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Title:

Handwritten radio script regarding 'LCL ... argument concerning democracy and decentralisation in this State'.

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A L P

More 4/7/60.

RECORDED
Good evening

It would appear from the editorial columns of the Advertiser and from a letter that appeared recently in its correspondence columns, that the L.C. is attempting to develop a most extraordinary argument concerning democracy & decentralisation in this State. Since this involves a ~~most~~ very strange ~~process~~ cerebral process which could hardly be called reasoning - it would be instructive to examine it.

The argument runs this way - the Labor Party says it believes in decentralisation. But it also says it believes in one vote one value. To get one vote value, each electoral district would have to contain as nearly as possible the same number of voters as every other district. As 63% of SA's population ~~live~~ live in the metropolitan area of Adelaide, this would mean 63% of members of Parliament would be elected by the people of Adelaide and only 37% by the rest of the people of the State. This would give control of Parliament to Adelaide, and that is the antithesis - they say - of decentralisation.

Now the people who say this sort of thing are using words without knowing clearly what they mean by them. Let's have a look at the two words - democracy & decentralisation.

Democracy, a word coming from a Greek root, means literally "people's rule." That means that the basis of election shall be that people, human beings, shall decide on the Government. The Labor Party is a Party which believes

in democracy. We say, as does any decent
court body, that it doesn't matter who
people live, or what they own, or what they
work at which gives them the right
to vote - it is merely that they are
people. ~~The~~ Every sensible citizen
would be in accord with that view!
The Labor Party's electoral policy then
is that there should be a house of
assembly of 56 members, representing single
electorates. The electoral boundaries
should be drawn by an ~~single~~ independent
electoral commission, with electoral distri-
wads as nearly equal in number of voters
as possible. ~~Not it is true that this
would mean that was meant.~~ But these
seats should be re-allocated periodically
to allow for shifts of population.
- Now that is a policy which is in
accordance with democracy.

What of the other word - decentralisation.

Well, we might ask - decentralisation of
what? Labor is quite clear on that point -
decentralisation of population, industry
and facilities. ^{This is Labor Policy.} If there is a decentralisation
of these things, in due course there will
be more ~~of~~ members representing country
districts in the H of A under the principle
of one vote one value than if ~~that~~ ~~the~~
would be representing the metropolitan area.

But if we don't have Labor's ~~the~~
democratic electoral policy we won't get
decentralisation of people, industry,
facilities. Since our vote one value
was set out of the S. A. constitution, the
weighted rural vote has produced
centralisation of people, industry, facilities.

not decentralisation. Before our vote, our
 vote was abolished, the country area
 contained just over 60% of S.A.'s population
 - now they contain only 37%. The point is
 that our LCL goes. I don't want decentralisation
 people, industry & facilities - that policy
 would increase the number of industrial
 workers, traditionally Labor voters, in the
 under populated country areas. That would
 even ~~be~~ decentralise up the voting
 strengths of the country areas to something
 like those of metropolitan districts, & the
 LCL would lose a number of country seats
 upon which it relies for its present
 majority.

For what is the present
 position. The Labor Party has
 for years polled a majority of small
 votes in the States at State as well
 as Federal elections. But under
 our present rigged electoral system
~~they did~~ the A.L.P. did not gain a
 majority of seats. The metropolitan
 area, with 63% of the population elects
 only 13 of the 39 members, and some
 metropolitan seats contain 29,000
 votes electing one member compared
 with some country districts with only
 6,000 votes electing one member. ^{decentralisation}
 But what does ^{that} extra mean?

LCL argument which I mentioned above
 is. IT means by decentralisation
 not decentralisation of people industry
 & facilities - but decentralisation of
 control, regardless of whether there are
 people there to exercise it. According
 to the LCL argument if you get a large,
 sparsely populated country area, you should

gave it a number of purchasers, ~~and~~ even
with only a handful of people to exercise
the vote. This of course is a complete
denial of democracy - it means ~~there~~
not people's rule, but a rule -
you give the vote not to people but
average - to miles of empty spaces
peopled by little other than saltbush
and then the LCL and its warring
daily paper has the face to call this
decentralisation. What sort of decentralisation

~~it will get~~ is this is it which
keeps the country areas underpopulated
& underdeveloped for the sole purpose of
keeping the present dictatorship in
power. Now at all, of course,
but then logic & reason, ~~business~~
principles & justice has never been
~~well looked for~~ in the League of
Country League. Goodnight.