



THE POLITICS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS: THE CASE OF ROAD FUNDING

by

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*Awarded 16. March 1982*

Thesis submitted for the Master of Arts

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May 1981

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ABSTRACT

Academic treatment of intergovernmental relations has been dominated by the examination of its administrative and financial aspects rather than those of a political nature. Nevertheless, from those who have dealt with the politics of intergovernmental relations and from the tangential observations of others it has become apparent that there are many conflicting arguments and assumptions as to whether intergovernmental relations are either more or less immune from party political influence than intragovernmental activity.

These arguments and assumptions have been distilled and presented in the form of an introductory debate which precedes a brief outline of road funding in Australia.

A typology is presented which examines the qualities of: (1) the various elements in the governmental process (i.e. administrative, executive and legislative), (2) the advisory bureaux, (the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads and the Bureau of Transport Economics), and (3) the special interest groups. This examination is designed to discover the importance of each of these elements in the decision-making process and to look at those qualities which have relevance to the arguments presented in the introduction.

The road grants made by the Commonwealth and South Australian governments are examined. Commonwealth grants from 1922 to 1969 are briefly reviewed and those from 1969 onwards are compared with the respective advice offered by the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads and the Bureau of Transport Economics. In dealing with state funding, grants to local authorities over a 30 year period are examined in electorates that have at some stage either been marginal or held by a minister responsible for roads, to discover if patterns that are explained only by political factors are evident.

The conclusion reviews the debate and the value of road funding as a case study in light of the findings.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by any other person, except when due reference is given in the text of the thesis.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A glance at the references of the substantive chapters will indicate my reliance on information supplied by members of organizations involved in the road grants process. On occasion explicit references have been avoided. This is in accord with the wishes of the informant.

## ABBREVIATIONS USED

AAA	Australian Automobile Association
AATO	Australian Association of Transport Operators
ACLGA	Australian Council of Local Government Associations
AGPS	Australian Government Publishing Service
ANU	Australian National University
APD	Australian Parliamentary Debates
ARF	Australian Road Federation
ARTF	Australian Road Transport Federation
ATAC	Australian Transport Advisory Council
BPA	Bus Proprietors Association
BTE	Bureau of Transport Economics
CAPD	Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary Debates
CAR	Commonwealth Aid Roads (Act)
CBR	Commonwealth Bureau of Roads
CRB	Country Roads Board
CRFFR	Centre for Research on Federal Financial Relations
HD	Highways Department
ITA	Independent Truckers Association
LDRTA	Long Distance Road Transport Association
LDOD	Long Distance Owner-Drivers
LTPD	Land Transport Policy Division (Transport Australia)
NAASRA	National Association of Australian State Road Authorities
PTDA	Professional Transport Drivers Association
RACWA	Royal Automobile Club of West Australia
RAASA	Royal Automobile Association of South Australia
RMC's	Road Maintenance Contributions
SARTA	South Australian Road Transport Association
SAPD	South Australian Parliamentary Debates
TIAC	Transport Industries Advisory Committee
TWU	Transport Workers Union

There was a dirt road through our village. A few weeks before an election the government's party's poll captain, who was ex officio the local road superintendent, would announce that the boys down in Halifax had instructed him to get her ready for pavin'. Men were hired to spread gravel, cut bushes and widen ditches ..... The Saturday before election day the work stopped, and three or four years later (sooner if there was a bye-election) they got her ready for pavin' again.

(quoted, Duff Spafford, "Highway Employment and Provincial Elections", Canadian Journal of Political Science, vol. XIV(1) March, 1981, p.135)