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**Title:**  
Outline of Approach to On Trial States Rights Book

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OUTLINE OF APPROACH TO ON TRIAL-STATES RIGHTS BOOK

by DON DUNSTAN

The Federal constitution and structure reflects social and political conditions, nature of settlement and temperament of turn of the century Australia: self-governing colonies, co-equal governments, parliaments and judiciaries.

An admirable - if uninspiring - document in that it allowed for and fostered the diversity of the society and rivalry of the States. An unfortunate document in that it has proved too inflexible to provide for the great social, economic and developmental changes of the ensuing 75 years.

Difficulties of obtaining changes through the referendum machinery, constitutional conventions or through the consistently conservative High Court. Study of the use of Sections 92 & 96 by conflicting parties. Difficulties encountered with Federal-State financial arrangements etc.

The need for change - the A.L.P. platform and the concept of regional government. Brief look at the means by which other Federations provide - successfully or not - for citizens to feel close to and able to influence Government decisions. Crucial that people should feel that decisions vitally affecting them are taken close to home where they can exercise influence. Unqualified centralism not the answer. Belief that given present constitutional rigidities and political realities change of the order required unlikely to be effected for 20-30 years. Interim proposals and suggested long-term approach.