compared with previous years when the Union barely rated a mention in association reports. Now, as well as strong support, there was an expressed desire to see Pavia continue as
president for the next year. The corresponding secretary, S. H. Warren, earlier the Gladstone association agitator for a strong Union, spoke warmly of Pavia's qualities in taking over the presidency. It was perhaps this groundswell of support that led the president-elect, J. A. Kennedy, to announce that Pavia would remain as president until he had completed his work on behalf of the Union with the Education Commission hearings. Pavia's 'untiring efforts' on behalf of teachers received the ringing endorsement of the conference.

Still a male club

Following the statement on Union opinions and aims in 1911, the Union adopted a 'Detailed Policy' or platform in 1912 which represented, at least in the view of Warren, 'a distinct step in advance in our history as a Union'.23 There had been some 'lessening of the strain' and some improvement in conditions and it appeared as though the Union may be on the way to becoming a significant force in South Australian education. But the Union was still a male club and largely a headmasters' club, a fact that was clearly demonstrated by Mr J. Willmott's statement to the conference in 1912 that 'there was not a man in the service but would be benefited by the raising of headmasters' salaries'.24

However, the club did not always work for the benefit of its members, as Inspector William Cherry found when he was called to account for his actions in relation to an assistant teacher, Miss Elsie Grant, in October 1912 at Coromandel Primary School. The head teacher of the school, Nicholas Opie, informed the Director of Education, Alfred Williams, that Grant had complained of 'improper conduct and behaviour' by Cherry. While Cherry might have thought that he could count on the support of his male inspectorial and administrative colleagues, this was not to be the case.25 At Cherry's request on hearing of the charges against him, a confidential Board of Enquiry was established. Cherry did not succeed in arguing in his defence that Grant had misunderstood his intentions. Jose and Bacchi (1993) suggest that Cherry was trying to exploit the prevailing sexual double standard through his position of power and status in the Department. Although they note the moralistic climate in South Australia in 1912, they argue that this was not the reason for the dismissal of Cherry. Rather, Cherry had not behaved as his public position demanded and he could not be presumed to be ignorant of the seriousness of his actions. He was subsequently dismissed from the Civil Service.

Like Cherry, the major male actors involved in investigating this incident had all previously held influential positions in the Union. Cherry himself had been vice-president in 1906 and president of SAPTU in 1907 and 1907–8.
A. H. Neale, Assistant Chief Inspector, had resigned in December 1906 from the position of corresponding secretary to take up the position of inspector. Alfred Williams, Director of Education, had been president in 1903–4 and 1904–5 when A. H. Neale was a member of the executive. Milton Maughan, Chief Inspector of Schools, had been president in 1897 and 1897–98 when A. H. Neale was corresponding secretary. Neale had been president in 1901–2 when Alfred Williams had been corresponding secretary. What conclusions should be drawn from the fact that all these men had held leadership positions in the Union, some at the same time, before moving to positions in the Department?

The Union was male-dominated: it was not until 1905 that a woman, Miss E. G. Edeson MA, first addressed the annual conference, on ‘The Spirit of the
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Kindergarten'; and only in 1907-8 was a woman, Lizzie Hales, elected to the executive for the first time. This domination was a reflection of patriarchal relations in the Department and society in general. However, the Cherry incident illustrates that the patriarchal club did not condone the actions of its members if they transgressed the limits of 'gentlemanly behaviour'. The majority of its members took seriously their positions in the class structure and the 'moral responsibilities' attached to these positions, and by their example the behaviour of teachers would be defined. It was necessary, then, for the Enquiry to uphold a view of what constituted appropriate conduct. Jose and Bacchi argue that not only was the Enquiry being conducted in the climate of a Royal Commission on education, but that 'senior educators, as part of their struggle to gain professional recognition for the teaching service, had attempted to regulate the conduct of the teaching staff' and Cherry's behaviour would undermine this struggle unless punished. 26

Alfred Williams died in office on 18 February 1913, aged 49 years, and Milton Maughan became Acting Director. Progress reports of the Education Commission were submitted to Parliament and the Union sought to have implemented those measures which it had put to the Commission. The question of salaries for women teachers had not been settled by the beginning of the new school year and executive decided to bring the grievances of the Women Teachers' Association before the Acting Director. Three issues had been outlined by the women teachers: first, the position of assistants classified before 1891; second, disparities between salaries of male and female assistants; and third, positions and prospects in schools. It was clear that the position of female teachers was unsatisfactory, but the male-dominated union continued its history of procrastination.

Membership of the Union peaked under the leadership of Victor Pavia. After 1912 and the activism around the Education Commission, levels of membership participation returned to those of earlier years. A proposal for a federation of teachers' unions throughout Australia was supported by the Union in 1914 and there was a prospect that a preliminary conference for a federation of teachers' organisations would be held in Hobart in January of 1915. However, this idea had to be postponed because of the First World War. At this time the Union appointed a committee to handle teachers' contributions to the Patriotic Fund in support of the war effort. 27

The South Australian Women Teachers' Progressive League (WTPL)

On 8 and 9 May 1915, the first congress of the South Australian Women Teachers' Progressive League, which was a federation of branch associations,
was held in Adelaide. Reporting the annual conference, the *Education Gazette* described the League as 'like a phoenix from the ashes' of the inactive Women Teachers' Association. Interviewed by the *Register* the day before the congress, the president, Adelaide Miethke, indicated that the League would take a more gradual approach to issues affecting women than in the past. Miethke spoke of the 'youthful enthusiasm' of Miss Hales and Miss Carter in their addresses on equal pay to the 1906 conference, but said that the question of pay was not the only one that concerned women teachers. Other issues that would be addressed by the congress included securing 'more ideal' conditions of work, a more liberal provision of private retiring rooms for women teachers and senior girls, smaller class sizes and a less crowded curriculum. Equally important for the League was the establishment of a separate curriculum and the development of a physical culture for girls.

Following an address by Miethke, the congress passed a number of motions in relation to these issues. In her address, the League president advocated a much stronger position and a stronger voice for women in the Education Department in view of the central role of women teachers in the education of girls. Was such a voice not unreasonable, she asked, in a service where girls were in equal numbers with boys; where infants and lower grades of both sexes were almost entirely in the hands of women; where senior girls should be in
Adelaide L. Miethke was president of the SA Women Teachers' Progressive League. She was the only woman on the SAPTU executive in 1912 and the first woman to be elected as vice-president of the SAPTU in 1915. (Mortlock Library, State Library of SA SSL:M PRG 107/7/1)

the hands of women; where domestic science and other girls' subjects could be adequately supervised only by women; where the Department's servants numbered more women than men; and where the home conditions of outback teachers, largely women, as well as the lodgings of young country girls in the city as trainees needed supervision by women? Other speakers took up these themes at the congress. Miss Sanders successfully moved that 'congress deprecates the present practice of adding special girls' subjects as an extra to a common curriculum, thereby lessening their importance, and strongly advocates the drawing up of a separate curriculum for boys and girls, particularly in the senior classes'.28 A committee was established after the congress to collect money for the Children's Patriotic Fund.29
The Journal

In June 1915 the first issue of the South Australian Teachers' Journal was published after many years of effort to establish an independent medium for teachers. This issue of the Journal was made available free to all teachers in an effort to encourage them to subscribe and to take a broader interest in public affairs, and the editor expressed the hope that the Journal would take a leading part in forming public opinion in South Australia in conjunction with the 'great daily papers'. At last the Union was able to print its annual conference agenda paper and program in its own medium, and no longer had to rely on the official government publication, the Education Gazette.

Conference resolved in 1915 that all teachers should be registered. By the time of the conference, the Women Teachers' Progressive League had held its first congress and its importance in the Union by virtue of its numbers was beginning to be recognised by the Union leadership. By this time, too, the term 'rural teacher' was being used in the place of 'provisional teacher' to describe the position of the many unclassified female teachers in small country schools. Nevertheless, the League was not successful in a move at conference to gain representation for the League and for the Rural Teachers' Association on the Union executive.

Writing in the Journal in September 1916 the president, C. Bronner of Sturt Street school, argued that since its establishment in 1896 the Union had made a number of important gains for teachers. He listed midwinter holidays; extended sick leave; salary increases; payment of salaries before the end of the month; promotion of children by teachers; reductions in class sizes; extension of the school leaving age; and the establishment of classification, appeal and curriculum boards as among the most important gains. These were not gains that shook the foundations of the relationship between the Union and the Department, and the list of limited successes lends support to Raggatt's view that the Union's actions at this time did not present a serious challenge to the relationship.
Chapter 3
The Quest for Justice and Equality, 1916–1937

With the establishment of the *South Australian Teachers’ Journal* in 1915, the Union had established some independence from the Department. Most Union business was now reported in the *Journal* rather than the *Education Gazette*, although the *Gazette* continued to provide notices of subscriptions and meetings as well as reporting the annual conference. But it was to be a long time yet before the Union was a truly independent entity. One mechanism that teachers thought would provide for the independence of the teaching force was the registration of teachers, and in this quest they were to be continually disappointed. At the Union annual conference in 1916 the president, Major Donnell, said that Parliament’s failure to pass the clause on registration in the new Education Act caused irreparable injury to the children of South Australia.¹ In advancing this argument, Donnell was adopting a tactic that was to be developed in future years—that of aligning the interests of students with those of teachers—and in this way the Union was exercising the rudimentary skills of pressure group activity.

Independence did not, however, mean that all teachers were united. Following the congress of 1915, the Women Teachers’ Progressive League (WTPL) adopted a stronger profile in the Union, and early in the year wrote to the Union executive asking for a more active sympathy with the aims and objectives of the League. This letter followed a spirited address on these aims and objectives by the League’s president, Adelaide Miethke, to its annual meeting in February.² Some of the male members of the Union were more ‘sympathetic’ than others. Charles Maley wrote forcefully in a letter to the *Journal* in 1916 that ‘the Education Department buys a service from teachers and, if women render equal service to men, they are entitled to equal remuneration’. The next issue of the *Journal* carried a letter under the pseudonym of ‘Homo’, forcefully
When SAPTU became an incorporated body and was registered as such under the Industrial Code Act in 1925, the common seal was manufactured. The seal design was conceived and drawn by SAPTU member Mr. J.H. Choate, of the Thebarton Technical School. It represented a Greek Galley forging ahead under full sail and oarage; darkness has been dispelled by the rays of the rising sun, both speaking of progress and light. The design was said to be suggestive of culture and educational progress. The Greek key pattern on the inscription ring enhanced the whole classical atmosphere.

The establishment date 1895 was incorrectly entered on the common seal at the time of manufacture. This same seal design was used by South Australian Institute of Teachers when it was formed in 1951.

(SA Teachers’ Journal)

attacking Maley’s letter and asserting that the ‘labour of women is actually of less value than that of men where both have recently been allowed to compete’. Later in the year Maley attacked ‘Homo’ in the Journal for hiding behind a pseudonym on such an important issue, arguing that ‘equal pay for equal work is elementary justice’.³

Attitudes in the Union such as those of ‘Homo’ led WTPL to consider seriously the possibility of breaking away from the Union in 1916. At the annual conference the new president argued strongly against this course of action, saying that ‘both sides’ would be weakened if the League withdrew, and in so arguing, revealed the sectional interests within the Union. Rupture was for a time forestalled when Adelaide Miethke explained to the executive in September that because women teachers felt how important it was for the whole
teaching body to be thoroughly united at that time, they had decided to remain in the Union.4

Despite this accommodation with the Union, salaries continued to be a burning issue in 1917.5 In June Adelaide Miethke and Lizzie Lamb wrote to the Director on behalf of WTPL with a plea for a ‘living minimum wage, consideration in equal degree for women and men in our profession, and a reduction of those disparities existent between men's and women's salaries at the present time’.6 The Director, Milton Maughan, replied with a rough estimate of the cost of meeting the League’s request, and agreed with the League’s view that the salaries of lower paid women were insufficient. Even with some support from the Union, both the Director and the Minister ruled out any salary increases in view of the financial strain.

One issue of classification and salaries was resolved satisfactorily for one group of women teachers—but, it appeared, at the expense of another group—when the longstanding question of the position of teachers classified before 1901 was at last taken up in 1917 by Director Maughan. However, the resolution revealed differences among women teachers. Speaking to a League meeting in May, Adelaide Miethke said that ‘it was a matter of regret’ that some of the people who had been reclassified ‘did not appreciate the fact that the younger generation, in standing by their seniors, had shut the door in the face of their own promotions, and that they were apparently disinterested in any other than their own personal question’.7 Age and qualifications were sources of division. At the same time the League took seriously its self-imposed responsibility for finding appropriate housing for female student teachers.8

In 1917 Adelaide Miethke was asked by the State Recruiting Committee to organise the Women’s Procession on ‘Win the War’ day.9 By this time, the war was taking its toll in many ways—soldier teachers, for example, were missing out on promotions and examinations while serving at the front.10 Also in 1917, technical education was introduced in South Australia and Dr Fenner was appointed as superintendent of the new branch. Although the Union welcomed this new development, it expressed the hope that there would not be a repeat of events of a decade previously when high schools had been introduced and the primary schools suffered a loss of resources. In October 1917, executive considered the question of registration as an industrial union, deciding that it should be an item for conference the next year.11

Industrial registration, salaries and rights

By 1918 the argument that members of the Union should be prepared to pay their officials was beginning to be heard more loudly at the same time as the
arguments in favour of industrial registration were gaining strength. Union vice-president, Charles Maley, wrote in the *Journal*, arguing strongly in favour of industrial registration. Maley dismissed arguments that registration would involve the Union in politics, bring it into closer association with the trade unions or undermine its dignity:

I have often thought that as a union we are too respectable. Over-respectability can kill any movement, no matter how righteous. Every great reform has been at the outset more or less a revolt against the ultra respectable. If Jesus had been timid enough to be respectable, he would never have been crucified.

The need for a more forthright approach by the Union was indicated by the tenor of replies received from the Director in response to some motions carried at Easter conference in 1918: 'cannot entertain this request', 'not within the scope of the Teachers' Union', and 'this is a rather absurd request and cannot be considered'. Nevertheless, annual conference voted 80 to 35 against a motion moved by Maley and seconded by Mr J. Drinkwater that 'it is desirable that the South Australian Public Teachers' Union should be registered as an industrial union'. Mr Duke argued for deferring a decision and caused laughter among the gathered teachers when he suggested that the 'profession was represented by every shade of political opinion—Conservatives, Liberals, Democrats, Laborites and Sinn-Feiners'.

At a number of meetings in 1918 WTPL heard from many teachers and again discussed the question of salaries. Annie Sharpley of Near Naracoorte school reported that she was earning a higher salary in 1890 before education became free than she was in 1918. The Union president pointed out to annual conference that, except in the case of the lower paid women teachers, the Union had acted with restraint in terms of appeals for salary increases. Peace celebrations and the cooperation of the Minister were reported in the *Journal* as reasons for postponing a proposed mass meeting of teachers.

By now interest in elections for official positions in the Union was strong, and there was recognition of the need for a more ordered method of choosing leaders. Headmasters dominated the executive committee but some exception was taken when this was pointed out by 'Scribbler' in the *Journal*. The South Australian Public Officers' Federation (which the Union had earlier joined) supported the Union when the government demanded that its former president, John Moyses, apologise for having protested, in a letter to the *Register*, at remarks made in the Port Adelaide Local Court which the Union considered were unfair to teachers. According to the Federation, at issue here was the right 'of Government servants to communicate with the press either as private individuals or as members of the Federation'.
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The post-war years

In 1919 WTPL noted that equal pay for equal work had been adopted as a plank in the platform of the National Party at the same time as it noted the very considerable discrepancies in the superannuation annuities for males and females.20 Again Adelaide Miethke carried forward in the Union and in public meetings the unequal salaries position. She addressed the 1919 annual conference as president of WTPL and vice-president of the Union on the 'necessity for the immediate revision of salaries, with a view to substantial increase to meet the ever-increasing cost of living'. Miethke was supported by Moyes.21 Later in the year Miethke addressed a mass meeting of public servants in the Adelaide Town Hall—a meeting which was supported by the Union and of which her spirited address on salaries was regarded as an outstanding feature.22

Conference that year also heard from Queensland delegates that there was no loss of dignity in going to the Arbitration Court. Indeed, in response to the previous year's motion which declined industrial registration, the president of the Queensland teachers' union urged South Australian teachers to be more militant if they wished to achieve their deserts.23 The Union welcomed the new Director, W. T. McCoy, and assured him of the loyalty of teachers. However, in the spirit of mild militancy, the opinion was offered in the Journal that 'perhaps, in the past, the spirit of loyalty has been carried to excess, and often restrained us from resolutely forcing an issue to its legitimate conclusion'. Nevertheless, this statement was followed by a moderate conclusion: 'But better far the excess than the contrary'.24

In a bid to further strengthen the Union organisation, Adelaide Miethke was requested by executive to draw up plans for a more effective organisation. After corresponding with teachers in country centres, Miethke presented a report which argued for the strengthening of country branches. However, she also argued for the appointment of a paid secretary who would work full-time on 'organising and propaganda work', a point which she said had been repeatedly stressed in teachers' correspondence. Further, Miethke argued for a delegates conference to expedite the business of the Union.25

During 1920 there was debate about the proposals for restructure and a League of Male Head Teachers was formed. But, as Miethke pointed out, headmasters and head teachers already controlled the Union as they held fourteen out of the nineteen positions on executive.26 At the same time there were appeals to teachers to join the Union and to get behind it in its efforts to ensure salary justice through arbitration. Subscriptions were raised in 1920 in preparation for a salary campaign and for a paid Union secretary. Maley continued to argue for equal pay but other male teachers were opposed. 'Pax'
opposed equal pay on what he called ‘ethical’ and ‘social and economical grounds’. In the final analysis, Pax admitted,

a woman can do a man’s work, and do it well, but the converse is not true: man cannot be the home-maker and the bearer of the nation’s children. This is the exclusive and sacred mission of the woman, and any attempt to put another ideal before our girls is wicked and false and a menace to the State, to society and to themselves.27

Towards the end of the year WTPL considered a proposition that it could remain independent of the Union and deal directly with the Department on all matters affecting women and girls.28 There were 457 members of the League of whom 365 were members of the Union.29

Adelaide Miethke was elected president of WTPL in 1921 for the eleventh year, and Phebe Watson was again elected secretary. In a spirit of cooperation, the League agreed to joint meetings between male and female assistants once every three meetings.30 Later in the year, the committee of the League asked Miethke to stand as president of the Union but she declined on the grounds of indifferent health and the stress of school work.31 She continued to argue
that the League should stay within the Union despite arguments from younger members that it should reassess its relation with the Union.

Tensions manifested

In 1921 the League was involved in an incident in which it defended one of its members against the arguments of a headmaster. This incident raised a number of questions about relations within the Union, about the rights of teachers and about the role of the press.

At the Easter conference of delegates a motion was moved by the Male Assistants' Association protesting against the use of sheds and yards for teaching purposes as being unfair to both teachers and scholars. During discussion of the motion, a female assistant from Sturt Street school in her capacity as a delegate from WTPL, raised the issue of a class being conducted in the porch of the Sturt Street school. Mr Bronner, headmaster of the school and a member of the Union, was not at the delegates conference and wrote to the Director saying that the statement was only partly true. He said that although a class was working in the porch, it was the teacher's choice to work there rather than a problem of overcrowding. Bronner, who had been president of the Union in 1911 and 1916-17, was accused of disloyalty to fellow unionists because he wrote to the Director rather than air his concerns within the Union. In an attempt to defend himself, Brinier wrote to the Journal giving his side of the story but found himself unsupported within the Union. WTPL expressed its total confidence in and support for its delegate, arguing that the porch was being used 'not on account of lack of room space, but because the teachers using it find it less intolerable than teaching in the room space offered, where, with classes wedged closely together they are obliged to talk one against the other, to the detriment of throat and nerves'.

Others attacked Bronner in the Journal, one anonymous member suggesting that it was the inability of headmasters to dissociate themselves from their rank and to act as unionists that rendered the Union ineffective. No doubt Bronner was trying to cover himself so that the Director could not accuse him of poor organisation of his school but he found that his methods were not approved by other members.

But the incident had other wide-ranging consequences. The Director called to his office seven members of the executive to inform the Union that the government believed that the Union had broken a regulation when the corresponding secretary had written to the press promising a full answer to newspaper reports about speeches made at the Easter conference. The regulation referred to stated that
teachers, while on duty, are required to refrain from taking part in political affairs, otherwise than by the exercise of the franchise. They must refrain from all actions in public matters that, in the opinion of the Minister, will interfere with the welfare of the schools in which they are employed, or with their usefulness as teachers.

Following further discussions with the Director, W. McCoy, and the Liberal Minister, George Ritchie, the Union wrote to the Minister expressing regret that the executive had 'inadvertently' committed a breach of the regulations and assuring him that the debate at conference had been conducted without party political bias, and that the promised letter to the press contained no political significance. July conference resolved that the Union should 'take every means possible to secure amelioration of the particular regulation', and the Union again wrote to the Minister arguing that the regulations deprived teachers of political rights. The letter concluded that

as British subjects who teach the universality of British freedom, we ourselves look for that freedom, and we therefore respectfully ask that the whole regulation be reconsidered, and, if in the opinion of the Minister, some restriction is still considered necessary, that the regulation be re-cast in much less dramatic and less far-reaching terms.

As well as raising the question of the political rights of teachers, the 'Bronner incident' led to a questioning within the Union of the extent to which teachers were united in a body which could be considered a professional association. 34

A new phase

Union members were agreed on the necessity of appointing a full-time paid secretary to conduct the affairs of the Union. One of the immediate tasks for the person appointed would be to attract teachers to join the Union. While the motion to appoint such a secretary was passed at the 1921 conference, this conference was recognised as one in which participation in union affairs was at a low point. This was also the year of the inaugural meeting of the Australian Teachers' Federation. T. H. Smeaton was appointed as the first paid secretary of SAPTU. Smeaton, an architect by profession, had been a member of the Adelaide City Council for four years and a member of Parliament for sixteen years. The Union offices were established in chambers in Flinders Building adjoining the Flinders Street Baptist Church. 35

The appointment of Smeaton, which was later described 'as a measure of protection against victimisation', 36 signalled a new phase in relations between
the Union and the Department. While the Union still continued to be respectable in the way that Maley had described it in 1918, by 1922 it had the capacity both to exercise greater influence among teachers and to take on issues with the Department. There were a number of issues which required this capacity.

A major issue was the demand by the Union for an industrial tribunal which would decide salaries and conditions. This became urgent when in 1921 the Premiers' Conference proposed to remove all employees of state instrumentalities from the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. In October 1922, the Journal published a letter from Smeaton to the Director 'respectfully [requesting that] the Government . . . establish a tribunal, to which would be referred for settlement all questions affecting rates of pay and conditions of service'. Smeaton pointed out to teachers that the arguments for the tribunal were not self-interested ones for teachers alone:

The whole argument is that, while the education of the child is rightly regarded as the foundation upon which citizenship and the welfare of the
SAPTU leased its first headquarters in Flinders House, Flinders Street adjoining the Baptist Church in 1921. This followed the appointment of Lieutenant-Colonel T.H. Smeaton as the first full-time, paid general secretary of SAPTU. There were two rooms, one was used for secretarial work and the larger room which could accommodate up to 25 persons was used for meetings. The SAPTU executive asked members to avail themselves of their headquarters 'as a meeting place, a centre of information and advice, and, in a modest way, a club where during office hours, writing and reading may be engaged in'.

(Photographer—Doug Nicholas)

State must be built, the means to make that foundation sound and strong are so seriously lacking in some respects, and so unwisely hampered in others, that the State is crippled, teachers are discouraged, and the children who are supposed to be the object of our greatest consideration are the principal sufferers. It is believed that these conditions will not be remedied until it is possible to have them dispassionately regarded by an independent tribunal, clothed with the necessary authority, and that is surely not too much for the Teachers Union to expect the Government and the public to approve.

The Journal also published McCoy's reply that the Minister was 'unable to approve of the proposal'. Indeed, McCoy had advised the Minister against the
tribunal. So there had been no gain by the Union on this front despite promises made by the Premier. Nevertheless, Smeaton pushed ahead with his plan to visit teachers with the aim of deepening their interest in the Union, and with an agenda to sharpen the policies of the Union. On his way back to Adelaide from a visit to Port Pirie, Smeaton was able to meet ‘a number of teachers at the railway stations en route during his return’. Smeaton wrote to the Director on behalf of executive requesting improvements to the residences of country teachers. He pointed out that the items requested were no more than ‘a common provision for decency and comfort in middle class homes, and certainly not an extravagant expectation for a profession which is supposed to be regarded as a centre of refinement and culture, wherever it is represented’.

Charles Whillas, who had been the third president of SAPTU and became an inspector in 1899, died in 1922. His death meant that a link with the early days of the Union had been lost. An obituary in the Gazette traced his career:

He came to South Australia in his early manhood, and for a time was an assistant teacher at the well-known proprietary school conducted by the Whinham family. Early in 1871 he entered the service of the Council of Education, and was appointed to Salter’s Springs School. Two years later he

South Australian Public Teachers’ Union conference, September 1923
(SAIT photographic collection)
was placed in charge of Riverton School, where he spent seven successful years. In 1880 he was transferred to Moonta, and after four years was advanced to Hindmarsh School. Six years later he was in charge of Flinders Street, where he remained for six years, and then returned for a further term at Hindmarsh. In October, 1899, he received his appointment as inspector of schools, and carried out his duties successfully until his health failed in 1906.

Whillas, along with W. L. Neale and I. A. Plummer, was a pioneer of the Teachers' Superannuation Fund which was given legal sanction in 1890.

South Australian teachers suffered low professional status and high class sizes. The particular plight of the young, uncertificated women teachers in the country was recognised in the claim by a request for a £10 per year increase. Without protracted argument, the Minister accepted the Union claim and the increase was paid from 1 July. However, there was concern at the Department's plan to import teachers from England to deal with the staffing problem in schools.41 The Union president reported that a delegation of himself, Adelaide Miethke and Mr Sutton in April to the Minister had been received patiently and sympathetically. He reported on the delegation's arguments which had emphasised the fact that South Australian teachers were paid less than their interstate colleagues. Further,

on the question of staffing, the delegation showed that even under the best conditions the profession of teaching was not a popular calling with our young people. There were not many who expressed a wish to enter upon that work, but if something could be done to remedy the ills, such as large classes, overcrowded rooms, teaching in sheds, porches, cold rooms in winter and hot rooms in summer, if teachers were not called on to sacrifice hours when they should be recuperating for next day's work or in study, if retiring rooms could be provided where teachers could get away from the stress and strain of the work, if only for a short period, and from the rooms whose atmosphere was more or less vitiated, where they had worked during the morning, we should have fewer resignations, and fewer teachers breaking down from the strain.42

In the Union's view, it was not just poor salaries but also unfavourable conditions and lack of a long-service leave system which militated against a continuous supply of teachers.

Unity within WTPL

It had been decided at the annual conference in 1922 that the Easter conference of delegates, which had been a part of the Union's structure since its inception,
would not be held after that year. Consequently, the structure of the executive committee gained even greater significance. WTPL pointed out that the High School Male Teachers' Federation, though not affiliated with the Union, had been given representation on the executive, while the High School Women Teachers, who were affiliated with the Union, had no such representation! Executive remedied this anomaly late in 1922. Nevertheless, there was discussion in the League about the most effective way of gaining representation on executive, and debate about whether the League should dissolve into associations to ensure more representation for women teachers under a constitutional provision which allowed 'a direct representative for an association of 15 members, and two for an association of 100 or over'. However, at the League's annual meeting in February 1923, 'speaker after speaker stood for continued solidarity and against isolated interests [with members stating] that they would have more confidence in two of their present leaders, watching the interests of all, than in seven or eight independent delegates'. With a changed view on this in 1930, the League unsuccessfully sought to change this rule at annual conference.

After many years of service Phebe Watson resigned in 1923 as secretary to the League to take up an appointment to the staff of the Teachers' College. In the view of Adelaide Miethke, Watson's 'resignation made it all the more incumbent upon her (Miethke) to continue in office' as president. Miss Ellie Opie of Nailsworth school subsequently accepted the position of secretary and Watson later agreed to act as press secretary for the League. At the same time she was female vice-president of the Union.

In 1923 there were 35 associations affiliated with the Union and as a result of the decision by the League not to split into separate branches, it was the only association specifically representative of women teachers. Associations at this time were variously constructed according to area of teaching, rank, gender and geography. Total Union membership was 950, of which 385 were members of the League. Total League membership was 407.

Noted workers for the Union

The third annual meeting of the Australian Teachers' Federation was held at Easter in Sydney in 1923. The Federation was welcomed by education authorities as well as by teachers' unions, but the South Australian Minister of Education was not prepared to pay the train fares of the delegates, arguing that the 'whole cost of sending delegates to a Teachers' Conference should be borne by teachers themselves in the Union'. Although each state was entitled to send six delegates, SAPTU could afford to send only its president; indeed, only New South Wales and Victoria were fully represented.
Smeaton’s work as an independent, full-time, paid general secretary of the Union was warmly acknowledged by the members at the annual conference of 1923. Smeaton had earlier ‘met with a painful and well-nigh tragic accident’ which for a time reduced his mobility. Conference passed motions that Smeaton be allowed by the Minister to accompany delegations of the Union to the Department and that he be allowed to interview the Minister on behalf of the Union. In view of the good work that he had done, conference asked the executive to favourably consider a pay rise for its general secretary. The power of independence was beginning to be recognised and conference voted to incorporate the Union.

In recognition of support given to teachers over a period of 40 years, a deputation of Union officials made a presentation in his rooms to Sir Langdon Bonython. On this occasion, just before Christmas in 1923, Bonython recalled how 40 years earlier he had hosted a lunch at Beach’s Cafe in Hindley Street for ‘the head masters of Adelaide’, none of whom was still alive in 1923. Bonython’s view was that ‘the social status and influence of the teachers were very different [in 1923] from what they were even thirty years’ before that.

From her new position at the Teachers’ College, Phebe Watson in 1924 provided advice on appropriate dress to ‘girl teachers’ beginning a career in the country, arguing that it was not necessary for educated girls to appear drab—‘the old idea of the University girl with brains clothing herself in shapeless garments and disgracing herself by horn-rimmed spectacles, is an exploded fallacy’. A well-clothed teacher could brighten ‘the lives of little bush children who are uninitiated in many intricacies in the realm of good taste in dressing’. She was supported in these sentiments by Miss Harley at Adelaide High School:

All teachers dress well now. Perhaps it is that their salaries are not quite so atrocious as in the old days. Once, of course, teachers were considered horribly old-fashioned and uninteresting. We no longer wear the old straw hat and elastic-sided boots, though perhaps there are a few who are forced to ride bicycles. Perhaps the day will come when our salaries will permit the expense of a motor car. It is the duty of everyone to dress as suitably and attractively as possible.

At this time Veta Macghey who was to be a key player in later events, was riding a motorcycle to school.

In January 1924 the secretary to the Minister of Education informed the Union that the Liberal Minister, Thomas Pascoe MLC, would not agree to the Union’s request that the general secretary be allowed to interview the Minister personally on behalf of the Union. However, with a change of government in April to the Gunn Labor government, the new Minister, Lionel Hill, agreed to receive the general secretary as the accredited officer of the Union.
Superannuation and retirement

Inadequate superannuation benefits for the widow of Mr C. Okely of Birdwood Higher Primary School led to an appeal by the Union in May 1924 to raise funds to provide for Okely's widow and her six children. Superannuation was a major issue for all teachers and the case of Okely's widow was a dramatic example of a general problem. A proposal for a new superannuation fund was enthusiastically supported at a meeting of members of the Public Service Federation, which included teachers, in May 1926. The fund was also supported separately by WTPL. At the same time, executive drew up plans for a sick fund for teachers.

While the Superannuation Bill was under consideration in 1926, WTPL made a strong case for women to be entitled to retire at 60 without loss of benefit. The main arguments put to a Parliamentary Select Committee by Phebe Watson on behalf of the League were

1 that many women would wish to retire at 60, especially those who were dealing with classes and doing rank and file work up to that age;
2 that a percentage of such women were ineffective at 60, and that it would be in the interest of the Department and the children for them to be able to retire then;
3 that youth, vigour and enthusiasm were needed for teaching, and these were often lacking in women who had put in over 40 years of strenuous endeavour as teachers;
4 that it would give some opportunity for leisure, after as much as 40 years of what the Arbitration Court had recently agreed to be the most stressful and nerve-racking of occupations;
5 that the knowledge that retirement was possible at 60, with adequate provision, would relieve anxiety and add to the content, health and efficiency of the service.

A stronger industrial platform

The Union affirmed its 'non-political' character in 1924 by declining an invitation by the Eight Hours Day Celebration Committee to take part in a Labour Day demonstration on the grounds that it was not a political association. However, it had no doubt about its industrial status and it welcomed the decision of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court in the same year to grant registration to the Federated School Teachers' Association of Australia, a decision the Union believed would have great benefits for teachers.

Legislation was passed in the South Australian Parliament just before the
Fourth conference of the Australian State Teachers' Federation was held in Adelaide on 22 and 23 April, 1924. ASTF was the precursor to ATF which was established in 1937.

Back row: Mr E.J. Rourke, B.A., B.E. (NSW), Mr W.L. Grace, B.A. (Tas), Mr N.L. Jameson (Vic), Mr W.F. Hatfield, B.A., BSc (NSW), Mr R. Lee (Tas), Mr L.T. Latter (NSW), Mr D. Black (Vic), Mr M. Gerlach (SA), Mr O.D. Hill (WA), Mr J. Bensted (Q), Mr E. Dash, B.A. (NSW), Mr E. Allen M.A. (SA), Mr G.W. McLean (WA), Mr G. Waddle M. Sc (Q).

Second row: Miss Eadie (Vic), Mr W.J. Hendry (NSW), Miss Ingram (Vic), Mr W. Bennett (SA), Mr A.G. Alanson (NSW), Miss Phebe N. Watson (SA), Miss Swann (NSW), Miss Adelaide Miethke (SA), Lieutenant-Colonel Smeaton V.D. (SA)

Front row: Mr F.J. Gartrell (SA), Mr G. Robinson (Vic), Mr Hopton, B.A. (Vic), Mr H. Hart (Vic).

(SA Teachers Journal)

Christmas vacation in 1924 which would provide access to the State Arbitration Court to public servants, including teachers, and much of the activity of the Union in 1925 was devoted to securing industrial registration and pressing a salaries claim. In a retrospective report to the Australian Teachers' Federation conference in Adelaide at the beginning of 1925, the Union argued that, in terms of educational and industrial developments, 1924 had been a good year for South Australian teachers:
It is hardly possible that any future year in the history of South Australia will be able to excel the record of 1924 for educational developments along the lines laid down with the earnest intention of meeting the needs of the times for the sound and suitable instruction of children in things that will prepare and equip them for capable citizenship.\textsuperscript{59}

But it was industrial registration and the outcome of the salaries claim which provided most satisfaction to the Union in 1925.\textsuperscript{60} Charles Maley, head teacher of Aldgate school, had championed this cause for the Union, and it was with great sadness that the executive recorded his death at a special meeting in March which had been called to discuss salaries. Sympathy was expressed to Charles Maley’s family:

In officially announcing the death of Mr Charles Maley, the president [Mr F. Gartrell] made feeling reference to the career of the deceased member, and specially to his work in connection with the Education Department
Charles Maley and the Maley Memorial

Charles Maley was a very active member of SA Public Teachers’ Union when it was a struggling institution. He was a stalwart advocate for improving teacher conditions. He believed that women should be paid at the same rate as male teachers. The Maley Memorial (above right) was erected at the Stirling East Cemetery by the SA Public Teachers’ Union. The unveiling of the memorial took place on May 4th 1927. (SA Teachers’ Journal)

and the SA Public Teachers’ Union. A tribute was paid to Mr Maley’s memory for long, consistent, and exceptionally able service, and it was agreed that this be recorded in the minutes, and also conveyed to his widow and family, with an expression of the profound sympathy of the Union. The motion was carried in solemn silence, all members of the meeting standing, in token of respect and sorrow.

At the time of his death, Maley was male vice-president, a position he had held since 1915. He had been a vigorous contributor to debates about the character of teacher unionism and was one of the few males in the Union to actively and publicly support equal pay for women. Funds were raised by members of the Union for a memorial to Maley and the commemoration of his
work 'was practically accomplished by the erection of a monumental memorial
over his grave'. The esteem in which Maley was held as a teacher and a
unionist was recognised by the inscription on his memorial: 'A wise counsellor.
A loyal comrade and the children's friend'. Maley's wife, Kate, died the following
year and was buried next to Charles.

The salaries claim was the first test of the Arbitration Court for teachers.
Earlier in the year, the Labor government had indicated that it would be prepared
to negotiate a claim until the amount involved led it to suggest that the claim
be dealt with by arbitration. The president, F. Gartrell, and two executive
members, Mr Skitch and Miss Lamb, along with the general secretary, presented
the teachers' case in the Court. In their presentation they argued that a salary
increase for teachers was justified on a number of grounds: long training, qualities
required of a teacher; the strain of the work; the inconvenience and deprivations
suffered by most country teachers; the need to attract recruits; the fact that only
small increases had occurred since 1884 in comparison to other workers; the
The Quest for Justice and Equality, 1916–1937

reduced purchasing power of current salaries; the fact that South Australian salaries were lower than those in other states; and, finally, the dignity of the profession.\textsuperscript{64} Both the metropolitan newspapers supported the teachers' salary claims.\textsuperscript{65} With the support of WTPL the claim argued that female salaries should be four-fifths of male salaries; although it was not specified in the award, this was effectively the outcome in most cases.\textsuperscript{66}

The work of the general secretary in visiting associations to further what the Union called its 'propaganda work' was of necessity curtailed by the work required for the award in 1925. However, new associations joined and membership increased—results, possibly, at least in part, of the argument that non-members could not expect to benefit from the award. One perhaps unanticipated outcome of the award was a successful application by the Guild of Inspectors of South Australia to be affiliated with the Union.\textsuperscript{67} Another development in 1925 was the interchange established for qualified primary teachers aged between 25 and 45 in South Australia and the London County Council.\textsuperscript{68}

In the period of activity in relation to salaries high school male teachers sought to increase their strength on the executive. To achieve this, the associations that constituted the High School Male Teachers' Union—the High School Head Masters' Association, the High School Senior Masters' Association and the High School Male Assistants' Association—sought and gained separate representation in 1926 with the result that there were now an additional six high school males on the executive.\textsuperscript{69}

T. H. Smeaton and some successors

Late in 1926 the general secretary, Lieutenant-Colonel T. H. Smeaton, was taken ill and was unable to carry on his duties in a full-time capacity.\textsuperscript{70} His health did not substantially improve and he continued his duties in 1927 while partially blind, requiring the support of others to find his way about. Smeaton's death at the age of 70 in October was recorded on the front page of the Journal in November. He was described in this obituary as 'a man of wide experience, outstanding ability, and unimpeachable character, whom to know was an education in itself'. 'It is doubtful', the obituary continued, 'whether there was a man in this State, outside the ranks of actual trained men, who had such a grip of educational problems as did the late General Secretary, and in this again he was remarkably well-fitted for the position which he occupied in the Union'.\textsuperscript{71} The Register also reported the death of Mr Smeaton and recorded at length aspects of his life as a 'valued citizen' of the state.\textsuperscript{72}

Smeaton's aims as secretary of SAPTU had been to increase the number of members in the Union and to enhance the professional prestige of teaching. In
the years following his appointment in 1921, he travelled throughout the state addressing teachers' associations and encouraging teachers to join the Union. As a former member of state Parliament, he was able to use his well-established connections on behalf of teachers and the Union. He used his position as the first paid secretary of the Union to organise its office efficiently and effectively, and during his illness the loss of his secretarial skills was keenly felt. Smeaton's 'junior clerk', Miss Pethick, was paid a bonus of £10 for her extra work in keeping the 'business' running smoothly in Smeaton's absence, and her salary was increased by five shillings per week. By the end of 1928, Miss Pethick had been made a senior clerk and her salary increased to £200 from 1 January 1929.73

In November 1927 the Union advertised the position of general secretary in the Journal. The finalists were Victor Pavia, E. S. Davis, L. Hayter and W. Finlayson. On 16 December, the executive committee made a choice by secret ballot between Pavia and Davis, the other candidates having been eliminated after discussion. Davis got the job.74 Less than a year after his appointment, Davis was found to have embezzled about £120 from the Union; Davis resigned and undertook to repay the funds. The amount was repaid the next month by Mrs Davis on behalf of her husband to avoid family embarrassment.75 The general secretary's position was advertised again in March 192976 and R. West acted as general secretary until it was filled.
The passing of the Compulsory Education Act in 1875 marked a period of far-reaching educational progress in South Australia. Amongst other things it led to the building of many schools which were hopelessly inefficient in design and construction in relation to lighting, ventilation, orientation and space. The SAPTU had great hopes that Parliament would provide funds for altering and repairing many old schools and for building new ones in the place of dilapidated structures.

(SA Teachers' Journal)

In April 1927 a Liberal – Country Party Coalition government with Richard Butler as Premier and Malcolm McIntosh as Minister of Education replaced the Labor government. While stressing that the Union 'had no politics', the Union
The new Teachers' College in Kintore Avenue, Adelaide. The college was opened on 21 March, 1927. There was a close relationship between the Union and Teachers' College. College staff and students were members of the SA Public Teachers' Union. (SA Teachers' Journal)

president and secretary wrote to the former Labor Premier thanking him for his courtesy to the Union while in office. However, the Journal again stated the Union's political neutrality:

It goes without saying that the loyal support of the SA Public Teachers' Union is assured to whatever government may be in power, for the furtherance of such progressive educational ideas as will make for the welfare of the State. 77

One of the early items on the Union’s 1927 agenda was to press for preference for unionists in the employment of teachers in South Australia, and this matter was before the Hill Labor government at the beginning of the year. However, the Butler government did not support the Union on this matter.

While the Journal had been an independent medium for teachers since 1915, some dissatisfaction with it was expressed at the 1927 annual conference. In an issue following the conference, the editor took up the cudgels in defence of the Journal by confronting members and telling them that if they were dissatisfied, they should suggest improvements and write articles. It was true that over the
past few years the *Journal* had contained mainly advertisements and reports of executive meetings, and in comparison with the early days of the *Journal* there were very few reports of the activities of the associations and WTPL. There was a regular ‘Book Chat’ column, contributed from the inception of the *Journal* by Phebe Watson, but members appeared to be requesting more ‘professional and literary’ matters. In 1928, after a period of sparse reporting of Union activities, the *Journal* took to reporting committee meetings and association meetings in detail. A *Journal* committee was formed in order to publicise the activities of the various arms of the Union and thereby, it was hoped, to increase its relevance to members.

In his presidential address to the 1928 annual conference, R. A. West told the Union members present that previously well-attended business sessions of the conference had, in recent years, been less well attended and that, as a consequence, ‘the debating ground has been shifted from the arena of the Mid-winter Conference to the monthly Executive meeting’. West suggested that it was necessary to look at the composition of executive and to consider the establishment of committees to deal with some of the work before executive, in particular a finance committee and a library committee. By the end of 1928 the Union had established a number of committees in addition to the *Journal* and vigilance committees. These included committees for finance, library, free books and, in view of the developing Depression, unemployment relief. One of the tasks of the *Journal* committee was to find ways of maintaining the level of advertising in the *Journal* at a time when the Depression made this difficult. Much of the work of this committee relied on the enthusiasm of Phebe Watson who, with the other committee members (Messrs Gordon, Corry, West and Lushey), was given the task of determining the monthly policy of the *Journal*.

Sport had always been a keen interest of teachers and in August 1928 it was decided to form a South Australian Public Teachers’ Union Amateur Sports Association. In background notes for the information of teachers, M. Lushey noted in the *Journal* that

in the earlier days the teachers of this Union took a large part in the sport of the State, and some well-known cricketers and footballers are still in our midst. It is desired to revive this sporting spirit again with a view to showing the public that teachers are not only schoolmen and bookmen, but also men of much wider interests—men who can take their part in the world of sport as well as in the realm of learning.

That this language reflected an apparently male preserve was reinforced by the fact that all members of the committee and the convenors for the various sports—cricket, tennis, bowls and golf—were men. Nevertheless, there were women teachers at this time actively engaged in sport. Veta Macghey, for
example, was an interstate hockey player who introduced girls' hockey to Norwood High in 1929.83

Attempts to dispel the apparent apathy among teachers for 'higher things' in their expectations of the Union were manifest in letters such as that from Norman Edwards (Norwood High School) in the Journal in May 1929. Edwards wrote that something of the spirit of the past association meetings with their instructive and social functions needed to be revived. He also suggested that the Union consider seriously the acquisition of 'headquarters worthy of the Union'. He wrote these ideas, he said, 'with the hope of provoking a correspondence, whether approving or opposing I do not care, so long as I can stir up the calm waters of apathy which seem to have flooded over our Union'.84

In a later issue of the Journal, Edwards put forward a proposal for a reorganisation of executive which had been drawn up by the Head Masters' Association. Significantly, this proposal did not include representation from WTPL.85 Nevertheless, WTPL the following year decided to support Edwards for the position of president-elect.86 Edwards was elected as president-elect but resigned from the position shortly afterwards.87 T. S. Raggatt, Union treasurer, responded to Edwards' suggestion of new headquarters, arguing that the present Depression was not a good time to use Union reserves and to borrow further.88

The Depression years

In June 1929 the Union announced the appointment of a new general secretary, Mr F. R. Forgan. Born in 1899, Forgan had been a teacher but had also qualified as a lawyer in 1928. Forgan's talents were many—he had both scholastic and business experience, was active in a range of sporting and athletic activities and was 'keenly interested in literary pursuits'.89 In his first report as general secretary in August 1929, Forgan suggested the establishment of an Emergency Relief Fund to prevent the need for teachers to plead indigent circumstances as this was 'unbecoming the dignity of our profession'. Referring to teachers' contributions to the Unemployment Relief Fund he suggested that

the outstanding feature to report during the year is one concerned with the highest aims of our profession, the welfare of our fellow-creatures . . . A thousand pities that they should be in want, but a million blessings that we teachers have been able to alleviate some of the suffering caused by the financial stringency at present existing.90

Union hopes that federal registration would lead to a federal award for teachers were dashed when the Federal Arbitration Court held in 1929 that education was not an industry; there was some consolation, though, when the
Court recognised teaching as a profession. In 1930 and 1931 the main issues centred around the salaries crisis and the salary reductions in the Depression.

However, there were other matters of concern to the Union in 1930, one of which was mounting dissatisfaction with the Australian Teachers' Union. South Australian delegates argued that if Western Australia and Queensland were not admitted, South Australia should seriously consider its affiliation. In particular, South Australia argued that there should be equal voting powers to all states on all questions, that the objects of the ATU should give primacy to those of an educational nature rather than an industrial nature and that funds should not be accumulated by the ATU. Furthermore, since the Federal Arbitration Court did not provide access to teachers, SAPTU delegates argued that the ATU should discontinue its registration.

In May 1930, executive decided that the Union should ultimately acquire its own building, but only when it had accumulated reserves of £10,000. Since September 1928 the Union had occupied offices in the Epworth Building in Pirie Street. Later, with an increase in the use of the Union's library, it was necessary to seek more expansive accommodation, and in August 1931 the Union moved offices to a suite of three rooms on the third floor of the Rechabite Chambers in Victoria Square.

**Negotiated salary cuts**

By July it was acknowledged in the *Journal* that rumours of impending salary reductions were abroad. A special executive meeting was held on the question but it was thought to be impolitic to publish the results of that meeting. Nevertheless, it was stated in bold print that 'no request for a reduction has been made by the Minister, and certainly no offer has been made by the Union'. However, in presenting arguments as to why teachers should join the Union, the *Journal* editors in July 1930 made no mention of the Depression. They pointed out the importance of the Legal Defence Fund, the Union library, the copying of lecture notes and the value of keeping 'before the public the value of our State educational system to every section of the community'.

It soon became clear that the question of a reduction of salaries could not be kept from members. The vigilance committee reported that in July, with a full attendance of members, it had discussed a request by the Budget Committee of State Parliament that the president and secretary of the Union meet with it to discuss 'a scheme which would cause least hardship if the reduction did come into force'. The Union seemed about to accept the inevitable, but the general secretary felt it necessary to draw attention to 'the foolish attitude of many teachers by indulging in scaremongering statements concerning their salaries'
and urged teachers not to engage in public discussion of salaries until a definite scheme had been developed.95

The special salaries committee which was set up by the union to deal with the question of salaries was concerned that the daily newspapers were receiving information from teachers which implied that the Union had done a deal with the government to reduce teachers' salaries, and wrote to the papers denying any such deal.96 The annual report of the minute secretary for 1929–30 is revealing in its commentary on Union activity:

The year 1929–30 now closing has been a quiet one as far as Union activities are concerned, if we except the last two special meetings called to discuss the salaries question. Sectional feeling has occasionally been rather pronounced, and it certainly does not do the Union any good when it crops up.97

The September 1930 Journal editorial finally admitted that a reduction in salaries was on the way:

Teachers are the only section of the community which has expressed its willingness to shoulder its fair share of the burden. Every proposal so far brought forward has been assailed by various other sections as affecting them. The [salaries] committee has been appointed to see that teachers are not called on unduly to share the burdens of others.98

But a salaries reduction was already a matter of discussion within the Union and a subject of public debate. Annual conference of 1930 affirmed that teachers were prepared to help the state in the Depression. The president, Mr Charlesworth, was reported in the Advertiser as saying that

it was necessary in the life of a teacher that he or she should be free from outside worries or anxieties regarding his economic circumstances. In the present time of financial stress, however, teachers, as reasonable citizens, were prepared to share in helping stabilise the finances of the State.99

Because teachers' salaries were the subject of an award in the State Arbitration Court, their salaries could not be reduced arbitrarily by government, but would require amendment by the Court or the agreement of the Union to vary the award. In an action regarded by the government as laudable, the Union, authorised by council on 20 October, supported an application to the Court by the Hill Labor government:

I wish to inform you that [the Union] has agreed to consent to your application for a variation of the public School Teachers award by (1) a reduction of 10 per cent in all salaries, and (2) the deletion of condition 1(b) of the award [which provided for proficiency bonuses], the variation
of the award to be effective for one year from the date of operation. This union does not accept the award variation on principle, but because the financial position of the State makes such a course imperative.\textsuperscript{100}

Council opposed the deletion of bonuses but the government held out against Corry's defence of the Union position. At the same time, the government served notice of compulsory retirement on almost fifty teachers who had believed that they would be employed until they were 70, but under a new policy were now being compulsorily retired earlier.\textsuperscript{101}

The WTPL decided to dissolve as a formal structure within the Union and to apply for representation as separate organisations. Seven associations applied for and were granted affiliation with the Union: Headmistresses, High School Senior Mistresses, High School Women Junior Assistants, High School Women Assistants (the secretary of which in 1931 was Miss May Mills, later to be the only female ever elected president of SAPTU), Infant Mistresses, Infant Teachers and Women Assistants.\textsuperscript{102} The council meeting of 1 May 1931 was the last attended by the League as an association.\textsuperscript{103} Later, two new associations of women teachers were affiliated with the Union: Correspondence School Women Assistants and Domestic Arts Teachers. Women delegates to the Federated State School Teachers' Association of Australia (FSSTAA) conference in January 1931 successfully moved a resolution arguing for equal status for women teachers. Laura Heyne, president of the High School Senior Mistresses' Branch of the League, argued that

the developing of the child is the natural province of women. It is the mother in the home who is entrusted with deciding what is best for the little one. In the schoolroom trained women who combine natural instinct with training are full of ideas, initiative, resource and thoughtful weighing of the child's welfare. Yet in the world of education in Australia, administrative work, and the development and direction of departments are almost entirely in the hands of men, and few opportunities are offered to women to share in these.

Women are successful in teaching, Heyne argued,

because with them it is a life work, the creative instinct turned to other channels. A woman lives for her work, day and night she plans and creates, her joy is in what she creates. With man it is his livelihood, not his mission. He has other responsibilities, other interests.\textsuperscript{104}

In 1931 the Union withdrew from FSSTAA after failing to have its constitutional amendments accepted at the January conference.\textsuperscript{105} Despite this lack of success for the South Australian delegates, unity prevailed on other matters such as when the conference discussed the effects of the Depression on education. One
May Mills was the first and only woman president of the SA Public Teachers' Union. (Her term of office began in May 1943.) She was nominated by the High School Women's Association of which she was president. The HSWA contacted other associations to support May Mills who had served on Council and as SAIT vice-president. (SA Teachers' Journal)

of these was potential overcrowding of schools in the coming year as unemployed school leavers returned in 1931. Adelaide High School, which was built for 700 pupils, already had 1200.106

The Department seeks to economise

In March and April 1931 the Education Gazette featured two articles on 'Education for Sparsely Populated Areas' written by the Secretary to the Director of Education. In these articles, Clarence Lewis extolled the virtues of the small rural Class VII schools and the Correspondence School, the latter having been established in May 1920 to provide schooling for children in outback areas who might otherwise have been denied access to education. By 1931 the number of students in the Correspondence School had risen from 253 at the end of 1920 to 875, 468 of whom had enrolled in 1931. Although the school catered for the ordinary curriculum,
pages on Domestic Economy [were] prepared each month by an experienced member of the staff and [were] sent out with the lessons. The object [was] at once to help the mothers of the pupils, and to stimulate in the older girls a love for housecraft and the domestic arts.

Both the Class VII schools and the Correspondence School, Lewis argued, were instruments of equality of educational opportunity, and the Correspondence School in particular was an economical means of providing educational opportunity. This school had been founded by women, initially as an altruistic activity, and was now administered by a headmistress, Miss S. N. Twiss, with eighteen assistants, a part-time art teacher, and three typistes. But there was also a broader cultural function attached to this school:

It is pleasing to be able to state that every member of the staff is animated by a high sense of the duty she owes to both parents and pupils, and strives as far as lies in her power to bring into the circumscribed lives of those dwellers in the 'outback' not only the blessings of knowledge, but a sense of kinship and friendliness with a world outside their own limited horizon.

These articles were written at a time when the Education Commission, appointed to find ways of reducing expenditure on education in South Australia, was preparing its first progress report. W. J. Adey, Director of Education, was a member of the Commission, the other members being Professor J. McKellar Stewart and the chairman, Mr J. Wallace Sandford, who had been president of the Taxpayers' Association in 1929. According to the Union, the Taxpayers' Association had in 1929 'suggested the serious curtailment of state education'. In its first progress report in April the Commission recommended that all Class VII schools with an average attendance of less than ten pupils be closed. There were 154 such schools. In addition, the Commission recommended charging fees for secondary education. Although Adey submitted a minority report, he accepted with reluctance the suggestion to charge fees. This suggestion revived debate in the press as to whether all students benefited from secondary education.

In its second progress report the Commission attributed the rapid rise in education expenditure 'over the last 10 years' to salary increases which had been granted to teachers. In particular, the Commission argued, the award by the Industrial Court in 1925 added £94,500 to the annual education bill. To deal with these problems, the Commission recommended that in primary schools the system of bonuses be abolished, living allowances be reduced and the positions of headmistresses and infant mistresses be abolished and that people holding these positions be called 'assistants-in-charge', with a corresponding saving in salaries. In addition to charging fees in high schools, the Commission
recommended amalgamation of some high schools and increasing rents for school residences.\textsuperscript{111}

The Union advised members to arrange for school council meetings to protest any suggested closing of schools, and argued that by trying to keep the schools open 'you will be exhibiting the true spirit of our Union in fostering the interest of education in South Australia'.\textsuperscript{112} 'Tish' addressed the 'Folks Outback' in August, saying that she believed that they need not tremble too much, 'as it would seem to be incredible that anything so drastic and reactionary as the abolition of small country schools (in any great degree) could take place even at such a time of financial stress as the present'.\textsuperscript{113}

Further developing the arguments presented at the Federation of State School Teachers' Associations in Australia (FSSTAA), a deputation of women teachers waited upon the Minister to argue against the abolition of the positions of headmistress and infant mistress. The deputation argued that women teachers recognised the necessity of salary reductions:

But to de-grade us by taking away our treasured Status, a status so highly prized and sought, as lending dignity, and authority, recognised alike by parents, children, staff—in fact, by the community at large—would be a blow which would crush more than ourselves—it would have a deleterious effect on all ranks below ours.

With so many avenues of promotion permanently blocked, dissatisfaction, loss of zeal, loss of initiative would inevitably come, and these would have a bad psychological effect on the efficiency of their work. Even our resilience would take time to recover.\textsuperscript{114}

More salary cuts and protracted negotiations

Teachers endured another salary cut in 1931, this time of 20 per cent in line with the 'Premiers' Plan'. Again, the Union agreed with the government that such a cut was necessary in the interests of the state economy.\textsuperscript{115} Further, the portion of superannuation pensions paid by the government was reduced by sixteen and two-thirds per cent.\textsuperscript{116} Corry's presidential address to the 1931 annual conference related to teachers how the Union had refrained from pressing too much on the government in the past year in order not to add to the overload of worries and difficulties already faced by the government.\textsuperscript{117}

The annual report of the general secretary recorded the disappointment of the Union in the 20 per cent reduction in salaries, but concluded that by agreeing to the reduction proposed by the government, teachers were less badly off than they would have been had they contested the reduction in the Arbitration Court. Nevertheless, the president reported that council had
appointed a committee to consider salary and conditions and to explore the possibility of the restoration of the whole or part of the 20 per cent. However, by the end of the year the *Journal* editors noted that, bad as things were, there had been no retrenchments in the Department and they concluded that the Union had been wise in not seeking such a restoration.

In March 1932 council established a committee to 'investigate the interference with school routine work caused by activities and other agencies which are not included as part of the Curriculum and report to Council with the idea of taking the matter to the Director'. While the committee considered a range of activities and organisations, it was apparently unable to arrive at particular recommendations and decided to bring the matter 'before the Director asking that a general principle be laid down governing outside activities'.

The general secretary reported to the June council meeting that there were rumours about salaries and conditions, including that increments might not be granted and that the teaching load may be increased. At the same meeting, a motion recommending to executive that it 'take immediate steps to apply to the Court for a restoration of the last cut in salaries' was lost. The question of salaries constituted much of the Union's activity in 1933. A special meeting of council in August unanimously voted against the government's 'suggestion' of a further reduction of five per cent and instructed the salaries and executive committee to meet the Premier. The Liberal Country League Premier argued that teachers had suffered less than other public servants in salary cuts and should be prepared to meet the government's request for a further reduction. Conference supported the salaries special committee in not agreeing to any reduction without recourse to the Arbitration Court, and it intended to resist any arbitrary action by the government. After discussions between the Union, the Director and the Premier, the Director, W. J. Adey informed the Union of the government's decision. In the curiously formal language of the time, Adey wrote to Forgan as follows:

Dear Sir
I have the honour to inform you, by direction, that the Hon. The Premier and Treasurer has instructed me to reduce the estimates for the teachers' salaries for the current year by £25,000, and to ask the teachers, in view of all the circumstances, to voluntarily agree to the reduction suggested, and thus avoid the necessity of legislative action.

In the covering note the Hon. The Minister of Education states that he sincerely trusts the teachers of the Department will appreciate the difficulties in which the Government finds itself, and will voluntarily assist the State in its great difficulties. He further states that he recognizes the special duties performed by teachers and fully appreciates the services
rendered by them to the State, but in view of all the circumstances there is no alternative than a reduction in the salaries' vote.\textsuperscript{124}

The Union replied that the appropriate way to deal with a salaries case was through the Arbitration Court. In response, the Liberal – Country League government introduced legislation on 27 September to reduce teachers' salaries as part of the Appropriation Bill. The Union variously described this action as 'class legislation enacted by Parliament against teachers who belong to the Union'\textsuperscript{125} and 'the Bolshevist instrument of direct action'.\textsuperscript{126} Salaries were to be reduced from 7 October. As a countermove, the Union then presented a submission to the Arbitration Court for an award in the terms of the scale awarded in 1925. The issue evoked strong passions in the Letters pages in the daily newspapers with one correspondent pointing out that although 'every taxpayer is keen for economy . . . every Britisher is also keen for fair play'.\textsuperscript{127} To this correspondent, who was in favour of arbitration, fair play was evidently not yet an Australian characteristic. Despite the severity of the issues affecting teachers at this time, the Union president, Mr G. Polson, told the 1933 conference that 'we can confidently assert that in no other State are more harmonious relations maintained with the Education Department.\textsuperscript{128}

Much of the salaries case of 1934 was conducted in closed court and was unable to be reported to the members. An interim report was provided by the salaries committee in October.\textsuperscript{129} On 9 November the President of the Arbitration Court delivered a judgement which was subsequently reported in the Journal.\textsuperscript{130} However, the judgement did not restore the principles of the 1925 decision and, just before Christmas, the Journal published a series of cartoons depicting the hardships of teachers.\textsuperscript{131} The cost of conducting the salaries case depleted the reserves of the Union and it was necessary to hold a special conference in March 1935 to alter the rules so that the Union could obtain a bank overdraft of £500 until September.

Salaries continued to be the major issue of 1935. At the 1935 annual conference, the general secretary reported that

the outstanding event of the year was the completion of the Salaries Case, the results of which are somewhat difficult to summarise. With certain exceptions above and below the typical example, the general result reflects the drop in the Living Wage with an additional drop of twenty pounds per annum in real wages. The correction of the twenty-four per cent cut to the award wages will result in an ultimate increase to the majority of teachers. The Award awaits Parliamentary sanction which we hope will be granted early in October.\textsuperscript{132}

This long delay occurred despite the fact that the award was made on 26 February 1935.\textsuperscript{133}
During the salaries saga, the Union again affirmed its ‘non-political’ position when it decided against joining a Council of Government Unions which had been proposed ‘to take united action against further salary and wages cuts’. Mr R. A. West, representing the Union on the SA Public Officers’ Federation informed the Federation, at its meeting on 26 May 1932 ‘that as the Teachers’ Union was a non-party body, and as some of the delegates to the proposed conference had definitely sided with one political party, his council thought it wise to refrain from associating themselves with the proposed Council of Government Unions’. Earlier, the Head Masters’ Association had been divided over this question but a majority of members at an association meeting in April ‘expressed the view that we should be very cautious in approaching any organisation which threatened to lower the professional status of the service’. Nevertheless, on the recommendation of its delegates to the South Australian Public Officers’ Federation, the Union was represented at the Living Wage Inquiry which commenced in September 1935 by an advocate in common with the Bank Officials Association, the Australian Workers’ Union, the Police Officers’ Association and the Railway Officers’ Association.

Corry’s presidential speech to the 1935 conference hinted at the dissatisfaction with the Arbitration Court as a mechanism for fixing teachers’ salaries and suggested a salaries board composed of teacher and employer representation with an independent chair who should not be the Public Service Commissioner. A subsequent proposal for such a board was turned down by council. However, Corry spoke strongly about division in the Union:

In our union there are too many sections, and the spirit of real unionism is not strong. I say that with regret. The Salaries Committee in future should be smaller . . . We found a great deal of criticism, which was not just, during the hearing of the case. The Salaries Committee had enough trouble with our opponents, without finding trouble in our own ranks. We must recognise the equality of all members of the Union. No one should ask for privileges and rights that they would not grant to other members. Unless we stand united we fall divided.

He also recommended a code of conduct as an attempt to ensure loyalty.

The Union’s position on the salaries award was summed up in the Journal of October 1935:

The best possible construction that can be placed on the award is that it represents a definite increase for a few teachers, and a decrease in real wages for the majority resulting in a reduction in present rates for more than twenty per cent of the teachers . . . Regarding the reductions imposed by the court, we wish to state that the Salaries Committee has already made strong representations to the Department that it should treat the award
rates as the Court intended them to be treated, namely, as minima only, and that the Department should ameliorate the hardship which will result if the award rates are treated as minima.139

At council meeting on 6 December a number of delegates asked questions of Corry in relation to the conduct and outcome of the salaries case and in relation to the Enquiry into the Female Living Wage.

The female living wage was increased by 1s 6d per week or £3/15s/9d per year in early 1936. Later in the year, the Enquiry into the Male Living Wage found that an increase of 7d a day or 4s 1d per week was warranted.140 In 1937, the increases were 4s 6d for men and 1s 9d for women, with the base rate for men £187/15s/6d and for women £122/12s/6d.141

Concerns about Union structure

A major item on the business agenda of the annual conference in 1935 was a motion to alter the Union constitution to provide for a conference of delegates rather than a conference of individuals. There was also a motion at this conference that the Union favour the registration of teachers. The first of these motions was unsuccessful and the second was not taken seriously by the state. One curious item on the agenda of the public meeting at the 1935 conference was an address by Mr Brunner on ‘Some Ideals of Education in Nazi Germany’.142 In an attempt to inspire interest in this conference, the Journal published cartoons.143

The Union rules were altered to provide for annual conference to be held in the May school vacation. The basis of representation to council was also amended along the lines which had previously been argued by WTPL—that is, ‘one delegate for not less than fifteen nor more than fifty members and one delegate for each additional fifty members or majority fraction thereof’.144 However, the proposal to turn the conference into a delegates’ conference was not accepted at conference. Women at the conference argued that such a proposal would mean that men would outnumber women. The proposal was also opposed by a number of teachers, men and women, who argued that it would remove the democratic control that members exercised over the Union. Miss Davies told the conference that she was

not in favour of a delegates’ conference, on democratic grounds. It takes the last vestige of control out of the hands of the rank and file. We would have no chance of exercising control of our governing body. The proposal is to take the power out of the hands of the many and put it in the hands of the few. There may be a few souls visioning an ultimate dictatorship.

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These sentiments were echoed by Mr McKinnon who argued that the proposal was undemocratic in principle and would lead to many 'outback associations' not being represented at all.145

In accepting the award of Life Membership at the 1935 conference, Lizzie Lamb said that she had pleasant recollections of the harmony between the teachers and the Department. I have not been on many deputations since Mr Adey has been Director, but I was previously. Whenever we went to Mr McCoy we were fully convinced of the justice of our case, but after his point of view was expressed we were fully convinced that he was right.

She spoke of the necessity for 'love and trust between the teacher and children, and between the staff and the head'. She was proud of the achievements of women teachers and appreciated their loyalty to her. However, she also acknowledged the help she had received from male assistants, and there was applause from the floor when she said that 'we did not always see eye to eye, but that made no difference to speak of'.146
At the annual conference of 1936 life membership was awarded to Phebe Watson, Adelaide Miethke, Inspector Gartrell, W. J. Odgers and J. D. A. Drinkwater. In her acceptance reply, Phebe Watson said that both she and Adelaide Miethke had been very interested in Union work for about fifteen years, and she was now seeing generational change and different views among the younger women. In view of the events which were shortly to take place, her final comment was interesting: 'We realise that this Union is a true one in which there is no sectional difference, and I wish its members every success'.

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In August 1937, more than 600 women teachers resigned from the South Australian Public Teachers' Union and formed the Women Teachers' Guild. The breakaway was the culmination of more than two years of intense dissatisfaction arising from unequal representation of men and women on the Union council and various other matters. For several years afterwards, the relationship between the two organisations could only be described as acrimonious as they traded blows in their respective publications and in the Industrial Court. However, from the late 1940s, cooperation in salary matters gradually healed the breach.

Breakaway and formation of the Women Teachers' Guild

In 1904, women teachers in city schools formed the Women Assistants' Association to protect the interests of women teachers and campaign for equal pay. In 1906 this association changed its name to the Women Teachers' Association and broadened its membership to include all women teachers. The women soon realised that equal pay was a distant goal and in the early years concentrated on achieving salary increases for the lowest paid country teachers. However, their attempts to advance women teachers' interests in general were thwarted by the inadequacy of their representation on the Union council, the Union's...
major decision-making body, which adopted the tactic of providing the appear-
ance but not the substance of action where women's concerns were at issue. 
Even though there were several reorganisations, women teachers were unable 
to displace the male teachers' hegemony in union matters during the period 
1904–1937.²

In the early twentieth century, Australian teachers' unions won access to 
their state's arbitration systems and were able to negotiate salary increases in the 
1920s. While access to arbitration deterred groups from breaking away in other 
teachers' unions, it ultimately had the opposite effect in South Australia. Having 
gained access to the Industrial Court, South Australian teachers achieved salary 
increases in 1926, with a set ratio of 4:5 for women's salaries vis-a-vis those of 
the males. The Women Teachers' Association, which had always been ambivalent 
about the benefits of negotiating salaries through the arbitration system, passed 
a motion approving these salaries 'for the present'.³

The depth of antagonism between men and women teachers was twice 
revealed in 1930 by the Union's president, Peter Corry. In January his speech 
in the Equal Pay debate at the Australian Teachers' Federation Conference was 
almost inaudible because of the interjections of the women delegates. His 
statements indicated lines of division which ran much deeper than sectional 
conflict.

The proper place for women is in the home.
I believe in equal pay because this would get rid of many women in industry. 
Many industrial troubles are due to the presence of female labour.⁴

Later that year it was proposed that teachers would be forced to accept 
salary cuts because of the Depression. At the Union's annual conference women 
teachers yet again demanded more representation on the Union council so they 
could participate in the anticipated salary negotiations. During this debate 
president Corry expressed deep-seated fears about women's presence in the 
Union. 'The men have been afraid for many years that some day the women 
would arise in their might, use their numbers and utterly swamp them.' Corry 
was adamantly opposed to equal representation of women on Union council 
and the Union's salaries committee which prepared the salaries cases. Moreover 
he was strongly supported by the Male Assistants' Association and that support 
plus his excellent debating skills and knowledge of meeting procedure was a 
crucial factor in blocking women's representation on the salaries committee 
which negotiated a fifteen per cent reduction in teachers' salaries in 1930.⁵

In the mid-1930s the Union re-entered the Industrial Court to restore 
salaries to pre-Depression levels. South Australian women teachers were devas-
tated when in 1935 Justice Kelly set their salaries at 62.5 per cent of the male 
rate! Everywhere else the 4:5 ratio had been generally accepted. Many women
teachers were convinced that their case had not received adequate Union support in the Court and wanted to negotiate salaries directly with the Education Department. They were well aware of the attitude of the Union's principal witness, Peter Corry, towards them. Phebe Watson and Jessaline Cooper, witnesses for the women teachers in this case, subsequently became leaders in the Women Teachers' Guild.  

With hindsight it can be seen that women teachers were contemplating separation and indeed preparing for it from the end of the disastrous salaries case in 1935. The breakaway was narrowly averted in mid-1936 when they managed to achieve equal representation on the salaries committee, traditionally elected at the first council meeting after the annual conference. Corry proposed a three-member committee, but Natalia Davies and Ruth Gibson presented 600 letters from women teachers requesting equal representation of men and women and pointing out that women represented over half of the Union's membership. After a long and bitter debate their motion was passed and a six-member committee was formed.

In February 1937 the women tabled a motion for equal representation for men and women on Union council to be debated at the annual conference in May. Not surprisingly the Male Assistants' Association marshalled men teachers to attend the conference in force and defeat the motion. At the July council meeting the situation exploded once and for all. In a repeat performance of the equivalent meeting in 1936, Corry moved that a salaries committee of three be appointed. Natalia Davies lost a motion to defer the appointments. R. F. Brand proposed a five-member committee (president plus two men and two women). An amendment for equal representation of men and women was lost as was Brand's proposal. Eventually the original motion was passed and Davies, Brand and President Lushey were appointed.

Here it is helpful to provide some details of the major players. Natalia Davies, aged 30, was a young assistant teacher in an elementary school. Elementary teachers were later to form the bulk of the breakaway Women Teachers' Guild. Peter Corry was about double her age, a headmaster nearing retirement. He represented the most hard-edged patriarchal views about the role of women; moreover, he had sufficient support from Union men for his actions. R. F. Brand's position is more difficult to characterise, though we can say that he represented a significant group of men who favoured conciliation (if not equal representation) with the women but who did not have sufficient support to oppose Corry in the 1930s.

To return to the main events: at this council meeting there was a proposal that the Union intended to enter the Industrial Court yet again to negotiate salaries. The women were adamantly opposed to this. In private correspondence with the Director of Education, Phebe Watson indicated that it was the fear of
being forced back into the Industrial Court on the same terms that finally sparked the secession of women teachers from the Union; not only had they been unable to increase their representation on the Union council, they also had lost control over their fate with regard to the salaries committee which made recommendations about salaries cases.10

On 18 August 1937, a meeting of 400 women teachers voted almost unanimously to withdraw from the Union and form the Women Teachers' Guild. At this meeting Phebe Watson was elected president and a draft constitution was accepted. It is clear that Phebe had been at the heart of extensive secret negotiations prior to the breakaway. She had been a strategist in matters concerning women teachers for about thirty years, although she had rarely held official positions within the Union. She had spent the major part of her career as a lecturer at the Training College and thus was well known by almost all teachers in South Australia. Her particular interest was the working conditions of the young women who worked in one-teacher rural schools dotted all over

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Phebe N. Watson, vice-president of the SA Public Teachers' Union 1922-6.
Phebe N. Watson was the first President of the SA Women's Guild which was formed following the split by the women from the South Australian Public Teachers' Union in 1937. She was also the hon. editor of the Guild Chronicle.
(SA Teachers' Journal)
The Women Teachers' Guild, 1937–1942

The Women Teachers' Guild, 1937–1942

the state. During the September holidays another meeting was held to inform
country teachers of the Guild's platform. More than 300 women attended this
meeting, thus indicating a broad basis of support for the new organisation.11

The August to October council meetings of the Union were explosive affairs.
At the August meeting 600 notices of resignation (to take effect in three
months) were received from women teachers. The salaries committee was
abandoned and not reconstituted until February 1938. Having sought Corry's
support privately beforehand, the Male Assistants' Association proposed that a
conciliation committee of six men and six women be formed. Women teachers
indicated that it was too late to attempt conciliation and Corry opposed the
appointment of all women who had submitted their resignations. (This com-
mittee subsequently met twice and resolved nothing.) Recriminations continued
at the September and October meetings. The women continued to attend as
was their legal right. Corry claimed that they had a 'moral obligation to retire'
and amidst storms of protest from the more conciliatory group of men, he forced
the meetings to be adjourned until December, by which time the resignations
had taken affect. It was only after five years had elapsed and Corry's retirement
had occurred that the Union considered reconciliation with the Guild.12

Meanwhile it is plausible to suggest that the strategic secrecy of the
negotiations prior to the formation of the Guild backfired when some women
high school teachers felt that they were not adequately consulted. Eventually
they chose to remain in the Union. After the inaugural meeting of the Guild
the metropolitan high school women met and decided that they would not be
'stampeded' into a decision and that country high school teachers should be
consulted. As a result a meeting was arranged for the September holidays. Prior
to this meeting Phebe Watson outlined her aspirations in correspondence with
another activist:

My own feeling is that the new organisation will be truly democratic in
that it will be an organisation run for women by women, with full repre-
sentation from all bodies of teachers [women]. Its aim, to make its own
representations to the heads of department, is I think the right one, and
my conviction is that women will get a fair hearing by putting their own
case rather than having to first convince the Union of the justness of their
cause, which for the past two or three years has been an impossible task.13

This quest for autonomy was evident at the September meeting of high
school women when teachers discussed a long list of grievances prepared by
Phebe Watson. Besides salaries and unequal representation on the Union
council, issues such as lack of career opportunities, inadequate sick leave and
superannuation, and the masculinisation of the public teaching service were
canvassed. Echoing the earlier arguments of Laura Heyne, Phebe argued that
teaching was 'women’s natural vocation', that the masculinisation which was particularly evident in high schools should be resisted and that adolescent girls should be taught by women. While the high school women agreed that all of those claims were legitimate, their concerns related to the methods of redress. Some members regretted the haste with which the breakaway occurred and the lack of conciliation on the part of women delegates. However, they also commented that the 'men have been lax in permitting one man to be so autocratic—they have apparently awakened now but it was not really until the women took drastic steps'. But the crux of the matter was an amalgam of gender and sectional conflict. High school women were concerned that they would simply be swapping dictatorship of men for that of elementary school women. In the final analysis, the majority vote favoured remaining in the Union for one year and monitoring developments. The minority in disagreement resigned and joined the Guild.14

In the following months the Guild moved quickly to consolidate its presence. Offices in the central city area, library and rest rooms were soon established. Members were encouraged to use them for social purposes as well as meetings. The Guild and the Union duplicated a range of services including the provision of legal defence funds. By mid-1938 the Guild had launched its own publication, the *Guild Chronicle*, with Phebe Watson as editor.15 In her official capacity as president, and privately, she applied both to the Minister and Director of Education seeking recognition of the Guild. She was immediately guaranteed access to these authorities. She also corresponded with the Union president, privately, and publicly, offering to cooperate in matters of interest common to men and women. Many years were to lapse before that would happen.16

**Major challenges 1937–1942**

Not surprisingly, the first (and ongoing) major issue faced by the Guild related to salaries and access to the Industrial Court. It seems that both the Guild and the Union favoured the formation of a salaries board to negotiate salaries directly with the Education Department rather than working through the Court. In 1938 the Education Department's position was unclear: rumours abounded that the Minister was 'refusing to deal with any question of salaries except by the award', yet the Guild was privately renegotiating the salaries of the lowest paid women. By early in 1939, it was evident that each of the parties saw the need for such a board but the Union's intransigence thwarted its establishment. An internal Departmental memo noted that Director Adey attempted to nego-
tiate with the Union for the inclusion of Guild representatives but he was unsuccessful.\textsuperscript{17}

The Guild then applied for registration in the Industrial Court, basically to achieve official recognition and to ensure that its members would be protected should a salaries case be presented. All of the acrimony of the breakaway was regurgitated in the court case. The principal protagonists again were Peter Corry and Natalia Davies (supported by Phebe Watson and Jessaline Cooper). The Union objected to the Guild's application on the grounds that women teachers were already represented in the Industrial Court. The Guild's case rested on the premise of a diversity of interests between its members and the Union. The Guild lost the case initially but won an appeal in May 1940. Justice Kelly noted in his summary that the service conditions of men and women were different and that the Union constitution did not adequately represent women's interests in cases of conflict between men and women. Sixty per cent of women teachers had joined the Guild and therefore were not covered by the Union's representation in the Court. However, Justice Kelly was anxious to discourage fragmentation within unions and refused to award costs to the Guild. At the conclusion of the case Guild members were reassured that there was no intention of going to court, especially during the war. However, the Guild privately continued to press the Education Department for salary increases for the lowest paid women teachers.\textsuperscript{18}

The second early focus of the Guild's attention was country teachers. There were two distinct groups: certificated assistants in large country towns, and those in one-teacher Class VII schools. The latter group consisted overwhelmingly of young single women who were by far the lowest paid teachers in the Education Department. Here it is pertinent to note again the personal influence of president Phebe Watson. After preliminary correspondence, the Guild presented a deputation to the Education Department in July 1938 on the 'conditions of living, work and salaries of lowest paid teachers in Class VII schools'. These teachers had fared worst of all in the 1935 salaries case. The Guild contended that in real terms their salaries were now lower than in the depths of the Depression; lower than those of a junior hospital wards maid or cook in a country hotel. And for their pittances they were expected to manage seven classes alone and teach all subjects plus needlework as an extra subject. The cost of living was much higher in the country and the living conditions were harsh. These women paid high board. They often had to share bedrooms and assist with the housework and they suffered from physical and emotional isolation. Finally, the Guild noted that the Department was experiencing difficulties recruiting sufficient women to staff these schools. As a result of this deputation the Director approved a boarding allowance of fifteen pounds for these teachers. This neatly circumvented the need to return to the Industrial Court.\textsuperscript{19}
The Guild was also instrumental in the establishment of a hostel for women teachers in two major country towns. It badgered the Education Department into providing single rooms and running water in the hostels and intervened on behalf of the women teachers who were being harassed by boarding-house keepers. However, much of the Guild’s work with country teachers was in the form of individual cases, handled privately: this is an enduring characteristic of women’s work in unions. 20

It is also important to note the limitations of the Guild’s commitment to country teachers. In the early years there was much discussion about the establishment of country associations. Gradually this dwindled to discussions about visits to country centres, and by 1942 it was announced that country visits would be curtailed due to the war. While the Guild continued to appeal to country teachers to join its ranks it precluded their active participation by holding annual conferences during the school terms. No country teachers held official positions: all were held by senior teachers in metropolitan schools. Finally, although the Guild demonstrated a clear commitment to the welfare of country teachers, it accepted the prevailing perception that these teachers, being young, would soon marry and resign from teaching. Thus, country teachers were not considered in discussions on issues such as promotion, superannuation and even incremental salary scales: these were seen to be the perquisites of more senior women. All this is indicative of marked differences between women teachers according to age and experience. 21

While there seemed to be a fair degree of internal consensus in relation to salaries and country teachers, the issues of promotion and seniority had the potential to expose deep divisions within the Guild. Firstly, there was the general problem that there were too few promotion positions available for women teachers. Hence in the rare event of a vacancy competition was fierce. The Guild agitated for more avenues of advancement for senior women. They consistently claimed that teachers under the age of 35 were likely to marry and therefore lacked the career commitment of older women as well as the teaching experience required for promotion. But for women over 40 who remained single ‘it may be fairly said that it [teaching] has become a life work. Having made teaching a career, and incurred heavy responsibilities, should they then be prevented from climbing the professional ladder?’ 22 They argued that women whose career was teaching should be rewarded by increased status, salary and associated opportunities to provide for old age through superannuation. In many ways their arguments reinforced the existing definitions of women’s work. They consistently maintained that not only was teaching women’s work but that girls should be taught by women:

The influence of a woman is of inestimable value, whether it be the young child just entering school, or with the girl of adolescent age, whose moral
welfare is of such vital importance to the State. There are times when only women can deal with girls and their mothers, in certain circumstances which arise in school life.\textsuperscript{23}

In 1940 the annual conference passed a motion to this effect and also engaged the National Council of Women to lobby the Education Department on the Guild's behalf.

In the burgeoning secondary school sector this discourse of danger was a weighty argument in favour of increasing promotion positions for women. As well, of course, women teachers were also expected to undertake many tasks outside school hours: for example, chaperoning girls at school socials and sporting events.\textsuperscript{24} Women teachers' work was further intensified during the war, as much of the schools' patriotic fundraising was delegated to them.\textsuperscript{25} Finally it was suggested that if promising students were to be attracted into the teaching profession there needed to be adequate avenues of advancement along the professional ladder.

While there was general agreement on the overall need for more promotion positions, tensions regarding the relative merits of academic qualifications and experience were evident amongst Guild members, and these were further complicated by sectional interests. Teacher qualifications generally had been increasing since the early 1900s and promotion positions and incremental salary scales were tied to length of training, qualifications and teaching experience. Problems arose when regulations changed and new qualifications were demanded, disadvantaging older teachers whose training predated the new awards. The Education Department's unwritten policy in these cases seemed to be that teachers under the age of 35 should upgrade but those over 40 were too old to endure the rigours of further study. The latter group's experience sometimes, but not always, allowed them to access higher salaries and promotion. Given that the Guild's activists ranged in age from about thirty to the late fifties the potential for conflict is obvious.\textsuperscript{26}

In the 1940s public secondary schooling consisted principally of technical schools and a few high schools. While the Education Department favoured teachers with university qualifications for these schools, there was no clear-cut policy and many senior elementary teachers, with and without these qualifications, were teaching in the technical schools. These teachers were eligible, by virtue of their experience, for promotion in both technical and elementary schools, but the question of their academic qualifications was unresolved. On the other hand, most high school teachers lacked elementary teaching experience, therefore were excluded from promotion in elementary schools. Again the potential is evident for conflict between qualifications and teaching experience, with the added complication of sectional interest.\textsuperscript{27}

All of these potentialities were realised in October 1940 when Ruth Gibson
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was appointed as a temporary inspector to assist Inspector Adelaide Miethke, who was unable to cope with her inspectorial duties plus coordinating the enormous Schools Patriotic Fund (the Education Department’s contribution to the war effort). Ruth Gibson, aged only 38, had had a distinguished career in the Education Department, rising from the position of assistant teacher to chief assistant in elementary schools and then chief assistant in a technical school. She had studied thirteen university subjects since her graduation in 1920 and spent 1938 travelling overseas. During that time she was a delegate to the International Council of Women Conference in Edinburgh and investigated the British and American school systems. Her travels were extensively reported in the *Guild Chronicle*. Her connections with the Guild were intimate and longstanding. She had been active in the Union, was at the epicentre of the breakaway and at the time of her inspectorial appointment was secretary of the Guild. According to custom she resigned as secretary, but she retained her Guild membership.

Ruth Gibson had been promoted over women who were more senior in terms of age, experience and position. Furthermore the position had not been advertised in the usual manner. The Guild was inundated with requests to find out ‘why something so unprecedented was launched upon an unsuspecting service’. Deputation after deputation waited on the Minister and Director of Education. The headmistresses were upset, as Ruth was only a chief assistant and the rare appointments of inspectors were usually made from their ranks. The chief assistants and the headmistresses were dismayed by Ruth’s youth and lack of experience in a promotion position. They believed that experience and seniority had been cast aside in this appointment. The usual slurs on the career commitment of younger (marriageable) women were again repeated. To complicate matters even further, the Director had intimated that the optimum age for promotion was around thirty-five, thus implying a lack of confidence in older women.

All the women knew of Inspector Miethke’s impending retirement, which would provide a rare opening to the most senior, explicitly female position in the teaching service. They contended that Ruth’s temporary promotion would give her some advantage when the vacancy was declared. The Guild members steadfastly maintained that their protests were not directed at Ruth Gibson but rather at the departure from well-established precedent of promotion by seniority. Given the close associations of the major participants, however, it would have been very difficult to separate the personal from the professional in this crisis.

When Adelaide Miethke retired in July 1941, Ruth Gibson won the position as Inspector of Girls Schools! This time the high school women from the Guild and the Union combined to put their case to the Director. Their concerns related to the lack of promotion positions for women in high schools compared
with technical schools. There were also undertones of sectionalism in their request that high school senior mistresses and headmistresses of technical schools be accorded the same status. They asked for the appointment of a woman inspector for high schools and also wanted clarification of the necessary qualifications and requirements for other promotion positions. In a thinly veiled reference to Ruth Gibson they suggested that ‘if experience abroad is a factor it should be stated in the regulations’.31

While promotion issues may have threatened the internal cohesion of the Guild, the question of the employment of married women united the membership. The marriage bar had been effective from the 1880s in South Australia although it appeared in the regulations only in 1915. The issue arose at the beginning of the Second World War when the Education Department began to re-employ married women in a temporary capacity to cover staffing shortfalls. In June 1941 the Guild passed a motion that ‘the employment of married women, except in special circumstances, should not be supported’.32 Given the sexual division of labour in schools, the employment of married women did not directly affect men teachers’ positions, therefore it was not a critical issue in the Union. While the Guild reluctantly countenanced their temporary employment because of the war, its arguments consistently reinforced the prevailing ideology that marriage and motherhood were incompatible with waged labour. They argued that ‘married women have divided interests, thus their service cannot measure up to the work of permanent staffs’.33 The Guild valued marriage and motherhood as the ‘ideal state’ for women. Indeed this chapter has demonstrated that its battles across a range of issues reinforced the existing definitions of women’s role. However, it should be noted that the Guild’s concerns mostly related to the public sphere, the traditional world of men and work, not the private sphere of the home. In 1941 for example, it declined to support the Housewives Association’s protest against rising bread prices ‘because the matter was outside the Guild’s province’.34

The Guild’s principal concern was for the woman ‘who must remain single. The right to work for her living and maintain her economic freedom is an absolute fundamental for her material and moral well being.’35 The Guild argued that the employment of married women disadvantaged other (read single) women:

Married men receive basic wages, therefore the additional money coming into a home from the wife would lead to a feeling of inferiority by other women.

Women working thus may employ ‘help’ at low wages. Child endowment would add further to the income.

[It would be] injurious to the classification and position of students awaiting appointment.36
But the crux of the matter was that married women teachers were displacing single women teachers in metropolitan schools, those displaced being sent to country schools for an extra term of country service. Thus single teachers were being forced to leave their homes and incur extra expense, serve under junior headmasters and lose status and chances of promotion. The Director explained that the staff shortages were such that 'the Education Department was in the hands of the temporary teachers and had to accept them at their own terms'. This was only the beginning of the collective debate about the employment of married women as teachers in public schools, since the shortfalls kept rapidly increasing in size during the post-war baby boom. While these shortfalls existed, married women teachers had bargaining power in the labour market in South Australia. They were able to obtain positions in schools close to their homes because of their traditional family responsibilities whereas permanently employed teachers could always be transferred at the discretion of the Education Department. On the other hand, their temporary status, actively supported by men and single women, denied them adequate salaries, promotion and superannuation: all the rights Guild members sought for themselves. In essence, marital status was a significant line of division among women teachers as well as between men and women. Such were the complexities of gender relations.

The Guild’s effect on the Union during the period 1937–1942

There is no doubt that the Union considered women’s issues more seriously after the breakaway. Changes within the Union included the establishment of women’s rest rooms, a direct response to the Guild’s initiative. Both organisations competed for women’s membership and recruited directly from the Training College. The Union gave financial support for the establishment of a Women Teachers’ Association and included the women vice-presidents in deputations. Lynda Tapp was nominated as president-elect in 1941 but defeated in the closest contest on record. The following year May Mills’ nomination as president-elect was successful and she became the first woman president of the Union in 1943. This was a significant achievement for women teachers in the Union.

That the Guild was somewhat bemused by the Union’s attention to women’s interests is indicated by editorial comments in the Guild Chronicle:

The Union refused to allow women’s claims, until the Guild came into existence. Now it actually pushes them, seeking equal pay for men and women!! How that Guild of ours keeps the men on their toes! Just a parting thought—how long would the little gentlemen dance to the ladies’ piping if the Guild did not exist?
This scepticism about the depth of the Union’s commitment to its women members was well founded and in the really important issues there was still the appearance but not the substance of change. For example, the Union delegation led by Peter Corry brought forward a motion on women’s salaries at the 1940 Australian Teachers’ Federation Conference. Lest it be thought that Corry was mellowing, he was arguing only for a common policy on this issue. However, the whole debate backfired, his motion was overturned and a new one making equal pay Federation policy was passed. Reluctantly the Union then adopted equal pay as its platform. But in 1943, when the Union decided to enter the Industrial Court with a new salaries case, it refused to argue the case for equal pay in spite of the very vocal protests of the High School Women Teachers’ Association.

At the Union’s annual conference in 1942, a motion was passed instructing Union council to appoint a committee to explore ways of healing the breach with the Guild. Conference discussion indicated that there had been a lack of forbearance on both sides at the time of the split and that high school women teachers were already cooperating in matters of mutual interest. It should be noted that the motion came from the Country and Suburban Association, not the influential Male Assistants’ Association who had been so entangled in the breakaway. There was no discussion at all about the original source of dissatisfaction, that is unequal representation on the Union Council. However, the possibility of capitalising on the rift within the Guild (the Ruth Gibson crisis) was canvassed.

Delegates from the Union and the Guild met in August 1942. The Union’s delegate offered to negotiate equal representation on the council if the Guild joined the Union. The Guild doubted the Union’s commitment in this matter and reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining its separate identity. There was no resolution to this impasse and the Union Council withdrew from further negotiations with the Guild. The Guild reiterated its 1937 offer to cooperate in matters of mutual interest but it was years before any meaningful dialogue between the two organisations resumed.

Conclusion

In some ways the material benefits of the Guild’s first five years were small: a boarding allowance for country teachers and a few more promotion positions. However, the significant achievement was that women teachers’ views and issues were placed on the Education Department and Union agendas in ways hitherto unrealised. To the women teachers involved, the breakaway in 1937 seemed the only logical course of action after years of unsuccessful negotiations with men.
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to have their causes supported. The issues surrounding the breakaway ran deeper than sectional conflict. In essence women teachers were challenging the system of patriarchal relations as it operated in the Union. From 1937 to 1942 the Guild succeeded in forcing the Department and the Union to deal with women teachers seriously as a force to be reckoned with in education and union affairs. The struggles and conflicts outlined in this chapter highlight the complex nature of gender relations during this period. The Guild's activists were single and mostly senior teachers in terms of age and promotion position. They represented their own interests in ways which partially challenged the traditional role of women in society. But they also represented other women's interests, for example country teachers and married women, in ways which supported the existing patriarchal order. Finally, their battles with the Union and within their own organisation indicate that gender, age, teaching experience, qualifications and of course marital status were more important lines of division than sectional conflict.
Chapter 5

The Union and the Guild, 1937–50

The High School Women Teachers’ Association of the Union voted with 96 per cent in favour of remaining in the Union in 1938 and the council granted the Association £25 to get the association going financially. May Mills was the president of this association. In the same year the Union executive decided not to recognise the Guild officially. By 1939, there were only three associations specifically representing women in the Union: High School Senior Mistresses, High School Women Assistants and Women Teachers’ Association. The Victorian Teachers’ Union conference in 1941 elected a woman, Miss H. Gilbert, as its president and she was invited to open the Union annual conference in May of that year.

In April 1939 Union council decided after some discussion that the Union general secretary, F. R. Forgan, should be allowed the right of private practice provided that Union matters took precedence in his work. Further, the secretary was to be employed as the Union solicitor at a salary of 25 guineas. While the latter decision may have been helpful to the Union in fighting the application for registration by the Guild, the Union may well have come to regret the decision to allow Forgan the right to private practice. Forgan took leave from the Union in 1941 but did not resign until 1944 to devote himself to private practice. During his leave Miss Jean Grieg was employed in an acting capacity.

When Phebe Watson resigned ‘with regret’ from the position of editor of the *Guild Chronicle*, she handed on the work to Veta Macghey, ‘feeling sure that, with the loyal support of all members, she will carry on with the knowledge, vim, and efficiency which are so characteristic of her’. After taking over the editorial position from Watson, Macghey instituted a ‘Country Letter’ which replaced Watson’s ‘Tish’ letter. Macghey was to use her influence in the next few years to bring about a reconciliation with the Union. Adelaide
Miethke, a pioneer of the women's movement in South Australian education and in the Women Teachers' Progressive League, retired as inspector in 1941, but continued to work on the Schools Patriotic Fund.

Early in 1942 the Chronicle published an article by the Director of Education, W. J. Adey, on the role of schools in creating a national identity in Australia. Adey said that he was amazed at the use made of schools and youth organisations in America and Europe 'to propagate political ideas and a national ideology'. The youth of Germany, he said, had marched and sung with little idea of 'the catastrophe ahead'. Australia had done little to instil a sense of values in the hearts and minds of its young, and he believed it was necessary for the federal government to take a role in so doing. This was a theme that Macghey was to pursue in subsequent editorials in support of peace, progress and justice. In one editorial she made a passionate plea for retribution for German war criminals, arguing that the British government was taking its time. She concluded this editorial with a strong expression of support for Russia:

Is it then, I wonder, far from the mark to say that our only hope of a just retribution lies in our great and splendid Ally, Soviet Russia?

Is it any wonder then, that I hope to see Russia, whose flags (signed in
The Union and the Guild, 1937-50

lieu of Stalin, by Mr Vlasov) flew from Parliament House on the 26th February, 1944, deal with Democracy's inveterate foe?

In the same edition of the Chronicle, a little play in praise of Empire and of the British discovery of Australia was published in the 'Infant School Corner'.11 Macghey pursued the theme of democracy in other areas including that of the status of teachers. She supported Director Fenner's attitude towards change in education in 1942.

The changed and changing conditions of society demand a sociological approach to education, which must be so framed as to meet the new social order. It is only by vigilance, and a realization that information in education is vitally essential, that we can preserve our democratic ideals and freedom.12

When a Committee of Enquiry into Education was established in 1943, the Guild held meetings with other women's organisations, including women from the Union, to protest the omission of women from the Committee, and a deputation to the Minister sought the inclusion of two women on the Committee. The response of the minister was to leave the question up to the Committee.13 In turn, the chairman of the Committee, Mr E. L. Bean, said that although he was sympathetic to the request, he did not feel that it was necessary to have a woman on the Committee as the evidence of women called before the Committee would suffice.14

Following questions in Parliament and a ministerial statement on the fear teachers felt about giving evidence before the Bean Committee, Macghey commented in an editorial that such fear would be unlikely not to exist in a large organisation where some people had power over the lives of others. In Parliament, the leader of the Labor opposition, Robert Richards, had called for a Royal Commission into allegations that not only was there fear among teachers but also that teachers had been intimidated.15 Macghey was critical of post-war reconstruction policies which she said took the status and salary of teachers for granted, and argued that teachers needed to react strongly if they were to achieve professional freedom.16

Renewed conditions and pay claims

Women teachers from both the Guild and the Union again urged equal pay in claims for a new award in the Industrial Court in November 1943.17 In February 1944 the president of the Industrial Court, Mr Morgan, handed down a judgement that the salary scale of 1935 was not anomalous and in so doing ruled out one of the grounds on which teachers had argued for a salary increase.18 Following this decision, the Guild applied to the Industrial Court on 3 May
1944 for a hearing of a new claim, and the Union subsequently also submitted a claim. The Guild argued that teachers' salaries cost the Department £765 000, only £283 000 of which was spent on women teachers, of whom only 80 received salaries equal to the average for the Department. Some women teachers earned less than the living wage, and the lowest paid women teachers earned less than waitresses, laundresses and general servants in boarding houses. In September, Morgan handed down an award which granted increases, including an extra £29 to adult women teachers. This was immediately claimed by the Guild as a victory for its actions on behalf of women teachers.

In evidence to the Bean Enquiry in 1944, Miss G. Menear said on behalf of the Guild that one of the reasons that education had not attained an honoured place in the community was because those engaged in it did not actively consider themselves as colleagues. She argued that the centralised system of education tended to produce dictators and automatons, and that country parents and school committees increasingly felt that under decentralisation they would stand a better chance of equitable treatment. A professional degree in education, a BEd, should be instituted in South Australia and should
be given higher status by the Department than the Bachelor of Arts. To further enhance professionalism, teachers should be given more freedom and 'inspirational' help when they required it. Finally, Menear argued that relief should be provided against much of the unnecessary strain that fell upon teachers.22

The trials of young women teachers in the country were brought to the attention of the Legislative Council in October 1944 by Mr Castline who described what he called the 'hill-billy' conditions encountered by these teachers. A survey by the Guild had found conditions to be 'appalling'. Reporting these allegations, the News said that 'young women schoolteachers in outlying areas in this State have had to live in a room without a door in a house sometimes occupied by Afghans, barricade a lockless door against the advances of a farmer, and wash in a bowl used at other times for separating milk and cream'.23

On 16 May 1946 the Teachers' Salaries Board came into operation. The appointment of one woman teacher to this Board was obtained after discussion with the chair of the Education Enquiry Committee, Mr Bean, and against the wishes of the Union.24 Throughout 1946 and 1947 the Guild, in common with other teachers' associations in Australia, conducted campaigns about the shortage of teachers and the need for good salaries to raise the status of teaching and to attract high-quality recruits into teaching. The Guild supported Australian Teachers' Federation resolutions on commonwealth government spending on education and on conditions in education.25 To deal with the post-war shortage of teachers the Guild accepted a scheme to import teachers from England to teach in South Australian schools provided that existing teachers were protected, that promotion was not given to the English teachers until they had served four years in South Australia and that the same rules as presently applied for country service would also apply to the imported teachers.26 To this campaign was added Macghey's editorial support in the Chronicle for commonwealth spending on education to support a democratic political system.27 The Union and the Guild cooperated in efforts to increase the number of teachers and supported the appointments of inspectors Ruth Gibson and A. W. Jones as recruiting officers in 1949.28

A spirit of cooperation

The idea of a federation of teachers' organisations in South Australia began to attract some support in 1947. Veta Macghey was a strong supporter of such a federation, but she believed that it would not be accomplished without the assistance of a third party and that it was unlikely to happen in the immediate future.29 However, despite animosity between the two organisations, there were
Veta Macghey was president of the Women Teachers' Guild of SA for some years prior to the amalgamation of SAPTU and the Guild in 1951. One of her greatest achievements was affecting, with Mr Tom Raggatt, the amalgamation of the two bodies and steering SAIT through its early years. Veta said 'it would be in the best interests of the teaching fraternity if a new organisation, planned on the principle of equal representation for both men and women, could be formed to incorporate the Union and the Guild, and I strove towards that end. Eventually such an organisation, the South Australian Institute of Teachers, came into existence through mutual agreement.' Veta Macghey was foundation President of the Women's Branch of SAIT; a position she held continuously until May 1956. She was also a teacher representative on the Salaries Board for many years.

(SAIT photographic collection)

cooperative moves in 1948. In August a committee of the two organisations was formed to press for a 'new deal' for education. Another issue which led to cooperation between the two and with other interested bodies was the argument for a Chair in Education at the University of Adelaide. On this issue a meeting chaired by Tom Raggatt from the Union was held on 18 October 1949 at the offices of the Union in the Liberal Club Building on North Terrace. This meeting, which was attended by representatives of the Union and the Guild as well as of other bodies such as the Catholic School system and the South Australian Public Schools Committees Association, unanimously agreed to work for a chair and delegated a committee which included Raggatt and
Macghey to write to the University Council requesting a chair. The Union had already written to the Vice-Chancellor, A. P. Rowe, on this question. Rowe formally responded to the Union in a letter to Raggatt, but in a personal letter to Raggatt on the same day Rowe pointed out that he was receiving letters on this subject from various people and requested Raggatt that if he knew who was encouraging this letter writing to ask them to desist. Rowe said that 'if these people had any knowledge of me they would know that uninformed approaches of this kind have not the slightest effect on me and are apt to make me feel that the case must be weak if it is necessary to resort to these tactics'. It was perhaps unknown to Rowe that the Union was behind these tactics.

In response to a question from the leader of the opposition, the Premier, Thomas Playford, said that South Australian public school teachers as a body were most cooperative and extremely loyal. The question related to a resolution designed to prevent the teaching of 'subversive ideas' in schools, passed at the conference of the Liberal and Country League. Continuing his reply, Playford said that the government would be most concerned if it thought there were communist and 'other subversive elements' in the teaching service. On 5 September 1949, Raggatt wrote to the Advertiser in relation to reports of a public meeting called by the Brighton branch of the Returned Services League (RSL) at which a statement was made that the speaker, or speakers, knew of teachers who were communists. The Union, Raggatt said, had never supported communism and he did not know of any member of the Union who adhered to 'the traitorous doctrines of this group'; however, he was impatient with the constant repetition of the unsubstantiated allegation that there were communists in schools.

Earlier in 1949 the Guild and the Union worked together to present a joint case on salaries to the Teachers' Salaries Board and agreed to approach the salaries case on a platform of equal pay for equal work. The Board consisted of E. L. Bean (Parliamentary Draftsman) as chairman; the Superintendent of Rural Education; the Public Service Commissioner; Tom Raggatt, representing the Union; and Veta Macghey, representing the Guild. Although equal pay was not achieved, by early 1950 Macghey was describing the 'splendid cooperation of the Union and the Guild' in matters relating not only to salaries but also to long service leave, the emergency recruiting scheme and reclassification of schools.

On 16 March 1950 Raggatt in a letter to Macghey proposed, on behalf of the Union, that the executives of both bodies meet with a view to discussing an amalgamation. He said that he had the full support of executive 'and the unanimous agreement of representatives of the women's associations of the Union'. The formal Guild response to Raggatt's proposals on behalf of the Union was provided by a letter to Mr Hamlin, SAPTU secretary, signed by Dulcie Smith,
Tom Raggatt was president of the SAPTU and co-founder of the SAIT. With Veta Macghey he was instrumental in the formation of the Institute in 1951 by the amalgamation of the Women Teachers' Guild and the SA Public Teachers' Union. He was the first President of SAIT in 1952. He was elected to represent ATF at UNESCO in 1950. His watch words were patience, tolerance and cooperation.

(Provided by the Raggatt family)

secretary of the Guild, on 15 April, in which she said that the Guild council had unanimously agreed to a combined meeting of the executives of both bodies.

These letters formalised a process leading to amalgamation that was already being informally conducted by the leaders of both organisations, particularly Macghey and Raggatt.38

The Guild was strong in its praise of Veta Macghey's work towards reunification with the Union. In her report to the annual general meeting of the Guild in July 1950 Dulcie Smith spoke of the tremendous responsibility and burden that has fallen to the lot of the President, Miss Veta Macghey.

It is well known to us all how Miss Macghey adhered to her views of what was due to women during the salaries case, also how again and again in the many other important affairs that have arisen, she has tenaciously and fearlessly insisted on what she considered was fair and equitable. She
has been able to work well with the President of the Union and so maintained harmonious relations on all occasions.  

In a final statement in the Chronicle under the heading in large letters of FULFILMENT, Veta Macghey paid tribute to the founders of the Guild and the pioneering women who had sustained the Guild and the benefits that their work had brought for women teachers. However, she continued, as time went on, in working for the good of women teachers, old grievances lost their sting, and the idea of co-operation with the Union began to dawn in the minds of thinking individuals who felt that the future good of the Teaching Service lay in the prime fact that all teachers should work together in one organization in which both men and women had equal power in the shaping of the policy of such an organization whose object would be to foster the interests of Education and its members.

Therefore we meditated on values, considered the bearings of things, and sought to foresee consequences, ridding ourselves as far as possible of the 'personal equation', and confronting the problem which demanded action as well as thought.

The bulk of Guild members supported the idea of combining forces, with 95 per cent of those voting on the issue recording an affirmative vote. This vote, Macghey argued, showed that the members of the Guild 'were aware that the Guild had served its purpose, and served it nobly too, but that the time had come, through the formation of the SAIT, to work as one undivided whole—for the good of the child, the teacher, and the school—both practically and idealistically'. From the Union side, Raggatt devoted considerable time and energy to country visits to discuss amalgamation and by December 1950 he was able to report that a special conference of the Union had approved the draft constitution for the new body.

Was the Women Teachers' Guild successful? If its main aim was equal pay, it can be argued that it was not successful, during its term, in the industrial arena. Although the Guild can be seen as a reaction to the patriarchal structure and activities of SAPTU, WTG was made up of single women teachers. The Guild rejected the argument that married women had a right to a career in teaching, and in so doing it developed its strategy within the constraints of both patriarchal and state ideology.

The break in 1937 was the most dramatic example of the tactic of separation adopted by women in Australian teachers' organisations. The determination of members of the Guild and in particular its leaders, to maintain a separate identity meant that reconciliation would involve compromise on the part of the Union. The formation of the Guild was more than a symbolic gesture or muted protest—it challenged the basis of the doctrine of unity. A majority of
women in 1937 sought to construct a unity based on the primacy of sectional interests as opposed to the unity of the occupational group as a whole. The latter doctrine, the Guild leaders felt, meant subservience of women teachers to the politics of male interests. Although Phebe Watson, first president of the Guild, expressed the view that the Guild women ‘... would not wish our interests to be those of women only’, and that the Guild would ‘... at all times be ready to gain knowledge from all sources and to collaborate and co-operate, wherever possible, with those organisations who have the same educational ends in view’,42 it was not until 1949 that the Union and the Guild began to cooperate on educational objectives, let alone industrial matters.43

Reasons for reunification

In view of the initial hostility of the two organisations to each other and the determination of the Guild to remain a separate organisation, why did these cooperative moves take place towards the end of the 1940s? One explanation is that Guild victories, such as the achievement of a salaries increase for women in 1944,

earned the respect of SAPTU and increased the self-assurance of the women of the Guild. A spirit of mutual tolerance gradually grew up and it needed only the advent of leaders too young to have been involved in the virulence of the split to firm this mellowness into something formal.44

It is generally accepted in SAIT that Veta Macghey and Tom Raggatt were such leaders. The personalities of these leaders were a significant factor in both the split and the reconciliation—it appears that neither Macghey nor Raggatt was associated with the resentments surrounding the split and both were dedicated to the idea of a reunion.45 Further strength is lent to this explanation by an examination of the editorial comment by Veta Macghey when she replaced Phebe Watson as editor of the Chronicle late in 1941.46 On occasions where she criticised the Union, she stated that she was replying to what the Guild viewed as unjust attacks on its actions by the Union and there was less of the strong opposition to the Union than had previously been expressed. She argued for a federation of teachers in South Australia, believing that such a federation could accomplish much for teachers, although when she first put this idea forward in 1947 it did not appear possible.47

Yet, there is a dimension to the moves for reunification which cannot be explained by the timely union of like personalities alone. As with the late nineteenth-century organisations of teachers, the Guild faced problems of resources and of creating a real sense of identity for its members who taught in
country areas, many of them in small schools. These often young, recently trained and single teachers faced social as well as occupational isolation. Through the columns of the 'Country Letter' in the Chronicle, Veta Macghey informed these members of developments she thought of interest to them, although in the main the 'Letter' appears to have served the function of instruction in methodology to juniors, unable to pursue further credentials. Although the Guild increased its membership from around 600 in 1937 to about 850 in 1942, it '... found difficulty in sustaining adequate country interest and representation', and its membership does not appear to have increased after the mid-1940s. Both organisations were engaged in an expensive competition to provide facilities as an inducement to membership, but these were in general only available to metropolitan teachers and provided little for country teachers. A further factor was the election in 1944 of Miss May Mills to the presidency of SAPTU, which increased the spirit of cooperation between men and the women who remained in the Union.

Under the terms of the arrangement to form SAIT, there were to be two separate branches based on gender and a central authority consisting of seven men and seven women. Raggatt's hopes for the new organisation were high:

Teachers are proud of the service, desire it to be maintained at a high level of efficiency, and are ever looking for improvement in methods, as well as in the conditions of service. I think it is true to say that the vast majority of moves for the advancement of teachers and education generally have stemmed from the teaching body.

It is my earnest hope that in the future THE INSTITUTE will press on with claims for the improvement of what might be termed industrial conditions. One such is our desire to see a Chair of Education set up at our University. We are the only one in Australia without such a chair at present.

When this is attained I hope that SAIT will give thought to matters involving educational research and development, so that we need fear no disparaging comparisons with other institutes abroad.

There will be much hard work to be done in setting the new machinery to work. The basic factor in this is to be equality of representation for men and women. No one will cavil at this, but it is necessary to think of ourselves as an organisation united for professional reasons as well.

I ask for the earnest, tolerant, helpful assistance of all members so that we may build an organisation founded on the goodwill of all.

At the final meeting of the Union council in May 1951, May Mills, who had been the first female president of the Union, recounted Union affairs through four periods: the First World War; Colonel Smeaton's organisation of the Union office; the unhappy phase of salary reductions in the 1930s and the
rif between men and women in the Union; and the fourth period constituted by the last decade:

Look at what we have achieved! We have a Salaries Board and have continuous increases in salary, because the public were more aware and more in sympathy with us than they have ever been before.

Some of the things that have been done in the past ten years—1941: reclassification of Primary Schools and again in 1948 brought changes to everyone; 1942: Curriculum Boards appointed; 1943: reclassification of High Schools; 1943–44–45 saw the works of the Education Commission. You know the results of that. All the findings have not been initiated; 1945 we had our Jubilee year when the Governor, Sir Willoughby Norrie, attended the Conference; 1946 came the Salaries Board and the practically defunct Policy Board went out; 1947: Teachers' Certificate, establishment of the AUA for teachers; 1949: long-service leave; 1950: Arts and Crafts Certificates; 1949–50: increased allowances to Junior Teachers; 1951: amalgamation.

That was the end of the fourth period and now the fifth period begins. We realized from the great disaster of 1937 that only unity can bring us what we desire. It will be a complete Union—we are a professional body of teachers, working not only for improvements in our conditions, but aware always of the responsibilities we hold in the moulding of a nation. I feel this will be the great work of the organization. That it will be a centre of culture in the community which will be looked up to and consulted and looked upon as the advisory body in such matters as are necessary in the education of the young.

Finally, Mills argued for a separate 'home' for the Union:

I feel we would all desire to see such a body having its own particular establishment where it can have a substantial home and build up that respect in the community that such a body has deserved and won for itself. 52

Tom Raggatt was elected unopposed as the first president of the South Australian Institute of Teachers. Also elected unopposed were the president and vice-president of the women's branch, Veta Macghey and Miss F. M. Nicholas. 53 In an election for the positions of president and vice-president of the men's branch, the nominees of the Male Assistants' Association, Reg Nelson and Russell Speed, were successful. 54

Ann Milne who had a long association with the education of young children in South Australia claimed later that she suggested the name of the new organisation:

After our unfortunate Guild/Union dispute when the Union was split, when Tom Raggatt and Veta Macghey had done their great work of bringing the
factions together, it was seen that there would have to be a new name. Tom Raggatt had been home on leave and had been given guest membership of the EIS (Educational Institute of Scotland). So when names were asked to be submitted, and knowing this, I put forward 'Institute' which found favour.\footnote{55}

The Guild Chronicle recorded in April 1951 that Union members had voted 'in the affirmative' for amalgamation of the two separate organisations, while the affirmative vote from Guild members was 95 per cent.\footnote{56}

The organisation which was created in 1951 to represent the interests of all state school teachers in South Australia, as SAPTU had set out to do in 1896, was predominantly one of primary school teachers. In the early years, the principal officers of SAIT were in the main drawn from the ranks of primary school teachers and often from those in senior positions; the remaining members of the central authority also came for some years from similar positions. Although leaders such as Veta Macghey and May Mills were high school teachers, they were in a minority. In general, the new organisation continued the historical pattern of teachers' organisations in South Australia, reflecting, in its leadership, the numerical majority of primary teachers.

At the time of the formation of SAIT, teachers in each of the other states except Victoria were represented by single organisations, themselves often the result of the merger of former rival organisations. Unity among teachers was the organisational and political norm, seen by teachers as an essential precondition for achieving the elevation of their occupation to professional status. Although women formed a numerical majority from the mid-1950s, the position of president was first held by a man, Tom Raggatt, and men continued to hold the position for 30 years, with many elections for the presidency not being contested by women.
In South Australia, sectional differences, city and country divisions, and the split between men and women, all had a long history dating back to the unsuccessful associations of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, which meant that the new organisation inherited unresolved conflicts which provided the bases for potential division in the future. At the time, though, there were issues sufficiently pressing to force people to put to one side the divisions and face what were seen as serious external threats to the occupational group as a whole. Among the issues providing this challenge were the shortage of teachers, inadequate and insufficient school buildings, low salaries and poor working conditions and a failure of government and university authorities to recognise the validity of what teachers saw as their legitimate demands for a university chair in education. Since SAIT represented a heterogeneous occupational group, unity was more than a structural arrangement—it developed as a doctrine to serve the ideological purpose of collectively attaching the interests of teachers at different levels to those of the dominant and powerful groups in the organisation. Since the Second World War teachers have seen unity as necessary for the achievement of improved conditions, as the previously divided occupational group was easily subject to the divide-and-rule tactics of the state. Even with internal disputes and membership differentiation unity has been maintained since 1951.

There are two important features of unity: structural and ideological. As an organisation, SAIT has represented the interests of an occupational group differentiated by levels of authority, degrees of status, gender and rates of pay. Ideologically, the doctrine of unity has served to combine workers differentiated in these ways into a dominant conception of the goals and purposes of the organisation.
Rates of union membership

Between 1951 and the abolition of automatic payroll deductions in June 1994, SAIT sustained membership of at least 80 per cent of state school teachers in South Australia and a lesser proportion of teachers from non-government schools. Teachers from non-government schools who had joined SAIT formed the Association of Teachers in Independent Schools (ATIS) in 1972. From time to time there have been murmurings of dissent from the established and developing practices in the Institute and, although an attempt was made to form an alternative union following division in SAIT in 1979, it did not have a fragmentary effect. As well as factors providing for unity within SAIT, external factors, in particular relations with employing authorities, have contributed to the stability and perpetuation of a single organisation which has been able to accommodate sectional antagonisms and disputes. There has been no serious proposition for separate professional and trade union organisations for teachers, as there was, for example, with social workers, who formed two separate organisations in the mid-1970s.
However, unity has not meant that all members have been actively involved in the Union’s affairs. Despite the efforts of the leadership to develop a strong organisation in 1951, associations were slow in fulfilling the legal requirements to properly constitute themselves.\(^1\) As a consequence, meetings of branch councils could not be called until November 1951, although the inaugural meeting was held in May. The general secretary found it necessary to remind members constantly through the pages of the *Journal* of their obligation to apply for membership of the Institute; with the dissolution of the previous organisations there was no legal provision for automatic transfer of members or associations to SAIT. According to the president, Tom Raggatt, after an initial period of apathy there had, by May 1952, been a resurgence of interest in country associations, prompted by visiting delegations from SAIT officials.

Full membership of SAIT grew from approximately 2500 at the time of its formation to almost 18 000 by the end of 1979. The degree of unionisation has varied between 80 per cent in 1951, and 93 per cent during a period of intense activity in 1968.\(^2\) The degree of unionisation is affected by the rate at which members from eligible sections of the teaching force join the organisation. For example, in 1978 the degree of unionisation for the different eligible sections was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible Section</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education Department</td>
<td>96.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Further Education</td>
<td>85.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Assistants (formerly Teacher Aides)</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school (formerly Kindergarten) Teachers</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent School Teachers</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is obvious from these figures that there has been an uneven distribution among groups eligible for membership. But it is also obvious that by the end of the 1970s SAIT was already an embryonic education industry union before this term was widely used. SAIT President, John Gregory, claimed in 1978 that two-thirds of kindergarten teachers in South Australia were unrepresented professionally or industrially. Gregory argued that ‘the Kindergarten Union does not act on behalf of their interests and only 400 [kindergarten] teachers are members of SAIT’. Urging kindergarten teachers to join SAIT, Gregory said that it ‘is a professional body, not just a union and it offers members support, protection and information’.\(^3\) Failure to attract support from pre-school teachers was a result of four factors. First, the varying conditions of the work of teaching between primary and secondary schools on the one hand and the smaller, more personalised relations of kindergarten teaching, tended to place these teachers apart. Second, the training of kindergarten teachers was less oriented towards professional socialisation than that of primary and secondary teachers. Third,
as the employer of a smaller number of teachers, the Kindergarten Union was able to establish closer authoritative ties with its employees than either the Education Department or the Department of Further Education. Finally, there was more direct parental influence, and therefore less teacher autonomy, in kindergartens. These four factors combined to produce a workforce of teachers less oriented to unionism than their colleagues in Departmental schools and colleges. At least this was the case until the end of the 1970s.

Teachers in independent schools in South Australia were eligible for membership of SAIT, but the majority belonged to a separate association for teachers in independent schools—the Association of Non-Government Education Employees (ANGEE). The Guild secured permission from the Registrar of the Industrial Court in 1948 for non-departmental teachers to be admitted as associate or full members. 4

While school services officers (formerly teacher aides and then school assistants) were eligible to join SAIT, they also qualified for membership of the South Australian Public Service Association (PSA). There was resistance within SHIT to allowing teacher aides to join its professional ranks. As the Karmel Committee noted in 1969,

the use of teacher aides within the classroom raised contentious issues. Generally speaking, teachers have opposed the employment within the classroom of people without full professional qualifications. Such objections stem from past policies, the effects of which may with justice be described as dilution. 5

By the end of the 1970s, however, most teachers had come to view school assistants as an integral part of the teaching process and rallied behind moves by both the PSA and SAIT in 1981 to resist the plans of the Tonkin Liberal government to cutback funding for school assistants. For the first time in the history of teacher unionism in South Australia, teachers took strike action in support of their colleagues.

Female–male ratio in SAIT

Up to the end of 1954 male teachers in SAIT outnumbered female teachers. In May 1955 the total number of full and associate female members was equal to that of men, and by May 1957 the number of full women members was higher than that of men—by that date full membership of women constituted 52 per cent of the full membership of SAIT. 6 Since then, the percentage of full women members increased to around 59 per cent in the 1970s, a percentage which was enshrined in a regular ʻColumn 59′ inserted in the Journal by the SAIT Status of Women Committee. In 1996 women constituted 68 per cent of the member-
ship. Prior to the removal of bars for married women teachers, many women were employed as ‘temporary’ teachers and, at the time of amalgamation in 1951, two-thirds of the part-time teaching force consisted of women.7

**Student teacher members**

Student teacher membership of SAIT steadily grew from around 450 in 1952 to around 5000 by the end of 1973. Active recruiting campaigns were conducted among students in the teachers’ colleges, with such success that by the mid-1960s the college-based associations had ceased to be merely ‘transmission belts’ for the Institute and had become semi-autonomous political organisations capable of gaining majority support from teachers’ college students on issues affecting their welfare. They also began to exercise an effective voice on the councils and committees of the Institute. With the granting of college autonomy, teachers’ college students became more closely identified and associated with national student interests and organisations. From the end of 1973 the numbers of these members began to decline and by July 1977 the membership was less than half what it was at the end of 1973. While the decline in numbers may have resulted from a number of factors, there appears to have been a

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In the 1960s SAIT organised annual camps for teacher trainees and young teachers in their first three years of training. The camps were a blend of recreation and serious discussions based on themes such as teaching as a profession and teachers’ rights and responsibilities. Here is a group of 1963 campers in a happy mood in front of Retreat House, Belair.

*(SAIT 1964 Annual Report)*
conscious decision by SAIT around 1975 and 1976 to cease active recruitment of student teachers from the colleges. This was associated with a period of student militancy on issues such as study allowances, and an argument prevailed in SAIT that militant students should be covered elsewhere—for example, by the Australian Union of Students (previously the National Union of Australian University Students).

With the heterogeneity of the Institute's membership, conflicts arose over the purposes, strategies and tactics of the organisation. Although the most severe split was the one that occasioned the formation of the Women Teachers' Guild, other divisions of a less serious nature, but with a potential to damage the doctrine of unity, also occurred. Ideological differences between teachers from a range of situations within the teaching service—differing in rank, section and geographical location—led to disputes within SAIT over the merits of the professional versus the union road to the achievement of goals. A younger and more qualified teaching force, educated in universities and autonomous colleges of advanced education and influenced by a well-developed student political culture, contributed to the politicisation of SAIT in the late 1960s and early 1970s; in combination with existing tendencies this led from the late 1960s to a change in tactics and strategies.

The organisation of SAIT

The structure of SAIT provided initially for membership participation in its affairs through affiliated associations and, by attendance at an open annual conference. Negotiations prior to the merger of SAPTU and WTG in 1951 resulted in the formation of separate councils for men and women, the delegates to which were elected by men and women in their associations. In turn, councils elected members to a central authority of fifteen members on the principle of equal representation for men and women. Separate councils were abolished in 1971, but the principle of equal representation on the executive was firmly retained, as it was when the rules were altered in 1969 to provide for direct election of all members of the executive. While it existed, the annual membership conference of SAIT was the only one of its type among teacher unions in Australia, although it had long been widely recognised that this type of conference was not entirely satisfactory. In 1984, the annual conference was changed to a delegates' conference as part of a general restructure. SAIT's full-time staff had grown substantially by the 1990s to include specialist officers, field officers and a caretaker, whereas it began in 1951 with a small clerical staff of four and had difficulty finding a cleaner to keep the rooms, rented from the Liberal Club, in order.
A discussion group at the Traditional Aboriginal Schools Association meeting held in 1982 at Ernabella. Left to right are Chris Jarvis, Maree McColm, Tim Goldsmith, Rosemary Irving, Lyn Carvossa, Rex Guthrie. (SAIT photographic collection)

Standing committees of the union deal with matters referred to them by council and executive, and both council and executive have the power to establish ad hoc committees. The number of these committees has decreased as the number of full-time staff has grown. At the same time, teachers' workloads have increased. A consequence of these two factors is that there is less 'voluntary' work by members on committees than in the past. Further, the nature and focus of committees has changed over time. For example, there is now no salaries committee, whereas in the late 1960s a strong committee developing policy and strategy on salaries was instrumental in the militancy of that time.

Associations and branches

Branches are the grassroots organisational basis of the union. Prior to the formation of branches, associations were the base and they performed a number of important functions both for members and for the organisation. It is possible to delineate three functions which led to contradictory tendencies. First, associations provided the means by which teachers joined SAIT and provided for
Themes

the base level participation of members in the organisation. Second, they provided the instrument for the incorporation of members to dominant practices of SAIT through the channels of representation and election to the ruling bodies. Third, associations were potential sources of division, or at least the expression of them, with the case of the Women Teachers' Guild providing an example in the 1930s and 1940s. With these contradictory tendencies, one of the functions of leadership was to provide unity.

On the eve of its amalgamation with the Women Teachers' Guild, SAPTU contained 53 affiliated associations. All associations were legally required to affiliate with SAIT, and it appears from Tom Raggatt's comments cited earlier that the slow affiliation of associations with the new organisation was partly due to apathy, as well as some ignorance of the procedures. Initially formed with eleven associations, the Guild was dissolved with the same number, but there were some amalgamations during the life of the Guild. Most significantly there were only two country associations in 1937—the Class VII Head Teachers and Teachers-in-Charge associations—and these combined to form one association as early as 1939. The Guild brought into SAIT two associations which did not exist in SAPTU—the Infant Mistresses' Association and the Home Science Teachers' Association (the Domestic Arts Association in the Guild)—while members of the Women Teachers of SAPTU and the Women Assistants of the Guild formed two new associations—the Primary School Women's Association and the Technical School Women's Association. Thus, the impact of the Guild in terms of structural alteration as a result of the merger was minimal.

The base unit of membership has altered dramatically since 1951. Teachers were initially organised in associations either on the basis of similar teaching status or location. With the equalisation of the numerical strength of men and women in the central organs of SAIT, it was no longer necessary to form large associations on the basis of gender, provided that the principle of equal representation was accepted in the committee structure. The growth in the number of secondary teachers meant that the emphasis in sectional disputes shifted from gender to teaching division. In 1963 an 'experiment' was tried in the formation of a school-based association, which was not, according to the executive, to be seen as a precedent. The attempt to establish an association at Salisbury High School was initially defeated in Men's Council, with a severe division of opinion in both councils on whether such 'sectional' associations were desirable. This move took place at a time of mounting dissatisfaction within SAIT with the general framework and efficiency of its operations. In 1975 there were five associations in high schools and by 1981 approximately half of the 164 associations were based in particular schools. Some of these associations had been formed in an attempt to neutralise the vote of powerful blocs such as the High School Teachers' and Primary Teachers' Associations on council. Competing
associations, representing teachers in similar teaching situations but with different ideological perspectives, were also established in the late 1970s—for example, the Secondary School Teachers' Association was formed to combat what some secondary teachers saw as the political aims and militant intentions of the High School Teachers' Association. Although a division between city and country teachers has always existed in South Australian teachers' unions, the tensions around country service erupted at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. There was conflict in SAIT between those who promoted an incentive scheme and those who sought a guaranteed return to the city after a period of country service. This conflict is discussed later.

In spite of the associations' position as the vehicle for democratic participation in SAIT, attendance at association meetings before the 1980s restructure did not always reflect the full strength of association membership. As the rules of the Institute were lax in relation to quorums, very poorly attended meetings often forwarded resolutions to council and executive and made and acted upon decisions. One of the more active and vocal associations, the Male Assistants' Association, could only muster, from more than 500 eligible teachers in the metropolitan area, attendances of 11, 12 and 24 members respectively at its 1967, 1968 and 1969 annual general meetings. A combined meeting of this association and the Primary Women's Association in 1969 managed a record attendance of 50 members. Historically, associations such as the Male Assistants' Association represented sectional interests which felt that they were dominated by more powerful blocs in the teachers' organisations, although such a feeling has not always been sufficiently strong to engender active rank-and-file participation in association activities.

Council

Separate branch councils for men and women teachers in SAIT were extracted from the male-dominated SAPTU as the price for unity and this, together with equality of representation on the executive, enshrined one of the longstanding goals of many women teachers in South Australia. It was an important internal political arrangement since councils, meeting monthly, were the vehicles through which annual conference decisions were implemented and thus played a crucial role in the interpretation of policy. Although the making of policy was not specified in the powers of councils, their function between conferences and their establishment of standing committees made a policy-making role inevitable. Disagreement over the existence of a 'female point of view', requiring the establishment of a separate Branch Council for Women, was evident in 1969 in a debate among a number of women in the correspondence pages of the Journal.
The issue which sparked the debate was a decision by the Women’s Branch president to ask women to remain after a combined council meeting had concluded. In itself the decision was probably not significant. What it presented to many women, though, was the perceived unwillingness of their representatives to act in a way that demonstrated their equality with male councillors.¹⁷

Separate councils were replaced by a single council in 1971, and this meant that the principle of equal representation was not sustained at this level of the organisation. However, by this time equal pay had become a fact and with its achievement one of the longstanding ideological and material divisions disappeared. Representation on council continued on the basis of delegation from associations and with the formation of more and new types of associations, council became a central focus of organisational division. Attempts at conferences to alter the method of representation on council reflected the growing strength of school-based associations and the larger sectional associations such as the High School and Primary Teachers’ associations. The changed political climate of the late 1960s, in which militant expression, if not militant action,
Unity

was first introduced on a wide scale into teacher politics in South Australia, provided many teachers with an understanding of the potential strength of their organisation and they were determined to see their strength reflected on council. Equally, previously dominant groups, such as those of primary and secondary principals, were determined to prevent their basis of organisational strengths and hegemony from being undermined.

Executive

Originally given the Stalinist-sounding title of 'central authority', the executive of SAIT, like its other central bodies, has its composition determined by the principle of equal male–female representation. Whereas in 1951 only the five principal officers were elected by the membership, with the remainder indirectly elected through branch councils, the whole of the executive has since 1969 been directly elected by full members. But this did not occur without controversy. A motion moved in council in 1968 by Richie Walsh to change the voting rules for the election of Institute officers was defeated. Walsh claimed 'that the rules for the election of officers were undemocratic and resulted in the election of too many headmasters to top positions in the Institute'. A further motion providing for popular election of the remaining ten members of the executive was defeated at the March 1969 annual conference. A letter to the editor of the *Journal* warned that the campaign for a popularly elected executive was not over and urged members to work towards the alteration of rules. Later in 1969, following a successful campaign, a special conference passed a motion providing for popular election of executive. Since it is responsible for carrying into effect conference and council decisions executive has interpretative powers and, by its interpretation of decisions, it has an implicit policy-making role. Executive is also able 'to take any action it considers necessary in any state of emergency affecting the interests of members of the Institute and to interpret the Rules'. The theoretical latitude implied by these powers is in practice limited by internal political factors such as the extent of consensus within the executive, its reckoning of support within council and the proximity of elections or conference as well as by external factors.

Conference

SAIT's rules, until the restructure of the 1980s, provided that its affairs were to be under the control of a conference of full and life members to be held each year. This theoretically enabled all members of the Institute to participate directly in the determination of policy. As already noted, this form of conference
was unique among teachers' unions in Australia, the usual form being a conference of delegates elected by associations. In practice, no SAIT conference under those rules ever attracted the attendance of more than about fourteen per cent of its full membership. The case of one teacher who had attended 55 conferences, despite enormous difficulties travelling over rough country roads, must be seen as a rather unique example of dedication rather than the rule of attendance commitment. Other conferences had to be postponed through lack of a quorum. Dissatisfaction was often expressed about this open form of conference. In 1954 the president-elect, Donald Carmichael, a primary school headmaster, argued that the conference 'would be better replaced by a delegates' conference'. Anticipating a poorly attended conference for 1959, the president, Fred Davis, urged members to attend, saying that conferences over the last ten years had been characterised by 'a relatively small attendance at the business session; few motions sent in by associations; a good attendance at the public meeting to hear a guest speaker; and a conference begun, continued and ended between 10 am and 1 pm'. He made an unfavourable comparison with interstate conferences which lasted for days.

Criticisms of the membership conference were that it was open to manipulation by well-organised voting blocs, that it effectively excluded many country teachers (who, unlike country delegates to council, were not paid travelling expenses) and that it relegated the democratic forum of associations to a less significant position in the structure of SAIT. Minority interest groups tended to be opposed to it on the basis of the first criticism, some country members on the grounds of the second and some associations, depending on their strength and degree of membership involvement, opposed on the basis of the third criticism. Branches now elect delegates to the annual conference.

Objectives of SAIT

The structure thusfar outlined exists to attain the following objectives:

In every possible way to further the interests of Education in South Australia. To obtain and secure for its members reasonable conditions and proper and sufficient remuneration and to guard them against hardship, oppression or injustice in connection with their employment. To watch over and protect the professional interest of members and to consider and deal with all matters affecting them and their professional relations.

A recent addition to these longstanding objectives was 'to promote the Australian Education Union as the sole body representing the industrial and educational interests of Institute members at the national and international levels'.

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During the 60s and early 70s a scholarship was awarded annually by SAIT to successful applicants to help in the investigation of a topic which would make a contribution to education and be of interest to teachers. In the picture above Mr W.A. White presents the 1970 award to Mr Ron M. O'Hare of the Inservice Centre at Raywood watched by Mr. F.A. Vickery, Chair of the Scholarship Fund Board. (SA Teachers' Journal)

Bessant and Spaull argue that the objectives of an organisation such as a teachers' union 'reveal its philosophy and purpose and often the direction of its activities' and that among these organisations in Australia there are generally three types of objectives—industrial, educational and political. On this categorisation, SAIT appeared until the late 1960s to have no political objectives—at least no overt ones—and its purposes were confined to those of an educational and industrial/professional nature. The public image of SAIT was that of a non-political organisation and the lack of an obvious political objective was, for various sections of the Institute, an important ideological point, both internally and in public campaigns. However, the 'official' position disguised the reality of considerable debate over the political position of SAIT and, as will be argued in a later chapter, some of the major conflicts in the organisation have been about SAIT's 'political' objectives or political direction.

The educational objective of the union is broad and all-inclusive and serves as the rationale for policies on material conditions in schools, for campaigns on commonwealth funding for education, and arguments for or against the introduction of particular philosophies, methods and subjects in schools. The protection of the material interests and working conditions of members is, as with any trade union, the basis of the industrial objective. Its objective of protecting
the professional interests of its members does not specify what is understood by
the term ‘professional’ and the idea that SAIT is a professional association has
been a source both of ideological and tactical divisions.

A teachers’ credit union

It was under the rubric of serving the members that the Satisfacs scheme was
developed in 1958. The initials stood for South Australian Teachers’ Institute
Savings, Finance and Cooperative Society.

In 1930 a small committee was formed by the SA Public Teachers’ Union
to organise the Cooperative Cash Purchase Scheme. In this scheme arrange-
ments were made with several retailers to allow a special discount to members
for cash purchases. Country members were able to participate in the scheme by
mail. Many members were reported to have saved more than their union
subscriptions by using the scheme. One member said his wife would pay his
union subscriptions if he did not just so she could have access to the scheme.
This scheme was undoubtedly a help to underpaid teachers who also took a pay
cut during the 1930s Depression.

In 1958 SAIT annual conference decided that Satisfacs Ltd be established.
The cash purchase concept was extended by the formation of the finance and
cooperative purchasing society; this was another step taken by the union to
improve the economic position of teachers.

At the inaugural meeting of the society, held on 30 June 1958 the founda-
tion board of five directors was elected. They were Mr J.E. Eddy, chairman,
Miss M. Connell, Messrs E.W. Golding, G.J. Lord and E.R. Speed. In 1962 Mr
L.E.Kiek, general secretary of the Institute, was appointed as SAIT repre-
sentative on the board.

The formation of the Satisfac Society Ltd gave teachers their own cooper-
ative society. It was envisaged by the founders that there would be three stages
in the development of the society; first, it would depend entirely on the support
of SAIT; second, it would stand on its own feet, pay all expenses and meet all
commitments; and, third, it would pay back to SAIT the costs incurred by SAIT
in setting up the society.

The formation of Satisfacs was hailed as an important step forward for South
Australian teachers in the field of practical economics. It gave them the
opportunity to improve their economic position through savings, loans and
trading advantages in a very wide range of goods which included household
appliances, clothes, furniture and cars at better than commercial rates. In 1958
teachers could become a member of Satisfacs by purchasing a minimum of ten
one-pound shares, over a period of time if necessary.
Satisfacs (the name was derived from the words South Australian Teachers' Institute Savings, Finance and Cooperative Society) Ltd was established by SAIT in 1958. Satisfacs became a credit union in 1971. General manager, Bill Russell, and chair of the board, Keith Beaty, were important players in developing Satisfacs into one of the major credit unions in South Australia.


In 1965, on the initiative of the men's and women's branch councils, Finch Wholesale Ltd was set up as subsidiary to Satisfacs to provide school requisites. This was done at a time when profit margins in school lines, other than exercise books which were price controlled, were high. Finch enabled schools and parents to save money on school purchases.

Towards the end of 1970 a dark shadow was cast across the account keeping within Satisfacs and Finch. This led to delaying Satisfacs 1970 annual general meeting in order to provide time to bring an audited balance sheet to the meeting. The president of SAIT, Wilf White, supported by the executive, played a crucial role in resolving a very difficult situation organisationally and at the same time ensuring that the members of Satisfacs continued to support the society by not withdrawing their money.

Following discussions, correspondence and negotiations between the SAIT executive and the Boards of Satisfacs and Finch it was agreed that Satisfacs would be concerned with finance only and that SAIT would provide a financial arrangement to safeguard the deficit in the shareholders’ funds. This was the first step towards Satisfacs becoming a credit union. Finch, besides continuing
as a wholesale supplier of stationery and other requisites for schools, took on the trading operations previously carried on through Satisfacs. Finch would be a SAIT-owned enterprise. Wilf White writing in the 'President's Column' in the Teachers' Journal of the 28 April 1971 said: 'The Executive of the Institute is anxious for the two societies to become profitable organisations efficiently operated and rendering service to our members, and is willing to restore to the full the value of the members' shareholdings, but only on the condition that members actively support them.' These arrangements secured Satisfacs and Finch. Finch [Wholesale] Pty Ltd proved to be a viable company in its first year of operation with Miss Val Martin as manager and Mr M. Milton as chairman of the board of directors. However, by 1973 the company was showing a net loss. The reason for the loss is outlined in the directors' report as follows: 'In the opinion of the Directors the results of the Company's operations during the financial year were substantially affected by extensive sales at deflated prices to clear stock accumulated over past years, and the fact that the administration costs of providing the discount service to members were considerably greater than the return from commission.' The company ceased to trade in December 1973.

Satisfacs, re-established as a loans and savings organisation, eventually became a credit union in 1971 with considerable assistance in the transition from SAIT. Satisfacs had an arrangement with SAIT that it would support SAIT's international program of training union officials from overseas teacher organisations, such as the coloured teachers' organisation in South Africa, as a way of paying back the costs incurred by SAIT during this difficult time. SAIT continued as always to actively recruit members for Satisfacs. Satisfacs then began its development into one of the major credit unions in South Australia, under the leadership of Bill Russell, general manager and Keith Beaty, chair of the board. Dean Mullen, who was strongly committed to the developing credit union movement in South Australia, was an active director during this period.

In February 1980, when Satisfacs moved to its new premises at 151 South Terrace, Adelaide, it had a total of 11 000 members and more than $17 million in assets. This marked a physical separation from SAIT, its parent organisation.

**Affiliations and cooperation with other bodies**

Teacher unity has a wider context in the affiliation and cooperation of SAIT with other organisations. At the time of its dissolution the Guild was affiliated with nine organisations to which it sent resolutions and delegates; these organisations represented broader social and political interests, as well as
organisations devoted to the advancement of education. The Guild maintained a longstanding affiliation with both the National Council of Women and the League of Women Voters. The strength of the Guild’s view that teaching should be an occupation for single women is indicated by the response of the Guild to a communication from the United Association of Women in 1941, seeking the Guild’s views on the employment of married women. The Guild replied that ‘the employment of married women, except in special circumstances, should not be supported’. Its strong support of the war effort as a fight for democracy was framed in traditional terms of the sexual division of labour and its general cooperation with other organisations reflected the ambitions of professionally aspirant single women. The pages of the Guild Chronicle with Miss Macghey as editor contained strong patriotic exhortations to Guild members.

At the time of the amalgamation SAPTU was a member of the Australian Teachers’ Federation (ATF) and a decision was taken by central authority in December 1951 that SAIT be represented at the ATF council in January 1952, thus reaffirming one of SAIT’s most important political and professional affiliations. ATF was initially formed as the Australian State Teachers’ Federation at a meeting in Sydney in January 1921; its provisional council was occupied for most of that year in attempting to persuade Prime Minister Hughes and the commonwealth government to become involved in education. As well as this political goal, the Federation was also formed to raise the status of teaching and provide for professional development and to attempt to gain jurisdiction for teachers under the Commonwealth Arbitration Commission. This attempt was unsuccessful.

Through ATF, SAIT has been affiliated with international teachers’ organisations, thereby participating in global political affairs. In 1951 ATF was affiliated with the World Organisation of the Teaching Profession (WOTP), the International Federation of Secondary Teachers (FIPESO), and the International Federation of Teachers Association (IFTA), a body of primary teachers. A fourth international organisation of teachers, the International Federation of Teachers Unions (FISE), was a subsidiary of the World Federation of Trade Unions, drawing its membership largely from communist countries, but with some roots in non-communist countries. In 1950 discussions between WOTP, FIPESO and IFTA led to the drafting of a constitution for a World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP), a move which SAIT supported through ATF. A 1950 British newspaper commentary recognised the political nature of the proposed confederation, arguing that with the character of international relations at the time, the powerful American National Education Association (NEA) would use its influence in an attempt ‘to orientate the organisation in a political and anti-Communist direction in line with its declared policy’. When WCOTP was formed in 1952 it stood in
direct political opposition to FISE. The already bitter relations between the two international federations were further complicated by the establishment in the same year of the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions (IFFTU) as a subsidiary of the anti-communist International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. IFFTU was alleged to have received large grants from German and United States foundations. As a result of these affiliations, SAIT's early international perspective was ideologically grounded in the inter-union rivalry of Cold War divisions.

Jean Pavy was a member of central authority later to be called executive. She was president of the Primary Women's Association and in 1961 she became President of the Women's Branch Council. She was a vigorous campaigner for equal pay and equal promotion opportunities for women. She was chair of the SA Council for Equal Pay. Within SAIT she was a member of the Equal Pay Committee. Jean Pavy believed strongly that education would be best served when the opinions of both male and female were available. She also believed that the best interests of children could not be served if women were considered inferior to men. Jean Pavy was the first woman teacher to represent Australia at a world conference of teachers which was held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1962. Her presence at the conference epitomised the Institute's belief in equality of opportunity for the sexes and brought messages of goodwill from women's organisations in this State. (Photograph provided by nephew, Andrew Pavy)
Unity

Also through ATF, SAIT was affiliated with the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations (ACSPA), an affiliation which gave SAIT a direct trade union role and provided important links with the trade union movement, thus enabling it to draw on substantial strength for support in campaigns on educational issues. Graham Smith from SAIT represented ATF on ACSPA executive for a number of years. This affiliation also meant that SAIT was drawn into debate on social issues such as penal reform and the impact of technology on working hours and leisure. The ACSPA affiliation was of crucial importance in the campaign for equal pay and SAIT was directly represented in a joint ACSPA–ACTU campaign on equal pay by central authority member Miss Jean Pavy. As a heterogeneous council of white-collar and professional organisations, ACSPA provided the potential for SAIT to extend its understanding of unity to embrace a broader coalition of interests.

Unity also has a meaning beyond affiliation and cooperation with other teachers' organisations. In addition to these formal affiliations, SAIT has cooperated with organisations representing other interests. Such cooperation

On 29 April 1976, 116 delegates from South Australia travelled on a chartered TAA aircraft to Canberra for the National E-day rally. The picture shows from left president Milton Hunkin and Corinne Lloyd Wright inspecting a placard prepared by Findon High School Staff Association before boarding the aircraft to Canberra.

Corinne Lloyd Wright was the first non-clerical woman officer appointed to SAIT in 1973. Her main areas of responsibilities were women teachers' issues, general research and campaigns.

(SA Teachers' Journal)
Themes

has ranged from ad hoc meetings or campaigns to long-term cooperation with organisations such as the South Australian Council of State School Organisations (SACSSO). There are inherent conflicts in relations between teachers and parents and these have manifested themselves in the sometimes turbulent relations between organisations representing these groups. Campaigns such as that on commonwealth aid for education has brought SAIT in contact with parent, student and other social and political interest groups. Both in formal affiliations and in cooperative ventures, sometimes described as 'partnerships', the appeal to unity has been a persuasive ideological tool used by dominant and 'ginger groups' alike to reinforce their particular points of view.

Employable teachers

The quest for unity in SAIT did not always readily include those teachers who were qualified but unable to find employment as teachers. That unemployment among teachers was a 'new problem' in the mid-1970s was indicated in a Journal article in 1976 by SAIT's former assistant general secretary, Bob Harris, then ATF assistant general secretary. Harris pointed out that while there were increasing demands from people eligible to teach, including people seeking to re-enter teaching, the employment policies of state education departments were based upon an inadequate understanding of the fluid relationship that existed between teacher supply and demand at the national level. Among other suggestions, Harris recommended that

Teachers' unions should look seriously at the proposal of the former Minister for Education, Mr Beazley, for Australian teachers to teach for periods of two or three years in developing countries. As Mr Beazley has pointed out, it is ludicrous for an affluent country like Australia to artificially restrict its supply of teachers when the developing countries are crying out for more teachers.42

SAIT began to consider the question of unemployed teachers later in 1976, but initially only from the perspective of employed workers in relation to the ATF charter of working conditions, particularly class sizes. In other words, the leadership of SAIT was not initially willing to consider that unemployed people could belong, as a right, to an organisation concerned with employed workers. By linking conditions with teacher supply, an argument could be made for SAIT to take seriously the position of unemployed workers. Sue Nash, president of the High School Teachers' Association (HSTA), argued that the denial of a teaching position to a qualified teacher was an injustice under SAIT's stated objectives and that it was necessary for the Education Department to change its stated priorities on employment of teachers for the following year: 'The
teaching members of SAIT will not tolerate unemployment of colleagues while 69 per cent of primary classes and 57 per cent of secondary classes in South Australia are overcrowded according to the ATF Charter of working conditions!'

After further pressure, and with some reluctance, a meeting of unemployed teachers was called at SAIT in the first term of 1977 at which an Employable Teachers' Organisation (ETO) was formed. This organisation immediately ran into problems with SAIT president, Milton Hunkin, and other executive
members such as Murray Haines and Reuben Goldsworthy. A motion moved by Haines and Goldsworthy ‘that SAIT recognises all unemployed teachers who are registered as such with SAIT’ was accepted by executive, and this indicated that SAIT would take a narrow view of the meaning of ‘employable teacher’. This was despite the fact that John Gregory, a more sympathetic member of executive, submitted a budget of $500 on behalf of ETO to executive.

The committee of ETO argued that official definitions of unemployment excluded many teachers who were not in full-time employment as teachers and therefore did not give an accurate picture of the state of teacher unemployment. Commonwealth Employment Service statistics did not include

1 married women who wished to return to teaching;
2 TRAs [temporary relieving assistants] who desired full-time employment;
3 teachers given contract work who wanted guaranteed job security; or
4 teachers forced into alternative employment.44

It took two annual conferences before SAIT agreed that employable teachers, including those on contract, could be members of SAIT, and there was further debate about how far the resources of SAIT should be used to support them. In the early 1980s SAIT tried to push the line that all contracts should be made permanent. Eventually SAIT and the Education Department agreed
Helen Menzies was SAIT's first women's adviser. She was appointed assistant general secretary: women's adviser and research officer in 1978. Helen supported and worked with women members through the Status of Women Committee by initiating Saturday morning seminars and developing the Contact Network. She disseminated information through 'Column 59' and the Contact Network Newsletter. She was also responsible for developing SAIT's Anti-Discrimination Policy which was adopted by Council in June 1980. (SA Teachers' Journal)

Unity

to a level of two per cent of contracts in the system and that 'permanent against temporary' (PAT) teachers would be used to cover short-term vacancies. Clare McCarty worked closely with ETO to achieve this outcome. Under the SAIT restructure of the 1980s an Employable Teachers' Consultative Committee was established to oversee the interests of non-permanent teachers; there has been difficulty in filling the number of vacancies on this committee.

Women's advisers/Women's officers in SAIT

In a move which was progressive among unions for its time, SAIT appointed Helen Menzies as its first women's adviser in 1978. Although a single union represented both women and men teachers in South Australia and equal pay had been achieved, there was an increasing awareness in Australia generally that unions did not represent all their members equally and were not adequately resourced to counter those historical and structural tendencies which favoured
one gender over another in union organisation and action. By this time, the Education Department had appointed Denise Bradley as an adviser, and Menzies and Bradley developed mechanisms of mutual support. The position in SAIT, which was for a two-year contract, was initially a half-time one without clerical assistance, the other half being devoted to research. Crucial to the establishment of this position were arguments put forward by the Status of Women Committee, particularly against some SAIT members and staff in the office who did not believe the position was necessary. In executive, there was heated argument about the necessity for a women's adviser, with some members arguing that the recent Departmental appointment of Denise Bradley made such a union position superfluous. Further support for Menzies came later from women in SAIT; the Women's Studies Resource Centre; Deborah McCulloch, women's adviser to the Premier; and from women in similar institutional positions, including women's advisers in interstate unions such as the New South Wales Teachers' Federation and the Victorian Teachers' Union. John Gregory also provided important internal support as president.

One of Menzies' early achievements was to demonstrate that, despite adherence to formal principles of equality, there was disparity between men and women in SAIT decision-making practices. Supported by the Status of Women Committee, she established a contact network, held Saturday morning seminars after branch council meetings to deal with topics of particular importance to women, and effectively used the Journal, in which she instituted the regular 'Column 59' as a medium of communication. Other significant issues with which Menzies dealt were parental leave and the appointment of women deputies. Menzies was succeeded in the position by Eleanor Ramsay, who carried out pioneering work on sexual harassment. Their work has been taken up and extended by Bev Tonkin, Liz Matheson, Sylvia Kinder, Jacqui Catalano and Jackie Bone-George, all of whom have, through their particular commitments, contributed to the work of SAIT and the position of women.
SAIT’s pursuit of higher status for teachers followed the path of professionalism established by SAPTU. This was not the only occupational strategy open to teachers, nor has it been pursued to the exclusion of the trade union role that SAIT as a representative organisation of workers subsequently adopted. The importance of the ideology of professionalism is that it has favoured certain objectives over others, and framed both the development of policies and the tactical pursuit of them in the boundaries established by its hegemony.

Addressing the inaugural meeting of SAIT in May 1951, the Premier of South Australia, Mr Thomas Playford, while congratulating teachers on their achievement of unity, also expressed regret that the new organisation considered itself an industrial body; he preferred instead to consider SAIT as a professional body.\(^2\) In his address to the same meeting, Dr Wyeth of Melbourne University outlined the reasons he believed teachers could not be considered professionals—in crucial areas of control over work and occupational autonomy, teachers did not have the appropriate institutional controls.\(^3\) The content of these addresses encapsulates the dilemmas faced by teachers at the time of the merger of the South Australian Public Teachers’ Union and the Women Teachers’ Guild—acknowledged by the state as professionals, yet on any objective count, lacking the conditions to be considered professionals. The rejection by the University of Adelaide of their argument that education was a discipline in its own right worthy of university study leading to a teachers’ degree, further underscored the tenuous claim to professional status of teachers. By choosing the name, South Australian Institute of Teachers, the members of the reunited organisation were making a symbolic statement about their status and indicating the direction of their endeavours.
Themes

There have been four major objectives in the pursuit of professional status by teachers' unions in South Australia: upgrading the level of qualifications of teachers' control of entry to teaching or teacher registration, control over aspects of work, and finally, the abstract goal of occupational autonomy. These objectives have not all been pursued at the same time, nor have they necessarily been seen by teachers as a series of unfolding stages through which they must inexorably pass in their pursuit of the professional project.

Although there have been changes in the content and tactics of the pursuit of professional status since 1951, these changes have not undermined the ideology of professionalism; they have, however, exposed its inherent weaknesses as an occupational strategy for teachers.

Upgrading the level of qualifications

Provided that teachers accepted the ideology of professionalism, they could be persuaded that as a result of their service and dedication they achieved social status, which served as a justification for poor conditions and low salaries. As a way of manipulating the supply of teachers in times of shortage authorities have been able to apply a 'lowest common denominator' in establishing the criteria of a qualified teacher, since the state and not the occupational group has controlled recruitment and entry. In 1980, after 105 years of state schooling, a significant proportion of teachers had minimal academic and professional training. Unless teachers were prepared to teach very large classes they had no choice but to accept unqualified entrants, since to boycott 'emergency' schemes of recruitment would have resulted in many teachers' refusing to work with people only marginally less prepared for teaching than themselves.

The project to upgrade the qualifications of teachers took place in the context of a tertiary education system strongly segmented to meet the requirements of an expanded industrial base. In 1951 teachers' colleges could barely be considered as tertiary institutions in Australia, controlled and directed as they were by the rigid prescriptions of Departmental authority. Selection to the University reflected what the Karmel Committee later called 'the well-known fact that children of some social groups are more likely than others to receive a tertiary education', although the bonded scholarships for student teachers assisted some working-class students to gain access to university studies. In the 1950s South Australia had only one teachers' college and this, in conjunction with the pupil teacher system, was the major avenue for teacher training. University graduates constituted a minority of teachers, although some teachers attempted, with considerable difficulty, to complete university studies.
A section of the SAIT Library at 64 Pennington Terrace.

The establishment of a Union library for members was due to Mr R.A. West, president of SAPTU, who worked assiduously to get conference, August 1928, to approve the establishment of the library. In his address to conference he said ‘I strongly recommend a library to our teachers as being in accord with the first object of the Union namely, In every possible way to further the interests of education.’

The library was opened by conference in 1929. As the country lending section of the Public Library was not in existence the Union library was valued by country members. The first Librarian was M.I.G. Symons. (SA Teachers’ Journal)

International efforts to raise the status of teachers began in the immediate post-war period, but in 1979 the Australian College of Education still expressed disquiet at the level of qualifications held by teachers in Australia generally. The debate about the appropriate form of training and education for teachers in Australia was influenced by overseas practice, particularly in Britain where a similar division of labour at post-secondary level had been created. By the mid-1970s the shortage of teachers throughout the long boom had been transformed into a ‘surplus’, with graduate teacher unemployment adding to the ranks of the rapidly increasing number of unemployed people in Australia.

The years following 1951 witnessed a movement from the cautious actions of reunited teachers in 1951 to the use of SAIT as a vehicle for militant expression two decades later. To understand why, it is necessary to trace the rise in the level of qualifications held by teachers since 1951, to examine the politics of recruitment and training and finally to analyse the significance of the registration of teachers.
Changes in the qualifications of teachers, 1951–80

The Karmel Committee enquiry into education in South Australia concluded in 1971 that 'the qualifications of teachers in government schools are still lower than they should be' and the Committee informed decision-makers that in some other school systems 'people holding incomplete qualifications are not given appointments'. During the decade after the Karmel Committee reported in South Australia, the qualifications held by teachers continued to change, until in 1980 the total number of qualifications held by teachers exceeded the number of full-time teachers. The following table illustrates the situation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of primary teachers with university qualifications</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of primary teachers with CAE degrees and diplomas</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of secondary teachers with university qualifications</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of secondary teachers with CAE degrees and diplomas</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By far the most common qualification in 1980 was the Diploma of Teaching awarded by a teachers' college, of which 10,569 were held by teachers.

Although the level of qualifications of teachers improved between 1951 and 1980, the goal of a 'fully graduate profession' for which teachers' unions had argued still had not been realised. The majority of teachers still received their awards from the 'intermediate' sector of tertiary education—the colleges of advanced education. Although teachers by 1980 were trained for a minimum of three years there was not a 'teachers' degree' which had attached to it the same status as that of law and medicine, as sought by the earlier teacher professionalisers. There was instead, not only in South Australia but in Australia generally, a diversity of qualifications which provide an entry into teaching. One of the aims of the Teachers' Registration Board, provided for in the South Australian Education Act of 1972, was to promote uniformity in standards and qualifications for entry to what its framers called 'the teaching profession'. However, a survey of Australian teachers by the Australian College of Education in 1979 concluded that

There is still no common qualification by which a teacher may be publicly recognised. The degree of Bachelor of Education would seem to be an appropriate qualification for all, but it is in fact held by only a minority of teachers, either as a first or second degree. Both those with an undergraduate diploma and those with a post-graduate diploma fall short of the study of educational theory embodied in an Education degree, necessary for coping effectively with the demands of teaching today. It would be heartening to
'Their proper place in society': The Pursuit of Professionalism

think that the progress in qualifications reported here would be sustained into the next decade, and that the present diplomas could be converted into degrees, resulting in an all graduate profession. 8

The politics of recruitment and training

An analysis of the politics of recruitment and training of teachers demonstrates firm control by the state, despite the efforts of SAIT to influence government policy. These efforts were carried out against a backdrop of three important political features of the post-war period: first, the increasing financial powers accruing to the commonwealth, while the states retained constitutional responsibility for education; second, the long periods in office of conservative parties both at the national and state level; and, third, the rigid Departmental control of teachers' colleges in South Australia until 1972, allied with a system of bonding which lasted until 1975. As a result of the first of these factors, the states came increasingly to direct their attention to seeking more funds from the commonwealth for education as well as other state government functions. Second, the post-war political dominance of conservative governments resulted in a lack of vision in education policy by the 1960s, since these governments were preoccupied with providing resources necessary to meet the requirements of demographic change. Finally, Departmental control of training colleges allowed the direct manipulation of the boundaries of professionalism. Beginning from a low base of qualifications in 1951, teachers faced formidable structural and ideological barriers when they sought to influence the politics of recruitment and training.

The SAIT contingent of delegates and observers at the first World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Professions (WCOTP). Assembly held in Australia in 1970. (SA Teachers' Journal)
Recruitment and training in South Australia

The debate about teacher training in Australia has focused on two issues: the form of training necessary to produce a worker capable of teaching in and managing a classroom of children; and the appropriate location of such training in a stratified system of post-secondary education. As long as the higher education sector in Australia remained the province of the small number of universities, what debate there was centred largely around the first of these issues with the assumption that a reasonably intelligent person could become a teacher after a short course of general education in subjects they would be expected to teach, in conjunction with some exposure to the 'theory and practice' of education.

Adelaide's first teachers' college was established in 1876, and the system of training teachers in a college and binding them to teach for a period of years coexisted with the pupil teacher apprentice system. Neither of these approaches produced teachers with high qualifications. Students who completed some university subjects endeavoured to further their university studies by attendance at classes after school if they were within travelling distance of the university. For teachers in country areas the only means of engaging in further study was by unofficial external studies, supplemented by notes provided at a small cost through the teachers' union by other teachers. Under such conditions it was inevitable that many teachers would be unable to complete degrees.

In 1943 the Chancellor of the University had expressed his view to the Director of Education that a first degree in education 'would pull down the reputation of all our degrees'. The University provided a post-graduate Diploma in Education, but this was not generally accessible to primary and infant teachers, who made up the majority of teachers and were the least well-qualified. It was only the post-war economic expansion and the shortage of teachers, created particularly by the expansion of secondary education, that led to more serious consideration of both the form and location of teacher education.

In 1945 the Education Enquiry Committee in South Australia chaired, by E. L. Bean, recommended that the course of training for all primary and infants teachers be extended to three years, but it was not until 1971 that this policy was finally implemented. The short courses of training in the 1950s for these teachers were further devalued by the emergency schemes, or 'crash courses', for teachers. Until the 1970s teacher education and training in South Australia was firmly under Departmental control; such control led to a regimented socialisation of teachers through the colleges. Academic development of the students-in-training took place within the confines of a system designed primarily to meet the needs of staffing the schools and secondarily to raise the academic level of students in the colleges. The close attachment of the colleges
to the employing authority made this situation inevitable, despite the intentions of some of the staff of the colleges, who were placed in the dual position of teacher and Departmental agent. Conformity and paternalism and isolation from other students created a utilitarian culture in which individual development was equated with its proximity to Departmental norms. Those students who undertook university courses as part of their training were often constrained to take only subjects which were relevant to their careers—that is, subjects which were taught in schools—and very few pursued higher degrees.

A shortage of teachers continued until the mid-1970s, mainly because teaching was unattractive to graduates and insufficient places were provided for student teachers. Rather than raise the levels of pay and improve conditions, governments lowered the standards of entry. That teachers’ unions have been unable to influence the policies relating to teacher recruitment is a result of two main factors: first, teaching is not an occupation united by a qualification publicly recognised as a professional ‘licence’ to teach; and, second, state control (or ‘mediation’) of teaching means that power to determine standards and supply lies with the state and not with teachers’ unions. Registration of teachers, which has been in operation in South Australia since 1976, has given teachers a measure of control over standards, but not over supply. Although teachers have been reluctant to accept this position, their strategies and tactics have evolved within the boundaries established by the ideology of professionalism. Weaknesses in this ideology became evident towards the end of the 1960s, when a general white-collar dissatisfaction with pay and conditions was articulated for teachers by SAIT. In the mid-1970s the possibility of the creation of a graduate profession existed through conditions over which teachers had no control—the ‘surplus’ of teachers.

To deal with the shortage of teachers and to raise the level of qualifications, SAIT’s objective was to persuade the South Australian government to make more funds available for the training of teachers and to raise the level of training. Recognising the need in 1950 to do something about the worsening staff situation in the schools, the Department seconded two inspectors, A. W. Jones and Ruth Gibson, to work full time on recruitment. Both SAPTU and WTG supported this move. However, in 1953 SAIT annual conference passed a number of motions critical of what it saw as the government’s inadequate recruitment policy. Conference ‘requested’ the Minister of Education (R. J. Rudall MLC) ‘to secure a far greater grant for education, as this Conference is of the opinion that the development of education is being severely retarded through lack of financial support’, and was critical of the lack of constructive action by the government with regard to ending the emergency training scheme. A committee was appointed to prepare a case for presentation to Rudall on the training of teachers, but some members argued that, given the government’s
electoral gerrymander, to effect a change in government policy would require more vigorous action. As a result of this argument conference set up a committee to engage in a publicity campaign to draw public attention to the problems of staffing the schools.

Conference was also critical of the level of allowances paid to teachers' college students and resolved that SAIT should make 'determined efforts' to have these allowances determined by the Teachers' Salaries Board. It also directed the salaries committee to prepare a separate claim for a graduate allowance to be presented to the Teachers' Salaries Board. On amenities in schools, the view was expressed that they were not in keeping with 'the dignity of teachers'. Rudall subsequently refused to meet a deputation of teachers to discuss the matters arising from the annual conference, which led to a further attack in the Journal: 'Over the last three of four years, the course of Ministerial policy has given rise to grave concern for the educational welfare of the children of this State.' Furthermore, the Men's Branch declared in July that the Minister was interfering in the domestic affairs of SAIT by dictating who should constitute deputations. Rudall was presented in August with a petition signed by over 400 teachers' college students requesting him to raise the allowance of students and to transfer determination of the allowance to the Teachers' Salaries Board.

The resolutions of the 1953 annual conference were indicative of the mounting dissatisfactions within SAIT over the level of provision by the State Liberal–Country League government of funds to improve conditions in education. In agreeing to a publicity campaign, conference had demonstrated a political acumen and made use of a tactic that was to be developed by the end of the next decade in pressing more vigorously for increased funding for education. Although relations between SAIT and the Minister deteriorated immediately following the conference, the deterioration did not lead to a break in the general character of relations between SAIT and the state. The 1953 conference showed that teachers, again united, were prepared to take a strong stand and were perhaps testing their strength, without overstepping their traditional bounds of caution.

'Traditional methods' of teacher action, consisting of regular deputations to the Department, meetings with the Minister and occasional use of the media, were utilised in an attempt to persuade public opinion and the state and commonwealth governments that spending on education should be increased. In 1955, following deputations from SAIT, the Department agreed to abandon the very short course of training and to replace it with a twelve months course for mature age people. Later in the same year, the government announced its intention of establishing a second teachers' college in South Australia, a move which was welcomed by SAIT, although with some scepticism about the date of completion. In the meantime the Chancellor of Adelaide University had
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informed SAIT that it was his intention to appoint a person to a Chair of Education on a temporary basis and, despite expressions of dismay and a further deputation from SAIT, the Chancellor stated his view that there was very little prospect that the chair would be filled in the foreseeable future. The following year, Professor Wagner, Professor of Education at the University of Southampton, was temporarily appointed to the chair while on sabbatical, one of his tasks being to make recommendations to the University on the development of the chair. In October 1955, to allow for the expansion of its activities, SAIT purchased a property in Pennington Terrace, North Adelaide, hoping also to enhance the prestige of teachers at a time when this was being made difficult by the actions of the University.

On 20 October 1955, No 64 Pennington Terrace, North Adelaide was purchased by SAIT thus fulfilling a dream of many years’ standing of teachers owning their own headquarters. The dream was brought to reality by the hard work of SAIT ‘house hunters’ notably Ned Golding and Jack Eddy. The savings of a generation of teachers, together with a generous overdraft from the SA Savings Bank paid for the property. An extension to the right-hand side of the building was proposed and subsequently built in 1959 to provide a hall and extensions to the library. In 1961–2 a new building was built on the northern boundary of the property.

(SAIT Annual Report)
At the beginning of 1956 the Department was criticised by SAIT for its failure to mention significant aspects of teachers’ conditions in its recruiting brochure, and in the period prior to the state election in March 1956, SAIT developed its tactic of the publicity campaign to expose the deficiencies of the schools both in conditions and levels of staffing. Although SAIT argued that the campaign built ‘the prestige of the teaching profession’, the campaign was criticised by some teachers and the press as being an unprofessional action. The criticism led to a reply in the Journal of May 1956, in which the president, Donald Carmichael, stated that it had been necessary, in the interests of attracting high-quality recruits to the profession, to use tactics which may have been considered the province of trade unions. SAIT, he argued, was both a professional association concerned with the quality of service to the community and a trade union concerned with the welfare of its members. He concluded ‘with a reminder that SAIT is a non-political organisation [which] has taken no sides in political issues.

As the staffing situation continued to worsen during the year, SAIT attempted to influence the Departmental policy of recruitment to the proposed new teachers’ college by using the rhetoric of professionalism, arguing that ‘the higher the entrance qualifications to a teachers’ college, the stronger the gates which guard the professional status of teachers’. Commenting on a speech by the Minister of Education at the 80th anniversary of the Adelaide Teachers’ College, the SAIT president again stressed the need for increased expenditure on education in South Australia to provide adequate facilities and teachers to meet the needs of children in the schools. On the eve of the 1956 Loan Council meeting SAIT also sent telegrams to both the Acting Prime Minister (Sir Arthur Fadden) and the South Australian Premier (Mr Playford) urging an increase in state grants for education, but no further increase was forthcoming. A crucial link had been established by SAIT between increased commonwealth expenditure and the upgrading of the status of teachers and from 1957 onwards South Australian teachers participated in a vigorous national campaign for commonwealth aid to education.

A new teachers’ college was opened at Wattle Park in 1957 to provide two-year courses of training for primary and infant teachers. The desirability of bonding student teachers in view of its adverse effects on both teacher recruitment and the status of teaching was again revived and the possibility of its elimination discussed with the Director. In the same year the Murray Committee on Australian Universities reported to the commonwealth government, giving impressive support to a policy of teaching as a graduate occupation. The Committee’s statement that schools should be staffed with soundly trained graduates was used by SAIT in support of its argument for a Chair of Education.
In 1959 the Chair of Education was filled, but the incumbent was entirely unsympathetic to SAIT’s plan for a teachers’ degree. Following his appointment, Professor L. E. Neal successfully moved to have the University withdraw the undergraduate education unit from the Arts degree and to make the study of Education an entirely post-graduate one. Neal’s belief that a ‘lightweight’ undergraduate degree in education would debase the currency of all degrees echoed the comment made in 1943 by Sir William Mitchell, Chancellor of Adelaide University. The move brought Neal and the University into direct conflict with SAIT since it dashed the hopes of teachers for a professional university degree and reflected the subordinate position of teachers in the academic hierarchy.

Neal later argued that there is a distinct difference between teaching at various levels and that teachers in primary and infant schools do not need university education, since

the great mass of ordinary boys and girls . . . are in fact quite repelled by the scholarly pursuit of knowledge such as universities know it. To try to bring the education of the great mass of teachers who have to deal with those sorts of children into the university, in order to improve the status of teaching, or try to get some semblance of uniformity and indivisible unity among the profession, is entirely wrong and could be very damaging to the children these people deal with.

Further, he claimed that

the teachers themselves often argue for a graduate profession, even if that were to mean an inferior graduate profession. They do this, however, not so much, if at all, in the interests of their pupils but in the interests of their prestige, their salary and bargaining powers. When all teachers have degrees, their degrees will not be worth much.

Neal compared teachers to doctors, lawyers and clergy, who, he argued, depend not on their degrees for professional standing but on the nature of their service ethic and he suggested that teachers could do the same by being seen to give unsparingly of their time and effort to their students.

At the beginning of 1960 the South Australian Minister for Education, Baden Pattinson, addressed the Australian Teachers’ Federation conference in Adelaide on the need for alterations in commonwealth–state financial relations. He also suggested that there was a gradual awakening in the public mind of the proper place of teachers in the community . . . Until recent years the teacher has been regarded as the poor relation or the cinderella of the professions and has not received the salary or the status to which he or she has been entitled.
The conference suggested a commonwealth training plan for teachers, a policy which was reiterated at the 1961 ATF Conference, which also urged a four-year post-matriculation course for teachers. SAIT's annual conference in 1961 not only asked but insisted 'that the present system of recruitment of untrained people to the staffs of secondary schools is quite unsatisfactory' and that the Education Department should adopt policies to limit such recruitment by the following year at the latest. Though a third college, Western Teachers' College, was opened in 1962, the staffing situation was not markedly improved and political pressure continued to be directed towards the commonwealth government. The premiers had presented a submission on education to the Premiers' Conference in June 1961 after a joint deputation to the Prime Minister in May by representatives of the Australian Council for School Organisations, the Australian Teachers' Federation and the Victorian State Schools Committee.

Mr R. King, president of the SA Schools Committees' Association, speaking to 500 delegates packed into Australia Hall on 19 July 1960, to launch in South Australia the National Petition for Commonwealth Aid. On the platform, from left to right, were Mr. Tideman, president of the High School Councils Association, Mrs. Rose, President of Yorke Peninsula Mothers' Club, Mr E.W. Golding, President of SAIT and timekeeper, Mr M.D. Haines, SAIT mens' branch president. All the organisations mentioned were members of the parent–teacher council formed in 1959 for the purpose of developing cooperation amongst the organisations in areas of interest—especially Commonwealth Aid for Education. (SA Teachers' Journal)
Surveys by SAIT in 1964 revealed that a high proportion of teachers did not have minimum qualifications—28 per cent of secondary school teachers were unqualified and 61 per cent of primary class teachers had less than the academic and professional minima laid down for a Teachers' Certificate, while only 18 per cent of infant class teachers were certificated. It was also found that more than 80 per cent of classes had 30 or more pupils, with many classes in the forties and fifties; to bring all classes down to below 35 it was estimated that a 13 per cent increase in the number of classes would be required. SAIT's policy was for maximum class sizes of 30 in primary schools, ranging to 20 at Fifth Year in secondary schools. The empirical evidence provided by the surveys lent support to SAIT's continuing plea to the state government for an increase in minimum entry standards and to its attack, at the 1965 annual conference, on the Menzies government or its rejection of the Martin Committee proposals on teacher training.

After 32 years in office the Liberal – Country League (LCL) government in South Australia was defeated at the election in March 1965 and the Labor Party took office with Frank Walsh as Premier and Ronald Loveday as Minister of Education. In January 1966 Loveday opened the ATF conference in Adelaide on the theme of secondary education for all, arguing that the goal embodied in the conference theme could only be achieved through substantial commonwealth aid. Wilf White, president of SALT and ATF, called

on the Commonwealth Government to take the initiative and set up a committee of inquiry into pre-school, primary, secondary and technical education; and through the various Ministers of Education to draw up and finance a national plan which will aim in as short a time as possible, the ideal of providing for every Australian an equal opportunity through education.

The Martin Committee recommendations on teachers' training provided the basis for a policy adopted by SAIT in 1966, seeking the establishment of a Board of Teacher Education in each of the states, autonomy for the teachers' colleges and the registration of teachers. During the year Wilf White floated the idea of setting up a General Teaching Council based on the Scottish model; he argued that such a council would assist in developing more authoritative relations with the Department and raise the status of the profession by the exclusion of unqualified teachers. Persuaded by the efficacy of professionalism as a means of enhancing teachers' social status, the annual conference in 1966 adopted a code of ethics for teachers which brought to fruition an idea which had long been considered by some teachers as a necessary step in the attainment of professional status. The brief code of only five clauses, which were stated in general terms, consisted of a series of moral imperatives, including
Wilfred A. White was elected as the first full-time president from 1 January, 1968. He had served as part-time president for two years from May, 1964. He was President of ATF in 1965 and 1971. He valued ATF as the voice of Australian teachers in Canberra. As ATF representative he became a member of the UNESCO Education Committee in 1968, was appointed chair of the committee in 1969 and became a member of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO. In 1970, the International Education Year, he organised an Australian seminar on education for international understanding. He believed that the interests of education in SA would be furthered by improving the working conditions of teachers, by increasing rates of pay and by protecting the professional concerns of teachers. (SA Teachers' Journal)

one which noted that teachers 'should offer respect to those in Authority, expecting in return, mutual respect and loyalty'. However, a move at the same conference to establish a Board of Discipline consisting of SAIT principal officers was defeated.  

By 1968, the state government was under considerable pressure to act on recruitment of teachers and it was to the new Liberal – Country League Hall government, with Mrs Joyce Steele as Minister for Education, that teachers turned after the defeat of the Dunstan Labor government in March of that year. Towards the end of 1968 and during 1969, SAIT embarked on a course of action which included the threat of a withdrawal of services by teachers if the government did not act to improve the salaries of teachers, the quality of recruitment and conditions in the schools. Although the government did not move immediately on the salaries issue, it did appoint a Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia in late January 1969. The terms of reference of the Committee were:
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to examine and to report and make recommendations to the Minister on:

(i) the whole educational system of the State in order to determine the
most effective use of resources available to the State for education;

(ii) the organisation of the Education Department, including the organisation
of teacher training;

(iii) means by which curricula and teaching methods of the schools of the
Education Department can be kept under continuing review.51

By establishing this committee the government managed to stem some of
the criticism of the state's education system. But while SAIT welcomed the
Enquiry with Professor Peter Karmel as chair, it was critical of the composition
of the Committee.52 However, as the first wide-scale enquiry into education in
South Australia for over twenty years, the Committee provided a channel for
SAIT's policies on recruitment and training of teachers.

The Karmel Committee reported in February 1971 to Hugh Hudson, Min-
ister for Education in the Dunstan government, which took office in June 1970
after defeating the Hall LCL government in an unexpected election. Many of
the recommendations of the Committee were received sympathetically by the
Dunstan government; in particular, the granting of autonomy to the teachers'
colleges and provision for the registration of teachers. A decision had already
been made by the Hall government that the minimum length of training would
be three years for all students admitted in 1971. In 1975 the bond was finally
abolished.53

As a result of the granting of autonomy to the colleges,54 one of the barriers
to the achievement of professional status was removed, since teacher training
could now be regarded as almost on a par with similar professional training for
some other occupations. Although teachers did not achieve their earlier goal
of a fully graduate 'profession' whose members were university trained, the
stigma attaching to the qualifications of those without university training was
removed. It had, though, been 28 years since the Bean Committee first recom-
mended that training for all primary and infant teachers in South Australia be
extended to three years.

The granting of autonomy removed teacher training from the immediate
direction of the Department—and, to that extent removed the stigma of
inferiority—granted academic freedom to the colleges and created the possibility
of diversity. But the granting of autonomy to the colleges gave no guarantee at
all to the teachers' union that unqualified teachers would not be placed in
schools, since recruitment and supply was still firmly the province of government
policy. It was with the aim of restricting recruitment exclusively to qualified
teachers that SAIT had evolved its policies on a General Teaching Council.

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Control of entry to teaching

Since a policy to increase the number of teachers was dependent on increased expenditure on education, SAIT's campaign in the area of recruitment and training was directed towards gaining greater state and commonwealth government spending. At the same time, SAIT made requests to successive state governments not to allow unqualified persons to teach. Although the requests became more like demands in the 1960s, teachers took no direct action to influence government policy, although the threat of such action was contemplated in late 1968 and early 1969. In the mid-1960s the idea of a General Teaching Council in South Australia tentatively emerged in SAIT as an institutional means of controlling entry to teaching. The idea of such a council was heavily influenced by the establishment of such a body in Scotland, and teachers in England and Wales had adopted a similar policy. South Australian teachers were also aware of the continuing direct action by the Victorian Secondary Teachers' Association to restrict entry to high school teaching to only qualified teachers, but the doctrine of unity and the unwillingness to consider direct action predisposed teachers in this state to pursue their policy by formal means.

SAIT's leaders were impressed by the success of the medical profession in excluding the unqualified and by the creation of a single profession uniting medical workers at diverse levels and with diverse tasks, and it was this model of professionalism which they sought to emulate through a Teaching Council. Commenting on the Australian Medical Association's (AMA) congress in Adelaide in 1962, SAIT president, Murray Haines, said that teachers should devote their conferences to 'education' and not just to the conditions of teachers; he congratulated the AMA 'on the highly professional nature of its meeting—its concern with medicine rather than with doctors'.55 The comparison that teachers have made between their organisation and that of doctors, though, is highly misleading, since, by virtue of their designation as employees, teachers require a united organisation to bring about improvement in their conditions, whereas the professional and social status of doctors is not dependent on either their membership of or involvement in the AMA. The simple, but major, difference between the two organisations was that the AMA was a voluntary body of established professionals exercising control over their work, whereas SAIT was a voluntary body of workers, professional neither in the sense of holding a recognised qualification nor in their control over the work in which they were engaged.

The idea of a body with power to control entry, and on which teachers would be represented, was considered by SAIT in 1962 when it submitted a motion to the 1963 ATF conference on the establishment of Institutes of
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Education in each of the States. This motion was subsequently passed by the ATF conference and ratified by SAIT:

That each state investigate and report on the desirability of developing within its State an Institute of Education with power to grant a Teachers' Certificate. Such Institute should consist of representatives of Education Departments, Teacher Training Institutions, teachers' organisations and universities and the certificate issued by it should be accepted as a minimum standard required for employment as a qualified teacher.\(^5\)

While the motion did not specify the mechanisms through which control of entry would operate, it did establish the idea of teacher involvement in such control. The initial argument for such a body was that it would provide for more authoritative relations between teachers and the Education Department by providing teachers with a firmer base from which to negotiate on policies of training and entry. SAIT asked the South Australian government to amend the Education Act and Regulations, so that a General Teaching Council could be established at the beginning of 1969,\(^57\) but the government took no action. The policy of 'teacher participation in determining professional conditions and standards' was reaffirmed by the 1969 annual conference.\(^58\) With the establishment of the Committee of Enquiry in January 1969, a SAIT working party made a submission to the Committee based on the terms of the Teaching Council Act in Scotland.

What SAIT wanted from registration was a public demonstration of competence and thereby a rise in the 'status of the teaching profession to [its] proper place in society'.\(^59\) It submitted to the Karmel Committee a proposal for a Teaching Council which would consist of 21 members, but to which SAIT would nominate only a minority of six teachers. The remainder of the council would consist of administrators, academics, private school heads and teachers' college principals, and its purpose would be to exercise 'similar control over the teaching profession as other professional bodies have over their members through responsibility for standards and registration.'\(^60\) In its report, the Karmel Committee advocated a board consisting of an independent chairman and eight members, two of whom would be nominated by SAIT. Two members would be drawn from the Education Department, one of whom was to be a headmaster; two from non-government schools, one of whom was to come from a Catholic school; and two members were to be drawn from higher education institutions engaged in teacher training.\(^61\) In the interests of efficiency, Karmel recommended a body smaller than that proposed by SAIT, but still with only minority teacher representation. Together with the campaign to upgrade qualifications, registration was seen as a crucial step in the attainment of professionalism through participation in control of entry, and its acceptance by the State Labor government was
hailed by SAIT leaders as a significant victory. The Education Act provided for a board of eight members—one less than recommended by Karmel—by allowing one, instead of two, representatives from higher education institutions.62

Twelve months before registration was due to commence at the beginning of 1976, the High School Teachers' Association (HSTA) initiated moves for a deferral of registration and a wider debate within SAIT, particularly through association and school meetings.63 HSTA opposed registration in the form provided in the Act on the grounds that it was an expensive operation for teachers, duplicating existing Departmental records, but, more crucially, that it would not allow teachers to exercise control over their profession. Teachers would not have a majority in the critical area of deregistration, where the provisions in the Act gave the Registration Board wide powers in the interpretation of teacher 'competence'. Predicting a decline in the working conditions of teachers and a growth in teacher unemployment as a result of deteriorating economic circumstances, HSTA argued that registration would weaken the ability of teachers to act in defence of their conditions and rights. If ‘professionalism’ was meant to guarantee ‘status, good working conditions and salaries, real freedom and responsibility, registration as presently constituted could well deny teachers these very things’.64 An activist group in SAIT, the Education Action Alliance (EAA), supported moves for deferral of registration; comparing the registration of teachers with that of nurses, the EAA argued that it had done nothing for the ‘professional status’ of nurses.65 A Special Conference in December 1975, defeated the move for deferral, and registration proceeded in 1976, with teachers constituting minority membership of the Board.66 In the crucial area of power to deregister members, SHIT would not have a majority. A reserve power gave the Minister the right to employ unqualified teachers in times of shortage where it could be established that it was in the public interest to do so, although this was amended to require such action to be supported by a majority decision of the Board.67

The debate about registration demonstrated contradictions in SAIT strategy. 'State-sanctioned professionalism' was used by teachers as a lever to improve their status, but it moderated their demands as workers to a level acceptable to governments. Although a working party of ATF had recommended in 1972 that where registration bodies were set up, not less than half of the members should be teachers,68 SAIT had not sought a majority of teachers on the Registration Board and the legislation did not provide for a teacher majority. This was a quest for status, not control. This form of professionalism was challenged by an argument for 'professionalism as control', but the challenge was unsuccessful. The Board in South Australia was constituted as a body of representatives of employers, employees and other parties having an interest in the registration of teachers; it gave teachers no control over their conditions of work, nor did they
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derive any broader occupational autonomy as a result of it. Mr Justice Olsson, the chairman of the Teachers' Salaries Board and president of the South Australian Industrial Commission, hinted clearly at this fact in opening the 1976 annual conference, when he stated that a system of quality control was needed for teachers, and that they could not continue to demand autonomy without accountability. 69

Conclusion

In the post-war period, SAIT embarked on a project to reconstruct the characteristics of teachers as an occupational group, principally through seeking to upgrade qualifications and to participate in control of entry to teaching. The management of the project was vested in a leadership that was drawn generally from teachers who were successful in their careers, and whose view of SAIT's role was influenced by their Departmental position. As an occupational strategy, professionalism appeared to offer some advantages after almost a hundred years of state education. Upgrading of qualifications and the autonomy of teacher training institutions, now universities, have overcome some of the barriers to the attainment of 'professional status' by teachers, and registration has provided them with a means of participating in the control of entry. But these conditions have not obviated the necessity for SAIT to act on behalf of its members in defence of their working conditions, nor to attempt to advance their interests through political action.

SAIT's strategy of professionalism was supplemented in the 1960s and 1970s by militant expression to influence policies on recruitment. The threat to withdraw services was a statement of intention to pursue a form of political action which was at once an articulation of the strength of unity and at the same time an expression of the failure of professionalism as an occupational strategy. 70 This militancy, though, allowed the state to divert the struggle from the issues involved to the issue of the morality of withdrawal of services as a form of professional action. Because of the hegemony of professionalism expressed through SAIT, militancy became an issue in itself—an issue potentially divisive and therefore self-defeating since it could not be sustained. A 'moment of unity' was easily undermined when opposition propaganda both from within the organisation and from the state, representing the 'public', struck the powerful chord of 'unprofessional behaviour'. Since teachers had sung to this tune for so long, the composition of a different melody was not achieved overnight.

For these reasons proposals to hold stop-work meetings, put at the 1968 Special Conference and 1969 annual conference, generated uncharacteristically
large attendances and widespread debate within SAIT. The dilemmas of an organisation trying to be both a professional organisation and a trade union were clearly brought into focus. Through the mass meetings teachers gained a different experience of the meaning of solidarity and the potential power of SAIT as an organisation able to influence government policy by using tactics which stepped outside the tradition of persuasion through lobbying and negotiation. These traditional tactics were by no means dismissed, but they were placed in the context of wider possibilities. Although no withdrawal of services took place at the end of the 1960s, it was clearly established as a distinct possibility. What emerged instead from the meetings was a commitment to the development of a publicity 'machine' in SAIT as a means of presenting its policies to the state and to the electorate; it was argued that this would enable the presentation of a more favourable impression of the professionalism of teachers than the use of militant tactics.

By the mid-1970s the shortage of teachers had been transformed into an 'oversupply'. 'Oversupply' is not an objective technical term; it is based on assumptions about desirable class sizes which can be manipulated for the purposes of public policy on education. It is on this issue of oversupply that other contradictions emerge in the teachers' struggle for 'professional control' of teaching. By 1976 registration of teachers was a reality in South Australia, teachers' colleges were autonomous and the minimum length of training had been increased to three years for all new entrants. Thus the goals of increasing the size and quality of the teaching force, which were urgent in previous decades, had been achieved and to this extent the professional project had succeeded. But since teachers had no power over the supply of occupational recruits, they were in no better position to exercise control over their labour process than they had been without registration, or when lesser qualified teachers were employed. As the report of the Keeves Enquiry into Education in South Australia noted in 1982, 'a registration process must be justified by a need to protect the public interest and is not a pre-requisite for the recognition of professional status'.

While the 'public interest' may be guaranteed by registration, it is clear that teachers could not maximise their rewards and conditions by relying solely on the convention of professionalism.

In the market condition of oversupply teachers are vulnerable to pressures which may erode the elusive gains which have been made in the name of professionalism. Under such conditions teachers need to consolidate their position even more strongly through organisations which recognise primarily the employee status of teachers. 'Oversupply' creates the possibility of better conditions by the employment of more workers, but only if governments are compelled to provide funds for such employment. Towards the end of the 1970s most teachers' organisations in Australia recognised that this would require
organisational unity with the trade union movement in Australia. However, this 'cloth cap' strategy was not accepted by South Australian teachers. On the eve of the merger of ATF with the Australian Council of Trade Unions, and following an acrimonious debate which divided the organisation, SAIT declined industrial unity by withdrawing from the Federation. For the reasons that have been discussed here, the quest for professionalism retained more support among teachers in South Australia at this time than in most other states. This was, perhaps, in keeping with the idea of an 'institute' rather than a 'union'. 
Chapter 8

Political Neutrality

Underlying the ethos of political neutrality in SAIT has been the practice of constant political action. It is necessary to distinguish four levels of teacher politics: union politics; industrial politics; party politics; and educational politics. In this chapter we will examine first the extent to which the ethos of neutrality has been promoted by the fact that teachers work in a bureaucratised situation in which control over the occupational group as a whole has been exercised by the state. Secondly, we will analyse the distinction between education and politics as it is presented in the ideology of professionalism.

Political neutrality is usually taken to contain three characteristics. The first of these is a limitation on the right of teachers to comment publicly on education, enshrined in regulations that control teachers’ activities. Although statutory limitations may not always be honoured by teachers, their existence constitutes a significant parameter of state control of political expression by teachers. The second is that teachers’ organisations have avoided developing policies on areas of government policy other than education; in other words they have confined their policy statements to education. The third feature of political neutrality is the refusal of teachers organisations to affiliate directly with a political party; in the case of SAIT this extended to a refusal to affiliate even indirectly with a political party. All these features have characterised the beliefs and actions of most teachers’ organisations in Australia to a greater or lesser extent and until the 1980s there was in SAIT a marked continuity of adherence to the doctrine of political neutrality.

Nevertheless—to restate and develop a point made earlier—underlying the ethos of political neutrality has been the practice of constant political action by SAIT, action which is necessary for any organisation of employees to achieve
In 1968 two adjacent properties on Greenhill Road, Parkside, were purchased to meet current and future needs for the rapidly expanding activities of SAIT and Satisfacs. The new building on the right, called Raggatt House, was built for SAIT and officially opened by Hugh Hudson, Minister of Education, in 1970. The building on the left is Macghey House. (SA Teachers’ Journal photographic collection)

their goals. While engaging in necessary industrial politics, the illusion of being outside of politics was maintained by not affiliating with a political party or with the organised labour movement, on the grounds that such an alignment would reduce the flexibility of SAIT in negotiating with governments of different political persuasions, and would reduce the professional status of teachers. Since it is directly the policies of governments which affect the conditions and status of teachers, it is with or against governments that education workers must act to effect change. On a narrow definition of politics as pressure group activity, SAIT is clearly a political body, and to argue that SAIT has no political position would be to ignore this simple reality.

Beyond ‘legitimate’ pressure group activity, however, the preoccupation with unity in SAIT served to inhibit the development both of broader political affiliations and of a broader political perspective in SAIT’s policies on areas affecting the work of its members and the structure of education. A sharp distinction was drawn between ‘education’ and ‘politics’ and this separation prevented the emergence of progressive policies which would have enabled SAIT to contribute to educational reconstruction on terms other than those dictated by the state. The acceptance of this distinction meant that SAIT’s policies were confined to the parameters set by state definition of the role and function of education. By avoiding ‘politics’ in an appeal to unity, teachers neutralised their potential to mobilise in defence of rights and conditions.

This chapter first examines the evolution of the doctrine and its institutionalisation in SAIT, and second, considers its effects by an analysis of ‘critical incidents’.
Restrictive regulations and the ethos of neutrality

As has been discussed earlier in this book, John Hartley, Inspector-General of Education in South Australia from 1876 to 1896, ruled by regulation and circular within a highly centralised system of administration. Hartley initiated the Education Gazette in 1885, and used it to further enforce his rules and expectations, including the promulgation of his view that the newly formed teachers' associations, which he and his inspectors had helped to form, 'should be non-political and must not be used as a vehicle for the airing of individual grievances'. Teachers were encouraged to contribute to the Gazette, and news from teachers' associations reached other teachers through its pages, giving Hartley a considerable degree of control over their activities. Under the guise of pursuing efficiency, Hartley circumscribed the actions of teachers through a multiplication of regulations and edicts which enshrined Departmental distrust of teachers and headmasters. In 1915 the Teachers' Union established its own Journal, thereby freeing the Union from total reliance on Departmental patronage, and allowing it to promote new ideas in education influenced by overseas thought and practice.

Like its predecessors, the South Australian Institute of Teachers faced a political and bureaucratic distrust of teachers enshrined in a myriad of directives. Despite the rhetoric of a partnership between teachers and the state, teachers exercised very little real freedom in 1951 and were by no means 'joint framers' of the control exercised over teachers. Teachers may have found the regulations irksome, but, more importantly, the regulations contained, as well as trivial intrusions into their work, severe restrictions on their freedom of speech.

By conforming to officially imposed restraints on their activities as individuals and in their associations, teachers adopted one response to the structure of their working and non-working lives, and in so doing they re-created the conditions under which such restrictive practices could continue. But acceptance was not the only available strategy, and practices have been developed in opposition to the official restraints. The very existence of teachers' associations is an indication of reactions to rules of conduct imposed by the state, and restrictions were gradually modified as a result of criticism. In general, though, teachers have acted within the rules set by the state, and have not seriously sought their abolition. Where the relaxation of restraints has occurred, it has been accompanied by the imperative of responsible criticism, an imperative issued by SAIT's leaders, as well as by state authorities. Soon after the formation of SAIT, teachers were critical of the level of government expenditure on education and embarked on a publicity campaign to demonstrate the deficiencies in schools, and this tactic continued to be employed. But as long as the criticism by teachers did not disrupt either the activities of the schools, or seek to alter
the relationship between teachers and the Department, the criticism was tolerated and accepted as part of 'pressure-group politics'.

SAIT at times called for the repeal of some restrictive regulations without success; in response to state intransigence the union tried to ensure that 'proper procedures' were followed when regulations were invoked. There were, in the first decade of SAIT's activities, complaints made to the Department about procedures adopted when enquiries were made about particular teachers, but SAIT assured itself that the enquiries, which it believed were distasteful not only to teachers but also to inspectors, were handled properly. The Australian Teachers' Federation considered from time to time the rights of teachers in regard to public comment and the 1962 ATF conference resolved to investigate limitations on the right of teachers in all states to public comment. In justifying their right to public comment, the teachers at the conference believed 'that the public should not lose the benefit of the informed views of its teachers'. The Australian Teachers' Federation considered from time to time the rights of teachers in regard to public comment and the 1962 ATF conference resolved to investigate limitations on the right of teachers in all states to public comment. In justifying their right to public comment, the teachers at the conference believed 'that the public should not lose the benefit of the informed views of its teachers'.

ATF Conference the following year called upon 'State Governments to repeal forthwith the existing restrictions on the civic, professional and religious rights of teachers', a policy which was ratified by SAIT. The Minister of Education in South Australia, Baden Pattinson, indicated to SHIT in 1961 that he welcomed criticism, since it suggested a healthy interest in education, but no moves were made to repeal the regulations which restricted such criticism. In 1964 under an apparently relaxed ministerial attitude SAIT president, Murray Haines, reminded teachers that

as professional people, there is a vast difference between making statements of, and in, the public interest, and in washing one's semi-private linen in public. Common sense, good taste, and practical politics should be one's guide.

Seven years later, the Karmel Committee commented that whether or not regulations which restricted the freedom of teachers were enforced, their existence was a potential threat to initiative and independence. The Committee argued that while 'no regulation explicitly forbids teachers to make public comment on the education system ... the grounds on which disciplinary action may be taken against teachers are so wide and vague, including "conduct likely to bring the Department into disrepute", as to have an intimidatory effect'.

Despite the careful language of the Karmel Committee, there were two events in the 1960s which demonstrated that the state's powers were not benign. The first was an attack in 1962 by the Returned Servicemen's League (RSL) on the activities in schools by teachers whom the League alleged were communists, and the second was an action by a primary school headmaster which involved criticism of the Department. The handling of these events illustrates
the difficulties faced by SALT when the power of the state is invoked against teachers who are accused of transgressing ‘accepted political boundaries’.

Communists in schools

The Adelaide morning newspaper, the Advertiser, in a front-page article on 20 July 1962, reported that the State Returned Servicemen's League (RSL) sub-branch conference the previous night had called on the state Liberal – Country League (LCL) government to investigate the ‘known presence of communists’ in South Australian schools. Evidence for the allegations of communist activity in schools was said to have come from RSL members. In its attacks, the RSL wanted to have teachers removed from the Department, saying that it would ‘no longer tolerate the claim that Communists are protected by the right of freedom of speech’, since that freedom had for too long been abused. The Minister, Baden Pattinson, instructed the Director, E. Mander-Jones, to conduct an immediate investigation into the allegations. Later the same day the Adelaide evening newspaper, the News, reported that a game had been organised in a country school with the purpose of pitting Russian against English soldiers in such a way that the Russian side always won, and also that communist propaganda booklets had been delivered to a metropolitan school. In its editorial, the News supported a Departmental enquiry, but emphasised that ‘there must be no witch-hunting. This could only play right into the communists’ hands. Nothing would suit them better than to see our democratic principles trampled’.Z1

On the day following the newspaper reports of the RSL allegations, SALT president Murray Haines issued a statement in which he said that ‘teachers have a duty to encourage, on the one hand, loyalty to Australia and its British connections and traditions, and, on the other, tolerance towards other people’. Haines claimed that members of SALT were just as concerned as the RSL to promote freedom in Australia, and had just as much a stake in the future of Australia. To develop responsible citizens, it was necessary that topics such as communism be discussed without bias in the schools. Haines attacked the RSL for besmirching the whole teaching profession, saying that if the RSL had evidence of disloyalty ‘on the part of the individual teacher, the proper course would be to take action against that person’.22

Teachers are particularly vulnerable to allegations of indoctrination or partiality, and the doctrine of political neutrality can be seen as a defence against accusations of disloyalty to the prevailing ideology. However, the SALT president's reply to the RSL allegations gave the impression that SALT accepted that an outside body had a right to seek state action against individual teachers if there was evidence of disloyalty. Such a position undermined the principles of collegiate responsibility and professional self-determination but it reinforced
the principle of unity by appealing to majority political preference, and by isolating potential opposition.

When Parliament met four days after publication of the allegations, the Education Minister stated that in a teaching force of 8500 it could be expected that some teachers would be communists, but that the vast majority were loyal and dependable. Over the next few days, the press coverage of the issue was prominently maintained, and members of both parties declared their opposition to communists in schools. The LCL member for Mitcham, Robin Millhouse, used the Address-in-Reply debate in the House of Assembly to state his agreement with the RSL campaign and argued that communists worked 'below the surface'; he deplored communists working not only in schools but also in other professions, particularly the law. Pattinson revealed that although the RSL had supplied verbal and certain written information to himself and the Premier, there was no evidence that any teachers had used their position 'in any way traitorously, seditiously, or disloyally, or in any way to indoctrinate any students'. The Director presented an interim report to Pattinson at the end of July which gave the government no grounds for disciplinary action. Pattinson revealed that particular teachers had been investigated as a result of the RSL forwarding five names to the government, and others were added later by the RSL and by individuals. The Advertiser reported that 'it is understood that the names of 12 teachers alleged to have indoctrinated students with Communist propaganda have now been supplied to the Government'.

As a result of the investigation the teachers named 'had been found to be scrupulous in their work and had emerged from the investigations in a favourable light'. Not entirely satisfied, the Advertiser argued that departmental enquiries would not pick up what it called the subtleties of 'communist workings—the coloration of lessons, the droppings of hints, and the use of oblique references'. At the end of October, Millhouse again raised the issue by quoting the concern of the RSL at the Director's statement in his second report to Pattinson that the government was powerless to remove nine members of the Communist Party from the teaching staff of the Education Department, and asked the Minister to release the reports. Pattinson replied that he had divulged the contents of the reports to the RSL, which could publish his letter if it was so motivated. The reports apparently were not released, and the extent to which any action was taken against the teachers named is not publicly known. However, some teachers attempted to find out what action had been taken against them. Following a protracted correspondence between an area school headmaster, his association and SAIT, the Area Schools Head Masters' Association resolved that

When a complaint is made about a teacher, including the Head Master of the School, by a member of the public or another teacher, a copy of the
letter of complaint shall be forwarded to the defendant. At any subsequent
enquiry held the person being complained about shall be present.

The area school headmaster stated that he had been 'inquisitioned' without his
knowledge at a police station in 1961, a matter which first came to his attention
when he appealed against the appointment of another headmaster to a position
for which he had applied in 1963.28

This was not the first time that allegations had been made about communists
in South Australian schools. In 1949 a teacher was dismissed for 'extreme
disloyalty', and there was press speculation about the extent of communist
influence.29 It is possible that some of the enquiries into teachers in the 1950s
to which reference has already been made were prompted by similar allegations.
But the episode in 1962 created widespread public interest sustained by media
support for the RSL campaign, and pressure on the Minister and the Department
was maintained in Parliament. Although many teachers were concerned with
the way the enquiry was conducted, SAIT's position was a defensive one and
it appears that SAIT's only public statement was made on the day after the
RSL allegations had been published. At the November meeting of SAIT
councils, Haines admitted that SAIT officers were the only ones 'not in the
picture' about the enquiry until the Minister decided to discuss the report of
the Director with them. The president assured the meeting that both the
Minister and the Director had the interests of teachers at heart. It was also his
opinion that if any teachers had used their position to indoctrinate children in
any way they would be unworthy as members of the profession.30

Throughout the whole episode the term 'indoctrination' was used by all
parties—the media, politicians, and SAIT—as though its meaning was self-evi-
dent and it automatically posed a threat to the freedom of 'normal' instruction.
The incident provided SAIT with an opportunity to challenge the RSL in its
ideological campaign, as well as to challenge the legitimacy of the prescription
'not to offend' in the regulations. But by appealing to the 'professionalism' of
the majority of teachers, SAIT's leadership not only remained silent on the
issue in the name of neutrality and unity, it also publicly demonstrated the
extent to which the ideology of professionalism in teaching left teachers without
any organisational strength to resist the moulding pressures of the state. In this
case SAIT accepted the dominant assumption that the only political views
which were acceptable in schools were those that reflected the political prefer-
ences of the majority. Subsequent attacks on the political rights of teachers
demonstrated the inability of SAIT to shed the values embodied in the doctrine
of political neutrality. Although there was no further major press campaign
against communists in schools, country newspapers occasionally published
reports dealing with alleged communist influence in schools; in response to such
accounts of 'bias', SAIT asserted the political objectivity of teachers, and its
support for the oath of allegiance at school assemblies. However, a very different response from teachers occurred with the suspension of a primary school headmaster in the Northern Territory in 1967.

The Murrie case

Any hopes that SAIT may have had that the new Labor government, elected to office in 1965, would repeal restrictive regulations, or at least turn a blind eye to them, were quelled by advice in that year from the Minister of Education, Ron Loveday, that certain of the regulations were interpreted by the Crown as restricting the right of teachers to comment on political matters. Two years later, in February 1967, still during Loveday's period of office, a primary school headmaster was suspended when he sent letters to the parents of his school, Larrakeyah Primary School in the Northern Territory, criticising the lack of properly qualified staff. The headmaster, John Murrie, suggested that the parents might consider sending their children to other schools, since, in his professional opinion, conditions in the school were not educationally acceptable. He also suggested that parents 'stir up public opinion' by contacting politicians and school committees. As an active member of the Darwin Teachers' Association,
Murrie had been seeking improvements in staffing arrangements for Territory schools.\textsuperscript{34} Murrie's suspension by the Deputy Director-General, J. S. Walker\textsuperscript{15}, led to a united front by teachers in their opposition to the actions of the state administration, where the chase for communists earlier had not. To the members of SAIT, and particularly its leaders, Murrie's suspension was not so much an attack on the political rights of teachers as an abrogation of responsibility by the Department and the government to act fairly in their shared management of education. According to a commentator on South Australian politics at the time, the action 'aroused the hostility of the normally non-political SAIT to the Department and its Minister'\textsuperscript{36}, while Thiele suggested that SAIT 'closed its ranks and, in a mood of defiance and defence was ready to take on all comers'.\textsuperscript{37}

SAIT leadership was taken by surprise at the severity of the punishment given to Murrie, and, after an investigation by the central authority and with the support of the branch councils, approached the Minister seeking a review of the case and the punishment.\textsuperscript{38} Loveday had been interstate at the time of the initial Departmental action against Murrie\textsuperscript{19} but accepted the Department's view of the affair and the subsequent demotion of Murrie.\textsuperscript{40} As a result of strong support for Murrie's 'professional conduct' from central authority, branch councils, the Darwin Teachers' Association, other teachers' organisations and sections of the press, and because of a legal doubt as to the validity of the Departmental action, the government appointed a Royal Commission to enquire into the circumstances surrounding the issue of the offending letter and the subsequent events.\textsuperscript{41}

Shortly after the enquiry began, the Commission was terminated due to the illness of the Commissioner, Mr Justice Walters. Following a review of the evidence, a settlement was reached between the parties whereby Murrie was reprimanded and reinstated as headmaster of his school but was not to be granted further promotion until 1970. In the Minister's view, it was imperative 'that the important work of the Department should not be indefinitely hindered by the strained relationship with the South Australian Institute of Teachers, which is one of the regrettable consequences of the Murrie case'. The Institute accepted the settlement, having maintained throughout that although Murrie may have been impetuous in sending the letter, he was not irresponsible, and 'had acted with the highest moral and professional motives'. A further provision in the settlement was that SAIT would be able to make submissions to the Minister on matters affecting the relations between teachers and the Department as they would have been dealt with by the Commission.\textsuperscript{42}

The case of John Murrie demonstrated that the regulations could be invoked, even if arbitrarily and on the whim of a particular administrator.
Walker's heavy-handedness in this case may have been a show of strength, since he was shortly to replace Mander-Jones as Director-General.\textsuperscript{43} Thiele describes Walker as 'an autocratic and irascible Director', a 'dynamic and, indeed . . . far-sighted administrator', but whose dealings 'in the area of human relationships . . . [were] much less successful'.\textsuperscript{44} But whatever the personal motives of administrators were, the use of the regulations clearly exposed the character of state control contained in them. Thiele describes the event as a watershed in the dealings of SAIT with the Department, since it led to the sweeping away 'of the old cap-in-hand attitudes' and to a new confidence of a professional body.\textsuperscript{45} However, while teachers were united in support of Murrie, they were in no position to assert professional autonomy and collegiate control, and even though they were able to make submissions to Loveday on matters of concern to the teaching body, they did so as subordinates.

Following the RSL campaign against alleged communists in schools and the Murrie case, the official attitude towards restrictions appeared to relax, and in closing the annual conference in 1968, the president, Wilf White, said that it was part of the professional responsibility of teachers to speak out on educational matters, but when they did they had to be sure that they were not accusing wrongly.\textsuperscript{46} White was responding to a view among teachers that identification with criticism of the system could adversely affect their careers. There was no doubt about White's sincerity and integrity as SAIT leader in seeking to promote discussion. But the regulations had served the purpose of institutionalising dissent and state power had been invoked in their name.

\textit{Social studies texts}

The issue of teachers' rights and their professional obligation to be impartial in the content of education was again raised in an ideological form in 1970 with an attack by right-wing politicians on some books used in social studies courses in schools. In July 1970, the federal member for Boothby, Mr John McLeay, criticised two textbooks as being 'socially subversive, anti-Liberal, and pro-Communist'.\textsuperscript{47} His attack was made at a public meeting in the west-coast town of Cummins, at which meeting it was decided to ask the Minister of Education to withdraw the books.\textsuperscript{48} Local newspapers featured the attacks, and printed statements which led to SAIT executive seeking legal advice in protection of members at Cummins.\textsuperscript{49} The substance of McLeay's criticism of the books was rejected both by SAIT and by the Minister, Hugh Hudson, who was reported as saying that the meeting at Cummins had been initiated by the League of Rights and the Eyre Bible Fellowship.\textsuperscript{50} He said that the criticisms 'were based on a sad misunderstanding of the books, of the social studies courses in South Australian schools and of the modern education system.'\textsuperscript{51} Hudson also replied to criticisms in the state
Parliament, and in all cases exonerated the authors of the social studies books, claiming that the books provided balanced treatment of issues, and were designed to encourage students to think for themselves in order to develop a full understanding of their own and other societies.52

The response of the Minister, of SAIT, and of individual teachers53 was to defend the authors of the books by the principle of impartiality which is an ideology continually promoted in the classroom. Such an ideology supports the view that schools are neutral institutions, a view which disguises the essential role of the school in the reproduction of social relations. This ideology in turn inhibits the political mobilisation of teachers since it constructs such activity as rendering them unfit to hold a responsible position in the socialisation of the young. In the case of the attacks by McLeay, teachers were, as they had been in the Murrie case, united in their response, and, further, they had the support of the Minister and sections of the media. SAIT was also favoured by a more progressive social attitude towards education. But the ideology of neutrality nevertheless prevailed as their defence, and the incident demonstrated the vulnerability of teachers to charges of political bias, despite their unity.

SAIT legal and industrial officer, Mr C.A. Willcox, with salaries committee chairman, Mr Graham Smith, working on the detail of the Salaries Award handed down 11 June, 1971. Mr Smith served SAIT on various committees including the equal pay committee and on executive as a member and then vice-president.

(SA Teachers’ Journal)
Political Neutrality

Salaries and militancy

The distinction between education and politics remained unchallenged in SAIT until the late 1960s when, in common with other white-collar unions in Australia, a more militant approach was adopted by many teachers in SAIT. Militancy itself did not present a challenge to the distinction, but it did cause a rethinking of SAIT's politics and function. The initial impetus for militant action was the unsatisfactory response of the state Liberal government to a salaries claim which was lodged in December 1967, and which was based on principles which differed from previous claims. Until 1967, general claims were based on rates paid to teachers interstate, with the consequence that there was a 'lag' for South Australian teachers. The 1967 claim was based on 'work values' and changes in demands being placed upon teachers as a result of the growing complexity of their work; it sought an increase of twenty per cent as well as a shortening of scales for assistants and changes to some other positions.54

In September 1968 the Teachers' Salaries Board, which had two teacher members on a board of five, announced its determination, with the highest increase granted being seven per cent for some promotion positions, while for more than half the teachers the increase was less than two dollars a week. As a result of the determination, South Australian teachers remained behind their colleagues interstate.55 Teachers felt that the government had failed to appreciate the importance in changes to their 'work value'; indeed the government advocate argued that the Institute had 'not adopted proper principles of wage fixation', and, in any case, there was a significant change in circumstances since 1965.56

The rejection of the basic elements of the claim provoked an immediate and angry response from teachers. Fifteen hundred SAIT members attended a mass meeting organised primarily by Graham Smith, chair of the salaries committee, in the Norwood Town Hall at which the award was unanimously declared 'totally unacceptable', and voted to seek direct negotiations with the Minister for salary increases. This move represented a significant shift in strategy, since direct negotiations had not previously been conducted by SAIT. The meeting also declared 'the award to be clear evidence of the Government's failure to recognise the total current needs of education in South Australia',57 a vote which indicated increasing intolerance of previous rules of silence. Negotiations took place with the Minister, Joyce Steele, in October and despite the mood of the mass meeting the government gave no ground on the issue of improved salaries although it did make concessions on scales for art and craft teachers.58 A second mass meeting attended by 900 teachers, was held on 4 December. At this meeting an executive motion for a shortening of assistants' scales was rejected by the meeting in favour of a motion calling on the executive
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to plan stop-work meetings in the first term of 1969, and daylong strikes in second term if necessary, to protest against the award.\(^{59}\)

Clearly the prospect of militant action introduced a new element into SAIT politics—both in the politics of SAIT's structure and function, and in its relation with the state. Linked with the condemnation of the government for its attitude to salaries was a condemnation of the government's whole educational policy; while the distinction between education and politics remained, it was clearly blurred by the possibility of a strike as an essentially political, as opposed to 'professional', protest. However, the ensuing manoeuvres within SAIT meant that the mass meetings at the end of 1968 had more effect on it than the government. Executive in February 1969 decided that it had no power to call members to stop-work meetings,\(^{60}\) and the motion from the mass meeting was reworded and presented to the annual conference in March 1969. This conference attracted an attendance of over 1000 members and was opened by the Minister of Education, Joyce Steele, against whose government the motion proposed action. The motion called for government action in twelve areas, including salaries, and was designed to stress the 'professional' as well as industrial reasons for the proposed action. A proposal for stop-work meetings to commence in selected schools in May lapsed and the original motion was strengthened. After a lengthy debate and a dramatic division on the floor of the conference, the motion was passed by 647 to 399 votes. At the same meeting an attempt to establish a vigorous publicity campaign to be financed by a five per cent levy on members was unsuccessful.\(^{61}\) Following the Minister's speech,

Members packed the Wayville Centennial Hall and the gallery for the 1969 conference following unsatisfactory outcomes to salary claims. The conference passed on division a motion considering for the first time the possibility of taking industrial action. This sanctioning of industrial action was a very significant first step in beginning to change the culture of SAIT. (SA Teachers' Journal)
which was met with howls of derision from a large part of the audience, SAIT decided that this would be the last conference to be automatically opened by a current minister for education, thereby breaking a longstanding union tradition.

The salaries award was gazetted shortly after the annual conference and the militancy abated, although some members of SAIT argued that the teachers' representatives on the Board should resign. Based on salary movements in other professional awards and on a comparison with interstate awards for teachers, SAIT lodged a new claim in June 1969. From the threats of militant action over the 1968 award, the government had emerged embarrassed, but had not been forced to give major concessions.

A special conference in September 1969 inserted a rule allowing general stoppages into SAIT rules in an attempt to contain moves for strike action. The same conference declared that teachers would refuse to work with unqualified teachers from the beginning of 1970 if a majority of staff in schools decided to take such action. Subsequent executive discussions on the motion were influenced by a report from the Director on action the Department proposed to take in the short and long term; rather than support the refusal to work with unqualified new teachers, the executive decided to circularise schools and request school meetings to discuss action. Although the executive motion had the effect of defusing direct action, it laid the basis for school meetings on SAIT action, and thus opened the way for a potentially far greater involvement of members in decision-making within the organisation. Of crucial importance to this whole strategy in relation to salaries was the existence of a standing committee on salaries as a means of involving the membership.

This is a small section of about 200 members at the special conference at the Thebarton Town Hall theatre in September 1969 who wrote into the SAIT rules that no general stoppage of work by all members could take place until a vote by secret ballot is carried by two-thirds majority of members voting (at meetings held in schools) in favour of a resolution to hold such a general stoppage and that the executive be elected by the general membership. (SA Teachers' Journal)
Publicity campaigns

Despite the antipathy expressed at the 1969 annual conference to a publicity campaign financed by members, a public relations officer was appointed during the year. The officer was a teacher, Bob Harris, who had stood as an ALP candidate in a previous election, and this immediately led to charges by conservative politicians of 'bias' in the campaign. Harris was appointed by SAIT president, Wilf White, who had arranged with the Director-General, John Walker, for Harris to be granted leave of absence from teaching to take up the position.

Harris led a well-coordinated campaign which involved parents, business people, students and others as well as teachers, and which was directed through the media at both the state and commonwealth governments. Throughout the campaign the pages of the Journal were filled with reports of meetings, and as the federal election approached towards the end of 1969, the election policies of the major parties in regard to education were published. As well, SAIT sought statements on education from all candidates. The announcement of a salaries award which was generally acceptable to teachers, caused the Executive to stress that the award should not be allowed to distract people from the real aim of the campaign which was for educational reform.66

As a sophisticated public relations exercise, the 1969 publicity campaign was an alternative to militancy and was effectively guided in what was assiduously presented as a non-political direction by Bob Harris with the support of the executive. The campaign was built around effective use of television, emphasising the issues of large class sizes and dilapidated school buildings. In the use of television, Harris was influenced by Don Dunstan's innovative television advertising in election campaigns at the time. Although SAIT supported the publicity campaign, it was funded largely by voluntary contributions from SAIT members. One effect of the campaign was to develop a spirit of camaraderie between younger militant members of SAIT and more conservative members, including some on executive. A strong parent-teacher alliance was created and the campaign received generally sympathetic media coverage and broad support from the trade union movement.

Although most teachers were not prepared to hold stop-work meetings, they were generally in favour of campaigning provided it did not offend their party political preferences. The 1969 campaign was the first to use mass pressure group tactics in SAIT, utilising the momentum of the school meetings proposed by the annual conference motion to involve the issuing of public statements, not only by the executive but by teachers in schools as well. Linked with similar campaigns in other states, the exercise in 1969 was given further support by a National Education Conference held in Adelaide in the middle of the year. Since it was not directed in favour of any particular political party, it had no
immediate indicator of success. However, in the November federal election the Liberal and Country parties were returned with a vastly reduced majority, and in South Australia the number of seats won by the parties were virtually reversed from the previous election in favour of the ALP.67

During the campaign of 1969 teachers may have been in technical breach of the regulations which constrained their public rights, but SAIT refrained from appearing to give support to a particular party. This tactic preserved both unity and political neutrality, since the strategic centre was the government as the allocator of resources. The campaign was a more organised development of the use of petitions, the media and parliamentary lobbying which had formed the tactical basis of the commonwealth aid campaign, particularly from the mid-1950s. With the development of a publicity machine, SAIT launched itself vigorously into educational politics, but at a level which was designed to extract greater expenditure from the state without challenging state control of education and the hegemonic processes embodied in it. By the end of 1969 SAIT had not taken the step of departing from the hegemonic construction of professional behaviour. Some other members of the Australian Teachers' Federation (ATF) were prepared to go further. At the ATF conference in 1969 its

1969 delegation to ATF.
From left to right: Mr W.A. White, Mr F. Woithe, Mr M. Haines, Miss B. Tomkinson, Mr G. Smith and Mrs B. Short. (SA Teachers' Journal)
Themes

president, Mr Whalan of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation (NSWTF), argued that many teachers had examined, and found wanting, the traditions of professional behaviour, and their examination had resulted in significant departures from tradition, particularly in stop-work meetings and refusals of duty in 1968. He expressed confidence that the tradition of unity and action, both within member branches and in ATF, would continue. 68

SAIT entered the next decade with militant action as a possible tactic to achieve its goals. But the doctrines of political neutrality and unity had served to defuse the immediate potential of militancy. The elections in 1969 for leadership positions in 1970 did not result in progressive and left-wing candidates winning positions, although the results were close for the position of president of the Men's and Women's branches. 69

1970 Annual Conference

The annual conference of 1970 sustained the momentum of the progressive political climate in SAIT which had been generated by the mass meetings of 1968 and the campaign of 1969. At this conference motions dealing with industrial unity, political tests, international peace and the rights of the child were placed on the agenda, in addition to motions proposing action on industrial issues. 70 With the scope of its agenda the conference is a watershed in SAIT history; there was an apparent break, at least on the agenda paper, with the ideological distinction between education and politics in the doctrine of political neutrality. But while the conference deplored political and religious tests, and declared that children had a right, in view of Australia's involvement in Vietnam, 'to be protected from selective information concerning Australia's commitments in Asia', 71 it refused, by a procedural motion, even to consider a motion on the agenda paper calling on conference to condemn 'the perpetuation of the war, and the continuing involvement of Australian troops'. The conference also rejected a move to investigate the feasibility of SAIT affiliation with the South Australian Trades and Labour Council. Despite these defeats, teachers who proposed and supported the 'political' motions had begun a phase in which the distinction between education and politics would be more difficult to sustain.

Through its involvement with international teachers' organisations, SAIT had promoted international understanding as an important part of the teacher's classroom role. Many teachers saw the United Nations as an instrument for the management of international tension, and believed that cooperation with its cultural arm would be an effective action for teachers in the maintenance of world peace. Teaching about the United Nations and international understanding was promoted by the Australian division of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), and in 1962 a
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Teachers' United Nations Association was formed in South Australia. Throughout the 1960s, the theme of international understanding was promoted by the SAIT leadership, and as the war in Vietnam began to impinge more closely on the minds of Australians, this theme took on a sense of greater urgency. By 1966 it was apparent that Australians, including teachers, could shortly be involved in combat, and an editorial in the March 1966 Journal stressed the need for teachers to act to end war. The organisation as a whole, though, did not take an active part in the public debates on the war, nor was there any significant pressure in SAIT to develop policies or take a public stand on the war until 1970.

Ginger groups

The commitment of SAIT and teachers to the dominant ideology of the non-political nature of the school system and of the teacher's place within it was challenged in 1970 by a group of activist teachers, teachers' college students and academics, loosely organised in a Radical Education Alliance (REA). It was this group which sponsored the 1970 conference motion which called on conference to condemn 'the perpetuation of the Vietnam War and the continuing involvement of Australian troops'. Although the motion was passed over at conference, REA continued throughout the year to promote an alternative conception of the role of education in international understanding through an articulation of socialist critiques of imperialism. In October, SAIT sponsored a conference on Education and International Understanding at which REA argued that the liberal assumptions involved in the theme diverted attention from the political economy of foreign policy and from Australia's role in imperialist exploitation of underdeveloped regions. The role of teachers, according to REA, should not be simply to assert internationalist ideals, but 'to act on these ideals and be prepared in schools to question and oppose our Government's foreign policy as well as Australian cultural attitudes towards other races and creeds'.

Although REA was not an association of SAIT, and was a loose-knit coalition of individuals with differing political perspectives, it was able to draw support from some associations and to utilise the strength of school-based organisation developed during the activism of 1969 and 1970 by circulating news-sheets and information about meetings. This informal network, as well as the Journal, was also the means by which REA attempted to involve teachers in the Vietnam Moratorium Campaign. REA formed the organisational basis for the teachers' moratorium committee, which encouraged teachers to stop work on 18 September 1970, in order to attend a Moratorium rally. The Minister, Hugh Hudson, was questioned in Parliament about his attitude to
teachers participating in the Moratorium, to which he replied that he was convinced they would act responsibly. 79

The socialist critique of imperialism and of Australia’s involvement in Vietnam was extended by REA to a critique of practices in schooling. In addition, it was influenced by other radical, non-socialist critiques of schooling, in particular the ideas of Ivan Illich and the loose collection of critics described as ‘de-schoolers;’ 80 it also contained teachers whose opposition to the practices embodied in the school system were based on liberal objections to the undemocratic nature of schools and their administration. The influence of REA was largely to reorient the conceptualisation of the relation between politics and education from a major concern with the political allocation of resources to schools to the construction of social relations in the schools as they were mediated by ruling-class hegemony. But the reconceptualisation was accompanied by a deterministic theoretical position in which there was little room for teachers to engage in social change through education, since the schooling system was seen to be in the tight control of the dominant class. The theory was, therefore, ineffective as a guide to practice. However, REA was successful in politicising SAIT between 1970 and 1972 and was the source of more general debate on political and educational issues in SAIT.

REA ceased to exist in late 1972, but it was the forerunner of a number of other activist groups during the 1970s. A group that immediately followed was the Campaign to End Grading and Sorting 81 influenced by the establishment of the Open Book journal by Bill Hannan and other Melbourne teachers. 82 This group sought to promote an awareness among teachers of the political construction of social relations in schools through an analysis of the inequalities produced by the selection functions of examinations and grading. The aims of this group were taken over and extended by the Education Action Alliance 83 which proposed democratisation of schools through community control, and open access to tertiary education. It organised a teacher action group to develop a theoretical articulation and program of opposition to competitive and discriminatory practices against both students and teachers.

Following a visit by American academics Sam Bowles and Herbert Gintis to a political economy and education conference in Sydney in 1976, and the spread of their influential book, Schooling in Capitalist America, 84 a new national organisation of radical teachers was launched. It produced a journal, Radical Education Dossier, 85 which served as the medium for the dissemination of radical ideas as well as being an organising vehicle through which groups in the different states could maintain national contacts.

While the composition of these groups was much the same as that of REA, the issues with which they were concerned changed as the economic crisis and its effects on schools deepened during the 1970s. The groups were never part
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of the formal structure of SAIT, but they did influence the thinking of some of the associations which were politicised as a result, while others which saw their interests threatened by the politicised debate in SAIT were forced into an expression of their own opposing views. The pages of the Journal featured the debate about 'the radicals', with a degree of liveliness which had previously been matched only by correspondence on proposed stop-work meetings in 1969. Tactically, these groups operated as ginger groups in SAIT, not seeking to 'capture' the decision-making bodies but attempting to politicise the organisation and its members through propaganda, debate and action. They were also given informal 'official recognition' when the Minister, the Director-General, and SAIT officials, as well as the British educationist, Brian Jackson, spoke at forums, particularly those organised by REA. While they acted to raise the political consciousness of teachers, the groups also served an important function for SAIT—they provided an avenue for debate and an expression of alternative views without challenging the 'integrity' of the organisation. In this way they encouraged and allowed for the development of more democratic practices in SAIT without fragmenting it, which in turn reinforced the unity of South Australian teachers.

1970 Senate campaign

At the same time as the first of the ginger groups of the 1970s was coming together, SAIT launched a campaign which was aimed directly at electing a member to Parliament on an education platform. As with the activist movements of 1968 and 1969, and with REA, the Senate campaign aimed to involve teachers in politics, but with quite significant differences in both approach and political perspective. A resolution was adopted at the ATF annual conference in January 1970 recommending that state affiliates field candidates in the forthcoming Senate elections, but SAIT was the only teachers' organisation geared up to do so.

In its campaign to influence the result of the 1970 Senate election, SAIT adopted an approach unique to Australian teachers' organisations by supporting its publicity officer as a candidate for the Senate. Harris' candidacy for the Senate was a shrewd political move, having an organisational base in the parent-teacher committees set up during the publicity campaigns of 1969 and 1970. By campaigning under the slogan 'Better Education', Harris separated himself from political party machines and gave substance to a claim of neutrality from party politics. He was able to draw on dissatisfaction expressed by teachers at what they saw as the paucity of the allocation to education in the 1970 federal budget at school meetings in September and at a public rally in October.86 SAIT executive, following strong arguments from president Wilf White and executive member Graham Smith, supported Harris' campaign on
the basis of giving support for his stand on education, rather than being seen to support Harris personally.87 This position was strongly endorsed by branch councils.

Bob Harris and the Better Education Committee developed the argument that an independent senator could provide the only effective catalyst in the task of persuading the commonwealth of the need for greater spending on primary and secondary education. This was so, they argued, because of the political stalemate created by rigid party politics.88 Harris, whose name was at the top of the ballot paper, polled 10.5 per cent of the valid votes cast89 but, because of allocation of preferences by the major political parties, narrowly
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missed being elected as South Australia's fifth senator. The result was seen by SAIT executive as a vindication of its support for the Better Education Campaign, and of the argument that politicians needed to be jolted out of the comfort provided by the dominance of the major parties. Although the Senate campaign had been intended as a continuation of earlier publicity campaigns and was aimed at creating pressure through public opinion, neither Harris nor his supporters believed that there was any real prospect of winning a seat in the Senate. The close election result, however, indicated that there was strong support in the electorate for a new political direction in education.

As with the publicity campaigns, the Senate campaign was an alternative to militant action by teachers. It channelled teacher dissatisfaction through pressure group activity, and developed a 'teacher–community alliance' with the ultimate aim of achieving independent Parliamentary expression of the needs of education. Since its major focus was on the need for increased commonwealth provision of funds for education the campaign had two obvious major effects. First, it reinforced the doctrine of unity by appealing to a sense of justice among teachers who believed that greater expenditure would lead to better opportunities for students. Second, it demonstrated the sensitivity of both politicians and the electorate to the issue of education. Both teacher unity and electoral awareness were utilised by SAIT and other teacher organisations throughout the 1970s in similar pressure group campaigns for increased spending, although the tactic of supporting an independent candidate was not used again in South Australia until 1993. In its election campaign of 1972, the Australian Labor Party drew heavily on this demonstration of increased political awareness, and the modernisation of education was a major plank in its platform.

But the campaign of 1970 had an equally important ideological effect. The 'independence' of the Better Education Campaign from the major political parties promoted the illusion of the political neutrality of SAIT. Further, and more crucially, it encouraged the view that politics entered education only at the level of the allocation of resources, and in doing so sustained the belief that schools and classrooms were themselves neutral institutional forms. In its support for the campaign, SAIT used a new tactic in a sophisticated manner, but its encouragement of teacher involvement in educational politics served to integrate them more fully into dominant political practices, and to leave unchallenged the political and ideological identification of teachers and schools.

Departmental liberalism

The restrictive regulations examined earlier served as a constraint upon the mobilisation of teachers, and were a powerful brake on the political actions of
teachers. With the adoption of a more militant approach towards government policy at the end of 1968, and the use of publicity campaigns in 1969, SAIT showed the potential to develop an aggressive strategy of opposition to dominant practices. Faced with this departure from the traditional quiescence of SAIT, the state in 1970 moved to lift some of the restrictions on teachers, a development that appeared to represent a liberal transformation of the administration of the Department.

The first element of liberalisation was contained in a statement by the Director-General, A. W. Jones, to a meeting of teachers in Whyalla in March, where he said that he wished to

scotch the false idea that teachers are muzzled; that they cannot speak out in public; that they cannot debate educational issues in public. There are no restrictions whatsoever on teachers other than those which apply to the law of libel and to decency. All we ask is that your facts are correct, that comment reflects an open mind, and that the common courtesies are observed.91

Jones' statement had the approval of Hudson92 who also argued that 'teachers were not only free to make their voice heard on educational matters, they had a duty to be heard'.93 In welcoming the liberalisation, SAIT president, Wilf White, conjoined teachers to take the opportunity to speak out 'in a responsible and constructive manner'.94

With the issue by the Director-General in August of a memorandum entitled Freedom and Authority in the Schools95 the second blow was struck against previous authoritarian practices by the state itself. The significance of the memorandum for a discussion of the distinction between education and politics in SAIT's professional ideology is that it served to strengthen the liberal view of the state as benign, acting in the interests of 'education'. The political precondition for the issuing of the memorandum was the election of the Labor government with a Minister for Education who was both progressive and pragmatic, and the recent elevation of a liberal, progressive administrator to the position of Director-General. By the conjunction of these factors, the state education system was directed by the state personnel in a progressive direction, purging it of its more restrictive elements as they affected teachers. A result was a winding back of teacher militancy. Interstate teachers often looked with envy at the apparent liberalism of the South Australian Department in comparison with the more obvious authoritarian practices of other administrations. Hudson was also instrumental at the 1971 conference of the Australian Labor Party in moving a successful motion to strengthen the party's education policy, a policy which was to have significant electoral impact during the Federal election campaign of
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1972 and which led to major shifts in commonwealth involvement in education from 1973.

However, the liberalism of the Hudson–Jones partnership was slowly redirected back towards more centralist control by their successors, Dr Don Hopgood as Minister, and Mr John Steinle as Director-General. Hopgood replaced Hudson in 1975 in a swap of ministerial portfolios in which Hudson became Minister for Mines and Energy, and Steinle succeeded Jones on his retirement in 1977. In comparison to the developmental phase of the first five years of the 1970s in which innovation and flexibility were encouraged and managed by the state, the contradictions of Hopgood’s administration were heightened by the state’s fiscal crisis following the end of the long boom and the beginning of the economic recession. Conflict generated by these contradictions in areas of staffing and teacher autonomy led to the re-emergence in SALT of a more critical approach to government policies and at times to open hostility between SALT and Hopgood. With the election of the Liberal Party to office in 1979, Harold Allison was appointed as Minister for Education, and hostility became the *modus operandi* of relations between SALT and the government.
Chapter 9

Industrial Politics and Political Affiliation

Trades and Labour Council

A central element in the doctrine of political neutrality in SAIT until the 1980s was the refusal to affiliate the organisation with the broader labour movement and with its political wing, the Australian Labor Party. The ideology of politics as the parliamentary representation of individual interests, and the separation of education from politics, served as powerful constraints on the mobilisation of teachers, and on the development of a sense of opposition which could be clearly articulated through a trade union consciousness. But not all teachers have shared these beliefs. Although the doctrine of unity served to inhibit the development of political links by SAIT, it has also been used to promote a more activist approach when teachers have felt themselves disadvantaged by government action in relation to what they have considered to be questions of justice which affected the whole occupational group. Such was the case with the response to the salaries award of 1968 which established a momentum of activism.

Stop-work meetings had been an option presented to teachers as a form of protest over the 1968 salaries award, and although this option was favoured by a majority of teachers, its supporters did not gain the requisite two-thirds majority. In a move to capitalise on the activism generated by the 1969 action motions and school meetings, a motion on industrial unity, calling for an investigation of affiliation possibilities with the South Australian United Trades and Labour Council (SAUTLC), was moved at the 1970 annual conference. Such a motion would have been inconceivable in South Australia prior to 1970 while the aims of SAIT were directed solely towards the pursuit of professional separatism, and while the consensus on the need for unity precluded potentially...
fragmentary items from appearing on the agenda. Although SAIT was a trade union, the idea of unionism was subordinated to the dominant role of SAIT as a professional association. However, the salaries issue generated a widespread recognition among teachers of their position as employees despite the special category they had attempted to establish for themselves as professionals.

The militancy of teachers' organisations, like that of many other white-collar employees at the end of the 1960s, was an expression of essentially economic concerns. Although the action on salaries in the 1969 annual conference was part of a lengthy motion expressing dissatisfaction with South Australian government inaction in a number of areas in education, the impetus for proposed action by teachers in 1969 was generated by the salaries award of 1968. Teachers condemned the government but were not prepared to take action to support their demands. There was a latent sense of opposition, justified more by a sense of injustice than by any alternative conception of the relation between teachers, the state and the process of education. The publicity campaign channelled this opposition in a direction which ensured unity in SAIT and did not involve a critique of, or challenge to, the dominant structures and practices embodied in state control of education.

The 1970 annual conference demonstrated divisions within SAIT on motions already discussed, and particularly on teachers' attitudes towards taking a public stand on the Vietnam War. Conference was also divided on the benefits of affiliation with the Trades and Labour Council. The motion on industrial unity called only for the establishment of a committee in SAIT to assess the benefits and otherwise of affiliation with the trade union movement in South Australia, for an investigation of the implications of affiliation in terms of industrial bargaining power and for a report on machinery involved in affiliation should it be accepted.¹ One observer interpreted the result as determination by a 'solid phalanx of conservatives' to prevent this and other motions from being considered in the 'free spirit of enquiry that . . . educationists are supposed to espouse'.² The motion was proposed by activist classroom teachers and given support by activist members of the executive, including Pat Underhill, a candidate for the SAIT presidency in the 1969 elections. But it failed to gain support, not only because it was opposed by conservatives, but because the concept of industrial bargaining power was still alien to the prevailing ideology of professionalism. This motion, and indeed the whole 1970 annual conference agenda, was unable to attract membership support precisely because of the limits of militancy inspired by issues of wages and conditions.³ The unsatisfactory 1968 salaries award was followed by an award in 1969 which was acceptable to most members, and the prime purpose of the late 1968 mass meetings had been achieved.
Some months after the conference the associations of men and women primary teachers discussed the possibility that associations affiliate directly with the TLC, but the investigation was not proceeded with. The major reason advanced against sectional affiliation was the precedent it would set for other sectional actions, and the major effect that such affiliations could have on SAIT unity.

After these unsuccessful moves within SAIT to align the organisation with the trade union movement, the matter was dropped for a time. Under the Labor government in South Australia many teachers believed that SAIT's aims were more likely to be achieved with a social democratic partnership that made trade unionism unnecessary. The idea of a broad trade union alliance involving SAIT was not discussed again until 1974 when it was raised in the context of an industrial strategy which proposed a merger between major 'peak' organisations of trade unions in Australia. SAIT became directly involved in these discussions through its membership of ATF, which in turn was affiliated with the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations (ACSPA). Before discussing the debate in SAIT on this issue, it is necessary to consider more fully the context in which the merger discussions between the councils of these peak organisations took place.

**The peak councils merger**

Discussion between the leaders of peak councils which began informally and tentatively in the late 1960s took place against a backdrop of previous separatism and mutual suspicion engendered by differences arising out of the division of labour and reflected in political, ideological and social distinctions between white- and blue-collar workers. As a consequence of these differences, negotiations were protracted, and it was not until 1979 that an arrangement satisfactory to most parties was formally agreed upon. Between the initial explorations and the conclusion of the merger, disruptions to the labour market position and employment conditions of workers led to a more favourable response by many to a merger.

In an address to the Australian Public Service Federation (APSF) conference in 1969, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) president, Bob Hawke, argued that the union movement should consider a form of organised unity. Members of the various trade union organisations were 'people united by the point that all ... depend for their welfare on the common bond that they have nothing to sell in this market economy other than their labour'. The political benefits to be derived from organisational unity were recognised by sections of the white-collar workforce and in 1971 the secretary of ACSPA, Rees Williams, stated his view that 'the trend in white collar unionism towards
closer co-operation with the blue collar unions and its eventual move towards and into political activity will mean that they will in time become a most effectual force in this community. Both Hawke and Williams envisaged that organisational unity would draw upon and go beyond the forms of cooperation and consultation which had been developed by the peak organisations. ACSPA, the ACTU, and two other peak organisations—the APSF and the High Council of Commonwealth Public Service Organisations (CCPSO)—formed a joint committee which made representations to government and opposition advisory bodies at the national level, and the unsatisfactory nature of this arrangement prompted both ACSPA and ACTU executives to investigate closer unity.

It was estimated in 1970 that an organisation which united these four bodies would represent over two million workers and would therefore have considerable potential industrial strength. Hawke argued the need for a shift in traditional union concerns for security of tenure to developing policies in three areas: how to participate in the consumption of goods and services; equality of educational opportunity for the children of all workers; and quality of life issues such as housing development, and cultural, recreational and transport facilities. Williams advocated reconstruction of the union structure ‘to allow political attachments and political intrusion [because] if Australian workers are to win the best working and living conditions and provide the best social, educational and cultural life for all, they must have direct access to political action as well as industrial processes and action’.

Thus, the strategy envisaged by these peak council leaders was a reconstituted union structure, uniting both white and blue-collar workers and adopting a self-conscious affiliation with the Australian Labor Party to allow for the direct political representation of the interests of workers. Both recognised the problems inherent in such a strategy due to the ethos of political neutrality among white-collar workers in Australia, particularly those who regarded themselves as professionals, and it was considered that some ‘opting in’ or ‘opting out’ arrangement may have to be made for unions opposed to ‘political’ decisions being made by peak councils.

Discussion on organisational unity continued over the next few years with ATF deriving benefits from the wider cooperation between unions. These benefits were in terms of support for national campaigns publicising the needs of schools and in support for protests against the obstruction by the Liberal – National Country Party opposition to the creation of the Schools Commission in 1973. Working parties of ACSPA and ACTU representatives met in February 1974 after the two smaller peak organisations had decided to keep their existing structures, and from then on the proposed amalgamation concerned only ACSPA and the ACTU. Affiliates of ACSPA were asked to seek the views of their members, and a motion supporting the amalgamation move.
was put to SAIT councils in November 1974. Debate on this motion recalled old controversies and highlighted the issues that were to provoke sharp division in SAIT by the end of the decade.

The original motion put to the November 1974 council meeting called on council to 'support the move toward affiliation of ACSPA and ACTU providing that individual affiliates of ACSPA retain their political and industrial integrity'. An amending motion, which was carried by 41 votes to 37, stated that SAIT 'not oppose the move towards affiliation of ACSPA and the ACTU providing the individual affiliates of ATF shall become affiliates in their own right if they so desire and ATF withdraw its affiliation'. Executive members were divided on support for the original motion—the amendment was moved by immediate past president, Murray Haines, and supported by another primary headmaster member of executive, Alec Talbot, while the original motion was equally strongly supported by an activist former member of executive, Graham Smith, who had been closely associated, as chairman of the salaries committee, with the militancy of the late 1960s and had been the ATF representative on the ACSPA executive.

The arguments against SAIT lending its full support in 1974 to amalgamation were expressed in terms of two central issues: first, the perceived compromise of political neutrality which would result if SAIT joined the ACTU; and second, the character of SAIT autonomy or 'integrity' within a large peak organisation. As will be shown later, though, the question of autonomy was not a separate issue, but a further arm to the argument of avoiding (indirect) political affiliation. In the final analysis it was this issue and its relation to broader labour affiliation that divided SAIT in 1974, and again in 1977 and 1979. However the closeness of the vote indicated that, at least on council, cracks were appearing in the edifice constructed through the ideology of professionalism, even though the outcome appeared to follow the traditional line of political neutrality in SAIT. The ideology in 1974 was supported by what were regarded as reasonable salaries and by the progressive relations which had been established between SAIT and the Minister for Education in the Dunstan government, Hugh Hudson. At the national level the Schools Commission, which had been established by the Whitlam Labor government, provided teachers' organisations with a satisfactory culmination to the long and expensive campaign for commonwealth aid. In other words, professionalism appeared vindicated by government action.

Talks between the two peak organisations continued slowly and with some difficulty despite the earlier optimism of the leaders, and by 1976 little headway had been made. A limited organisational outlook, typical of many unions in Australia, provided a barrier to unification and the development of a broader perspective. However, the election of a conservative government in 1975
following the sacking of the Whitlam government, the deepening recession, and the threat of unemployment in a wide variety of jobs irrespective of status, contributed to the need for organisational revitalisation of the union movement in Australia. At the beginning of 1977 concrete proposals on the form of amalgamation were discussed, with the outcome that each individual affiliate of ACSPA would be required to seek affiliation with the ACTU.

SAIT—ATF—ACTU

It was at this point that anti-union elements in SAIT mobilised strongly and effectively to block the affiliation of SAIT with a reconstituted ACTU. Until the 1974 council debate on a national merger, SAIT was an enthusiastic supporter of ATF to the point of arguing for a strengthening of its secretariat. As a loose federation ATF did not impinge on the autonomy of SAIT, while at the same time it gave South Australian teachers representation at the national and international levels and provided an important base for policy development in SAIT. However, support from some previous ATF stalwarts in SAIT turned to hostility towards ATF when broader labour affiliation was proposed. Strong opposition to the merger came from various sections of SAIT, and the opposition was centralised in the executive which played a crucial role in the eventual decision to end SAIT's affiliation with ATF. In its interpretation of its powers, and in its ability to mobilise anti-union opinion within SAIT, the executive defence of professionalism and SAIT's integrity was a key ideological and organisational factor in the decision.

To allow for affiliate discussion on entry to the ACTU, ATF executive proposed in September 1977 that no decision should be made until mid-1978, and that an education program should outline details of unification. SAIT executive conducted a survey on the question of ACTU affiliation in November and December 1977. Approximately 80 per cent of those members who voted (40 per cent of SAIT members or 8800) recorded a vote against SAIT affiliation. In January 1978, ATF conference voted to continue participation in the amalgamation discussion against the opposition of SAIT delegates and delegates from the Tasmanian Teachers' Federation (TTF), which had conducted a survey with a result similar to that in South Australia. In December 1978, SAIT executive appointed delegates to the 1979 ATF conference and adopted a strategy of opposition to blanket ATF affiliation with the ACTU. Again, despite SAIT and TTF opposition, the 1979 ATF conference voted by a substantial majority to endorse the unification proposals and for ATF affiliation with the ACTU. In voting this way, the ATF conference rejected a SAIT recommendation that
individual affiliates of ATF seek entry to the ACTU if they wished but that
ATF not amalgamate with the ACTU through its membership of ACSPA.

There then existed in SAIT a situation where an ATF decision was in
conflict with an opinion in SAIT, even though the latter had been expressed
only informally in the 1977 survey. On 13 February 1979, executive decided to
hold a plebiscite on affiliation and to suspend all relations with ATF pending
the result of the referendum.22 This decision, and the form of the plebiscite
question,23 were challenged by a number of council members who argued that
a decision on the plebiscite should rest with council and not the executive. A
special council was held on 10 March and a decision taken to hold a plebiscite
on the question: ‘Are you in favour of disaffiliating from the Australian Teachers’ Federation?’24

The 10 March special council decision was a victory for teachers who
supported continuing ATF affiliation. It asserted the power of council to hold
a plebiscite, it changed the plebiscite question to one which required a two-
thirds majority vote to change the status quo, and it did so against the expressed
view of the president, John Gregory, that SAIT opinion was already clear
through the 1974 council decision and the informal ballot of 1977. Gregory
argued that the call for a special council was an attempt to frustrate previous
decisions.25

In the weeks between the decision of the special council and the closing
date of the poll on 30 April, an intensive campaign was mounted by both the
supporters and opponents of ATF’s entry into the ACTU which was now
expressed in terms of support for or opposition to SAIT remaining affiliated
with ATF. Following the February executive decision to suspend relations with
ATF a group of teachers consisting of three members of the executive, the
president of the Primary Teachers’ Association, a member of the High School
Teachers’ Association executive, and other activist teachers, formed a coordinat-
ing committee of Teachers for ATF (TATF). This group campaigned widely
among teachers in the schools, both directly and through associations. It revived
the tactic used in earlier activist campaigns of using school-based meetings, a
tactic which was assisted by the formation of school-based associations. An
unsuccessful move was made by members of TATF at a council meeting late in
March to invite the president and general secretary of ATF, Van Davey and
Ray Costello, to come to Adelaide in order to discuss with SAIT leadership
and members the implications for Australian teacher unity and for SAIT of a
decision to withdraw from ATF.26

The campaign to disaffiliate from ATF was coordinated by Cath McNaught-
ton, who was a SAIT vice-president, a member of executive, and a delegate to
ATF conferences including the one held in January 1979, when she was
delegation leader. McNaughton was authorised by the executive to write the
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official ‘Yes’ case for disaffiliation; in addition, she authorised advertisements in the Journal on behalf of ‘The Friends of SAIT’ supporting the case for disaffiliation. Her strong opposition to the entry of ATF into the ACTU was expressed in a lead article in the first issue of the Journal for 1979 in which she attacked what she said was the compulsion of delegates to the ATF conference by the two largest ATF affiliates, New South Wales and Victoria. The supporters of disaffiliation did not campaign as widely or as actively as TATF; indeed because the disaffiliation line was the executive majority line, its supporters were able to utilise the resources of the administrative apparatus in SAIT.

Because of the weight of opinion against SAIT joining the ACTU, and because of the organisational mobilisation in favour of that opinion, the supporters of continuing ATF affiliation were placed in the position of adopting arguments which were essentially defensive; since no positive decision in favour of trade union affiliation had ever been taken in SAIT, moves to generate support for a change of policy were more difficult to sustain than arguments in favour of the status quo. The central issues around which the debate revolved were:

1. the professional integrity of SAIT in the ACTU;
2. the party political character of the ACTU;
3. the benefits to be derived from continuing ATF affiliation; and
4. the possibility of resignations from SAIT.

The arguments against ACTU affiliation

Opponents of affiliation with the ACTU argued, as they had in 1970 and 1974, that SAIT would lose its political, industrial and professional integrity in the ACTU. An appeal to the differences between teachers as ‘professionals’ and the ACTU as a body of trade unionists did not disguise the anti-unionism inherent in the campaign. While SAIT might not lose its autonomy, it would, according to this view, lose ‘public respect’:

Our effectiveness is dependent on our standing as a profession, and the respect we attract from the community. In the public eye we will lose much of our professional standing though affiliation with the ACTU, and hence will tend to lose the respect of the community. Consequently, we may well retain paper autonomy whilst being an ineffective body to whom no-one listens.

In addition, opponents of affiliation drew upon the ‘tradition’ of political neutrality by arguing that the ACTU was ‘party political’ both in its support for a Labor government and in the provision by the state branch of the ACTU
(the South Australian Trades and Labour Council) for the state Parliamentary Labor Party to nominate a member to the TLC committee. The major argument against political alignment was that it would reduce the flexibility of SAIT in bargaining with non-Labor governments at both state and national levels.

The third argument for disaffiliation from ATF represented an attack on that organisation rather than an argument against ACTU affiliation. In contrast to earlier strong support for ATF from proponents of professionalism in teaching, the 1979 campaign denounced ATF for its apparent ineffectiveness as a national lobbyist for teachers, and argued that SAIT could be more effective in educational lobbying by seeking its own direct representation to state and federal bodies. There was a chauvinistic element to the argument that although 'ATF needs us, we don't need it', which was not expressed during the earlier 1974 debate on the issue. Although this was in part a reflection of the hard line taken by the coordinator of the anti-ACTU campaign, it drew strength from the organisational weakness of ATF as a confederation which lacked the ability to effectively organise all teachers nationally.

Finally, it was suggested that there would be a membership defection if SAIT joined ATF in the ACTU. While no evidence or experience could substantiate this point, its rhetorical value in rallying teachers to SAIT unity was important. It again echoed a view expressed by Murray Haines in the 1974 debate, drawing upon SAIT traditions and practice, and appealing to the ideology of professionalism.

The arguments for ACTU affiliation

Within the terms of the debate which had been set by the previous policy decisions in SAIT, supporters of SAIT remaining in ATF were placed in a defensive position on the first two points. On the autonomy of SAIT they argued that affiliation with the ACTU would have little impact, since SAIT's integrity was governed by its constitution; further, that professional associations already affiliated with the ACTU had not lost their autonomy. While SAIT's rules and constitution would continue to safeguard its integrity, its ability to represent members would be strengthened by joining an organisation in which salaried and professional workers would, by virtue of their numbers, have a significant influence.

The second point on which supporters of affiliation were defensive was that of political alignment with the Labor Party. SAIT activists had always abided by the principle of political neutrality in the interests of unity, and this campaign was no exception. Supporters of affiliation did not advance the argument of self-conscious political alignment as had been suggested by ACSPA leadership in the early 1970s; instead they pointed out that the ACTU neither
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funded\textsuperscript{15} nor was affiliated with the ALP.\textsuperscript{36} The only argument in favour of political alignment to be advanced during the campaign came from the Education Collective of the Communist Party of Australia:

SAIT has had the policy of remaining distant from party association; there is no reason why this cannot continue under ACTU affiliation. There is a major reason why it should not. SAIT should be waging a full scale campaign against the Liberal–Country Party for its reactionary educational policies. The pose of independence is in the final analysis tacit lack of direct and effective criticism of wrong government policies.\textsuperscript{37}

However, in the official ‘No’ case, and in the literature supporting affiliation, this argument was purposely avoided by TATF, since to have entered this sphere of debate would have undermined support from industrially progressive, but politically neutral teachers.

In positive terms, the argument for affiliation stressed the benefits to be derived from mutual support and exchange of information among teachers through a national body with international affiliations, and through representation of teachers on several educational advisory bodies. Industrial unity through ACTU affiliation would allow teachers more effectively to participate in national wage cases and would provide teachers with a forum for consultation and action on major industrial issues. The experience of other white-collar unions in the ACTU was quoted as evidence of the benefits to be gained from industrial unity, and as evidence of the ability to retain their own autonomy and position of political non-alignment.\textsuperscript{38} On the basis of such experience, TATF argued that ‘teachers can make of ACTU affiliation as much as they want to. We can accept what we like and ignore what we don’t like’.\textsuperscript{39}

On the question of possible membership defection, supporters of affiliation could only provide a counter-assertion to the claims of the proponents for disaffiliation as they had done in 1974. Rather than attempt to argue a position on this point, since there were no grounds on which claims could be made in any case, the supporters of affiliation appealed to unity within SAIT and argued that the unity could be enhanced, rather than dissipated, in a broader industrial movement.

The arguments advanced by supporters of affiliation sought to remove obstacles in the way of SAIT joining the ACTU. They were not a reflection of a widespread affinity of teachers with the trade union movement, and in themselves they provided no positive reason why SAIT should join the ACTU with ATF. Locked into the argument about professionalism, supporters of ATF constructed the argument for affiliation in the terms established in the ideology of professionalism. Although wide industrial benefits to teachers were canvassed as a reason for amalgamation, they were placed in the context of a defence of
autonomy and neutrality. Following the campaign, the debate within SAIT on the affiliation issue turned from questions of industrial and educational benefits to a more explicit focus on the question of democracy in SAIT and its future role.

The plebiscite and its aftermath

Despite a very active campaign by supporters of ATF—ACTU affiliation, the result of the plebiscite, which closed on April 30 1979, was a 64.2 per cent vote in favour of SAIT disaffiliating from the ATF. Over 12,000 teachers, 71 per cent of those eligible, voted. Immediately following the declaration of the poll, the president, John Gregory, informed ATF that SAIT affiliation was immediately to cease, an action which was endorsed by the executive on 8 May, which also resolved to refer the decision to a special conference on 30 June. However, the annual conference on 12 May pre-empted the business of the special conference by suspending standing orders to discuss the result of the poll and the executive action.

Conference criticised the executive’s interpretation of the rule which provided for a two-thirds majority in referenda, and its subsequent action in withdrawing from ATF. Conference asserted that it was its right, rather than that of the executive, to make an announcement on the result of the poll, and resolved, on the basis of a simple majority, that SAIT should disaffiliate from the ATF. This was not a ratification of the executive’s decision, as the Conference decision was subsequently interpreted by the SAIT president and secretary, but an assertion of the powers of the membership through conference. Conference also amended the rule on plebiscites to provide that ‘a simple majority of members voting shall be binding on the membership and shall become Institute policy’.

While the majority of supporters of the campaign to remain affiliated with ATF accepted the majority result of the plebiscite as the democratic expression of members' wishes and decided in the interest of unity to remain in SAIT, two separate steps were taken as a result of the executive decision. One of these was a challenge in the Industrial Court to the validity of the disaffiliation decision of the executive, and the other was a move to establish a separate union. The legal action was taken by four teachers, none of whom were members of the TATF coordinating committee; the majority of this committee had decided that such action was unlikely to succeed, and, given the majority vote for disaffiliation, was politically untenable to an activist group seeking to democratise SAIT. In another move, three supporters of TATF, including a member of the coordinating committee, Richie Walsh, decided, against the majority opinion of TATF, to move for the establishment 'of an alternate classroom teacher and school-assistant based union'. Walsh was also granted
the right to intervene in the court challenge to request 'the court to rule that SAIT resume full normal relations with the ATF and its affiliated bodies'. Both the court challenge and the move for a separate union represented dissatisfaction with SAIT policy and its decision-making structures, but neither were tactics supported by the majority of activists whose position was that democratisation and change should be attempted within SAIT in the tactical interests of maintaining unity among teachers.

In his decision on the challenge to disaffiliation, the president of the South Australian Industrial Commission, Mr Justice Olsson, rejected the argument that the executive had no power to sever relations with ATF on the declaration of the poll, and stated that, in any case, the subsequent annual conference decision supported the disaffiliation. By upholding the legality of the procedures adopted within SAIT on the question of disaffiliation, the court gave support, both legal and ideological, to the constitution of SAIT and its procedures. The decision averted what could have amounted to a crisis of legitimacy in SAIT and gave support to the proponents of unity both of the right and the left. It also strengthened the resolve of activists to campaign politically within SAIT for progressive policies and democratic structures, rather than to adopt a legalistic, and hence formalistic, instead of an activist approach to change in SAIT.

The separatist move by Richie Walsh, a high school headmaster and former member of the executive, and two classroom teachers, Graham Byass and Alan Dunstan, was based on the expectation that a substantial number of teachers would be sufficiently disillusioned, with both the 'obstructionist' tactics of the executive and the pursuit of professionalism in general, to support an alternative organisation for teachers dedicated to unionism rather than professional principles. Walsh and his supporters abandoned the tactic of ginger group activism in favour of what they called a 'genuine alternative' union which would 'be a model of industrial democracy and [would] immediately affiliate with ATF and [the] ACTU'. This group publicly disagreed with other members of the TATF coordinating committee on the value of unity in SAIT and attacked what it saw as the blocking of progressive industrial policies by a powerful conservative group. But although the separatist group drew support for their arguments about the nature of SAIT, they attracted little sympathy for the move, and there was no defection from the union such as had occurred in 1937.

Walsh had long been an activist in SAIT with a commitment to democratisation of the organisation. He had attracted hostility both from inside and outside SAIT for his social credit politics, and at one stage was made the brunt of an attack by the League of Rights. Although a high school headmaster at the time of the affiliation debate, he was a supporter of a stronger voice for classroom teachers in SAIT decision-making bodies. Walsh was particularly
critical of the role of the president, John Gregory, in the affiliation debate because of what he saw as Gregory's partisan stand on the issue. Gregory was re-elected unopposed for a second term as President, and in late 1982 gave his support, with reservations, to SAIT's reaffiliation with ATE.

The 'alternative body' was named the South Australian Teachers' and School Assistants' Union (SAT & SAU). It produced a newspaper, Union News, through which it attempted to generate support for the idea of an alternative teachers' union. Articles on conditions, employment policies, cooperative and 'back-scratching' relations between SAIT and the Department which were not in the interests of teachers, Liberal Party education policies, and SAIT's attitude to non-SAIT members holding membership of Satisfac sustained a number of issues of the News. However, members of the alternative union proved difficult to attract and it received recognition from neither the South Australian government nor the opposition, although the latter was said to have been encouraging. It did not become a registered union but instead became a section of the Australian Government Workers' Association (AGWA), and it claimed that this provided it with industrial muscle to support its members.

**Into the union movement**

With the exception of SHIT and the Tasmanian Teachers' Federation, affiliates of ATF joined the ACTU in 1979. The failure of separate peak organisations to have a significant impact on decision making at the national level led to the merger moves which culminated in 1979. Although the original impetus for these moves came not from teachers but from other sections of the white-collar workforce, teachers were generally persuaded of the benefits to be gained from industrial unity with the broader labour movement. This was particularly the case following the defeat of the federal Labor government in 1975 and the return of a conservative government with an ideological commitment to privatisation. Although teachers were not necessarily convinced that ACTU affiliation would bring immediate benefits to education, it was isolation from political influence at the national level that eventually won the argument for the majority of teachers' organisations in Australia to join the ACTU.

While it is not the intention of this book to examine the dynamics of political debate in other teachers' organisations in Australia, it is clear that issues which were debated and were a source of division in SAIT were similarly controversial in other ATF affiliates. ATF president, Van Davey, and general secretary, Ray Costello, addressed other affiliates on the issue but were not invited to South Australia. Why then was SAIT one of only two teachers' organisations in the ATF which decided to remain aloof from industrial unity?
The tension between professionalism and trade unionism has been reflected in internal divisions in the organisations which teachers have developed. However, for diverse reasons in the other organisations the political forces tending towards cooperation with the labour movement led to a resolution of the tension in favour of affiliation. In SAIT, arguments for affiliation were unsuccessful despite an active campaign by its supporters. But in SAIT the argument for affiliation was conducted essentially within the boundaries established by the opponents of a move into the ACTU.

However, to the leaders of both SAIT and the Tasmanian Teachers’ Federation it was clear that, despite the antipathy towards unionism expressed by their members, an accommodation and possible eventual reconciliation with ATF would be necessary if both organisations were to have access to ATF research and information facilities and were to influence educational policy. A ‘cooperative association’ agreement was drawn up between SAIT and ATF in

This was SAIT’s first delegation to the ACTU congress in Melbourne in 1983. Presenting a unified and solid front at the ACTU conference are; Back row: Di Bailey (ATF), Virginia Battye (SAIT), Margaret Hussin (SAIT), Sue Owens (SAIT), Craig Campbell (SAIT), Graham Smith (SAIT life member/observer). Middle row: Margo Weir (ATF), Clare McCarty (SAIT), Simon Marginson (ATF), John Hill (SAIT), Peter Noonan (ATF), Bill Leslie (ATF). Front row: Keith Lawler (ATF/ACTU Executive), Jennie George (NSWTF/ACTU Executive), Leonie Ebert (SAIT), Van Davy (ATF), Rob Bluer (ATF). (SA Teachers’ Journal)
Themes

SAIT President, Clare McCarty (third from left), the speaker on behalf of education workers at the Festival Theatre, May 1993, mass meeting to protest the loss of 3000 Public Service jobs.

Clare was the first rank-and-file member of the UTLC executive and the first woman and teacher to be vice-president and then president of the UTLC in 1990. (SA Teachers' Journal)

1980 and for the following two years SAIT representatives attended ATF conferences as observers. Late in 1982 a plebiscite was held on the question: 'Should SAIT reaffiliate with the ATF?' The decision of 1979 was overturned by a majority of those voting, and in 1983 SAIT sent representatives to both the ATF and for the first time the ACTU conferences as delegates.55 During the campaign on the plebiscite, opponents of reaffiliation mounted arguments similar to those which had been presented in 1979, while supporters of reaffiliation were able to be more positive about the benefits of ACTU membership following the experiences of the other teachers' unions.

Further links with the trade union movement were developed during a salaries campaign in 1982 which involved other public sector unions, and this cooperation was extended with the development of a joint unions electoral platform for the state election in 1982. A defence of public sector services and of the working conditions of public sector employees in the face of threatened cuts by the state Liberal government required an alliance of public sector
workers. While this idea was not novel to public sector workers in other states, it was the first time in recent years in South Australia that a union-alliance strategy had been practised on a continuing basis. Success in salaries negotiations and in gaining a favourable response to the platform by the Labor party were attributed by SAIT to the joint campaigns, and this provided a basis for a further step towards unionism: affiliation with the South Australian United Trades and Labour Council (SAUTLC). At a special conference in November 1983, a motion to affiliate with SAUTLC was passed, thereby consolidating SAIT's links with the organised labour movement at both state and national levels.
Chapter 10

Relations with Employers

The character of relations between SAIT and the departments responsible for the administration of education, in particular the Education Department, has been a powerful force in constructing and shaping the ideology of professionalism. Although the relationship has changed as a result of various factors, the rhetoric of a partnership between teachers and the state has been a persistent theme in the politics of consensus adopted by SAIT. A further consequence of the doctrine of political neutrality was its effect until the 1980s in limiting the influence of SAIT on politics in education—the process by which power is distributed and decisions are made within the education system. This was a central paradox in teacher unionism, since the claim to professionalism by teachers is in large part based on their claim to expertise and authority in teaching, yet control over the education process resides not with the occupational association, but with the state.

Before 1950 there was no desire on the part of teachers' unions to alter the basic relationship they had with the employers of teachers. When South Australian teachers were reunited in one association in 1951, the new organisation inherited the practices and perspectives of the previous organisations. The formation of SAIT was achieved by means of organisational adjustments to the South Australian Public Teachers' Union rather than through the creation of an entirely new structure for an organisation with fresh perspectives and aims. Unity in 1951 grew out of the difficulties of separate organisations rather than a desire on the part of teachers to change the direction of the professional path. Although SAIT claimed a new 'professional image' for teachers as a result of the merger, the new image was not accompanied by a vigorous and altered approach either to questions of educational philosophy or to the form and nature of bargaining with the employer. A precondition for the formation of a trade
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"THE LAST STRAW"

It is perhaps interesting to note the high percentage of certified men in S.A. retiring through ill-health—a percentage much higher than in other States—From a reviewer in "S.A. Teachers' Journal"

(SA Teachers' Journal, 20 June, 1935)

union consciousness is the awareness of a separate and collective identity developed by a sense of opposition between the interests of educational workers and the class interest represented by the state. The collaborative nature of relations between teachers and the state had inhibited the development of an oppositional frame of reference for teachers, and there were no signs in the merger of 1951 that this was about to change.

The context of the relationship since 1951

As earlier chapters have shown, teachers have not sought to take control of the decision-making process from the state. Rather, they have sought to influence the process on the basis of their proclaimed professional status, and in this process they have competed with other groups such as parents' associations and employers' organisations. The relationship between teachers and the state has
been mediated by the politics of consensus; within the consensus conflicts have emerged, sometimes to the point of challenging the basis of the consensus. However, the management of conflict and dissent, at least until the 1980s, was shared by both SAIT and the Department under the rhetoric of a partnership in educational progress. This ‘partnership’ was regularised through both formal and informal channels of contact. One example of this is that SAIT’s rules provided that the organisation’s contact with the Department would be through the Principal Officers; in the interests of unity, associations were not allowed separate representation. This had the effect of ensuring conformity to SAIT policy, and gave its leaders effective internal control of the relationship. For the Department, the arrangement had the benefit of negotiation with one body of teachers, enabling it more directly to manage its ‘side’ of the relationship. It is arguable that dealing with a multitude of separate associations would allow the Department to divide and rule, but it would lose the advantage of a central and ‘responsible’ partner.

For the purpose of analysing the changes in the SAIT—state relationship five phases, corresponding with political and administrative changes in South Australia, are identified. These changes took place in the context of altered commonwealth—state financial relationships which brought about different forms of state intervention at both state and commonwealth levels. From 1951 to 1967 the relations between SAIT and the Department were conducted with E. Mander-Jones, who was appointed in 1946 as Director of Education. Mander-Jones was succeeded by John S. Walker, as Director-General, in November 1967, and he in turn was succeeded in March 1970 by Albert W. Jones, who held the position until September 1977, when John Steinle became Director-General. By this time there were other bodies with which SAIT had to negotiate on behalf of its members, particularly the Department of Further Education and the Kindergarten Union. From April 1933 until March 1965 South Australia was governed by the Liberal — Country League (LCL). The election of March 1965 brought the Labor Party to office until April 1968, when it was succeeded by the Hall LCL government. In mid-1970 the Labor Party returned to office and governed until 1979. The following analysis is divided into five periods corresponding with political and administrative changes between 1951 and 1979.

1951–1965

The first issue of the Journal in 1915 included a statement of respect for the administrators of the state’s educational system, and even though such overt politeness was not continually displayed in the second half of the century, disrespect was rarely displayed publicly. In the period between 1951 and 1965, it was implicitly agreed that the aims of SAIT and the Department were the
The suggestion that a journal should be published to be the 'official organ and mouthpiece of the teaching body' was made in 1902. This suggestion came to fruition when the first SA Teachers’ Journal was officially issued during Mr W. Bennett’s presidency in 1915. The cost of the journal was met by advertisements and the Rigby Ltd’s advertisement took pride of place for 26 years. The size of the journal was restored in 1948. Designs were invited for covers without advertising and this was implemented in October 1941. In 1959 the cover was changed again in May as a result of a competition. The winner was Mr D. Bettang, teacher at the SA School of Art. The uniformity in cover design and colour changed in May 1962. The cover design was now changed more frequently and bolder colours were used. In February 1962 a four-page newspaper was produced to present news quickly and in an arresting fashion. This paper was called S.A.I.T. NEWSLETTER. In 1968 the Journal in magazine form and the S.A.I.T. NEWSLETTER were combined to produce a newspaper-type production. The importance of this change was that it provided a more frequent means of communication to and from members at a reduced cost. This format is still in use today.

(Photographer—Doug Nicholas)

same; in his speech to the inaugural meeting of SAIT, the Premier, Mr Thomas Playford said that

the Education Department and the Institute have the same objective… The main objective of the Government and this Institute is to give the children of this State the best opportunity we can in their education. I have no doubt that every one of you sincerely agrees with me in this respect.3

During this period, SAIT adopted what Thiele later called a ‘cap-in-hand’ approach to the Department. Although there was occasional criticism of the government of the day, there was little open criticism of the Department. While teachers were frustrated by the often slow workings of the bureaucracy in the redress of grievances, they were generally persuaded of the good intentions of the officers in acting in the interests of teachers and education generally. Almost ritualistically, ‘full, free and frank’ discussions between SAIT and the Department were reported to members through the pages of the Journal, although the
substance was not reported in detail. In its official medium, SAIT rarely broke the rule of silence in relation to its employer, and opportunities were taken to express the harmonious character of the relationship between the parties; similar opportunities were taken by the ministerial and Departmental heads.

The range of material covered in union journals, as well as the method of presentation, is often a guide to the approach taken by the organisation in its dealings with employers and others. Until 1956, the Journal reported on industrial and educational items of interest to teachers in a matter-of-fact manner. With the appointment of Laurie Kiek as general secretary in 1955, the Journal (which was then edited by the general secretary), came to include more structured and interpretative industrial and professional material, as well as more active internal communication in the form of regular articles from associations. A SAIT Newsletter was initiated in 1963 to give greater coverage to industrial matters, and the Journal included more of what was considered 'professional' material. Kiek was succeeded in 1969 by Max Lamborne, a teachers' college lecturer. By this time the Journal was edited by a full-time publications officer, Guy Saunders, who later became the journal editor. With the support of the publications committee, Saunders combined the previously separate publications into a new series of the Journal. The last edition of the Newsletter appeared in December 1968 and the new series of the Journal began in February 1969.

The dominant method of attempting to influence the Department during this period was the use of deputations both to the Departmental head and to the Minister. This was the case on a wide range of issues including housing for teachers, the role of inspectors, conditions of promotion and forms of school classification, recruitment and training of teachers, remote allowances, higher duties pay, and other issues affecting teachers generally and individually. The deputation was also supplemented by informal contact between SAIT leaders and Departmental officers, many of whom shared similar status through length of service. There was also occasional use of the media and small-scale lobbying of politicians.

1965–1968

In March 1965, the Walsh Labor government was elected to office with Ron Loveday as the first Labor Minister for Education with whom SAIT had to deal. For most of his three years of office, Loveday's Departmental head was Mander-Jones who retired in late 1967. Loveday was opposed to those sections of the Martin Report which argued for the autonomy of teachers' colleges, and on which SAIT had sought to construct a case for a more 'professional' course of training for teachers. The government planned no major changes to the structure of education in South Australia, nor did it view the position of teachers in relation to the state in any fundamentally different way to its predecessors.

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Teachers were, as shown in a previous chapter, to be granted no extension of political rights under the Labor government, and Loveday did not seek to alter the nature of the SAIT–state 'partnership'.

From 1965 to 1968 a stronger and more persistent line was adopted in SAIT on the need for the state to recognise the professional status of teachers by upgrading existing teachers' colleges and building new ones. Strong dissatisfaction was expressed with the commonwealth government's rejection of the teacher training proposal in the Martin Report. A code of ethics was adopted at the 1966 annual conference and discussions on the formation of a Teaching Council were initiated. Sections of SAIT were also recognising the need to adopt more vigorous forms of pressure in dealing with the state where satisfaction was not achieved by traditional means. A forum of school representatives was called in 1965 to discuss the relations of SAIT with the Department—an expression by some rank-and-file members of dissatisfaction with the conduct of these relations by both SAIT leaders and the Department. With the Murrie case of 1967 the harmony of the bureaucratic–practitioner relationship was broken; as argued earlier, SAIT saw this case as an abrogation of responsibility by the Department and as an unfair use of regulatory power. Although SAIT action on this issue reduced the severity of the punishment dealt to Murrie, it did not resolve the tension inherent in state control of teaching—the tension between the bureaucratic and service orientations of teachers.

1968–1970

J.S. Walker was appointed Director-General in late 1967, and Loveday was replaced by Joyce Steele when the Hall LCL government won office in March 1968. Walker engaged in a reorganisation of the Education Department and gave new but limited freedoms to headmasters in handling educational problems in their schools and in making some of their own educational decisions. However, with the long history of centralisation and hierarchy at both Departmental and school levels, these changes represented modifications to the top levels, rather than a restructuring of decision making to involve all teachers. In his relation to the Minister, Walker was a classic example of a strong public servant using his political and administrative power to dominate a minister who was insufficiently supported by the Premier and her cabinet colleagues. Neither intended that the Department would alter its relations with SAIT.

It was during this period that dissatisfaction with state intransigence on the demands of teachers led to the activism in SAIT discussed earlier. From a position of acquiescence with state determination and control of the conditions under which teachers worked, SAIT adopted a stance of militant expression. While direct action through withdrawal of 'professional services' was not taken, the 'culture of militancy' was an impetus to a different attitude towards the
dictates of the state. SAIT associations, branch councils and executive all considered new tactics in dealing with both the Department and the Minister. These tactics represented an assertion of the professional as opposed to bureaucratic tasks of teachers, and they foreshadowed tentative policies on school autonomy and democracy.

The first of the new tactics to emerge was that of refusing to accept dictates by the government. In July 1969, branch councils voted in favour of a motion calling on teachers to refuse to handle bus passes from September. This move was initiated by the Male Assistants' Association whose publicity officer, Dean Mullan, argued that the 'work involved in the issue of bus passes is completely alien to our calling', and imposes extra non-professional tasks on an 'already overcrowded day'. A similar motion two years previously had not been acted upon after a deputation had been assured of a government response. However, in the altered climate of 1969 the call for a refusal was taken seriously by teachers. In itself the particular issue was not significant, since there were many bureaucratic tasks that teachers performed; what was important was the symptom of conflict involved in the issue.

A more significant issue in 1969 was that of term dates for the following year. Following the announcement of new dates by the Minister, a motion condemning the action was carried unanimously at the August meeting of branch councils. The Minister's decision was seen as symptomatic of the lack of proper consultation with SAIT by the government, and the motion called upon 'the Government to enter into immediate and bona fide round-table consultation with the Institute on this matter to mutually discern an acceptable formula to resolve the issue'. A further motion proposed action by teachers on alternative term dates should negotiations with the Government be unsuccessful. After negotiations with the Minister, the threat to apply alternative term dates was withdrawn. Whether teachers would have felt sufficiently inconvenienced by the Minister's announcement to have responded to SAIT's call to begin work on a different date was therefore not tested.

While these refusals, or threats of refusal, were not matters on which the whole of the membership was involved, they were representative of attempts by SAIT to exercise stronger influence over the way in which teachers were treated by the state. Discussions on the issues in SAIT were carried out within a modernised vocabulary of the 'partnership'—the verbosity of the motion on term dates was an attempt to bring about equality in the partnership through 'round-table' conferences. These tactical innovations followed dissatisfaction with the Hall government's response to the proposals put at the 1969 annual conference on qualitative improvements to the state education system. Their favourable reception by sections of SAIT was made possible by the frustration engendered initially by the salaries award of 1968, and by mounting dissatisfaction with the
conditions of teaching felt by many teachers, who believed that they were not being treated as professionals. SAIT was also influenced in 1969 by the politicisation of student teachers who were beginning to display a more aggressive approach in their relations with the state.

The catalyst for militancy in the teachers' colleges was provided by a decision in 1968 of the Minister to replace the longstanding system of textbooks on loan with a financial advance to students to be recovered by deductions from subsequent fortnightly allowances. Students felt that such a system would disadvantage them as they considered the allowance insufficient to compensate for the lack of access to books on loan. Mass meetings of students were held at Adelaide Teachers' College at which the Minister was condemned for her failure to properly consider the needs of students. Early in 1969, the Minister was again attacked for her role in the suspension of a student teacher from Adelaide Teachers' College because of his anti-war activities. The suspension of Bob Hall followed his arrest during an incident in which he was distributing anti-war leaflets, and students saw this as an indication of the repressive character of both college and Department regulations. In the course of a campaign to have Hall reinstated, students sought SAIT backing for an approach to the Minister to revoke the decision of the College principal. Because of its desire to remain politically neutral, and because of the status attached to college principals in the organisation, SAIT limited its support to an offer of legal advice, and an interview with the principal. Mrs Steele treated student dissent as a matter of 'kicks' on the part of 'youthful crusaders'. Both the textbooks incident and the Bob Hall suspension generated a momentum of student activism which was carried by students into SAIT through their representation on branch councils, and which SAIT was forced to confront at two levels. First, in terms of tactics, the student radicalism of 1969 ignored the convention of neutrality and the institutionalised settlement of disputes. Second, an incipient challenge to the definition of professional conduct as that defined by the state was mounted by the students in terms of a challenge to the prevailing orthodoxy of liberal theory. This was consistent with the tendency for dissenting movements within professions to originate in their student wings.

1970–1974

Walker was succeeded by A. W. ('Alby') Jones as Director-General in March 1970, and in May of the same year Hugh Hudson replaced Joyce Steele as Minister following the election of the Labor government. With new state personnel, the relations between SAIT and the state took the form of a new consensus, managed, in the interests of stability, by a more open administrative style and by a political acumen on the part of Hudson not displayed by previous
ministers. In its dealings with Hudson and Jones, SAIT now had a background of militancy, a climate of emerging political debate and a functional public relations machine.

In their management of the state education system Hudson and Jones introduced a more open and consultative approach with SAIT as well as lifting some of the more restrictive aspects of state regulation of teachers. The Freedom and Authority memorandum discussed the uses to which the autonomy of schools should be put: liberty to vary courses, the use of experimental teaching methods and variance of organisation of classes. It was further proposed that staff should share in the formulation of policy and provision was made for student opinion to be made known in secondary schools. Heads were reassured that they were in 'undisputed control' of their schools, a statement which underscored the Departmental intention that a movement towards school autonomy was to be achieved by a devolution of power at the top levels rather than a democratisation of decision making at the school level. Even with this view, the memorandum represented a significant departure from the old line of rigid centralisation.

Equally significant, though, was the timing of its issue. In the two years prior to 1970, the formation of staff associations in schools had been accompanied by moves for an official SAIT policy on participatory decision making in schools, and a moderate policy to that effect was determined by a combined meeting of branch councils on 2 May 1970:

That while the day to day and emergency decisions of a school government must inevitably be made by the Headmaster, the general lines of domestic school policy should be evolved by a majority decision of a committee responsible to a general meeting of all teaching staff at the school, and comprising ex officio the teacher administrative and subject coordinator, and, by election, representatives of the remaining staff, with the Headmaster acting as executive officer of that committee in the policy area that it specifies.

An amendment to include school students in the decision-making forums was defeated.

In a move to contain the criticism of state administration which had been gathering momentum in SAIT, Hudson called a conference in July of officers from top levels of the Education Department and representatives of SAIT, including a teachers' college student representative, to discuss relations between the Education Department and SAIT, priorities in education, staffing in schools, the morale of the teaching service and possible changes to the Education Act. The conference was held at the Education Department In-service Centre at Raywood in the Adelaide Hills, a centre which Jones had described in a paper two years earlier as containing a pleasant environment in which 'barriers
between parties holding conflicting views . . . dissolve . . . under the influence of propinquity and other solvents'.

The conference was held to determine what kinds of concessions were necessary to dissuade more radical action on the part of teachers and, although it was a round-table conference of the kind that SAIT had been calling for, its agenda was firmly under the control of the Minister. Both Hudson and Jones stressed that the aim of the conference was to achieve a consensus in an informal gathering, with the intention of providing a more relaxed atmosphere in which harmonious relations could be restored. No decisions were taken at the conference, but it provided the Minister and the Department with an assessment of the state of activism in SAIT, and allowed the airing of dissatisfaction without any commitment to action by the government or Department. A minority of SAIT members present saw the conference as a forum to develop a critique of the emerging ideology of liberalism in the Hudson–Jones partnership, but the majority saw it as a non-political, professional exchange of views.

This was the first of many such annual conferences to be held at Raywood.

In the new era of consultation and open-door policy, the Karmel Committee, established in 1969 by the previous LCL Minister, Joyce Steele, reported to the

The Minister for Planning and Minister of Mines and Energy (previously Minister of Education), Mr Hugh Hudson, visited SAIT to take part in the unveiling ceremony of a decorated cornerstone, taken from the Education Department and mounted in front of Raggatt Building, SAIT in 1978. President John Gregory and Mr Hudson are pictured here at left with members of the executive. (SA Teachers' Journal)
Themes

Labor government in 1971. The report of this committee provided the government with a basis for legislative changes in areas which SAIT saw as important in its attempts to achieve professional status; in particular, the recommendations on autonomy of teachers' colleges and registration of teachers. But the report also contained a blueprint for functional reorganisation of the Education Department and for the modernisation of schools in line with what the committee saw as the development of a pluralist society. These recommendations included greater freedom for teachers in the development of curriculum and a modified role for inspectors, as well as more structured community involvement in schools.  

However, the philosophy of efficiency within which the Karmel Committee framed its recommendations was not unanimously shared in SAIT, and moves began at the 1971 annual conference to initiate a debate on the relation between the structure of educational administration in South Australia and the aims of achieving a democratic and equal society through education. A motion moved at the conference by Dean Ashenden and Pat Underhill was referred to the executive for action, the outcome of which was a conference on Education and Democracy sponsored by SAIT in 1972. Following the conference a recommendation was made to SAIT executive to establish a committee which would consider the part that teachers and students could play in implementing broad-based democratic provisions in schools. SAIT later prepared a working party paper, Democracy in Education, for the Australian Teachers' Federation and a de-politicised adaptation of the principles discussed at the SAIT conference was adopted by ATF in 1974. But the discussion within SAIT on this theme was not sustained, and the effect of the debate was the incorporation of the rhetoric of democracy into its relations with the state while the structure of relations remained the same. On most matters for which SAIT had to seek an administrative or political response, the traditional tactics of the deputation remained a necessity. Despite attempts by sections of SAIT to move the relations in the direction of 'participatory management' of education, the character of state mediation of teaching was not fundamentally altered.

1975–1979

While Hudson presided over a period of expansion and innovation, his successor, Dr Don Hopgood, presided over an education system in which there was a proclaimed surplus of qualified teachers. This meant that registration of teachers could be introduced without any threat to the supply of teachers, since there was a qualified pool from which the state could draw. As teachers gained a degree of influence over entry to the profession and as the qualifications of teachers improved, they believed that they were in a better position to claim professional status. However, control of entry did not mean control over recruitment and supply of teachers, both of which remained with the state. Not
did it effect a transfer in the function of bestowing status from the state to the occupational association, since the promotion and reward structure was not controlled by SAIT. An attempt to introduce the concept of 'collegiate responsibility' into the salary and promotion structure of teachers was made in 1975, and while this proposal drew on the earlier moves to introduce democratic decision making into schools, it had as its prime goal the recognition of the worth of the classroom teacher by suggesting a promotion structure in which teachers would not have to take the administrative path to gain higher rewards. Such a proposal, if accepted, would lead to a diminution in the importance of hierarchical structures as well as greater flexibility in the staffing structure of schools.

Debate on this issue in SAIT lasted almost two years. It had been initiated early in 1976 by the establishment of a subcommittee on salaries structure and work value case for teachers, which became known as the Endersby committee after the chair of the committee, Phil Endersby, a secondary classroom teacher. The primary goal of this committee was that tasks be allocated to staff 'according to their competence (meaning “strengths, interests and potential as perceived by both the individual and the school”); and that the process of division and allocation of tasks be conducted in accordance with the general principle of collegiate responsibility'. While the committee did not propose the abolition of positions of principal and deputy principal, opposition to its report was strongest from those groups. The Secondary Deputy Principals' Association argued that it was 'naive [to believe] that only the actual teachers of children should be recognised as a major contribution to education in schools', and that such a view ignored the contribution of competent administrators. Conflict in SAIT on the proposal caused sharp division between the proponents of the hierarchical structure and those whose promotion opportunities were diminished by the existence of such a structure, and were likely to remain so in an unfavourable market climate for teachers.

When the proposals were finally put to a referendum late in 1977 a majority of teachers gave their support, but in the crucial area of 'collegiate responsibility', the necessary two-thirds vote was not obtained. As a result of the referendum, there was no break with the established hierarchy in teaching nor with the continued allocation of status on the basis of a system which had been in existence for over a century.

Conclusion

The rhetoric of a partnership between SAIT and the state in the management of education in South Australia functioned to disguise the reality of state
domination and teacher subordination. Despite the distribution of power in favour of the state in this relationship, the ideology of professionalism persisted as a powerful force shaping the tactics of SAIT in its attempts to influence the character of the relationship. The major doctrines embodied in this ideology neutralised SAIT’s potential to effect change, both in the direction of state policies on education and in control over the work process. Even in the first rounds of militancy, SAIT did not seek to change the structure of relations with the state; rather the militant expression of teachers at the end of the 1960s was channelled in a direction which served as a supplement to traditional forms of teacher activity. Although the ‘cap-in-hand’ approach was abandoned during this period, the new and more sophisticated consensus which emerged in the early 1970s was managed by the state, with SAIT remaining a junior, albeit more mature, party to the consensus.

The politicisation of SAIT in the 1970s generated a new and more vigorous debate within SAIT on a range of issues affecting teachers’ control of their work process, and dissent from traditional practices by large sections of the membership led to conflicts over the direction that SAIT should take as an occupational association. These conflicts were expressed in differences over the structure of school organisation and the prerogative of the state to dictate to teachers in areas which they considered their ‘professional’ domain. But while these conflicting perspectives led to long and vigorous internal political debate, their effects on state control were neutralised by the lack of a developed sense of opposition, and the conservative traditions and practices remained as the dominant influences. In its social democratic form, the state incorporated emerging demands for greater autonomy into a structure based on enlightened management, while in the period of contraction in the latter part of the seventies, the illiberal reality of state control was reasserted. In its failure to recognise and confront the political nature of this control, SAIT remained a conservative influence in South Australian education.
Part Three

The New Unionism
In this chapter we examine developments in SAIT in the 1980s by looking at the emergence and consolidation of particular associations and at some of the issues which came to the forefront of SAIT politics as a product of a new culture in the union.

The debate in 1979 on affiliation with ATF revealed serious divisions within SAIT on the question of the ideological and material position of teachers in relation to the labour movement, and it highlighted the tensions inherent in an organisation of state employees attempting to be both a professional association and a trade union. In earlier years the moderation displayed by SAIT allowed the easy incorporation of teachers into Departmental philosophy and practice. One of the products of incorporation is the ability of the state to delegate responsibility to SAIT to deal with the management of teacher dissent and division. While SAIT has always had this function the contradictions involved are heightened under conditions of fiscal crisis, and in the 1980s sharp divisions emerged within SAIT on a number of issues.

In the early 1980s the response to state administration was shaped by the deeper penetration of the fiscal crisis into the dominant ideology and by a conjunction of two important internal factors: strong support for a restructure of SAIT and a leadership dedicated to an activist role for SAIT. This meant, first, an apparent break with traditional strategies, and second, a new climate within which divisions among teachers were to be resolved. Entry into the organised labour movement added an extra dimension of support to campaigns by teachers to influence state policy.

The first apparent break with traditional forms of teacher action occurred early in 1981 with two strikes by teachers over a stated intention by the Liberal Minister for Education, Harold Allison, to cut school assistants’ hours by four
SAIT secretariat at a farewell function for Pam Willmott in 1982 to mark her retirement. With 23 years with SAIT she was the longest serving of any SAIT employee at that time. She was appointed as a chief clerk in 1959 with a staff of five and retired as an administrative officer of a secretariat of nearly 50.

(SA Teachers’ Journal photographic collection)

per cent and to engage in a compulsory rationalisation of school assistants. Although Allison’s move was the catalyst for strike action, dissatisfaction among teachers had been mounting with what they saw as the failure of the Liberal government to provide adequately for the needs of schools in accordance with its election policies two years previously. There was a certain irony in this as the SAIT president in 1979, John Gregory, had publicly argued that the Liberal policies at the time were superior to those of the Labor Party.

School assistants 1960–1990

SAIT had long shown an interest in the gradual appointment of ancillary staff to primary and secondary schools, particularly in the late 1950s and 1960s when SAIT supported attempts by teachers to reduce their administrative and other non-teaching duties in order to fulfil more demanding professional teaching
duties. This move was paralleled by the introduction of technological and scientific equipment in schools which caused extra burden for the teaching staff. Ancillary staff initially worked in the largest high schools where administrative demands were beyond the capacities of teaching staff, and were viewed as having a strictly supportive function. These were mainly clerical assistants in front offices and a very limited number of laboratory assistants. In the late 1960s the Plowden Report in Britain emphasised the practical value of trained ancillary staff assisting teachers not only in clerical but also classroom tasks. SAIT supported such appointments in South Australian schools and at the end of 1968 the SAIT president held discussions with the Director-General about the introduction of school assistants. The Karmel Report in 1970 recommended expanding the employment of non-teaching staff and increasing the flexibility of their roles according to school needs and availability of training. SAIT supported this trend, and with a new injection of funding in 1970, teacher aides were introduced to the state education system with the primary aim of increasing the effectiveness of the teacher in the classroom.

SAIT members generally supported this move but some saw the use of untrained people as the thin edge of the wedge, arguing that teacher aides could be used to replace trained teachers, thereby posing a threat to their jobs. However, at a special conference, called in June 1972, it was agreed that teacher aides be eligible for SAIT membership. In 1972 teacher aides had also decided to form an association, the School Assistants' Association, which applied to SAIT for affiliation. SAIT council approved this affiliation on 30 September 1972. The initial role of the School Assistants' Association was to provide, once a term, a forum for discussing conditions. At first these forums were not well attended, but the association began to hold conferences which provided work-skills training as well as information on SAIT and industrial relations, and these were always well attended.

The PSA was opposed to these moves by SAIT as it feared loss of members amongst teacher aides. The divisions between Public Service Association (PSA) and SAIT were emphasised by the different positions taken by these unions in relation to an award for teacher aides lodged by SAIT in 1973. The debate in the Commission was protracted and in 1975 PSA lodged a counter-award application which sought to cover all ancillary staff and which relegated teacher aides to a lower salary grade than the first application. The deputy president of South Australian Industrial Commission, Judge Olsson, heard evidence from a large number of schools both in South Australia and Canberra. In 1976 Olsson opted for a single unified award for all ancillary staff, as suggested by PSA, with three grades for salary purposes. SAIT was nevertheless successful in arguing that teacher aides could access Grade 2 rather than just Grade 1 as was argued by PSA. In the award, teacher aides were also reclassified as school assistants,
Teachers took industrial action for the first time in SA on 27 March, 1981, in support of ancillary staff whose hours had been reduced. The picture is a part of the march to Victoria Square of the 5000 SAIT members following the mass strike meeting on Friday 10 April. This was a joint action with the Public Service Association who also covered ancillary staff in schools. Marchers shouted and sang a variety of songs specially written for the occasion including 'Allison Flies while education cries, Liberal-style wonderland in education blunderland'. (SA Teachers' Journal photographic collection)

a move which was welcomed by SAIT. Teacher aides, as well as teachers who were SAIT members, openly displayed their disappointment with the PSA position, and argued that the only organisation which could represent teacher aides without divided loyalties was SAIT. In 1977, ancillary staff were rationalised to provide a more equitable distribution of resources in line with enrolment requirements. SAIT attempted to influence a government review on the allocation of ancillary staff by pushing for the allocation of permanent status. In 1978 extra funds were allocated for additional ancillary staff within the education system.

During this 1977–78 period PSA and SAIT began to form an alliance around industrial issues; however, some divisions remained until the early 1980s when the organisations joined forces against government moves to reduce hours and to introduce transfer and retrenchment arrangements for the school assistants as part of a drive to cutback the numbers of ancillary staff by four percent. A particular concern was clause 13 (3) of the regulations which unilat-
generally granted schools rights to vary the hours of the school assistants and make them redundant if necessary with only two weeks notice.\(^7\)

Neither of the two strike rallies that were organised were attended by a majority of teachers—attendance at the first, on 27 March was estimated to be 1000 teachers, and at the second, on 10 April, to be 5000. The strike action was preceded by discussions and a plebiscite in 1980 on whether the two-thirds requirement for general stoppages should be maintained. Lacking any history of prior strike action, the SAIT organisation was not fully prepared to deal with these strikes. Many school associations placed advertisements in the press indicating that they supported the reasons for the action but felt unable to leave their schools. While not all teachers were convinced that it was necessary for them to act industrially with school assistants, despite the fact that a reduction in school assistant hours at particular schools would add to their workload, one of the lessons of this industrial action was that strike action was seen as compatible with professionalism.

SAIT had engaged in militant expression with threats of strike action just over a decade earlier, and although in 1981 it supplemented this expression with action, its militancy was still constrained by similar ideological factors. The limitations of militancy lay in its restricted purpose which was to apply pressure on the South Australian government to provide better conditions for teachers—the militancy did not contain any sense of opposition to the structural conditions which led to teacher dissatisfaction. Although SAIT, together with PSA, which also covered school assistants, managed to obtain an agreement with the government that there would be no forced reduction in hours or forced transfer of assistants during 1981, the strike action did not resolve the question of long-term job security for school assistants. What emerged from this episode was the possibility that militancy would be used as a stronger supplement to traditional forms of teacher pressure, but it was clear that for this to occur a number of strategic conditions would need to be met. There would need to be a stronger union base in schools, an organisation better prepared for such action and a leadership which could sustain unity in SAIT while at the same time breaking through the barriers posed by the distinction between ‘education’ and ‘politics’. In other words, response to the causes of the erosion of job conditions required internal structural and ideological changes.

This dispute marked the first public display of support for school assistants by teachers who realised the value of school assistants, and it culminated in a strike, unprecedented in the history of education in South Australia. SAIT gained 300 new members.\(^8\) In 1982, the first SAIT field officer for school assistants was appointed to provide support and direction in the field. She worked with about 200 schools, dealt with a wide variety of issues and was paid at the rate of a school assistant.\(^9\)
The New Unionism

It was not until 1983, with a change of government, that ancillary staff returned to the formula that existed prior to 1981. In addition, the new Labor government increased the junior primary allocation to a base of twenty hours, the same as the restored primary formula. As part of these negotiations, school assistants gained a voluntary transfer scheme that enabled them to consider transfer without the fear of losing their jobs. Also, in 1983 clause 13 (3) was no longer implemented and in October 1984 it was deleted from the School Assistants' (Government Schools) Interim Award. This was supported by SAIT and by PSA.

In 1983 SAIT introduced structural changes to reflect its growing commitment to school assistants. This was marked by the establishment of a review committee to improve the working conditions, wages and staff development opportunities for school assistants. The review committee provided more opportunities for school assistants to influence the SAIT executive. Also, for the first time, a conference for school assistants was organised by the president of the School Assistants' Association. This was followed by three more conferences held in 1984 and led to the growing mobilisation of teachers around various issues affecting assistants—such as, for example, when in 1985 the Education Department was late in paying 3000 part-time school assistants. SAIT and PSA wrote a joint letter to the Director-General pointing out the unfairness of this and demanding changes to the payment procedures of the Education Department.

In 1984 the Industrial Commission finally granted the adjustment of salaries that was decided by Justice Olsson in 1976 but which had been taken away on appeal. This adjustment resulted in a 3.8 per cent salary increase for school assistants Grades 2 and 3 to restore the salary nexus with public service clerical officers. In this same year the state government established a review of school assistant staffing to examine the distribution, level of provision and range of duties of ancillary staff. SAIT delegates were Marie Sellstrom, executive member of SAIT and president of the School Assistants' Association, and field officer Elizabeth Neville. The review led to the reinstatement of 100 positions for school assistants and a whole range of policy and practice changes. It supported the increased provision of ancillary staff, greater flexibility in the utilisation of the weekly ancillary staff time, and discussed the need for the Education Department to provide accessible training and education schemes for all school assistants.

In 1986 SAIT established a School Assistants' Consultative Committee. This was a change forced by the SAIT restructure. The committee in that year negotiated with the government and PSA to achieve an equitable transfer scheme and worked on preventing principals from hiring and firing staff. This Committee in 1987 argued for a time leave bank which allowed ancillary staff
to accumulate time equivalent to two-fifths of their fractional time which might be taken off at a time convenient to themselves and their school.\textsuperscript{16} In December 1989, as part of an ongoing process of award restructuring that was to last for five years, school assistants were awarded a three per cent salary increase.

\section*{Pre-school teachers and assistants}

Another feature of the 1980s was the active entry of pre-school teachers and assistants into SAIT politics. Before the state government assumed responsibility for pre-school education under the aegis of the Children's Services Office (CSO), most kindergartens in South Australia were controlled by the Kindergarten Union (KU). It was an independent incorporated body, the funds for which came partly from government subsidies and partly from fundraising activities. The first kindergartens were established in 1905 for disadvantaged children, but wealthier people soon came to understand the benefits of pre-
school education for their own children and used their organising ability to obtain them. Since kindergarten teaching was seen as an extension of women's domestic and social work in caring for children it was poorly paid. Conditions were poor and teachers sometimes worked extremely hard for long hours. Like mothers, some teachers saw their work as a labour of love and did not expect to be paid adequately; remnants of this attitude lingered even after the Pre-School Teachers' Association became a part of SAIT and women achieved equal pay with men. Relations between KU and its staff were paternalistic. Knowing that the pre-school adviser would disapprove, Rhonda Arthur waited until the adviser was interstate to call the first meeting to discuss setting up a union of kindergarten teachers in 1962. Arthur subsequently became the first president of the newly formed Pre-School Teachers' Association (PSTA).

PSTA joined SAIT in 1968 when Alison Gibson was president of the association. This move into SAIT was an important step for kindergarten teachers, assisting them to gain advances in salaries and superannuation as well as recognition as members of a body of professionals. During the 1970s, a number of issues were the source of struggle for PSTA in its relations with KU. These included the frequency and severity of rationalisation and the process by which staff were distributed throughout the organisations. Frequent rationalisation demoralised staff and sometimes brought about unethical competition for students. By 1981 the staffing situation had worsened to such an extent that PSTA believed that it was necessary to politicise parents.

When pre-school funding was reduced by the state government in 1981, pre-school teachers and aides in SAIT initiated a long and intensive campaign. For the first time, pre-school teachers, aides and parents rallied on the steps of Parliament House. Myrtle Bank Kindergarten held a stall with cotton wool 'ice-creams', papier-mâché 'cakes' and cardboard 'biscuits' under the slogan: 'It will be a good day when pre-schools get all the money they need and the airforce has to hold a cake stall to buy a bomber'. Several hundred people—teachers, aides, parents and children—packed the entrance to Parliament House during the day, and PSTA was convinced that it was the partnership with parents which was the decisive factor in having funding restored in 1982.

Lack of coordination between KU and the Education Department in the provision of early childhood education sometimes resulted in Child Parent Centres being set up in schools close to kindergartens which had space to spare and the resulting competition for children caused ill-feeling between the different providers. The Keeves Report commented favourably on early childhood education in South Australia but emphasised the importance of integrating pre-school and child-care services at a time when PSTA was asking SAIT to take over industrial cover of child-care workers. SAIT successfully fought off a proposal to accredit two-year trained child-care workers as teachers.
Nearly 300 local residents supported a protest march at Whyalla on 6 July, 1979, against reduced funding for pre-schools. The marches included parents, children, students, unemployed. A media campaign organised by the campaign group resulted in support for the action in articles which appeared in the Whyalla newspapers.

(SA Teachers' Journal photographic collection)

In 1984, the South Australian Labor government acted on a report by Marie Coleman to replace the Kindergarten Union with a Children's Services Office (CSO), a move designed to give the government greater control over the use of public funds and to coordinate early childhood services under one body by taking away responsibility for family before- and after-school care from the Department for Community Welfare. As KU had considerable community support, the move was met with argument and resistance both in the Parliament during debate on the legislation and in the community where supporters, reputedly organised by KU and the Lady Gowrie Kindergarten, marched in opposition to the proposed changes. Some pre-school teachers and teacher aides were also apprehensive about the changes, fearing that being placed in the same location with child care would result in the loss of educational focus of kindergartens and a consequent loss of teacher status and erosion of industrial conditions. When the majority of the PSTA committee supported the changes, some members resigned. Although there was majority support in the PSTA committee, the committee nevertheless wrote to all members of Parliament deploring the lack of time allowed for consultation on the legislation. There
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was a significant change of ethos from charity to career paths with the move from KU to CSO, and conditions were maintained through the strong support of the SAIT field officer. 17

Technical and Further Education members

The establishment of the Department of Further Education at the beginning of the 1970s initiated significant activity among technical and further education staff in SAIT. Prior to this time, vocational education largely consisted of trade and post-trade training provided through what were known as trade schools as well as in the post-primary technical, later known as technical high, schools. Teaching staff of the trade schools were represented in SAIT by the trade teacher and senior trade teacher associations. These staff were generally recruited from industry and neither held, nor were encouraged to acquire, qualifications beyond their trade and post-trade studies, since such qualifications were seen at the time as being sufficient for the purpose of providing vocational training. At the beginning of the 1970s, the nationwide expansion of technical and further education, allied with the concept of lifelong learning, was accompanied by new programs and new approaches in 'adult education'. With the establishment of the Department of Further Education, trade teachers reorganised within SAIT to form the Further Education Association, and those who managed adult education in technical high schools comprised the Adult Education Association. A later development was the formation of the Lecturers' Association with the creation of the position of lecturer in technical colleges consequent on the rapid expansion of the middle-level technician, certificate and general education programs. Lecturers in the main were recruited from commerce and industry for their technical expertise and, although most were graduates, they did not require educational qualifications for appointment.

Discussion and negotiation between the Further Education Association and the Adult Education Association, both of which wanted to open access to 'higher level' teaching, and the Lecturers' Association, which wanted to restrict it and to preserve status differentials, was often heated and bitter. When a unified structure in technical and further education was finally achieved in 1976, an uneasy truce prevailed between the former combatants until they finally amalgamated to form the Further Education Staff Association (FESA) in SAIT. The recognition of the need for unity came after the retirement of Max Bone as the Director-General of Further Education. Bone's successors were driven by more conservative agendas, and relations between the Department and SAIT became increasingly combative.

Until the 1970s, the technical and further education positions in SAIT were held by men. Although women such as Virginia Battye were encouraged to join
the executive of FESA, men continued to hold the majority of leadership positions. A sharp break in this tradition occurred in 1979 with an organised effort on the part of women to win a number of executive positions at the annual general meeting. Carol Morrison was elected as vice-president, Battye as assistant secretary, and Liz Hooper and Kerry Hyson as executive members. Realising what had happened with the elections, somebody at the meeting said in surprise 'It's a takeover!'. With women forming a substantial part of the executive, the agenda now consisted of debates and action on a wider range of issues including equal opportunity and a women's adviser position in TAFE. Often the same women were pushing for change in both TAFE and SAIT. Another critical issue was that of country service. Other issues were transfers, temporary appointments, commonwealth and state funding for TAFE and child care for both students and staff.

The Further Education Association took a number of initiatives in researching, developing and promoting a range of policies designed to improve the operational framework of the Department as well as in the area of staff development. In 1981 the Association published the first edition of the FEA News which reported on professional and industrial issues in the sector. At the same time, the national body representing technical and further education teachers, the Technical and Further Education Teachers' Association of Australia (TAFETA), disbanded and became the Technical and Further Education Teachers' Association of the Australian Teachers' Federation (TAFE TA), a move which was encouraged by the increased involvement of the commonwealth government in the TAFE sector. SAIT, through FEA, contributed to debate and action on educational, professional and industrial issues in the further education system. At both a national and local level, the beginning of the 1980s saw an industrially well-developed further education workforce.

The extent of this development was not clearly recognised by the South Australian Labor government when in 1987 it sought to modify a range of employment conditions in TAFE colleges. Seen by staff to be detrimental to their existing conditions, the government's actions were deemed unacceptable and, for the first time, TAFE teachers took strike action. A decision by the government to transfer college principals and vice-principals from the TAFE teaching service to the public service, where greater control could be exercised over them, generated further hostility and led to a high degree of support for the college managers. An outcome of this dispute was an industrial agreement and the codification of a range of personnel matters which had not before been documented in TAFE. The next phase in relations was the implementation of the Structural Efficiency Principle (SEP), established by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission in 1989 in the context of award and industry restructuring and which set the framework for relations into the 1990s. Among
SAIT president, Bob Jackson, next to speaker David Donaldson at the TAFE rally on the Parliament House steps in 1987. (SA Teachers' Journal photographic collection)

the office holders and activists generating the modernised approach to industrial relations from the 1970s through to the end of the 1980s in the TAFE sector were John Lelliott, Peter Norman, Virginia Battye, Colin Leaker and George Hackett.\textsuperscript{18} Bob Jackson, SAIT president from 1984 to 1987, was a TAFE principal.

SAIT and Aboriginal education

South Australia has a long history of the employment of Aboriginal education workers, but their generally poor conditions were for a long time ignored by unions. In the mid-1970s schools which were previously church schools were taken over by the state government and in 1981 the title of Aboriginal education worker replaced earlier titles of Aboriginal teacher aide and school assistants. SAIT's initial involvement in Aboriginal education was largely the product of the commitment of field officer Bill Hignett and presidents John Gregory and Leonie Ebert who cooperated with Aboriginal teachers and Aboriginal education workers such as Pat Buckskin. They also worked closely with
Aboriginal Education Workers (AEW) from the Pitjantjatjara Lands being inserviced in 1994 by Don Callope, SAIT Aboriginal Education Worker, on the Australian Education Union Report prepared by Bill Hignett and Pat Buckskin. The report, which was to form the basis of a national award for AEWs, was modelled on the Industrial Agreement developed in 1987 for AEWs by SAIT. (Provided by SAIT organisers)

Paul Hughes, chairman of the South Australian Aboriginal Education Consultative Committee, and Peter Buckskin, a member of the National Aboriginal Education Committee. After a new duty statement for Aboriginal education workers was obtained in 1981 inspections of the work done by these workers and the conditions under which they carried out their work began in 1982. In recognition of the complexity of the work uncovered by these inspections, a new award was proposed. This proposal was met with hostility from the Education Department which argued that the workers could be covered under the school assistants’ award, and it was only after pressure from the National Aboriginal Education Committee and with ministerial intervention from Lynn Arnold that changes were considered. Even then it was not until 1987 that the award finally came into effect giving adequate recognition to the work of Aboriginal education workers.
Much of the work of SAIT field officers working with Aboriginal schools in remote areas was to do with conditions of teaching, staffing of classes, lack of preparation for teachers, teacher housing and teachers' relations with the communities. One example of housing provided for teachers has been described as a 'dog box'. The two people who shared it had only a curtain for privacy and were expected to store supplies there for up to three months.

From the early 1980s, white teachers intending to teach in Aboriginal schools were provided with some training in Aboriginal studies and an induction program. In the late 1980s, however, a level of tension developed between SAIT's industrial focus for workers and moves for self-determination in Aboriginal communities. This sometimes had the effect of bringing teachers in Aboriginal schools into conflict with communities which were seeking to develop new directions for their schools. These tensions and conflicts inevitably strained relations between SAIT and Aboriginal communities and leaders, relations which were not restored until the early 1990s.

Leadership

The election of John Gregory, a high school teacher, as president in 1978 marked a significant shift away from long-established patterns of leadership in which (predominantly primary school) headmasters held the position of president. Gregory's election marked a watershed in SAIT, demonstrating the capacity of the membership to bring about change in the style and substance of the union.

A further change in leadership took place in 1982 when Leonie Ebert, a high school principal, was elected for 1982–83, the first time a woman had been elected president of SAIT. Ebert had been elected 1981 female vice-president with David Tonkin as male vice-president on a ticket of 'change, strong leadership and action'. She had also been the first chairperson of the SAIT status of women committee when Helen Menzies was appointed the first women's adviser in SAIT. Tonkin was re-elected in 1982 with Clare McCarty as female vice-president. In the years 1982–84, activist teachers held a near or slim majority on the executive. Leonie Ebert was defeated in the elections for the 1984–85 presidency by Bob Jackson, principal of a Technical and Further Education college. Although he gained a smaller primary vote than Ebert, Jackson was elected on preferences from a third candidate, Peter Francis, a high school teacher. Jackson later stood unsuccessfully as the endorsed Liberal candidate against the Labor Minister for Education, Greg Crafter, in the state seat of Norwood.

While executive members were not in complete agreement during these years, they initiated or coordinated several significant campaigns and projects with the support of membership as well as that of an expanded secretariat and
field officers. These included campaigns on class sizes, a policy on Aboriginal education, campaigns on salaries and education expenditure and the development of a policy on curriculum. While many of the campaigns were around issues which had long been of concern to teachers, the style of leadership was more action-oriented than in previous years, and the arguments for more decisive policy development and action were articulated in terms which did not accept the politics–education dichotomy of the customary terms of debate.

Division

There were, however, two issues on which opinion was significantly divided during this period: one was a general division over support for party policies during the 1982 state election campaign, and the other was a sectional division on the question of funding for private schools.
Dissatisfaction with the progress of policy implementation by the state Liberal government was expressed not only in the strike action of 1981, but through the general channels of SAIT activity. Confrontation with the Minister had led to a break in the conciliatory approach, and during the election campaign of 1982, the Minister, Harold Allison, accused SAIT of being blatantly political to the point that he considered breaking off personal contact with the president, Leonie Ebert. SAIT’s election material was criticised by sections of the Adelaide media for its political nature. Annual conference in October passed a lengthy motion which asserted SAIT’s right to comment on party policies in line with its aims of furthering education; compared the policies of the parties with favourable statements on the Labor policy, although it did not advocate directly a vote for the Labor Party; condemned Liberal policy and performance; and stated that it would continue to campaign regardless of which party was elected.

It is significant that although no direct vote was advocated by the conference, the comparative statement of support for Labor policy was interpreted by many members as such advocacy. The doctrine of political neutrality still retained considerable support, and its importance was shown again in argument about a decision at the 1983 ATF conference to mount a national education campaign. SAIT was careful to avoid any statement of support in relation to the policies of the major parties in the 1984 federal election. In the December 1985 state election SAIT adopted a stance similar to the one it had taken in 1982 by refusing to intervene in the election campaign. Instead it analysed the performance of the Labor government, comparing it with the previous Liberal government and found Labor ahead of its rival. This was publicised in a separate state election issue of the Journal. It was clear in the minds of teachers and others that SAIT preferred to work with the Labor government, although ‘there [were] still great areas of need and innovation yet to be looked at’.19

The second division occurred as a result of disagreement by a section of teachers with SAIT’s campaign, in conjunction with ATF, for a moratorium on funding private schools. In 1972 the Association of Teachers in Independent Schools (ATIS) was formed to provide private school teachers with a voice in SHIT, and from the beginning there was tension over the state aid question. SAIT had evolved a needs-based funding policy, but when SAIT reaffiliated with ATF, some members of ATIS claimed that their interests were not provided for, although SAIT had represented them industrially. In March 1984, SAIT council passed a resolution, by 200 to 4 votes, calling for ‘a three year moratorium on all private school funding to allow a period of public discussion to enable the development of a responsible non-government school funding policy that addresses need’ and ‘that during the moratorium, redistribution of funds in favour of the poorer private schools from within the frozen overall level of
non-government funding be pursued'. At short notice an ATIS meeting was held at the SAIT building in May 1984, at which ATIS disaffiliated from SAIT while representatives of the law and media waited outside.10 Private school teachers who wished to remain in SAIT formed a new association—the South Australian Independent Schools Staff Association (SAISSA, later the SAIT Non-Government Divisional Council)—with the aim of working for support within SAIT and attempting to change its policy on funding.

The break meant that although SAIT continued to represent all state school teachers, it no longer represented all teachers in South Australia. A decade after the break, an article in the Journal suggested that the Catholic Education Office (CEO), alarmed at the increasing militancy and radicalism in SAIT in the early 1980s, encouraged an 'independent' union for teachers in Catholic schools:

The CEO organised an amazing series of meetings of teaching staff in February and March of 1984 involving the Catholic hierarchy and leading Catholic Education administrators. There must have been also intense covert lobbying especially among those school principals who tended to exhibit an independence of mind and an ability to sort the rhetoric from the reality. Most principals could exert tremendous pressure on staff to 'toe the official line' and could effectively discourage any 'radical' tendencies their staff might have entertained such as setting up a union organisation within the school.21

Following the disaffiliation, an award application was lodged on behalf of ATIS (later the Association of Non-Government Education Employees, ANGEE) in July, and in January 1985 the award was granted in the Industrial Court ahead of an application lodged on behalf of private school teachers by SAIT. The striking similarity between the two applications gave rise to a suggestion that ATIS had copied the draft SAIT award and used a word processor in the Catholic Education Office to lodge the ATIS application before SAIT lodged its award. After the granting of the ATIS award, it was inevitable that its aim of registration as a separate union would be granted and, despite objections from SAIT, this was allowed by the Industrial Registrar in February 1985. In his reasons, the Registrar stated that he did 'not consider that the members of ATIS could conveniently belong to SAIT'. He recognised that SAIT had not neglected the interests of its private school members 'apart from the issue of Government funding to Independent Schools', and on this question he considered 'that a legitimate interest of teachers in Independent Schools is the continued expansion and improvement of the system in which they work. That interest was not only submerged under the umbrella of SAIT but was actively opposed.'22
At the time of the hearing it was claimed that the membership of ATIS was 885 and that of SAISSA was 266. While it might be argued that the Registrar's judgement was a political and not an industrial one, it was supported by the argument that similar separate associations existed for private school teachers in other states. Because of the nature of this disaffiliation, the judgement did not provide a precedent for breakaways of other sectional groups in SAIT.

A major area of policy debate in 1985 was the controversial Draft Policy on Homosexual and Lesbian Teachers. The draft policy was the outcome of a process which had begun in 1979 with the publication of a draft anti-discrimination policy adopted by council in 1980. A broader policy, which added a clause to include discussion of homosexuality in the curriculum, eventually went to a plebiscite of members late in 1985. The course of this debate was followed with interest by the media and by groups such as the National Civic Council which gave prominence to the views of a leading opponent of the draft policy, Alec Talbot, president of the Primary Principals' Association. In the referendum, members reaffirmed the anti-discrimination clause but rejected the inclusion of an 'open' approach to homosexuality in school curricula.

In 1986 the executive was divided between supporters of the president, Bob Jackson—the 'SAIT Independents', who had a majority—and those who stood on a ticket of 'experience and commitment'. Two issues in SAIT were central to the campaign for the election of this executive: the position of the general secretary and the policy on homosexual and lesbian teachers.

The general secretary, Jan Lee, was dismissed by the 1985 executive although she had been reappointed by the 1984 executive before it left office. The dismissal was rejected by a majority on council, and there followed a prolonged conflict between council and executive over the respective powers of these bodies in relation to appointments. Intense argument also occurred within the pages of the Journal and in the Adelaide press. Legal action in the form of appeals, against both the dismissal and the executive decision to ignore a February council resolution calling for Lee's reinstatement, resulted in two important decisions: first, the South Australian Industrial Commission ordered the reinstatement of Jan Lee, deeming her dismissal 'harsh, unjust and unreasonable'; second, a majority decision of the Full Bench of the Commission affirmed the powers of council over the executive on major decisions.

Equitable service scheme

That new strategic conditions existed in the 1980s was forcibly demonstrated by divisions between city and country teachers on the proposal for an equitable service scheme (ESS). A special council meeting in September 1980 adopted a
Close to 250 teachers attended the transfer–action meeting at Port Augusta in November 1980. The meeting formed the Country Teachers' Action Group to work towards a more equitable system of country service.

(SA Teachers’ Journal photographic collection)

policy for country teaching with a preamble arguing the need for the government to provide incentives and containing action by SAIT to achieve incentives for country teaching. The preamble created dissatisfaction among country teachers who saw it as a subterfuge by city teachers to avoid country service; instead the country teachers emphasised that part of the policy which guaranteed transfers to the city after four years country teaching. A Country Teachers' Action Group was formed with the aim of ensuring a guaranteed right of return, and country teachers actively utilised their school-based associations to achieve this goal. Between the adoption of the policy and a council meeting in June 1981, a joint Education Department – SAIT working party reached agreement on a city–country transfer scheme. The June council meeting accepted the scheme and defeated a move by a city primary school principal and the president of the Primary Teachers' Association to refer the scheme to a plebiscite. Annual conference in July confirmed the council policy.

Defeated in their moves for a plebiscite at these meetings, some city teachers requested a special conference in order to commission a plebiscite on the
Improved housing for teachers in the country has always been a major issue for teachers in SAPTU and in SAIT. Pictured here is the delegation to Liberal MP Mr Goldsworthy in 1981. From left: SAIT vice-president David Tonkin, liaison officer Bill Hignett and teachers Geoff Bailey and Paul Wilton.

In the 50s SAIT ran a very aggressive campaign in the Teachers’ Journal called ‘Pig in a Poke’ against poor housing. (SA Teachers’ Journal photographic collection)

policy, and despite concern that such business may be out of order, a special conference, at which attendance was estimated to be more than 1000 members, was held in October. This conference voted in favour of a plebiscite on the ESS, but during the meeting some 340 country teachers walked out to stage their own meeting, arguing that the move for a plebiscite was both out of order and an attempt by city teachers to delay the implementation of the scheme. Although there was a 67 per cent affirmative response to the scheme, the divisions had been protracted and bitter. During this dispute fragmentation was clearly reflected in the differential responses of city and country teachers to their
working conditions, and unity on other issues, such as school assistants, was difficult to sustain. Some country teachers promoted a ‘Campaign Against the City Peril’ and there was talk of an alternative union. Country teachers had demonstrated the importance of school-based associations as a strategic factor in the SAIT structure, giving further impetus to the case for a restructure, and country teachers could use their voting strength to support candidates for leadership positions on the basis of their support for improvement in country conditions. This issue was the most divisive in SAIT since the debate over ATF, and it took many years before trust between former opponents was restored.

Industrial and educational politics combined

The 1980s saw a breakdown in the dichotomy between industrial and educational areas of union action. Leonie Ebert and David Tonkin as presidents, and as activists in conjunction with others before taking on leadership positions, encouraged a broader vision of unionism than had previously prevailed. Of

President David Tonkin speaking at a teachers’ salaries campaign rally on the steps of Parliament House in 1990. Clare McCarty is standing behind him.
(SA Teachers’ Journal photographic collection)
'Who owns the Curriculum' conference organiser Craig Campbell with guest speaker Jean Blackburn. The conference was planned and organised by the professional development committee.

The conference resulted in the development of a better curriculum policy for the Union, an acknowledgment that a failure to affect curriculum would be a failure to affect working conditions and the humane education of children. The conference discussed inadequacies in SAIT's resource distribution and structure where particular responsibility in the area of curriculum planning and policy was lacking. (SA Teachers' Journal photographic collection)

critical importance to the cultural change that reshaped SAIT in the 1980s was the participation of activists in the ginger groups of the late 1960s and 1970s, where ideas and strategies were developed and energy for change was harnessed. Because the political agenda in SAIT was opened up, ideological divisions were sharpened in the 1980s. While this caused tensions, both in the running of the organisation and in debates that took place in the schools and associations, it also laid the groundwork for an organisation which was to become more adept at putting educational issues more clearly on the political agenda.

An example was the curriculum policy initiated and developed when Ebert
Courses for SAIT representatives were not formalised until 1981. They were held in country locations as well as Macghey House, Adelaide. Enrolments to these courses were also open to interested members.

SAIT's first-ever Union training seminar for women was held in 1979. Pictured here are SAIT reps and lecturers at the first course held in the SAIT building, Parkside. (SA Teachers' Journal)

was president and finally produced with the leadership of left members of the executive when these members had a majority under the Jackson presidency. This was to be extended in later years under Tonkin's leadership to a curriculum guarantee which provided a synthesis of a range of policies and enabled SAIT for a while to exercise effective control over the agenda in relations between the union and the employer. Despite the longstanding emphasis on professionalism in South Australian teachers' unions, it was not until 1981 that SAIT took an active approach to developing a curriculum policy. Craig Campbell, a secondary school teacher and member of Teachers For an Active SAIT, was instrumental in the development of this policy, chairing a policy committee and steering the policy through conference.

SAIT took on professional development as a major activity in the early 1980s partly because of inadequate policy and direction by the employers, but also in the positive sense of educating teachers and other education workers as unionists. Eleanor Ramsay, women's adviser, worked closely with teachers on developing an approach to sexual harassment, and the union conducted training for representatives on selection panels. By this time SAIT had become an education industry union—it covered teachers in schools, in TAFE colleges and in kindergartens, and it also included within its coverage Aboriginal education workers and school assistants. With the withdrawal of commonwealth funds for professional development, SAIT took the initiative to enter this arena and to
place itself at the centre of the working lives of its members. For example, by
being able to organise seminars for school assistants who wanted to know about
areas such as classroom management and curriculum matters, SAIT gained an
edge over the other unions which had members in the school assistants and
pre-school area—the Public Service Association and the Miscellaneous Workers
Union. SAIT formalised union education in 1981 and provided temporary
relieving teacher cover for teachers attending union courses. These initiatives
also enabled SAIT to demonstrate to teachers’ unions in the other states the
usefulness of being an industry union and to argue persuasively a case in the
South Australian Industrial Commission for the alteration of rules to gain award
coverage for other education workers.

Later, through its membership of the Australian Education Union (AEU),
SAIT argued the case for teachers’ organisations to be expanded into industry
unions. Based further on SAIT’s example, AEU’s rules were designed to ensure
adequate representation of women. An example is that the federal conference
of AEU and each delegation consists of at least half women.

Overall, the 1980s was a period of expansion both in the nature of mem-
bership of SAIT, in the scope of its activities as a union and in its contribution
to teacher unionism at a national level. However, by the end of the 1980s, the
budget was under strain and it was necessary to evaluate strategic directions.

Field officers

Of all the democratic projects initiated by or carried out in conjunction with
SAIT, the most significant for union democracy in SAIT was the restructure
of the 1980s. Proposals for a restructure of SAIT with school-based associations
as the basic organisational unit flowing to a delegate, rather than an open
conference, were finally agreed upon in 1984, and in 1985, with the support of
a grant from the federal government, a project was initiated on democratic
decision making in schools. But before discussing union democracy, it is neces-
sary to look at the evolution of the role of field officers in SAIT as an important
development in the capacity of the union to provide support to the membership.

As early as 1971, the membership committee had identified a need for more
extensive direct union contact with members and potential members. At this
time, the number of full members of SAIT was just over 10 000 and student
teacher membership was around 3500. In a report to SAIT in 1971, Bob Harris,
assistant general secretary, pointed out that the union paid its professional
officers less than other teachers’ unions in Australia and expected them to
accept a higher ratio of members to officers than the other unions. Harris also
pointed out that his position combined the duties of membership, publicity and
research and that this did not provide for organisational effectiveness. He argued for the appointment of a field officer.24

Further action on the issue was taken at a meeting between association representatives and Bevan Connor from the SAIT office in November 1975. This meeting discussed a proposal from SAIT’s structure committee that a liaison officer be appointed to the western region as a pilot scheme. Such a person would be based in Whyalla in 1976 and seconded to SAIT for three days a week, providing relief teaching on the other days. The meeting strongly supported the idea but wanted the person to be employed full time. Although they saw the scheme as having some potential problems they saw it as desirable for a number of reasons. It would, for example make union staff available when they were needed and would promote the profile of SAIT in schools. SAIT proceeded with the idea and appointed Mike Guidera as its first liaison officer. When Guidera indicated his intention to resign at the end of 1978, the impetus was provided for a further assessment of the need for such officers, and a proposal for additional officers was presented to SAIT principal officers. Guidera’s reports to executive had indicated the value of the role he occupied.25

By the 1980s, liaison officers were replaced by field officers, who were given responsibilities for organising and for looking after sectional interests, and the position became an integral part of the SAIT organisation. Even though arguments in support of these positions had been advanced since the early 1970s, some people in the organisation objected to them on the grounds that they resembled positions in trade unions. For this reason, the title of organiser, although favoured by some, was not used. Some of the major issues that the field officers worked on were teachers’ housing, accommodation for single teachers and, particularly for country teachers, transfer rights. At first field officers in country locations were accommodated in Departmental premises, which gave the impression of limiting their independence, but SAIT eventually gained independent accommodation for them. The work of field officers has always combined pastoral care, action on SAIT campaigns, the external promotion of SAIT, including raising its profile in schools, and providing a vital link between the organisations and worksites.

SAIT restructure

The restructuring of SAIT which began in the late 1970s transformed the associational base which had lasted, albeit with modifications, since the formation of the South Australian Public Teachers’ Union at the end of the previous century. At the end of the 1970s the most powerful associations, in addition to those representing principals, were the High School Teachers’ Association and
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the Primary Teachers' Association. These were influential associations, often with progressive policies, but they were not necessarily representative of their potential membership and, for this reason, not widely regarded as democratic in their decision making. Arguments for a restructure were based on the principle that the fundamental unit of democracy in a union is, or should be, the workplace. Against this it was argued that teachers were generally conservative and that workplace democracy would not lead to a progressive union. School-based associations could neutralise the power of both the principals' associations and the teachers' associations and for this reason gained the support of members who were otherwise politically opposed.

In the process of restructuring, the old question of whether the annual conference should be a membership or delegates' conference was finally resolved in favour of a delegates' conference. In between the school-based associations and the annual conference other layers of decision making were inserted. Branch council was replaced with area councils, divisional councils and state council. This structure provided for greater membership participation. But the increased layers of councils meant that not only were delegates required to attend more meetings but that motions at the school level may well be lost on the way to state council and conference. With schools now the basis of SAIT organisation, the number of units in the union increased dramatically. However, not all these units were equally active at the end of the 1980s, and the central organisation continued to have an important educative, supportive and propaganda function.
By the formal provision of equality of representation of men and women on its central bodies, SAIT in 1951 removed the source of fragmentation which caused the most serious split in teachers' organisations in South Australia and once again established unity among teachers. In its structure the new organisation displayed the features of trade union democracy: grassroots membership participation through associations; representation from this level to the central decision-making bodies; an annual conference open to all members, with the power to determine policy; and general membership election of members of the executive which ran the organisation between conferences and councils. This structure was changed to a worksite base in the 1980s and in the view of the majority of members, union democracy was enhanced by the change. Further structural changes have taken account of the needs of an industrially based union.

Although SAIT was in a better position to act on behalf of teachers than the separate organisations which preceded it, unity at times became a preoccupation in which issues likely to be divisive were not confronted in a sustained manner. A tension between professionalism and trade unionism lay beneath this preoccupation with unity, creating an ever-present dilemma in the tactics to be adopted in the pursuit of teachers' occupational goals. SAIT attempted to be both a professional association and a trade union but this dual strategy was predicated on the assumption that once they had attained the elements which constitute the professional model teachers would be granted the status they felt had so long eluded them. To achieve this end, teachers were concerned to establish their political neutrality, and in the name of this doctrine avoided for a long time direct links with the trade union movement.

This strategy was consciously changed by a redefinition of the professional
and industrial interests of education workers in the 1980s. Here for the first time teachers took strike action, and the lessons learnt then were to be applied in the 1990s. After the decision to withdraw from ATF in 1979, South Australian teachers were isolated from effective action with interstate teachers, and the realisation that in order to have any influence on public policy they would require a unity stronger than that provided by SAIT played a major part in the 1982 SAIT referendum. Further, the plan by commonwealth and state governments to introduce a wage freeze heightened teachers’ awareness that their ‘professional’ position was being undermined. SAIT reaffiliated with ATF and joined the South Australian Trades and Labour Council. However, SAIT has not joined the Australian Labor Party, or any other party, and most of its leaders have not felt constrained by party allegiance.

Much of the internal politics of SAIT, as with any union, is a product of attempts to manoeuvre people and policies between levels of the organisation. A more important aspect of SAIT politics, though, is the extent to which the organisational unity of teachers has succeeded in furthering the interests of teachers as an occupational group. The stated purpose of unity was to enable teachers to work collectively for the improvement of education in South Australia, by which they understood a lifting of their status, as well as the
provision of better buildings and facilities for themselves and their students. Crucially, though, unity does not mean professional self-government. The doctrine of unity, by appealing to an ideal, may enhance a sense of collegial identity, but this is not the same as collegiate control of the occupation, as established in the collegiate forms of the 'higher' professions. Even with a united organisation, teachers have not been able to persuade or force the state to accede to their requests for professional control of teaching.

Changes in SAIT strategy in the last few years have been the product of changes in the union, in the management of education in South Australia and in broader political and economic areas. SAIT president, David Tonkin, summarised the new industrial relations agenda in education for the 1990s as being about the purpose, control and content of education and about the organisation of teachers' work. He also argued that with attacks by the government on workers' compensation, teachers would have to fight for their civil rights as well as their industrial conditions. Tonkin was right. Further, the agenda would be shaped by the response of both Labor and Liberal state governments to the State Bank crisis and to developments at a national and global level.

The argument that improvements in the conditions of learning can be tied to improvements in the working conditions of teachers was developed at a sophisticated level in the curriculum guarantee agreement negotiated between SAIT and the Labor government at the end of the 1980s. This historically important agreement which covered wages, career structures and staffing issues, was used in a work value case in 1990. While this case resulted in South Australian teachers obtaining the highest salaries in Australia at the time, the government broke the guarantee by reducing the number of teachers. The cynicism of teachers towards the Labor Party induced by this action was reinforced by further attacks on public education by the Labor government. It seemed to teachers that their industrial restraint had again been taken for granted. Further attacks on education by the Brown Liberal government, bolstered by the report of the Commission of Audit, signalled that the 1990s would be a period of turbulence. A challenge for SAIT as a result of these attacks has been to develop strategic alliances for a broad defence of public education against economic rationalism. But South Australia has not been unique in this regard, and a further challenge for teachers' unions in all states has been to forge a national organisation and a national strategy.

There are likely to be increasing strains placed on the capacity of SAIT to act in the interest of all its members at a time when deregulation of working conditions is part of the industrial relations agenda of most governments. Divisions existed at the end of the 1980s between city and country teachers over the provision of incentives versus compulsion to undertake country teaching;
between men and women teachers, and among women teachers, on whether married women should be required to teach wherever the Department chose to send them; between tenured teachers, contract teachers, relieving teachers and unemployed teachers on a charter of working conditions; and between teachers in promotion positions, and those who were not, over the career structure. Should the bases of these divisions remain unresolved, the tensions and strains will pose problems for SAIT strategy.

There is still a challenge for SAIT to deal with gender differences at various levels of education, particularly career paths for women. When Lizzie Hales spoke out at the 1906 conference of SAPTU, she expressed the concerns of women teachers and set the stage for a long battle by women for the recognition and removal of the barriers to their advancement as education workers. This history has traced the politics of the formation of separate associations for women teachers in South Australia and has discussed their achievements. With the reformation of a single union of teachers again in 1951, structural arrangements were carefully put in place to provide for equal representation of men and women in decision-making bodies. Equal pay was achieved after a long struggle, but barriers persisted to the career advancement of women. Since the late 1970s, SAIT has recognised the pervasiveness of these barriers by the appointment of a women's adviser, a title later changed to that of women's officer at the end of the 1980s. But even with merit selection and equal opportunity regulation, there are barriers to the careers of women teachers, and there is still evidence in the 1990s of unequal career paths. A decline in the number of female principals and the particular effects on women of the casualisation of the education workforce pose particular challenges to education unions.

In 1993, SAIT supported its president, Clare McCarty, as a candidate for the Legislative Council. The justification for direct intervention in the elections was based on arguments similar to those mounted by Bob Harris in his 'Better Education' bid for a 1970 Senate seat. At that time, SAIT executive urged members to support Harris who was SAIT's publicity officer, as a 'Better Education' candidate for the Senate. The position adopted then by the executive was one of supporting Harris' stand and campaign rather than supporting him personally. There was moral and practical support, but no financial support was given or implied by the executive action in 1970. In contrast, state council in 1993, with only one dissenting voice, took a clear decision to endorse the SAIT president as the Independent Education candidate, and to support that endorsement with funds of up to $100 000.

SAIT went further in 1993 than in 1970 by providing direct and material support for the candidate. The arguments were that neither major party was sufficiently committed to education to warrant the support of SAIT, and that it was necessary, regardless of which party commanded a majority in the lower
house, to ensure that the upper house was not dominated by one of the political parties and that it acted as an independent house of review. According to the SAIT argument, an independent member representing education would act in the public interest as a watchdog on the government. By this approach to the elections SAIT could sustain the argument that it was a 'non-political' organisation in the sense that it did not support or oppose either major political party and that it was supporting an independent candidate in the interests of education.

SAIT's approach was heavily influenced by the Victorian experience following the election of the Kennett Liberal government in 1992. In that state the Liberal government, with a majority in the upper house, was able to close schools and sack teachers without effective opposition. Determined that whichever party won government in South Australia would not obtain a majority in the upper house and be able to pass whatever measures it wished, SAIT targeted the Legislative Council. John McCombe, SAIT general secretary, was thrown out of the ALP for a time because he conducted McCarty's campaign on behalf of the union.

This strategy represented pressure group politics at a sophisticated level—education of the public and the exercise of influence on the major political parties based on thorough documentation of needs in a sensitive policy area. In adopting the campaign slogan, 'Education is the Key', SAIT was able to stress the relationship between education, employment, the economy and the environment. The aim of the campaign was to create a public awareness of the importance of education to all other aspects of life and to signify the need for a sufficient number of well-qualified teachers to provide a sound base for the future. SAIT rejected the doctrine of economic rationalism and sought government guarantees of smaller class sizes, pre-school education for every child and the maintenance of country education. It also demanded that social justice considerations be taken seriously. Election material to members also listed protection of industrial conditions as part of the platform, although this was not stressed in the public campaign material, and through its articulate candidate, the campaign emphasised the public interest.

Because of the complicated system of proportional representation used for the Legislative Council, the outcome of Council elections was not known for some weeks after the election. In the House of Assembly, the extent of the Labor Party's heavy loss was clearly evident on the night of the election, and this added to the political interest in the outcome of the Council elections. It was only in the final distribution of preferences that McCarty was eliminated from the possibility of gaining a seat in the Council. Labor gained a vital seat to prevent the Liberal government from gaining control of the Council, and the Democrats held the balance of power as they had previously done. Another
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achievement for Clare McCarty was her election as the first female president of the South Australian United Trades and Labour Council in 1990.

Following the election of the Liberal government, SAIT took action to protect its organisational base, having observed the Kennett government in Victoria abolish payroll deductions for union subscriptions and change industrial legislation. SAIT already had in place a system for the direct debiting of members’ subscriptions which it was able to bring into action should a government abolish payroll deductions in this state. In the event, the Brown government did not seek to abolish payroll deductions but, rather, required members to sign up every year, a position which SAIT rejected. SAIT’s institution of the system of direct debiting of members has enabled it to retain a high level of membership, unlike other major public sector unions, and has symbolically reinforced its independence from government. Nevertheless, there was some loss of membership with an inevitable effect on the SAIT budget, and a consequence has been the loss and reorganisation of some jobs in the SAIT office.

SAIT’s progress on establishing itself as an education industry union in the 1990s has had an effect on teachers’ unions interstate and on negotiations about the character of a national union for education workers. The position of early childhood workers, Aboriginal education workers and school services officers (SSOs, formerly school assistants) has been consolidated in the union after some uncertainties. While there are challenges ahead for these groups of workers, including the development of a national award for Aboriginal education workers based on the South Australian award, more difficult challenges are likely to be faced by the TAFE section of the union. Employment conditions in TAFE are under threat, with a high level of hourly paid and part-time work, much of which is negotiated individually, and there is pressure for separate agreements at TAFE institutes and even for separate schools within institutes. Closer relationships were developed in the early 1990s between SAIT, with its Non-Government Divisional Council, and the Association of Non-Government Education Employees (ANGEE), mainly because of the closer cooperation between education unions at the national level. Here there is a recognition across sectors that education is under threat and that strategic cooperation by unions is necessary in areas such as the drive for productivity bargaining.

In discussions leading to the formation of SAIT it was agreed that the executive body of the new union would be established on the principle of 50 per cent representation of women. This remained a powerful principle and practice in SAIT, although as a result of changes to other governing bodies the principle was not sustained throughout the union. Three of the last five presidents of SAIT were women, and South Australian education unionism enters a new era in 1997 with a woman, Janet Giles, as president of the South Australian Branch of the Australian Education Union.
March 1996, SAIT members took industrial action and held a rally at the Victoria Park Racecourse to achieve improvements in salaries, workloads and class sizes and to obtain the right to move from a State Award to a Federal one. (The Advertiser)

At the beginning of 1997, the South Australian Institute of Teachers formally became the South Australian Branch of the Australian Education Union. This new union identity formalises the industry links which South Australian education workers already have with their interstate colleagues. Almost 70 years earlier, teaching was declared by the High Court to be outside the definition of industry, a decision which was accepted until 1983 and which placed restrictions on the development of a national union for education workers. However, the centenary of continuous unionism for teachers, and more recently other education workers, in South Australia coincides with the creation of a federal union identity for Australian education workers. It also coincides with the introduction of the industrial relations agenda of a conservative coalition government elected in 1996 at the national level, an agenda which will provide a challenge to the new union.
Notes

Introduction

1 Colin Thiele, Grains of Mustard Seed, Education Department, South Australia, 1975.
6 See for example, B. Bessant and A. D. Spaull, Teachers in Conflict, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1972; Bruce Mitchell, Teachers, Education and Politics: A History of Organizations of Public School Teachers in New South Wales, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1975; A. D. Spaull (ed.), Australian Teachers: From Colonial Schoolmasters to Militant Professionals, Macmillan Australia, South Melbourne, 1977. An unpublished work on South Australian teachers to the end of the first half of this century is B. K. Hyams, State School Teachers in South Australia 1847–1950, PhD Thesis, Flinders University, 1972. In addition to these major studies, there is a large number of other unpublished studies and numerous journal articles.
7 See, e.g., 'Politics at State Level: South Australia', Current Affairs Bulletin, 11 September 1967.
Notes


Chapter 1

4 Register, 5 March 1851.
5 Register, 15 April, 4 June, 1851.
6 *Educational Journal of South Australia*, Vol. 1, No. 1, August 1857. The final volume was that of Number 12, 22 July 1858. Held in State Library.
11 Central Board of Education, Minutes, 1858.
14 The *South Australian Advertiser*, 1 October 1870, pp. 1073-7.
15 Mr Nadebaum was elected the first minute secretary of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union at a conference in 1896. See 'South Australian Public Teachers Union: A Brief Account of Its Early History', *SA Teachers Journal*, 24 June 1915, p. 12.
16 Hyams, p. 1.
17 Thiele, p. 21.
18 Miller, p. 36.
19 Register, 4 October 1875.
20 Thiele, p. 16.
21 Central Board of Education, Minutes, 1875.
22 Council of Education, Minutes, 1876.
23 Council of Education, Minutes, 1876.
24 Council of Education, Minutes, 1876.
26 For example, letter from Charles Webb, Secretary, SAPTA to J. A. Hartley, Esq., on matters raised by the committee of the Association, 6 March 1877. Council of Education, Minutes, 1877.
27 Council of Education, Minutes, 1876.
28 Thiele, pp. 24-5.
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30 Thiele, p. 30; Register, 18 July 1881.
31 Thiele, p. 43.
32 Annual Report 1884, SAPP, 1885, p. 35.
33 Inspector-General's Report, SAPP, 1886, p. xiv.
34 Inspector Clark, SAPP, 1886, p. 17; Inspectors Hosking and Burgan, SAPP, 1887, p. 8.
35 SAPP, 1886, p. 5.
36 SAPP, 1886, p. 17.
37 Thiele, Ch. 4.
38 Education Gazette, 1885, p. 40.
39 Education Gazette, 1885, p. 47.
40 Education Gazette, 1885, p. 54.
41 Education Gazette, 1886, p. 32.
42 Education Gazette, 1885, p. 40.
43 Education Gazette, 1885, pp. 20–1.
45 There had been earlier (unsuccessful) attempts to establish such a journal for teachers in order to discuss matters of interest 'which could not very well be introduced into an official publication like the Education Gazette'. Minutes of SATA Monthly Meeting, 25 August 1892. At Monthly Meeting, 10 February 1893, it was reported that the first issue of The Educator would shortly appear. (SATA Minute Book, ANU Archives.)
46 Education Gazette, 1887, p. 16.
47 Balaklava, Burra, Gawler, Gladstone, Moorooroo, Orroroo, South Eastern, Southern Yorke's Peninsula, Yorke's Peninsula, Quorn, and South Australian. Education Gazette, 1886. The Gazette (1886, p. 24) reported an average attendance at Yorke's Peninsula association meetings of 33 teachers, and an attendance of 40 at the 1889 Gladstone annual meeting (Gazette, 1889, p. 109). These and other reports indicate that country association meetings were better attended on average than the SATA meetings in Adelaide.
49 Education Gazette, 1887, pp. 40, 48.
50 Education Gazette, 1888, p. 46; 1889, p. 40.
51 SATA Minute Book, ANU Archives, 1891–92.
52 Thiele, p. 48.
53 In September 1890, a SATA Committee Meeting 'was called to confer with the Assistants' Association Committee on the matter of corporal punishment as regards assistants specially. The question was discussed at length in a conversational manner, and further action postponed pending an attempt to bring about a meeting of all head masters and assistants concerned.' SATA Committee Meeting, 11 September, 1890. (SATA Minute Book, ANU Archives.)

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54 Miller, p. 372.
55 SATA Minute Book, ANU Archives, 4 June 1891; 15 September 1891; 10 October 1891.
56 Among the public school headmasters were W. L. Neale, J. W. Kennedy (1890), T. H. Noye, W. G. Grasby, M. M. Maughan, and Alfred Williams (1891), and A. Mueller (1892). Minute Book of the Teachers' Guild of South Australia and Collegiate Schools Association 1891–93, and Collegiate Schools Association 1893–1905. (Held in Mortlock Library.)
57 Minutes of SATA Monthly Meeting, November 1892, (SATA Minute Book, ANU Archives), and Education Gazette, December 1892, p. 158.
58 Minute Book of Collegiate Schools Association 1893–1905.
59 The SATA Committee decided on 1 May 1893 to place the matter of affiliation of the country associations with the Guild on the agenda of the next monthly meeting (Minutes of SATA Committee, 1 May 1893. SATA Minute Book, ANU Archives), but it was not discussed again.
61 Gumeracha Teachers Association, Education Gazette, 1892, p. 51.
62 Gumeracha Teachers Association, Education Gazette, 1894, pp. 75, 137.
63 Gladstone Teachers Association, Education Gazette, 1894, p. 134; 1895, p. 39.
64 Minutes of SATA Committee Meeting, 16 February, 1893. (SATA Minute Book, ANU Archives).
65 Minutes of SATA Monthly Meeting, 10 February 1893; 11 March, 1893. (SATA Minute Book, ANU Archives) Gill became vice-president of SATA in 1895.
66 Minutes of SATA Meeting, 3 August 1895. (SATA Minute Book, ANU Archives).
67 Minutes of SATA Meeting, 27 April 1895. (SATA Minute Book, ANU Archives).
69 Education Gazette, 1896, pp. 46, 55.
70 Education Gazette, 1896, p. 62.
72 Education Gazette, 1896, p. 113. The events leading to Hartley's death, and the response in the colony to his death are described in Thiele, pp. ix-xiv.
73 Education Gazette, 1896, p. 114.
74 Education Gazette, 1896, p. 115.
75 Register, 26 September 1896, p. 4; 29 September 1896, p. 4.
76 Register, 29 September 1896, p. 4.
77 Education Gazette, 1896, pp. 135–41.
78 Education Gazette, October 1896, p. 118.
79 Education Gazette, October 1896, p. 120.
80 Education Gazette, October 1896, p. 120.
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1 Education Gazette, Vol. 13, 1897, p. 98.
4 Thiele also notes the shift from quiescence to a sharper position in the 1899 conference (p. 71).
5 Register, 29 September 1899, p. 4.
6 Education Gazette, November 1900, p. 123.
7 Education Gazette, Vol. 17, 1901, pp. 131–3.
8 Unlike earlier conference reports which were featured in the Education Gazette, the 1902 conference was reported in the Register, September 23, p. 7.
9 Education Gazette, July 1906, p. 171.
10 Raggatt, October 1926, p. 266.
11 Education Gazette, August 1905, pp. 128–32.
12 Raggatt, March 1927, p. 52.
13 Raggatt, March 1927, p. 52.
14 Education Gazette, 18 July 1906, p. 171.
15 Education Gazette, 18 July 1906, p. 171.
17 Education Gazette, 17 July 1907, p. 164.
18 Education Gazette, 16 July 1909, p. 181.
19 Pavia had been treasurer since 1902 and was to remain so until 1912 when he took over the presidency from T. W. Cole.
20 Education Gazette, 14 July 1910, p. 189.
22 Correspondence Files of the Education Department, GRG18/2, No. 1186, 16/5/1911.
23 Education Gazette, 13 August 1912, p. 182.
24 Education Gazette, 13 August 1912, p. 183.
26 Jose and Bacchi, op. cit., p. 52.
28 The interview with Adelaide Miethke and the proceedings of the congress were reported in the Register, 7, 8 and 10 May 1915.
Notes

Chapter 3

1 Education Gazette, 1916, p. 197.
6 GRG 18/2/1917 / 2040.
12 See, for example, the report on the Queensland Teachers Conference, and the article by the union vice-president, Charles Maley, ‘What Has the Union Done?’, Journal, Vol. 3, No. 4, 27 March 1918, p. 82.
15 Education Gazette, 20 August 1918, p. 146.
26 Journal, May 1920, p. 128.
28 Journal, 30 November 1920, p. 94.
29 Journal, Vol. 6, No. 4, 1920, p. 73.
31 Journal, Vol. 6, No. 9, p. 176.
33 Journal, Vol. 6, No. 9, 1921, p. 172. The details of the speeches at the conference were reported at length in the newspapers.

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35 Journal, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 68.
38 GRG 18/2, No. 2233, 27/9/1922.
43 Journal, Vol. 8, No. 6, December 1922, p. 376.
55 Journal, Vol. 11, No. 11, October 1926, p. 262.
61 Journal, April 1925, p. 1024. See also obituary, Journal, April 1925, p. 1028.
63 From memorial erected to Charles Maley.
68 Education Gazette, 1925, p. 76.
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72 'Death of Mr T. H. Smeaton: A Valued Citizen', Register, 18 October 1927.

73 Journal, Vol. 15, No. 2, March 1929, p. 34.

74 Executive Committee, 7 October 1927; Special Executive Meeting, 14 October 1927; Vigilance Committee, 7 December 1927; Executive Committee, 16 December 1927, T42/8.

75 Vigilance Committee, 2, 15 and 30 November 1928, Box 227, SATU Minute Books 1 and 2, 1928–29.


81 Journal Committee, 14 December 1928; Executive Committee 8 February 1929, Box 227, SATU Minute Books 1 and 2, 1928–29.

82 Journal, Vol. 15, No. 7, August 1929, p. 168. A photo of N. Edwards and other staff of Norwood High School in 1923 is in History Sub-Committee of the 75 in 85 Celebrations Committee, (comp.), We Came to Norwood High: The First 75 Years, Adelaide, April 1985, pp. 102–3.

83 History Sub-Committee of the 75 in 85 Celebrations Committee, (comp.), We Came to Norwood High: The First 75 Years, Adelaide, April 1985, p. 103. The photo includes Veta Macghey. There is a single photo of Veta on p. 103 and commentary on pp. 102–3.

84 Journal, Vol. 16, No. 4, p. 118. One clue to this may be the comment in We Came to Norwood High, p. 103, on Edwards' support for Macghey's promotion in 1932.


86 Journal, Vol. 16, No. 8, September 1930, p. 3.

87 Journal, Vol. 16, No. 9, 20 October 1930, p. 8; 'Salaries Award: Particulars of Negotiations', Journal, Vol. 16,
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No. 9, 20 October 1930, pp. 10-11; 'Teachers Award', Advertiser, 11 October 1930; 'Teachers Agree to 10 per cent Cut', Register, 11 October 1930.

102 'Women's Associations', Journal, Vol. 17, No. 5, 14 May 1931, p. 3.
104 "Creative Instinct Turned to Other Channels": Why Women Excel In Their Careers', Register, 8 January 1931.

106 'More School for Workless Children', Register, 8 January 1931; 'Staying At School: Govt. Invitation May Mean Overcrowding', Register 9 January 1931; 'Back To School: Overcrowding May Result, High Schools Affected', Advertiser, 9 January 1931.

107 Education Department Correspondence Files, GRG 18/2, No. 1008, July 1931. Deputation re abolition of positions of headmistress and infant mistress.
114 Education Department Correspondence Files, GRG 18/2, No. 1008, July 1931. Deputation re abolition of positions of headmistress and infant mistress. See also 'Women in Education', Journal, Vol. 17, No. 7, 20 July 1931, p. 13.
115 Journal, Vol 17, No. 9, 19 September 1931, p. 3. See also 'Public Service Commissioner's Address' (to annual conference), Journal, Vol 17, No. 9, 19 September 1931, p. 13; 'Minutes of Conference', p. 15.
116 'Annual Reports: General Secretary', Journal, Vol 17, No. 9, 19 September 1931, p. 11.
118 Journal, Vol. 18, No. 9, 22 September 1932, p. 11.
119 Journal, Vol. 18, No. 12, 1932, p. 3.
Notes

127 *Advertiser*, 8 September 1933.
133 Letter from acting general secretary to Mr R. E. J. Miller, Saddleworth, 3 April 1944. Held with Minute Book, 1931–32.
143 *Journal*, 27 August 1935, p. 31.

Chapter 4


4 See reports of the event in the *Register*, 8 January 1930; *Advertiser*, 8 January 1930.
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9 For details of teaching records see Teachers' Classification Board and Teachers' History Sheets, GRG 18/167 in State Records Office, South Australia.

10 Council, 2 July 1937, SAPTU Minute Book 1937–38, N91/11; Phebe Watson to Director, 22 October 1937, Education Department Correspondence Files, GRG 18/2/1937/1532 in State Records Office (hereafter GRG 18/2/1937/1532).


13 Phebe Watson to May Mills, 30 August 1937, PRG 26/1, MLSA.

14 Notes made by May Mills in 1937, PRG 26/1, MLSA; Many of the issues raised were similar to women's concerns in Winnipeg, the Chicago Teachers' Federation and the National Union of Women Teachers. See Kinnear, 'Mostly for the male members,' 12, Collins, 'Regaining the Past for the Present,' 43, and Sarah King, 'Feminists in Teaching: The National Union of Women Teachers, 1920–1945,' in Women Who Taught: Perspectives on the History of Women and Teaching, ed. Alison Prentice and Marjorie Theobald (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) 191–2.

15 Guild Chronicle, 28 June 1938; The importance of close social networks in sustaining women teachers' careers was also a feature of the Women Teachers' Association in Toronto. See Smaller, 'Room of One's Own,' 114; Alison Prentice and Marjorie Theobald, 'The Historiography of Women Teachers: A Retrospect' in Prentice and Theobald, Women Who Taught, 12–15.

16 Phebe Watson to Director, 22 October 1937, GRG 18/2/1937/1532.

17 Phebe Watson to Director, 11 August 1938, GRG 18/2/1937/365; WTG correspondence, 28 February 1939, GRG 18/2/1939/437.

18 WTG correspondence, 6 May 1939, GRG 18/2/1939/1301; Advertiser 24 May 1940; Chronicle, 14 August 1940.


20 WTG correspondence, 6 May 1939, GRG 18/3/1939/1301; See also Hilary de Lyon


22 SAPTU deputation to Director, July 1931, GRG 18/2/1931/1008; *Chronicle*, 21 February 1940.

23 SAPTU deputation to Director, July 1931, GRG 18/2/1931/1008.


26 WTG to Director: Case of the IIIA assistants, 28 September 1942, GRG 18/2/1942/1774.

27 WTG to Director, 7 December 1940, GRG 18/2/1940/2160.

28 Ruth collected information about the National Union of Women Teachers' equal pay campaigns and noted that in New York State equal pay had already been implemented. *Chronicle*, 15 February 1939, 15 April 1939; *Advertiser*, 9 May 1939, 8 July 1941; WTG to Director, 7 December 1940, GRG 18/2/1940/2160.

29 *Chronicle*, 5 December 1940.

30 WTG to Director, 7 December 1940, GRG 18/2/1940/2160; *Chronicle*, 18 April 1941, 5 December 1940.


33 WTG to Director, 25 March 1943, GRG 18/2/1943/631; Women teachers' organisations in New South Wales and Ontario also supported the marriage bar for similar reasons. See Gray, 'Crying in the Wilderness,' 2, Reynolds and Smaller, 'Ontario School Teachers,' 166–9.

34 *Chronicle*, 3 December 1941; Collins, 'Regaining the Past for the Present,' 43.

35 *Chronicle*, 15 August 1939.

36 *Chronicle*, 18 August 1941; WTG to Director, 25 March 1943, GRG 18/2/1943/631.

37 *Chronicle*, 15 April 1939, 30 October 1942; WTG to Director, 25 March 1943, GRG 18/2/1943/631.

38 Hyams, 'Battle of the Sexes,' 41–2; *SA Teachers' Journal*, Vol. xxvii, No. 4, p. 3; Council, 3 June 1938, SAPTU Minute Book 1938–39, N91/12.

39 *Chronicle*, 26 November 1943.

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41 Annual conference minutes, 12 May 1942, SAPTU Minute Book 1941-42, N91/15.
42 File on the amalgamation of SAPTU and WTG, N91/792.

Chapter 5

1 N91/12, South Australian Public Teachers' Union Minute Book 1938-39; council meeting, 3 June 1938.
2 Journal, Vol. 24, No. 9, 1938, p. 3.
4 Chronicle, Vol. 4, No. 1, 19 February, p. 7; Advertiser, 19 May 1941.
5 Journal, No. 4, 1939, p. 8.
6 Chronicle, Vol. 4, No. 6, 3 December 1941, p. 3.
8 Education Gazette, 1941, p. 110.
9 'Miss Adelaide L. Miethke, OBE, BA—A Tribute', Education Gazette, 15 July 1948, p. 130.
11 Chronicle, Vol. 6, No. 6, 1 July 1944, p. 3
12 Chronicle, Vol. 5, No. 6, 9 December 1942, p. 3.
13 News, 22 January 1943.
14 Advertiser, 26 May 1943.
16 Chronicle, Vol. 6, No. 7, 29 March 1945, p. 3.
19 Letter to the Editor from Women Teachers' Guild, News, 19 April 1944.
20 '£29 Rise for Women', Advertiser, 19 September 1944.
21 H. Oakley, secretary, Women Teachers' Guild, in a letter to the News, 20 September 1944.
22 Advertiser, 8 March 1944.
23 News, 12 October 1944.
24 Chronicle, Vol. 8, No. 12, 12 July 1946, p. 4.
27 See, for example, Vol. 10, No. 18, 28 November 1947, p. 3.
29 Chronicle, Vol. 9, No. 17, 26 September 1947, p. 5.
30 Chronicle, Vol. 13, No. 21, 30 September 1948, p. 3.
31 Chronicle, Vol. 15, No. 3, 1 December 1949, p. 3. See also report in Mail, 20 August 1949, on 'Union President Raggatt stating need for a Chair'.
Notes

32 Letter from Rowe to Raggatt, 5 August 1949. T42/5/1, President’s File 1946–49.
33 News, June 1948. There were several articles related to communists in schools in newspapers in 1948 and 1949. This and some other articles are in T42/11/2, ANU Archives.
34 T42/5/1, President’s File 1946–49.
36 Advertiser, 28 January 1950.
38 The letters are contained in Box 226—Amalgamation of SATU and WTG to form SAIT 1942–51.
43 Other, less formal, cooperation had taken place earlier; e.g. in 1943 two high school members of the Guild had formed a committee with two comparable members of the Union for a deputation to the Director on matters affecting senior women. Chronicle, 26 September 1943, p. 3.
44 ‘Women in SAIT’
46 Veta Macghey continued to hold the position of editor until the dissolution of the Guild. In 1940, she was president of the High School Branch of the Guild, a fact which suggests that she may not have been very distant from the moves surrounding the split.
47 Minutes of Guild Advisory Meeting, 9/7/47, Chronicle, 26 September 1947, p. 5.
48 Secretary’s Report, Chronicle, 19 June 1942, p. 7.
49 H. P. I., p. 23. At the meeting to constitute the Women’s Branch of SAIT it was noted ‘... that the Guild had not formed country associations, their country teachers being known as Rural’. Minutes of Meeting Constituting Women’s Branch, 30/4/51, Journal, 15 May 1951, p. 4. However, the Guild had referred to two of its associations as country associations—Head Teachers Association and Teachers-in-Charge Association. Chronicle, 20 June, 1939, p. 11. The merger of these two associations was reported in the following issue of the Chronicle, an indication of the difficulties of country associations.
50 ‘Women in SAIT’.
52 Journal, Vol. 1, No. 1, 18 June 1951, p. 27.
Chapter 6

1 Journal, 17 October 1951.
2 The figures in the text are those according to calculations by SAIT officers and reported in the Journal and annual reports from time to time.
3 Journal, 3 May 1978.
4 Chronicle, 30 November 1948, p. 3.
6 Figures from annual reports.
8 The councils had begun to meet jointly on a trial basis on 6 May, 1961. See 'Council Commentary', Journal, June 1961, p. 5.
10 Chronicle, 15 August 1939, p. 4.
11 The secretary and a delegate of the Women Teachers' Association in SAPTU was Miss M. L. Connell, who in SAIT was a delegate for the Technical School Women. The other delegate for the Women Teachers in SAPTU was Miss N. C. Hastwell, who in SAIT was a delegate for the Primary School Women. Miss M. B. Carozzi, who was secretary of the Women Assistants in the Guild was a delegate for the Primary School Women in SAIT. See Journal, 15 May 1951, p. 2, and 17 October 1951, p. 2; Chronicle, 30 June 1938, p. 5, for the relevant lists of affiliated associations, secretaries and delegates.
14 List—Associations of the Institute, as at 31 March 1981, SAIT.
17 See 'Gulf between sexes is encouraged', Journal, 9 July 1969, p. 4; 'Council discussions tend to be dominated by male delegates', Journal, 23 July 1969, p. 4; 'Are they incontrovertibly women first?', Journal, 13 August 1969.
21 This calculation is based on the reported attendance of 1500 members at the March 1969 annual conference called to consider the possibility of direct action on salaries and conditions. Journal, 26 March, 1969, p. 1. This figure also includes associate members, as teachers' college students were present and voting at the meeting. The number of full members in December 1969 was 9220. Annual Report to 31/12/71.
Notes

24 Journal, April 1959, p. 3.
26 Bessant and Spaull, p. 4.
27 Following Departmental advice of 1885 cited earlier.
28 Minutes of Meetings of the Finch Board of Directors, 1973–76.
29 In 1941, the Guild was affiliated with the National Council of Women, Committee of the Department of Information, SA Public Officers Federation, SA Government Superannuation Committee and League of Women Voters (Chronicle, 20 June 1941, p. 5—Annual Report of Secretary). In 1950 it was affiliated with: The National Council of Women, SA Council of Social Service, Workers' Educational Association, ANCUN, SA Government Superannuation Committee, National Safety Council, Book Week Committee, League of Women Voters, New Education Fellowship (Chronicle, 30 September 1950, p. 5—Annual Report of Secretary.)
30 Minutes of Advisory Meeting, 11/7/41. Chronicle, 11 August 1941, p. 5.
31 Editorial, Chronicle, July 1944, p. 3. In 1940, the Guild was also affiliated with the Schools Patriotic Fund. Chronicle, 12 June 1940, p. 7—Secretary's Annual Report. This Fund had a predecessor in the 1914–18 war and was closely associated with the work of the schools as centres for the war effort. See Bessant and Spaull, The Politics of Schooling, Pitman Publishing Pty Ltd., Carlton, 1976, p. 5.
32 'Minutes of Central Authority', Journal, September 1951, p. 5.
33 This history does not deal in detail with ATF. For an account of its origins, see A.D. Spaull, 'The establishment of a national teachers federation in Australia 1921–1937', History of Education Review, Vol. 18, No. 1, 1989.
35 For further accounts of the Australian Teachers' Federation, see inter alia, Bruce Mitchell, Teachers, Education and Politics, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1975, pp. 83, 87, and W Trudinger, The Victorian Teachers Union: Its History and its Influence on Education, Educational Investigation for BEd, Melbourne University, 1941, Ch IV.
37 Article in the Times Educational Supplement, September, 1950.
Chapter 7


3 Dr E. R. Wyeth, Address to South Australian Institute of Teachers, Inaugural Meeting, Journal, 18 June 1951, pp. 6–12.


5 Education in South Australia, p. 104.


9 Education in South Australia, p. 12.

10 Journal, March 1952, p. 3. Some students were allowed exemption from attendance at tutorials and lectures, but were vulnerable to any policy changes made by the University. See President’s Report to First Annual Conference of SAIT, Journal, June 1952, p. 19, ff.


12 Education Enquiry Committee (Chairman, Mr E. L. Bean): First Report, Adelaide, 1945, paras 85–86.


16 Journal, July 1953, p. 3

17 ‘Commentary on Meeting of Men’s Branch, 11/7/53’, Journal, August 1953, p. 16.

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20 *Journal*, August 1955, p. 3.
21 *Journal*, October 1955, p. 3.
22 *Journal*, October 1955, p. 4.
25 *Journal*, November 1955, p. 5.
27 *Journal*, April 1956, p. 4.
29 *Journal*, September 1956.
30 *Journal*, July 1956, p. 3.
31 *Journal*, August 1956, p. 5.
33 *Journal*, March 1958, p. 3.
35 *Journal*, June 1960, p. 11.
36 Prof. Neal, 'Courses in Education at our University', *Journal*, February 1961.
38 Neal, p. 318.
39 *Journal*, February 1960, p. 17.
41 *Journal*, June 1961, p. 36.
46 *Journal*, June 1965, p. 6.
47 *Journal*, February 1966, p. 3.
51 *Education in South Australia*, p. 1.
52 *Journal*, 26 February, 1969, p. 3.
54 The following relevant Acts were passed in 1972: The Board of Advanced Education Act; Colleges of Advanced Education Act 1972; The Torrens College of Advanced Education Act, 1972, which provided for the merger of Western Teachers College and the South Australian School of Art. See also the Annual Report of the Director-General of Education, 1972, p. 6.
55 *Journal*, June 1962, p. 3.
Chapter 8


Notes

4 Bessant and Spaull, Teachers in Conflict, p. 2; Bruce Mitchell, Teachers, Education and Politics, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1975, p. 215; Coates, Ch. 8.

5 Colin Thiele, Grains of Mustard Seed, Education Department, South Australia, 1975, p. 29.

6 Education Gazette, June 1885, p. 21.

7 Thiele, p. 54.


10 The date of the first issue of the South Australian Teachers Journal was 24 June 1915 (Vol. 1, No. 1).


16 Journal, February 1962, p. 3.

17 Journal, June 1964, p. 5.

18 Karmel Report, p. 476.

19 See also Letter to Editor, Journal, August 1962, p. 13, signed by F. S. Kealley, President, Education Sub-Branch of the RSL.


24 SAPD, H of A, 1 August 1962, p. 356.


28 SAIT correspondence, 1965.

29 SAPD, 6 September, 1949, reported in Journal, 19 November 1949.


31 L. Kick, SAIT general secretary, Letter to the Editor, Angaston Leader, 21 April 1964.


33 The newsletter from Murrie is reprinted in Saitnews, 30 March 1967, p. 3.


35 ‘Background to events at Larrakeyah’.

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37 Thiele, p. 223.
38 'Background to events at Larrakeyah', Saitnews, 30 March 1967, pp. 1-2.
39 Thiele, p. 223.
40 'Minister's Statement', Saitnews, 30 March 1967, p. 2.
41 The Royal Commissioner, Mr Justice Walters, was appointed 'to inquire into the circumstances under which Mr John Douglas Murrie, Headmaster of Larrakeyah Primary School in the Northern Territory, composed and issued a newsletter on 16th February 1967, and other matters', Report of the Royal Commission, South Australian Parliamentary Papers (SAPP) No 103, 1967.
43 Thiele, p. 223.
44 Thiele, p. 224.
45 Thiele, p. 225.
46 Journal, May 1968, p. 27; Saitnews, 30 May 1968.
47 Sunday Mail, 12 July 1970.
49 SAIT Executive Minutes, Minute No. 16 11/70.
51 Minister for Education, Press Statement, 14 July 1970. (Hugh Hudson's Papers.)
53 See, for example, Letters to the Editor, Journal, 12 August 1970.
54 'Salaries Committee', SAIT Annual Report to December 31, 1967, p. 15.
56 Saitnews, 11 July 1968, p. 3; Saitnews, 1 August 1968, p. 3.
57 Saitnews, 11 July 1968, p. 3; Saitnews, 1 August 1968, p. 3.
58 'Salaries Committee', Saitnews, 11 July 1968, p. 3; Saitnews, 1 August 1968, p. 3.
60 Journal, 26 February 1969, pp. 1, 3.
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73 Journal, March 1966, p. 3.
74 The Radical Education Alliance produced a broadsheet entitled Chalk Circle, the first issue of which was published on 23 March, 1970.
77 Radical Education Alliance, 'Education and International Understanding', 1970.
79 South Australian Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, 1 September 1970.
81 Newsletter, The Steering Committee, Campaign to End Grading, December 1972.
82 An undated (1927) pamphlet explaining the aims of the Open Book journal lists Bill Hannan as author and editor.
83 This group published a regular newsletter, Education Action Alliance Newsletter, from 1974.
87 Journal, 8 July 1970.
89 Hughes, p. 92.
90 'Significant vote for Better Education'.
Chapter 9

2 Letter to Editor, 'Generation gap was evident at Conference', Journal, 27 May 1970, p. 2.
4 'News from Associations', Journal, 16 September 1970, p. 3.
5 Quoted in Rees D. Williams, federal secretary, ACSPA and Australian Bank Officials' Association, 'Co-operation between unions', ACSPA School of Industrial Relations, La Trobe University, 22–24 May 1970, p. 16.
6 Rees D. Williams, 'White Collar Unions in Australia', Lecture to Monash University, Faculty of Economics and Politics, 7 June 1971, p. 16.
8 R. Hawke, quoted in Williams, 'Co-operation between unions', p. 16.
9 R. Hawke, quoted in Williams, 'Co-operation between unions', pp. 8–9.
10 R. Hawke, quoted in Williams, 'Co-operation between unions', pp. 21–22.
13 'Organic Unity Within the Australian Union Movement', Discussions between ACSPA and ACTU, Melbourne, 26 February 1974.
20 'Background to ACTU Affiliation Issue', Journal, 7 March 1979, p. 6.
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28 Journal, 4 April 1979, pp. 4, 12, 24.
29 Journal, 14 February 1979, p. 1. See also Journal, 7 March 1979, p. 6, Letters to the Editor, ‘Protest from NSW’, for a reply to McNaughton’s article by members of the New South Wales Teachers Federation (NSWTF), and Journal, 21 March 1979, p. 4, Letters to the Editor, ‘Reply to NSW’, for a reply by McNaughton to the NSWTF protest.
30 ‘Vote Yes because . . .’, Journal, 4 April 1979, p. 12. Quotes an article from the Western Teacher, 16 March 1979.
33 ‘The No Case’, Journal, 4 April 1979, p. 11.
34 Teachers for ATF, ‘Some Myths About the ATF and the ACTU’, 28 February 1979, Appendix A.
41 McCullum and others v Connor and others, p. 16.
44 1979 SAIT annual conference, Minutes.
48 ‘Court Challenge to ATF Disaffiliation’.
49 McCullum and others v Connor and others, p. 2, pp. 21–2.
51 ‘The Time is Now’.
52 Journal, 18 July 1979, p. 3.
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54 SAT & SAU, Union News, No. 6, December 1980.

Chapter 10

2 First editorial, reprinted in *Journal*, June 1965.
3 Reported in *Journal*, June 1951, p. 6.
4 *Journal*, 11 June 1969, p. 3.
5 See, for example, *Journal*, May 1957, p. 3.
6 South Australian Parliamentary Debates (SAPD), House of Assembly, 19/6/65.
7 A lengthy motion to this effect was carried at the 1965 annual conference. *Journal*, June 1965, p. 6.
8 *Journal*, June 1966, p. 18.
11 *Journal*, March 1968, p. 3.
13 Dean Mullan, publicity officer, MAA, 'Full facts in bus pass issue should be known', *Journal*, 23 July 1969, p. 16.
16 See 'Loans for Textbooks', *Advertiser*, 1/2/69; Letter to the Editor, 'Student Allowances', *Advertiser*, 5/2/69.
17 *Journal*, 26 February 1969, p. 3. For a more detailed analysis of the Hall case from the Adelaide Teachers' College Students' Representative Council perspective see the article by the College SRC secretary, 'Joyce Steele, Bob Hall, and What's the Point of Education Anyway?', *On Dit* (Adelaide University), 2 April, 1969.
18 See 'Students “Used”—Minister', *Advertiser*, 29 April 1969, and a letter critical of the Minister, 'Influences on Students', Letters to the Editor, *Advertiser*, following the article.
Notes

24 The agenda items and form of the conference are set out in Memorandum to the Hon. The Minister of Education: Conference with South Australian Institute of Teachers at Raywood, Saturday, 18 July and Sunday 19 July 1970, Director-General of Education, 18/6/70, and Conference at Raywood, July 1970. Topics.
26 The full text of the motion is printed in Journal, 26 May 1971, p. 4.
29 ‘Motions from Democracy in Education Seminar’.

Chapter 11

2 Ancillary Staff Review Committee, 1985, p. 8.
3 SAIT council meeting, 7 December 1968.
4 Ancillary Staff Review Committee, 1985, p. 9.
5 Interview with Pat Appleton 13/10/95.
6 Journal, 8 September 1976.
7 South Australian Government Gazette (Industrial), February 1981.
In the Interests of Education

8 SAIT Council Meeting, March 1983.
9 Interview with Elizabeth Neville, 4/5/95.
11 South Australian Industrial Gazette, 6 December 1984, p. 387. SAIT and the PSA were represented respectively by Elizabeth Neville and Carolyn Adlam.
15 Interview with Elizabeth Neville, 4/5/95.
17 The discussion of pre-school teachers and teacher aides is informed by written material provided by Miriam Tonkin and interview with Suzanne Simon.
18 In addition to records, this discussion is based on interviews with and written accounts by Virginia Battye, Colin Leaker, George Hackett and Peter Norman.
21 Raduntz, p. 10.
22 H. V. Shillabeer, Industrial Registrar, South Australia, 1 August 1985, p. 5.
25 See Reports of Western Region Liaison Officer. See also R. B. Connor, acting general secretary, Memo to SAIT principal officers on SAIT Liaison Officers—Non Metropolitan Areas, 14 August 1978.

Chapter 12

2 State Council, 30 October 1993.
3 General secretary, SAIT, 1 November 1993.
5 'Education is the Key', Campaign Leaflet, November 1993.
6 McCarty gained 18 521 votes representing 2% of the formal vote. This vote was higher than that for any other group outside of the major parties, and was higher than that for the National Party. It was, however, insufficient to gain a quota.

264
## Appendix 1

**Membership as at 30 June 1996**

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<th>Category</th>
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<td>Technical and Further Education</td>
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<td>Early Childhood</td>
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<td>Non-government Schools</td>
<td>225</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Education and Children's Services</td>
<td>12 960</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15 635</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>68%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>32%</td>
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Females: 10 560

Males: 5 075
## Appendix 2

**Presidents and vice-presidents of SAPTU/SAIT/WTG**

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(from April 1897)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1897–98</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1899–1900</td>
<td>J. Harry</td>
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<tr>
<td>1900–01</td>
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<tr>
<td>1901–02</td>
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<tr>
<td>1902–03</td>
<td>R.T. Burnard</td>
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<tr>
<td>1903–04</td>
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<td>W.H. Cherry (from December 1906)</td>
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<td>W.H. Cherry (from December 1906)</td>
<td>Mr Wholohan (from December 1906)</td>
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<td>G. Charlesworth</td>
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<td>1909-10</td>
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<td>W.H. Hand</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1918-19</td>
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**In the Interests of Education**

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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>W.T. Westgarth</td>
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<td>Miss A.L. Tapp</td>
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<td>1944-45</td>
<td>A.P.C. Hart</td>
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<td>W.S. Gent</td>
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<td>1946-47</td>
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<td>Reginald A. Nelson</td>
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<td>(D.P. Schubert was to have become President 1946–47 but resigned to become Secretary of VTU. Raggatt re-elected)</td>
<td>E.J. Pryor</td>
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In the Interests of Education

South Australian Institute of Teachers

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<td>1952</td>
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<td>Pres.: Wilfred A. White</td>
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## Appendix

### MEN'S BRANCH

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<td>Murray D. Haines</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Wilfred A. White</td>
<td>Murray D. Haines</td>
</tr>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>Wilfred A. White</td>
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### WOMEN'S BRANCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>President</th>
<th>Vice-President</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Miss Betty M. Tomlinson</td>
<td>Mrs Lillian G. Short</td>
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<td>1969</td>
<td>Mrs Lillian G. Short</td>
<td>Mrs D. Proctor</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Mrs Lillian G. Short</td>
<td>Mrs D. Proctor</td>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>Miss Margaret A. Watson</td>
<td>Milton Philip Hunkin</td>
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### Male Vice-President

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Murray D. Haines</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Milton P. Hunkin</td>
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<td>1975</td>
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<td>1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>John Gregory</td>
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<td>1982</td>
<td>Leonie Ebert</td>
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<td>1983</td>
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<td>Clare McCarty</td>
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### Female Vice-President

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<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Milton P. Hunkin</td>
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<td>John F. Gregory</td>
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<td>L.E. Golding</td>
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<td>Philip Endersby</td>
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<td>Philip Endersby</td>
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<td>Bill Cook</td>
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<td>Clare McCarty</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Janet Giles</td>
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MEN'S BRANCH | WOMEN'S BRANCH
---|---
1993 Clare McCarty | Bill Cook/Ken Drury | Janet Giles
1994 Clare McCarty | Ken Drury | Janet Giles
1995 Clare McCarty | Ken Drury | Janet Giles
1996 Janet Giles | Ken Drury | Jacqui Catalano

Women Teachers' Guild Presidents 1938–50

1938–39 Phebe Watson

1939–40 Phebe Watson

1940–41 Jessie Cooper

1941–42 Jessie Cooper

1942–43 Jessie Cooper

1943–44 Jessie Cooper

1944–45 Jessie Cooper

1945–46 Mary Coombs

1946–47 Mary Coombs

1947–48 Mary Coombs/ Veta Macghey

1948–49 Veta Macghey

1949–50 Veta Macghey
Appendix 3

Women’s Advisers/Women’s Officers

Helen Menzies 1978–80
Eleanor Ramsay 1981–83
Bev Tonkin 1984–87
Liz Matheson 1988–89
Sylvia Kinder 1990–91
Jacqui Catalano 1992–95
Jackie Bone–George 1996–
Appendix 4

Life Members

YEAR UNKNOWN
Mr T. Harry
Mr R.T. Burnard
Anne Espie

1923
Mr J. Willmott
Mr F. Wholohan

1924
A.E. Lampe

1929
Mr W. Bennett
Victor J. Pavia

1930
Mr C. Bronner
Mr C. Charlton
Mr F.W. Cole
Mr J. Fairweather

1931
Mr G.S. Berriman
Mr T.S. Bosch
Mr L.H. Gordon
Mr W. Ham
F.N. Leak
Mr T.G. Roberts
Mr R. Sutton

1932
Mr G. Charlesworth

1933
Laura O. Heyne
Mr E.W. Skitch

1935
Lizzie A. Lamb

1936
Mr F.J. Gartrell
Mr J.D. Drinkwater
Adelaide Miethke
J.W. Odgers
Phebe Watson

1937
Mr G.T. Polson

1940
Ellie Opie
Mrs E. Swift
Miss A. Schmidt
Elsie Smily

1942
Peter A. Corry

1945
Hilda Cotten
Euphemia Drummond
Margaret H. Stacy

1946
Mr I.G. Symons
Mrs J. McDougall
Hilda Taylor

1947
E. Allen
J.H. Williams
Mr R.A. West
Miss N. Hynes

1948
May Cleggett

1949
Gertrude Law
D.D. Smith
Appendix

Miss F. McDonald
Miss Z. Wilson

1950
May Mills
Miss D. Hodges
Dora Flint
Thomas S. Raggatt

1952
Janet McKechnie
Mr A. Hart
Mr R. Barbour

1955
Frances Nicholas
Mr R.A. Potter

1956
M. Veta Macghey
Dorothy Collins

1958
Jean Leslie

1959
Mr W. O'Connell
Mr C. McKinnon
Donald Carmichael

1960
Fred H. Davis
Dulcie Smith

1961
Alan Rendell

1963
Edmond W. Golding
Garnett J. Lord
Jean Pavy

1965
Edward Russell Speed

Mr J.E. Eddy
R.E. Mitchell
Eileen M. Kean

1967
J. Naughton
Mr W. Westgarth

1969
William H.A. Cochrane

1971
Murray D. Haines
Graham F. Smith

1972
Wilfred A. White

1973
Lillian G. Short
Frank A. Woithe

1974
Mr D. Warren
Betty Tomlinson

1976
Mr A.K. Beaty

1977
Ron W. Close

1978
Milton P. Hunkin

1980
Cath McNaughton

1984
Les Kemp

1987
Laurence E. Kiek
Appendix 5

Members of first SAIT delegation to South Australian Trades and Labour Council elected at Council meeting, 25 February 1984

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leonie Ebert</td>
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<td>Clare McCarty</td>
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<td>Janet Giles</td>
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<td>Margaret Hussin</td>
<td>Robert Jackson</td>
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<td>Marie Reynolds</td>
<td>John Sims</td>
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<td>Kathy Bodnar</td>
<td>Peter Turner</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Matheson</td>
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<td>John Gregory</td>
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<td>Peter Trethewey</td>
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### Appendix 6

**General Secretaries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>CORRESPONDING SECRETARY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896-98</td>
<td>R. Hand (resigned April 1898)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>A.H. Neale</td>
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<tr>
<td>1898-99</td>
<td>A.H. Neale</td>
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<tr>
<td>1899-1901</td>
<td>C. Charlton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-02</td>
<td>A. Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-03</td>
<td>J. Harry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903-04</td>
<td>A.H. Neale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904-06</td>
<td>W.J. Adey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-07</td>
<td>A.H. Neale (resigned December 1906)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Fairweather</td>
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<tr>
<td>1907-08</td>
<td>J. Fairweather</td>
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<tr>
<td>1908-10</td>
<td>R.T. Burnard</td>
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<tr>
<td>1910-13</td>
<td>S.H. Warren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913-15</td>
<td>A. Darke</td>
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<tr>
<td>1915-16</td>
<td>C. Bronner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916-17</td>
<td>W. Bennett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-19</td>
<td>R. Sutton</td>
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<tr>
<td>1919-20</td>
<td>T.H.S. Nicolle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-21</td>
<td>F.J. Gartrell</td>
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<tr>
<td>1921-22</td>
<td>F.J. Gartrell &amp; T.H. Smeaton</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>GENERAL SECRETARY</strong> (paid, full-time)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1922-28</td>
<td>T.H. Smeaton</td>
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<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>L.H.R. Gordon (Acting, on Smeaton's death)</td>
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<td>E.S. Davis</td>
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<tr>
<td>1928-29</td>
<td>E.S. Davis (resigned on 24 October 1928)</td>
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<td>R.A. West acting.</td>
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<td>1929-41</td>
<td>F. R. Forgan (on leave from October 1941—replaced by Miss Jean Grieg</td>
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<tr>
<td>1942-45</td>
<td>Miss Jean Grieg (Acting Secretary to March 1945)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1945-54</td>
<td>G.J.D. Hamlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>E.R. Speed (Acting, April–May)</td>
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<td>1955-66</td>
<td>L.E. Kiek</td>
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**In the Interests of Education**

<table>
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<th>YEAR</th>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>C. Ames (Acting, February–March)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967–68</td>
<td>W.H.A. Cochrane</td>
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<td>1969–78</td>
<td>M.A. Lambourne</td>
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<td>1979–83</td>
<td>Bevan Connor</td>
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<td>1983</td>
<td>Beverly Nicks (Acting, April–May)</td>
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<td>1990–94</td>
<td>John McCombe</td>
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<td>1994–</td>
<td>Jack Major</td>
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</table>
We asked a number of people if they were willing to be interviewed and we made a general call for material which could be of assistance in the production of this history. The following people generously responded by agreeing to an interview or by supplying material in the form of written reflections or letters. We acknowledge this generous support.

Max Adlam
Andy Alcock
Doug Anders
Pat Appleton
Evelyn Balan
Virginia Battye
Peter Buckskin
Craig Campbell
Jacqui Catalano
Bevan Connor
Bill Cook
Van Davey
Tom Dyster
Viv Eyers
Mary Gallnor
Janet Giles
Laurie Golding
John Gregory
George Hackett
Bob Harris
In the Interests of Education

Catherine Heptinstall
Bill Hignett
John Hill
Paul Hughes
Milton Hunkin
Don Jarrett
Laurie Kiek
Colin Leaker
Jan Lee
Clare McCarty
John McCombe
Cath McNaughton
Helen Menzies
Elizabeth Neville
Peter Norman
Jean Pavy
Harry Penny
Jan Perry
Lorraine Phillips
Ron Pratt
Jack Read
Marie Sellstrom
Lillian Short
Suzanne Simon
Howard Spreadbury
Angas Story
Betty Tomlinson
Miriam Tonkin
Peter Turner
Richie Walsh
Gus Willcox
Alan Wilson
Alana Zergal-Mellor

Material belonging to the late:
Fred Davis
Hugh Hudson
Graham Smith
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