

elites, whatever their domain, find it difficult to sustain a communication net, to decide upon distinctive policy positions, or to invoke an effective coordination of efforts. The medical elite is locality-bound; the military services feud with each other; scientists are preoccupied with their specialties; commercial elites are fragmented; industrialists are rivals.

Whenever a problem of common concern is identified, it is the instrumentalities of modern government that provide the organizational scaffolding and the policy guidelines for its solution. This is not to say that the public sector takes over the job, however. Those in political life itself are preoccupied with the tactics and details of electoral and legislative campaigns; public officials tend to worry about only part of the problem — the scope, tempo and form of the bureaucratic tasks that must be done. For the rest, in the politically-nurtured societies of the twentieth century, public policies are both formulated and implemented through the services of skill elites — experts, specialists and scientists working in government agencies, in ancillary structures, with labor unions, with large firms, or in professional groups.

On every side governmental machinery is being invoked to create and sustain high levels of health, education, welfare services, economic stability, environmental protection, community integration, etc. To control and direct that governmental machinery is the continuing expectation of the political elite. At the same time, to have an influential voice in fixing policies and guiding their execution is the clear expectation of the strategically-placed elites in every policy domain. Between these two groupings are those knowledgeable specialists actually charged with policy responsibilities — the functionary elites who make up the meritocracy. For various reasons, they often tend to see themselves as indispensable to the policy-making processes in question. Since their contributions are based on skill and merit, the dominant roles they sometimes play seem *inherently* right and natural. By the same token, the intrusions of legislators or other political elites into their policy domain often seem unreasonable and unjustified.

With such political dynamics, and with the countervailing strains that operate on all participants, the study of elite interaction patterns in public policy fields presents challenging research opportunities.

Australasian Political Studies Association
Henry Mayer

The University of Sydney*

Your APSA and ours share an acronym and a common purpose. Little else — we operate with hardly any resources. *PS*, with its news of executive meetings, contested elections, committees, planned budgets, etc. leaves me with a feeling of wry amusement tinged with envy.

Our APSA is very informal. The half-page Constitution keeps getting lost. Elections at the annual conference are never contested. Presidency and Vice Presidency are formal positions which rotate. We've never passed any policy resolutions. There's an Executive Committee but I don't think it has ever met.

What we do is governed by our lack of resources and given that lack we are in fact pretty active. There are only 2-300 academic political scientists in Australia and New Zealand. They are an eclectic lot. The latest US fashions take some years to trickle through, so at times just when we feel all isolated and backward we find that we've skipped one or two US waves of fashion and are in the vanguard. See Veblen on the advantages of backwardness.

Distances are huge, fares high, grants almost non-existent. APSA has about 400 full members with voting rights and 600 associate members. Most of our money goes into the journal which has a circulation of round 2000. Except for the Subscription side, all work is voluntary and done with no clerical help.

What we do: 1. There's an annual 3-day conference, usually late in August. In 1972 it will be August 15-17 at Victoria University, Wellington, N.Z. Visitors and papergivers are welcome — contact Prof. R. H. Brookes, P.O. Box 196, Wellington, N.Z. 2. Since 1966 we run the bi-annual *POLITICS* with about 10 papers and a few notes in each issue. We try to run each round a theme. Keith Legg will be in our May 1972 issue, Fred Greenstein and William Riker have contributed. We get too many long and constipated papers from the US, not sufficient short wild and

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imaginative things. POLITICS is rough, somewhat amateurish since I do editing, book review editing, and technical parts, sometimes more fun and livelier than resource — rich journals but, alas, often just as dull as they are. Subscription is \$US 5.50 p.a., cheques to APSA, Department of Government, University of Sydney, Sydney 2006 Australia. 3. We have a monograph series. 4. Since 1971 there has been one Parliamentary Political Science Fellowship at Canberra for which APSA nominates candidates.

When the day comes, I hope soon, where our mini-establishment is challenged or we have real tensions it means that we shall at last have sufficient resources and clout to motivate someone to organize. As it is, it's mainly self-criticism and shadow-boxing which is not healthy. All enquiries about POLITICS, academic and business and books, to me, at above address, all others to our valiant secretary, Dr. Joan Rydon, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Vic., Australia.

This note, of course, is my thing and gives my own views.

Associazione Italiana di Scienze Politiche e Sociali (AISPS)

During 1971 the Association has continued its activity of promoting studies of political science in the frame of the University law reform project now under discussion in the Parliament. In particular the AISPS has sought to make the Government aware of the needs and problems of the newly constituted Faculties of political sciences.

As scientific activity it published the "Tavola Rotonda" proceedings on the theme "Rapporti tra esecutivo e legislativo in Italia e in prospettiva comparata."

The AISPS is planning now to organize a meeting of Italian political scientists for next spring in Rome, but the date of the meeting has not yet been set.