

Well, ladies and gentlemen, it was some months ago that Denis Murphy wrote to me and said : will you launch my book on T.J. Ryan? I want to make that plain from the outset because this visit was arranged a long time ago - in principle; the date wasn't necessarily set - Some people will be cynical enough to think that I might be here for some political purpose. I resent that sort of insinuation (interjection: he's not here tonight). I'm very glad to be here at the Sandgate Bowls Club because I've never been on this side of the lagoon. I would have lost count of all the times I've been right round it and looked across, and at last I've made it. And I thank the presidents very much for being so gracious to me, but to all of you. These are excellent premises, and I can compliment you on the way you look after your members and guests. Thank you very much indeed.

Now, I've been with Denis Murphy with various audiences over the last few years at the Homestead - the only time, I want to make it plain to you I ever go to the Homestead is to make speeches; I wouldn't go for any other purpose. On this occasion, of course, it's entirely a social and literary occasion. I love literary lunches and academic dinners. So naturally I brought along, I got leave to come from Fred Daly, because we've been in Parliament for over 22 years now, next month I think it'll be 23 years in my case - but it's 31 years in his - he's the father of the Parliament - and he treats us all as wayward children. Those on our side, of course, we instinctively love him - and those on the other side do as they're told. It has warmed my heart to see the way you've responded when his name was mentioned - anybody that can equal Clem and Sylvia Jones in applause is doing pretty well.

I'm here tonight not to support Denis Murphy as a candidate, and he has been an outstanding candidate, but to support him as an author. I regard him as one of the finest young men in Australia. He qualified himself to be a university lecturer by his own efforts - he didn't have a silver spoon, as they say, or whatever it is - and in Queensland you need a pretty long spoon. But he qualified himself in a very competitive field and I don't know where he finds the time to conduct so many other activities. He's written several books; they are excellent books. The Department of History in the University of Queensland is outstanding in Australia because of its concern with Australian history. You know, when I used to go to university, people would be a bit inclined to say that Australian history wasn't really a subject that you could learn at university. But the University of Queensland has disproved that. And there's another field where I think the University of Queensland Press is outstanding: More than any other publisher in Australia it publishes Australian verse. Now we have some good history here and we write some good verse. We have very good politicians in the British democratic tradition. I mean from time to time, I'm not

saying that they're all ...

But of course I always remember the good times, I talk about the best. And there have been some very good ones. And also the verse, and the literature we produce in Australia is equal to any produced anywhere in the English-speaking world. We ought to be pleased. I am very happy to be at the launching of another publication of the University of Queensland Press. You'll notice that I'm using 'press'; I'm praising the press in a very specialised sense.

Now Denis Murphy has had a most interesting and admirable subject for this biography. Whatever they might say about the reception that the press in the wider sense gives the Australian Labor Party there's no question the way historians regard it, because everybody who writes about Australian politics this century, writes about it in the context of what the Labor Party has done or has aimed to do. If one looks to the past, everybody, whatever his politics, would acknowledge that the Labor party has been the creative and dynamic force in Australian public life. Now people don't necessarily believe it at any particular time - they didn't believe it when it was happening in the past. But when it's been achieved, when they look back, they all say, that is, there is nothing when people look at Australian politics, which they identify with anti-Labor politicians, or anti-Labor Governments. It's all been in terms of what Labor politicians or Labor governments have done. One of the charming things, reading "T.J. Ryan" is the way that in the second decade of this century all the things were said about his government and about himself, which are said by his successors today. All the terms of abuse were already being used - disloyal, treacherous, treasonable, anti-monarch, and disloyal, everything like this. The only phrase of all the ones which are used about us now which was, which is with all the terms which are used about us now, were all used in T.J. Ryan's day. The only one that they used to use about him which we never copped was the word 'bolshevik'. But otherwise the terms of abuse are precisely the same; it's most comforting! Those were the days when in Queensland the Premiers, instead of just standing off and hurling abuse, decided to go and get into the action themselves. And two of Queensland's Premiers—the ablest of them this century, Ryan and Theodore went into the House of Representatives. Ryan died at 45; there is no question that if he'd lived a normal 20 years or even more that you would have expected him to have in Parliament he would have been Prime Minister of Australia. Now Theodore went in in a bad time, bad economic time, universal depression throughout the world. But everybody now acknowledges that Theodore was way ahead of his time; he was the only person who was a Chancellor or a Treasurer who read Keynes and all those people that were; I mean we've gone beyond Keynes now, but he was way ahead, the rigours of the depression would have been very much less if they'd been a few more people that had heeded Theodore, the former Premier of Queensland, who became Federal Treasurer. These were very great men, and of course, previously Griffith and so on in the last

century were very great men, Premiers of Queensland who went into Federal affairs. Griffith, of course, was a Minister and then in the High Court, the first Chief Justice, and a very great one; great Premier, great literary man too, incidentally, and first Chief Justice. You've done some great things in this State, but you've done them in so far as you've identified with Australia as a whole. I've never believed that Queenslanders were different from the rest of Australia; where you're good it's because you're Australians too.

And perhaps I might be forgiven if I made one particular illustration of what I mean there, because the week before last the arrangements had been made here in Brisbane, in the Administrative Offices - the Premier was there, and a few other Premiers, and I myself and somebody on behalf of the Opposition in the Federal Parliament - we were all there and we agreed that we would meet in Melbourne the week before last, you know last week; Wednesday, Thursday, Friday last week, Clem Jones, the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition all of us were to be down there. This was all arranged in June; it was to be a Constitutional Convention and suddenly, right at the end, it was decided up here that you wouldn't go, and the reason was because at the Constitutional Convention we were going to talk about local government, it was on the agenda, and it was on the agenda because when the Convention was first suggested back in 1972, there was a House of Representatives election imminent and we said that we would have a Convention but only on condition that local government was represented at it as well. Because these days it would be absurd to look at the Constitutional arrangements in Australia and think that they were matters solely for the Federal Government and the State Governments. There are many things that the local government bodies in Australia need to do; if they don't do them, or if they can't do them well enough, then our community suffers. So we insisted that local government be on the agenda, that was decided at the Sydney Convention, of course, two years ago and it was again to be on the agenda for Melbourne last week. And because it was there, the Liberal Premiers and the Country Party Premier wouldn't go; they didn't want to be seen to vote against the interests of local government. But my Government believes that it is important that that sphere of government also be mentioned in the Constitution and that local government be given the wherewithall, be given the opportunity, to do the things that need to be done on a regional, or local or community basis. Well, that's why they didn't turn up, at the Convention. But they were all gathered, the absentees, on the other side of the road; they were all in Melbourne. They gathered on the other side of the road and they issued a statement on federalism. The significance is that it was a statement on taxation and you in Queensland will realise the implications of that statement because the core of it is to abandon uniform taxation and to say that everywhere in Australia you will pay two lots of tax - one lot of income tax to the Federal

Government, and the other lot of income tax to the State Government. (Interjection: "Fraser's folly") - Well, I appreciate the phraseology - I said that everywhere in Australia you'd pay two lots of tax - that's not right, in Canberra they'll only pay one lot, they'll only be paying the Federal tax, and they'll get out of the other tax entirely, and the reason for that is that the Federal Parliament can only impose taxes on condition that those taxes are equal throughout Australia. That is, the Federal Parliament couldn't pass a special tax for Canberra to bring it up to what any of the other States were paying. So if you have two lots of income tax, the Federal one and the State one, the people in Canberra will be overjoyed. When I retire I'll go to live there, along the road, admittedly, but it'd be a good place to retire, because I wouldn't have to pay that second tax. But I don't think the people will cop it because Queenslanders still will recall in many cases, and those who don't remember it will easily find it out, and read about it, that in the days in Australia, that is until 1942, when there was Federal income tax, and also in every State a State income tax, the taxes in Queensland were higher than in any other part of Australia, and it was because of that that so many people invested, and employed and went to live in the southern States. And Queensland's industries have never caught up because of that tax. Queensland, being an extensive State, a State which has to have schools, and hospitals and other public services throughout this very large area, the second largest State in Australia - but only a third in population - they had to pay more to get Government services for people anywhere where they lived in the State. By contrast in Victoria, a compact State, the smallest of the mainland States, the second largest in population of the Australian States, their tax was lowest, because you don't have to spread Government services over such a large area. There are many more people able to use every centre of Government service. So in those days, two taxes: Queenslanders paid the highest tax in Australia, and they had to do that, and even then couldn't get, one must admit, as good schools, for instance, as were provided in the other States. Now that is the core of this policy of federalism, bringing a double tax system, instead of a uniform tax system, and the comparison is made with Canada. Now I'm damn glad the comparison has been made, because it's very easy for people to see what the population of the Canadian provinces is, and what the tax rates in the Canadian provinces is. And the most populous, the most prosperous provinces in Canada, Ontario, British Columbia, they pay, they charge the lowest provincial income tax; and the smallest, in population, or the largest in area, the poorest of the States, you know to put it bluntly of the provinces there, they pay the highest taxes. Now this is just the wrong way you'd want to have it. It ought to be possible for us as one nation to see that whatever a person does, wherever he lives, governments provide the things which governments have to provide of equal standard. If you go to a new place you shouldn't have to wait until your family has grown up or has left the district before standards in that district become good enough.

If you live in a run-down area you shouldn't have to bear, unaided, the replenishment or the improvement, the replacement of the standards for the things which governments have to provide. It's important that as one nation we should see that wherever Australians live they are able to get as good schools, as good hospitals, or as good public services as Australians get anywhere else. The only way to do that is to pool the resources of the nation and have them spent where they are needed most. Now, it's true enough, people say, say about the United States; there are State income taxes there, but you look at the United States. It's very evenly developed. There are as many people on the West coast in California as on the East coast in New York. There are as many people up in the north, say in Illinois, as there are down in the south, such as in Texas. It's equally taxable, it's equally prosperous. There are patches which are much less prosperous but north and south, east and west, the place is very even. But you look in Australia, it's in the south-eastern part, the part say, Melbourne and Sydney, or if you like to stretch it, from Adelaide to Brisbane and the part down below that line which is the prosperous part. The rest of Queensland or South Australia, or Western Australia or New South Wales is very much more expensive to run. Now the core of what the Liberals are putting to the people now should be seen by the people. And I don't believe they'll have a bar of it. I've always said when there was an election, or when one was in the offing, and the Liberals had to be precise, people would see the catches. It's no use just abusing us because of unemployment, or inflation. Sure they're bad; but there's no country in Europe or North America where they aren't just as bad. They're much worse than when we came in, but they're much worse in all those other countries than they were three years ago - you can't blame us alone; you don't blame Nixon for that alone; or Ford or Wilson or Schmidt or Pompidou or Giscard d'Estaing - or Franco. It happens everywhere in the West, everywhere. And of course our opponents may parry by saying well we did it; things are crook, and every political party in opposition says it about the government in every country in the west, one has to admit that. If we were in opposition I think we'd be making out a very good claim against the government. When you have to face the people there has to be an alternative put, and there can be no doubt that when they start in our opposition to specify what they would do if they were given the chance you'll see the catch. And I don't believe that anybody in Queensland would want to go back to the stage of double taxation, because it's only the Liberal Party in Sydney and Melbourne that has sold this policy to the Federal leaders. You'll notice, Gordon Chalk, he's very unenthusiastic about it; so's Kevin Cairns - the first time I've ever mentioned him on a platform. But I don't propose to talk anything about platforms or policies. It's once they start being precise, you can see the catch. Then they were talking about tax indexation a month ago. How would you have tax indexation on State income taxes as well

as Federal income taxes; what could the Federal people do about tax indexation on the State income tax? Now some people say that there will be in a few weeks, a couple of months, an election. All I can say to you is that before the end of June next year there will be an election, at least, for half the Senate, there must be. Now the Senators who are there and were elected to go up to the end of next June, they will be there until the end of next June; whenever there is an election for half the Senate the new Senators to replace them would not take office until the 1 July. But the interesting thing is that at the moment it is a flawed Senate, or as Jim Killen says, a tainted Senate. There are two people there; I don't know who owns them, but they don't belong to us. But they succeeded people who the people elected as members of the Labor Party. And let's remember, back at the last elections in May last year, not only was there a very large majority of voters for the Labor Party in the House of Representatives, we've a comfortable majority there, but the Labor candidates for the Senate got more votes than did the candidates of the Liberal Party, the Country Party, the Liberal Movement, the D.L.P. - remember the D.L.P.? - all of them combined, every party combined, got fewer votes than we got in the Senate. But we haven't got a majority of members in it, and to get things through the Senate you have to get a majority. If the Senate is evenly divided the thing doesn't go through. Now in those circumstances, of course, it would be absurd for a Senate not to pass legislation we put up. Now some people say that the Senate will reject the Budget. Well if that took place, it would be very interesting to fight a campaign on what sort of Budget they would put instead. It's not the Senate's job to reject Budgets; they can't initiate money bills, the Constitution says so; they can't amend money bills, the Constitution says so. The Victorian Constitution says that the Upper House can reject money bills; the Australian Constitution doesn't use that word at all, so some of the comparisons made down there have no validity in our situation. Now, I musn't speculate any further, because I don't, you know, I want to catch people with their pants down. It's an attitude which appeals to people that boarded at the best schools. If there was an election on the grounds that the Senate had rejected the Budget, then the election would turn around what sort of Budget would the Senate have passed? What sort of Budget would the Liberals want? And that would be very intriguing to find out. Because I don't believe that it is possible in the circumstances applying in Australia or in comparable countries today to bring down a better Budget than Queensland's Bill Hayden introduced. If I may draw a comparison, he's a person very much like Denis Murphy; a person who, without any inherited advantages, has qualified himself superbly for an important role in this community, and instead of just looking after his own selfish interests, looks after the community and serves it with might and main.