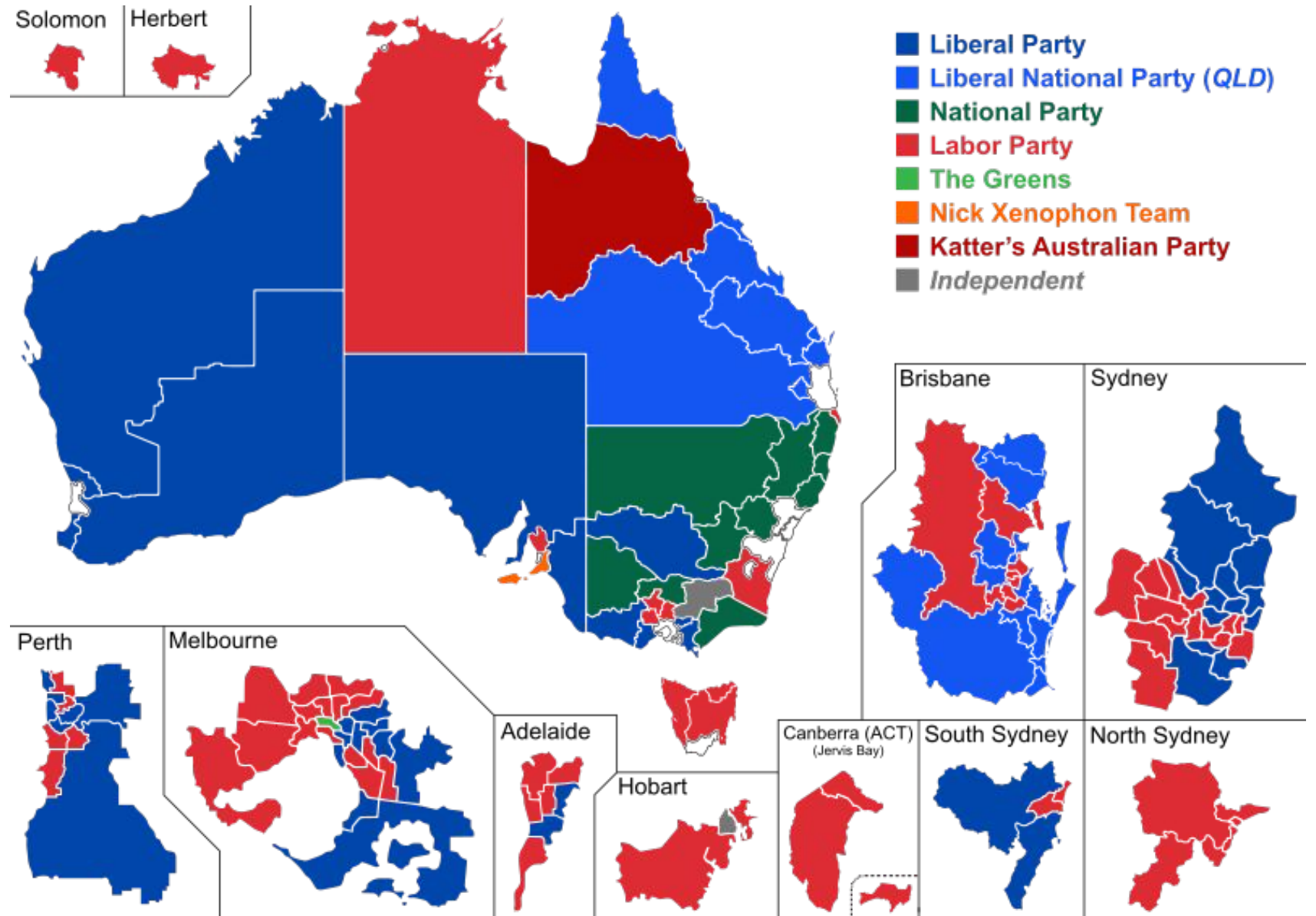




Liberal Party of Australia

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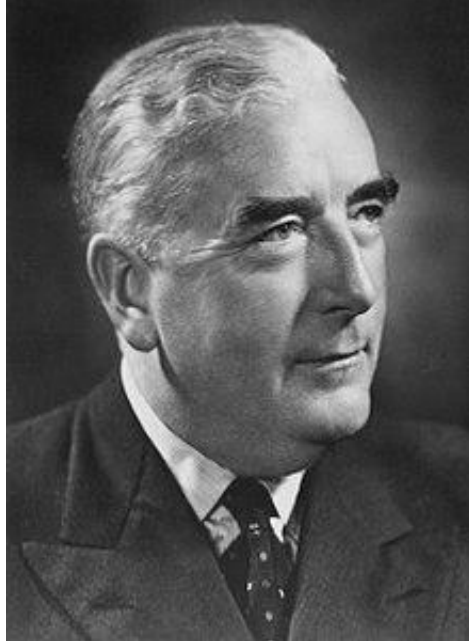
The *Liberal Party of Australia* is a major centre-right political party in Australia, one of the two major parties in Australian politics, along with the centre-left *Australian Labor Party*. It was founded in 1944 as the successor to the *United Australia Party*.



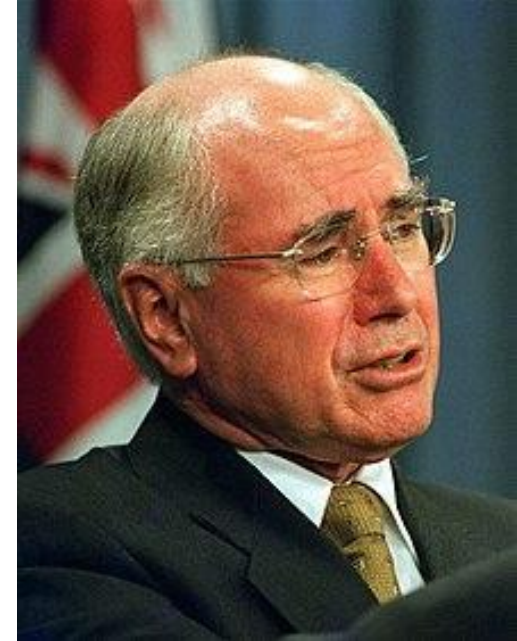
The party's ideology has been referred to as conservative, liberal-conservative, conservative-liberal, and classical liberal.

The Liberal Party tends to promote economic liberalism (which in the Australian usage refers to free markets and small government).

Two past leaders of the party, Sir Robert Menzies and John Howard, are Australia's two longest-serving Prime Ministers.



- Sir Robert Gordon Menzies
- 20 December 1894 – 15 May 1978)
- an Australian politician who twice served as Prime Minister of Australia, in office from 1939 to 1941 and again from 1949 to 1966. He played a central role in the creation of the Liberal Party of Australia, defining its policies and its broad outreach. He is Australia's longest-serving prime minister, serving over 18 years in total.



- John Winston Howard
- born 26 July 1939
- an Australian former politician who served as the 25th Prime Minister of Australia from 1996 to 2007. He is the second-longest serving Australian Prime Minister, behind only Sir Robert Menzies, who was in office for over 18 years. He is also the oldest living former Australian Prime Minister, having been so since the death of Bob Hawke on 16 May 2019. Howard was leader of the Liberal Party from 1985 to 1989 and from 1995 to 2007.

In 1944, the Liberal Party of Australia was founded after a three-day meeting held in a small hall not far from Parliament House in Canberra. The meeting was called by the then Leader of the Opposition (United Australia Party) Robert Menzies.

- Robert Menzies had already served as Prime Minister of Australia (1939-41), but he believed that the non-Labor parties should unite to present a strong alternative government to the Australian people.
- Eighty men and women from 18 non-Labor political parties and organisations attended the first Canberra conference.
- They shared a common belief that Australians should have greater personal freedom and choice than that offered under Labor's post-war socialist plans.

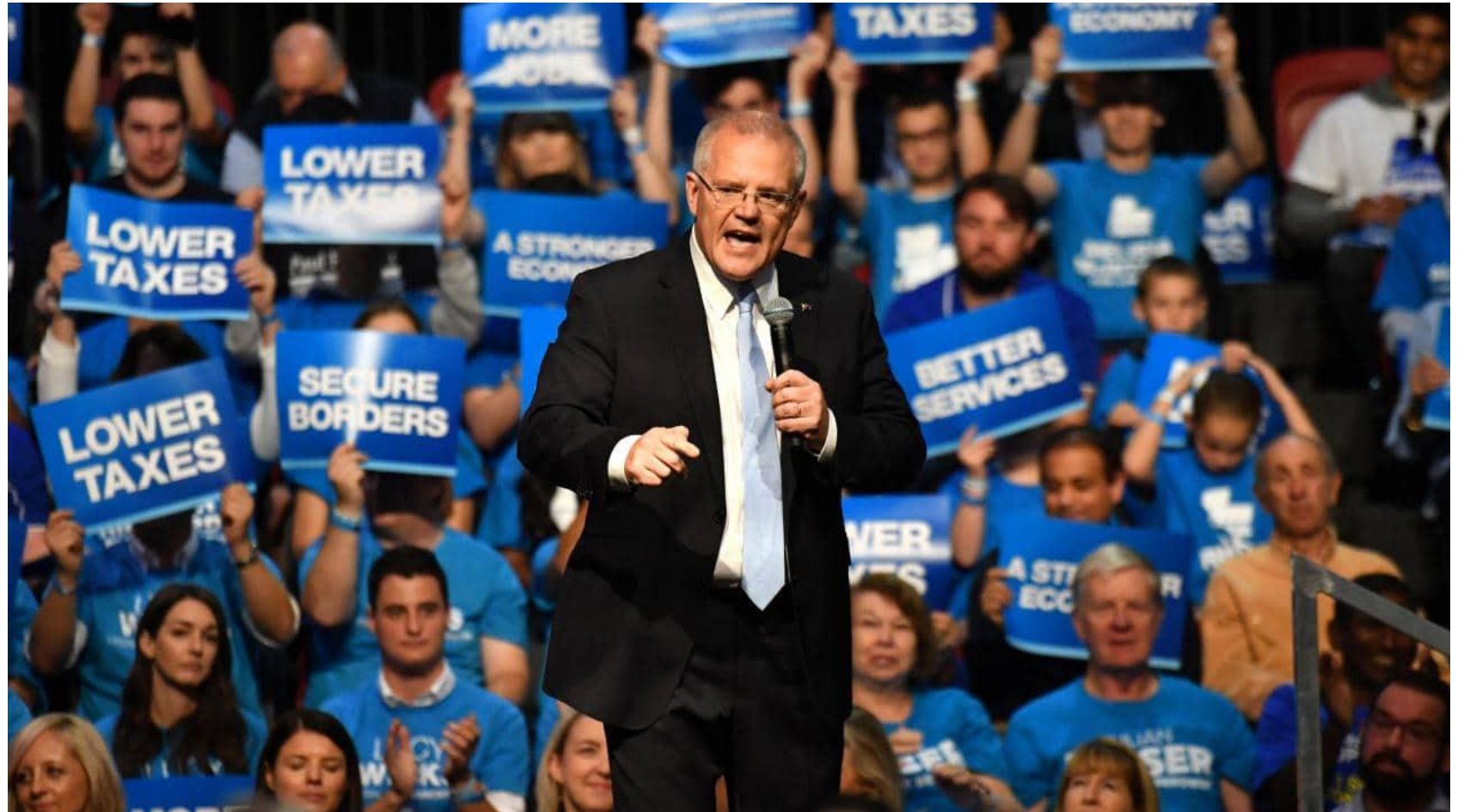
- On October 16, 1944, the name The Liberal Party of Australia was adopted, uniting the many different political organisations. Two months later, at the Albury Conference, the Party's organisational and constitutional framework was drawn



- ^{up.} The name Liberal was chosen deliberately for its associations with progressive nineteenth century free enterprise and social equality. By May 1945 membership of the Liberal Party had swelled to 40,000.

The contemporary Liberal Party generally advocates economic liberalism. Historically, the party has supported a higher degree of economic protectionism and interventionism than it has in recent decades. However, from its foundation the party has identified itself as an anti-socialist grouping of liberals and

- Strong opposition to socialism and communism in Australia and abroad was one of its founding principles. The party's founder and longest-serving leader Robert Menzies envisaged that Australia's middle class would form its main constituency



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The Liberal Party's organization is dominated by the six state divisions, reflecting the party's original commitment to a federalised system of government (a commitment which was strongly maintained by all Liberal governments bar the Gorton government until 1983, but was to a large extent abandoned by the Howard Government, which showed strong centralizing tendencies).

- Menzies deliberately created a weak national party machine and strong state divisions. Party policy is made almost entirely by the parliamentary parties, not by the party's rank-and-file members, although Liberal party members do have a degree of influence over party policy.
- The Liberal Party's basic organizational unit is the branch, which consists of party members in a particular locality. For each electorate there is a conference—notionally above the branches—which coordinates campaigning in the electorate and regularly communicates with the member (or candidate) for the electorate. As there are three levels of government in Australia, each branch elects delegates to a local, state, and federal conference.
- All the branches in an Australian state are grouped into a Division. The ruling body for the Division is a State Council. There is also one Federal Council which represents the entire organizational Liberal Party in Australia. Branch executives are delegates to the Councils ex-officio and additional delegates are elected by branches, depending on

