Religion, Welfare and the New Social Contract in Australia

Paul Smyth
Professor of Social Policy
University of Melbourne
Introduction

• Governing paradigms
• Policy settings
• Policy instruments
• A case study: the BSL
Australia’s Voluntary sector

• The ‘New Protection’ (1900s)
• a welfare society
• BSL: Christian Socialism in Australia
• Temple and the welfare state (1940s)
• Service delivery - research and advocacy – protest- service innovation - involving the wider church
Australia’s welfare state 1970s

• From charity to rights
• The new micropolitics of welfare
• redefining the role: gaps- innovation – ombudsmen – opportunities for altruism – choice of service – community education – research and policy – community development
Neoliberalism

• Fiscal crisis
• Micro economic reform and ‘Charities’
• The Job Network
• Impacts on sector
• End of welfare state paradigm
Towards a new Social Contract

• From neoliberalism to social democracy
• Reintegrating economic and social
• New economic and social rights
• From choice and competition to trust and voice
BSL and the new social contract

- Sector changed by competitive mega agencies
- Is ‘big’ healthy for voluntaries?
- What proportion of government funding?
- Beyond service delivery to: research and policy – service innovation – disperse power downwards – re engage communities and anglican constituency