

01.003/2 (4)

BRASSIL, J.T.C. Editor, Togatus 1956. Member of University Council
representing undergraduates

- 000 Student at University of Tasmania in 1955, having started at Sydney.
Only one subject needed to complete degree. Married, teaching at
Hobart Matriculation College.
President of SRC at Sydney - 12,000 students.
Stephen Fitzgerald contemporary in George Wilson's Asian History class.
Tutorials held in private homes. A friendly place. Relations/staff
and students couldn't be understood by people at other larger universities -
this relevant to ORR affair.
Enid Campbell, Professor of Law at Monash.
Neil Murray, Director of TAA.
Smallness was tremendous advantage over Sydney University. Admiration
for Gerald Firth; Alf Hagger - who elected to stay in Tasmania.
There were also senior staff who couldn't have left.
- 045 Hard to stay out of extra-curricular activities. Had been very active
in National Union of Australian University Students. President in Sydney
when Hawke was President in W.A. and Ivor Greenwood in Melbourne.
Urged by fellow students to participate, after R.C. and changes in Act.
Orr was not the centre of the revolt among the staff - but only professor,
and spokesman. Main two "stirrers" were Malcolm McRae and Tony Kearney,
later Registrar.
Reasons for stirring : lack of freedom; Henry Baker said he supported people's
rights to differing opinions; but in reality tremendous pressure to conform.
Senior University officials didn't want to get off side with Labor Govt.
- 090 Hobart community not ready to accept nonconformists.
Many people got more than they bargained for - University staff wanted
Enquiry, not R.C.
- 110 After living in Tasmania for many years began to perceive reasons for
attitudes : teaching, and football coaching led to knowing people, and
relationships.
- 125 All senior officials of Tasmanian Education Department are illustrations
of local in-breeding.
- 135 Student support of academic staff in R.C. period - McRae almost a hero :
Orr also popular, and respected.
- 145 Students who didn't support : the now Senator Mike Townley : Adrian Gibson -
against stirring, for the status quo. Not a political division among the
students.

1st issue of Togatus in 1956 (Brassil editor) on day of Orr's dismissal.
"Who will rid me of this turbulent professor?"

People of different political persuasion (illustrations) on both sides.
No line-up on political or religious grounds.

Easy to condemn Orr; very very difficult to support him.

200 "A worthless individual" - no concept of loyalty to family; self-centred.
But a wrong had been done to an individual.

Became Council member representing undergraduates - for 7 years from 1959
(after Malcolm Hills). Peter McManus was first. He was challenged by
Chancellor and Stanley Burbury on his right to sit. Suggested there was
225 something wrong with his election. But he stood his ground and was one of
few people on Council who argued against Orr's dismissal.

Hills had difficulty remaining on Council. He was teaching at Friends
at the time, and the then headmaster, Mr Oats, also on Council, suggested to
him that he should resign from Council as they ought not to have two from
school. Told to make decision / his teaching or outside activities. Chose
latter : got job at Hutchins.

When first went on Council he was working for Education Department - was told
he was being sent to Queenstown. Resigned : joined Friends.

+ Coincidence : when Brassil joined Council in 1959 he also was asked to go to
Queenstown by the Education Department. He refused to go; was told by
Director of Secondary Education that he would never be promoted. However he was,
265 to a school in Launceston. Local Superintendent said "Of course you'll be resigning
from the University Council".

On some issues about Orr, on Council, Brassil could not get a seconder. Until
~~now - professional~~
now - professional staff got (a new) representative - then seconded for each
other - (BOB SOLOMON).

285 Active association with Labor Party - but at loggerheads with ministers of Labor
government about University matters. Often taken aside and told this not the
way to get on.

300 Pre Bob Solomon, non-academic rep. (WHO?) followed official University line.
Professorial and non-professorial representatives on Council both anti-Orr.
Did this mean majority of staff also anti-Orr? Yes.
Support for Orr came from other universities, not here.

320 Necessity of Trust Fund for feeding and clothing Orr family - Orr himself
could not be trusted with the money.
Orr quite capable of doing what he was accused of but could not have been
found guilty on the evidence that was produced.

- 335 Convinced that it was a frame-up.
Any one in particular responsible? People who felt threatened. Hytten took R.C. very personally.
- 350 Attempts to silence Togatus. All material published had to be checked by legal advisers, which took a long time.
Suggestions that Brassil had been "sent" to rock boat. Tribute to E.J. Cameron, from Ross - "a fair-minded" member of the Establishment. Professor Hardie took every opportunity to advise Brassil to get out of political arena.
- 400 Townsley and Perkins also concerned to silence students. How?
Tale of two girl students seeking refuge.
- 425 Affidavits re overseas Malaysian student, threatened to send him home if he didn't give evidence.
- 450 Students (1) who gave evidence re promiscuity of Susan Kemp - or were prepared to (3 others).
But if they had, "their life in Tasmania would have been finished".
- 480 Digression to ruling class of Launceston.
- 510 The role of the Mercury in Hobart.
+ +

The Danes' brothers' scholarship for the Editor of the student newspaper.
£300. Students to select whom they thought should be editor, but other people could apply for the scholarship. Committee to determine. Over 4 or 5 years it was always the person the students had selected.
Mercury "terribly concerned" by Brassil's editorials. Subsidising "student radicalism" - they cancelled it, and money then given as prize for top Economics student.

- 615 Other issues exercising the Council during this period :
Building on new site.

Side B Subsidy for Student Union - pound for pound from Cosgrove government.
Credit to Malcolm Hills for raising money : Hills and Brassil both made Life Members of T.U.U.
B. opposed Hytten Hall being called H.H.; but approved of George Wilson being first Warden, who was greatly respected by students.

035-38 ? + ??

Women's residence : site set aside on campus : J. Franklin Hall would have moved. Very close vote, worth investigating, can't remember details.
Strong opposition to students' residences from some quarters. "Haunts of student radicalism". Big issue of men's Catholic college - vigorously opposed.

- Siting of residential colleges "a running sore" for years.
- 080 Education Faculty. Difficulties of getting p/t Dip.Ed. Support of Tom Doe and Russell Porter. Perkins opposed. Hardie was not an educationist. What was he? "He was a mathematical philosopher" (contrast A.K. Stout).
- 110 Yet Tasmanian Education Department more open to change : ahead of Victoria by few years. "You could do things in a small community".
- 125 Tribute to Kenneth Brooks - Adult Education in Tasmania. Education Department progressive note Matric Colleges, Schools Board, Curriculum Development, Psych. area (Ray McCulloch, now at Monash).
- 150 An exciting place educationally - all happening "despite the Faculty of Education".
- 175 Great scholars : Enid Campbell.
/ "Everybody in the Law Faculty resigned over the ORR issue" /
Stephen Fitzgerald, Neil Murray.
Roland Wilson, Laurence McIntyre.
Gerald Firth, Trevor Swan, Alf Hagger, George Wilson.
- 205 The importance or otherwise of the Vice-Chancellors.
Tor Hytten : "no great administrator".
Keith Isles : "brought here to retire". Not outstanding in any way.
- 230? Research directorate at end of war - a significant group in B's view.
x x McAuley, Isles, John Kerr, Alf Con ? , "Pansy" Wright - influence of those people - from near or far - on the University of Tasmania worth investigating.
Attitude of McAuley to ORR Case.
(Soft-peddalling here? Catholic solidarity?)
Role of McAuley in the settlement.
"If it wasn't for McAuley the thing would never have been settled".
- 345 B's efforts to get classes started - even first year classes - in the north, during his period on the Council.
Also meetings of Convocation held out of Hobart; and inaugural lectures.
But NO CLASSES.
Opposition held that small University would become fragmented.
Relations / University, community, Adult Education.
- 420 "People under threat react violently".
END.