

A HISTORY OF THE ORD RIVER SCHEME
A STUDY IN INCREMENTALISM

by

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This is my own account of my
research, and contains as its
main content work which has
not previously been submitted
for a degree at any University

Signed *S. H. Graham-Taylor*.....

Date *21 December 1978*.....

ABSTRACT

The decision to commence the Ord River Irrigation Scheme in the East Kimberley region of Western Australia had extensive political repercussions in national and state politics. The thesis is introduced with an analysis of the decision in relation to the literature of decision-making theory, in particular the two most actively supported decision-making theories - the rational and the incremental approaches. The thesis demonstrates that the Ord River Scheme accords with the empirical patterns of incremental decision-making. The processes of decision-making on the Ord River Scheme involved a seemingly endless sequence of small, incremental and unco-ordinated adjustments on the part of both the Commonwealth and the Western Australian governments.

The initial chapters trace the early exploration of the Kimberley region, the state-encouraged experiments in tropical agriculture in the 1920's and the early plans for settlement in, and development of the area. Later chapters analyse the main decisions made by both the Commonwealth and Western Australian governments relating to the development of the region - decisions concerning the establishment of Kimberley Research Station, the construction of the Ord River Diversion Dam and early farming developments. The thesis then examines the attempt by both the Commonwealth and Western Australian governments to inject some rationality into the decision-making process on the Ord, in the form of cost-benefit analysis, the Commonwealth government's agreement of 1967 to finance the construction of the Main Ord Dam and finally, the Western Australian government's decision in 1974 to abandon cotton growing.

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Abbreviations and Notes

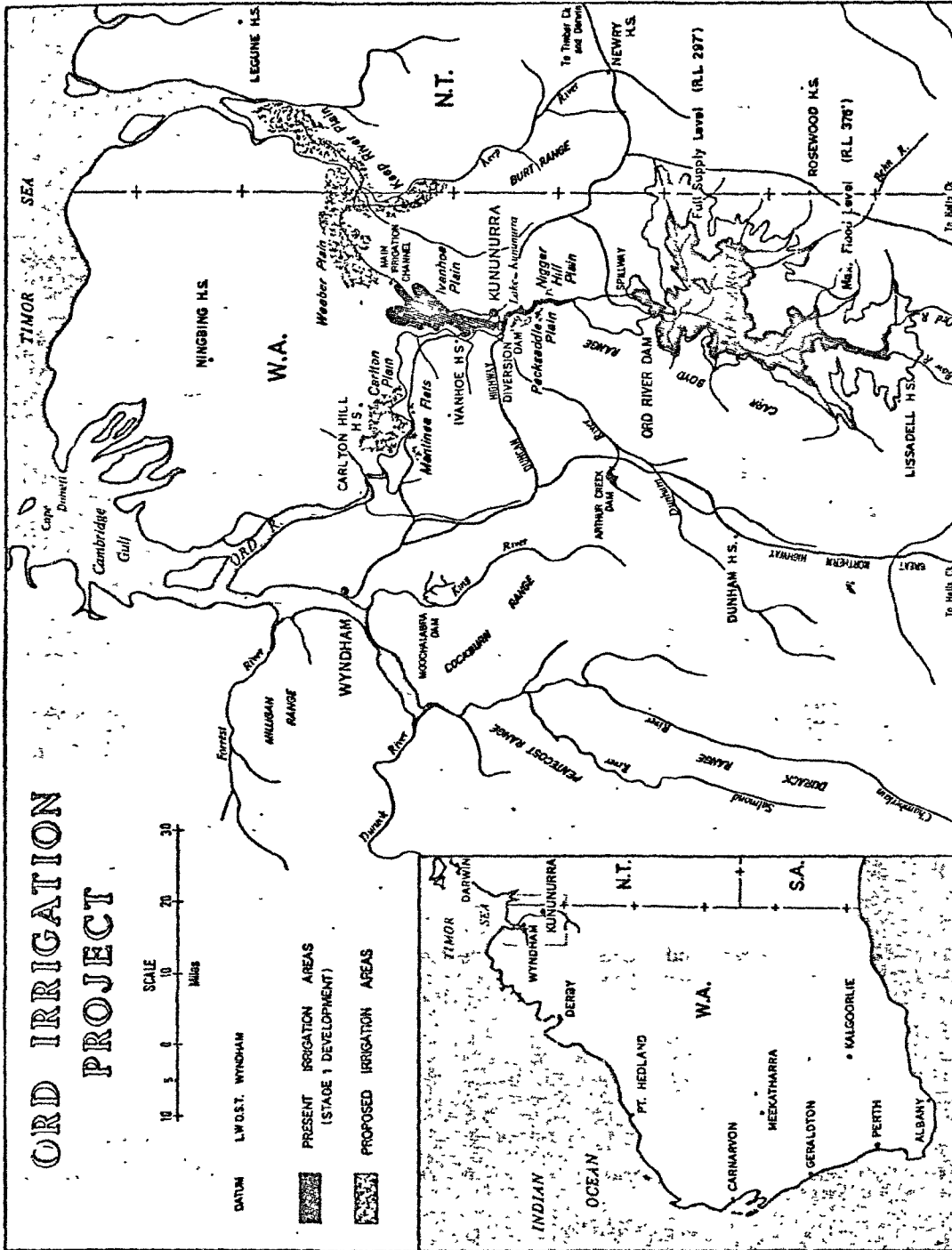
Abbreviations

B.A.E.	Bureau of Agricultural Economics.
C.P.D.	Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates.
C.S.I.R.	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, became C.S.I.R.O. in May 1949.
C.S.I.R.O.	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization.
C.S.R.	Colonial Sugar Refining Company Ltd.
K.R.S.	Kimberley Research Station.
P.P.B.S.	Planning, Programming and Budgeting Systems.
P.W.D.	Public Works Department.
W.A.P.D.	Western Australian Parliamentary Debates.

Notes

Weights and measures: figures quoted prior to 1971 (when metric conversion began) are in imperial units. Those relating to the post 1971 period are quoted in both imperial and metric units for comparative purposes.

Currency: monetary values are quoted according to the currency in use at the time - pounds prior to 1966 and dollars thereafter.



Source: *The Ord Irrigation Project*, P.W.D., Perth, August 1972, p. 3.

