There is a sense of *déjà vu* in this account of the 1921 Conference, in that the dominant division within the party was once again between the State Executive representing the extra-parliamentary sections of the party and the MPs, especially Premier Storey and his successor, Premier Dooley. An attempt by the Executive to assert its right to direct Caucus on parliamentary issues (including, once more, appointments to the Upper House) resulted in tough negotiations between Executive and Caucus, with a points victory to Caucus. This was documented in the Executive Report and discussed again on the floor of Conference. This was only the beginning of that particular battle, since in the following year, after the defeat of Labor in the 1922 NSW election, the Executive expelled the leader of the parliamentary party, James Dooley, setting off a period of intensified factional chaos.

As in previous years the correspondent for the *Australian Worker* presented his material in a fairly disorganised way, although there is a preference for telescoping debate on a similar theme even if it extended over various days. It is possible to get a strict chronological account by comparing it with the day-by-day reports in the *Daily Telegraph* or the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which are otherwise much briefer. In this instance I have preferred to indicate the day of debate when there is a clear break in the account, and divide the text according to the separate reports in successive editions of the *Australian Worker*.

Each year, preparations for Conference involved the publication of a business paper detailing the matters set for discussion. Unfortunately many of these have not survived. In 1921, however, a summary of the 274 motions presented by branches and unions was published months in advance of Conference in the *Australian Worker* (6 January 1921).

Although the AWU still controlled the State Executive and the business of Conference, factional division was obvious. In the election of
a new Executive Jack Bailey's AWU ticket of was opposed by a ticket promoted by JH Catts, the Federal MP for Cook who was associated with the Railways Federation. Catts claimed on the floor of Conference that: “Of the Executive elected, 14 were from his ticket, 12 from the Bailey ticket, and 4 who were on both tickets”. Catts was a bitter enemy of Bailey and the AWU. His denial that his was a ‘Government’ ticket was not convincing (nor was Bailey’s denial that he had a ticket at all), although Catts was more anti-AWU than a supporter of Storey and Dooley. He would be expelled from the party in 1923 for publicly criticising AWU corruption.

Executive Report of NSW ALP for 1920

(Australian Labor Party, State of New South Wales, Annual Report, 1920)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Thirtieth Annual Report and Balance-Sheet of the Australian Labor Party, State of New South Wales, is herewith submitted for your consideration.

Like the Annual Conference of 1919, that of 1920 did not assemble until June, the postponement being caused on account of the State elections being held on March 20th, and to enable the whole efforts of the Movement to be concentrated on securing victory for the Labor Party at the polls.

New Branches and Unions

During the year new Branches have been formed at the following centres:

- Kempsey
- Bexley
- Caswell
- Griffith
- Holbrook
- Illabo
- Moama
- Albert
- Cessnock
- Goulburn
- Mosman
- Greenthorpe
- Gundurimba
- Liverpool
- Lewisham
- Glenreagh
- Brighton-le-Sands
- Rooty Hill
- Millthorpe
- Stockton
- Byron Bay
- Springwood
- Beechwood
- Blackheath
- Six-Mile Camp
- Bugaldi District
- Armidale
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yetman</td>
<td>Neutral Bay</td>
<td>Hurstville Grove</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coolamon</td>
<td>Deniliquin</td>
<td>Penrose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burrawang</td>
<td>Summerhill Creek</td>
<td>St Marys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cabramatta</td>
<td>Blayney</td>
<td>Woolgoolga</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corrimal</td>
<td>New Lambton</td>
<td>Riverstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerilderie</td>
<td>Hurstville</td>
<td>Henty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smithtown (Women’s)</td>
<td>Enchareena</td>
<td>Long Bay</td>
</tr>
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The strength of the organisation has been further increased by the addition during the year of the following unions, which have affiliated in accordance with the rules:

- Tanners and Leather Dressers
- Australian Postal Electricians
- Shop Assistants—Newcastle Branch
- Undertakers and Cemetery Employees
- Caterers’ Waitresses
- Australian Progressive Carpenters
- Painters

**Executive Meetings**

During the year Executive meetings have been held, attendances being as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
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<th>Attendance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrews, J</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Last, CF</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur, T</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Martin, W</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartle, TS</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>McCauley, V</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benson, Mrs M</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>MacGrath, E</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berry, AB</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>McLelland, D</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brightfield, A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>McPhee, N</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brotherson, W</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>O’Sullivan, Miss EM</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckland, G</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Potter, J</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devitt, J</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>Power, JM</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwyer, F</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Rowlands, G</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwyer, Mrs K</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Seery, Mrs EM</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finucane, W</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Sutherland, GH</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fowler, Mrs L</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Tyrrell, TJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gibbs, WA</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Mitchell, HJ</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grayndler, E</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>O’Brien, AE</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hackett, C</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Lambert, WH</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higgins, JF</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Carey, W</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The State Elections**

The State elections were dealt with in an interim report submitted to last Annual Conference. The Labor Government took office with a following of 42, and although there have been changes in the personnel of the
House the number of supporters of the Government remains unaltered. The changes were due to the appointment of Messrs Beeby and James to Judgeships, and the deaths of Messrs Fingleton and Briner. It will be remembered that no provision was made for filling such vacancies in the new Electoral Act under which the elections had been conducted. Much discussion took place as to whether the candidates (irrespective of party) next highest on the ballot should be appointed to the vacancies, or whether the seats should be allotted to the next highest candidates of the same Party to which the retiring candidates belonged. Finally the latter method of filling the vacancies was adopted.

Death of Mr James Fingleton, MLA
On October 15th last the Party suffered a loss by the death of Mr James Fingleton, MLA for Eastern Suburbs. The sad news was received with deep regret throughout the Movement, to the advancement of which Jim Fingleton had dedicated his life. The Government accorded their late colleague a State funeral, and a large gathering of Labor supporters attended to pay their last respects.

Eastern Suburbs Vacancy
The vacancy caused by the death of Mr Fingleton was filled by Mr Frank Dwyer, another old and tried Labor stalwart, whose succession to the seat was a well-earned reward for long years of unselfish devotion to the cause of the workers.

Labor Legislation
During the Storey Government’s first session, 44 Acts of Parliament were placed on the Statute Book. Among these was the Anti-Profiteering Act, which, though robbed of many of its best features in the Legislative Council, has already had a perceptible effect in reducing the cost of living. Other important measures were also emasculated in the Upper House, in which Labor unfortunately has only three pledged representatives.

Keen disappointment was felt in Labor circles at the delay in bringing forward the Motherhood Endowment Bill, which was postponed until next session. The announcement that Mr Storey would leave for England to deal with certain financial matters, and that Parliament would not sit during the period of his absence was the subject of strong criticism by the Executive and the Branches generally, who were anxious for the early re-assembly of Parliament in order that effect should be given to the Motherhood Endowment proposals and Labor’s policy generally.

Special Executive Meeting
A number of special meetings of the Executive, at which the State Parliamentarians were asked to attend, were called to deal with the
matter. An official report of proceedings was issued to the daily Press, but the capitalist organs published it in a mutilated form under misleading headings, apparently designed to misrepresent the attitude of the Executive. Consequently, only the readers of The Labor News had any opportunity of knowing the exact position at the close of the conferences. The official report read as follows:-

**ALP Official Statement**

The New South Wales Central Executive of the Australian Labor Party, after conference with the Premier and some 20 members of the State Labor Party on the 13th and 14th instant, and the fullest consideration, with one dissentient carried the following resolution:

“That this meeting of the Executive, after hearing Mr Storey, still adheres to its former decisions, and registers its inflexible determination in insisting that Parliament reassemble not later than March, 1921, to give effect to Labor’s policy; and, further, that the necessary appointments be made to the Legislative Council forthwith, in order to secure the passage of Labor measures sent up from the Assembly.”

This resolution was forwarded to the State Labor Party, who considered the matter on the 18th and 20th instant. The Party did not come to any decision, but adjourned the matter for further consideration to the Central Executive, which met again on the 20th and 21st instant. Messrs Dooley, Lang, Cann, McGirr, Bailey and O’Brien, having been deputed to act for the Party, submitted their point of view. Mr Loughlin also took part in the deliberations, whilst Messrs McTiernan and Kavanagh and other members of the Party were present. Finally the following additional resolution was carried unanimously:

“Whilst this Executive has no power to open Parliament or carry on the work of Parliament, it has both the right and the duty to inform the State Parliamentary Party what the Movement expects of it, and, having done so, the responsibility rests upon the Parliamentary Labor Party to recognise its obligations.”

The Organisation exists to carry out the objective, platform, and policy of the Annual Conference. The Executive is empowered to act on behalf of the Labor Movement between its Annual Conferences, and it cannot accept a quiescent or neutral position in the face of great social injustice, but must continuously fight until it carries out its public pledges – first by obtaining a majority in Parliament, and then insisting upon that majority carrying out the pledges upon which it was elected.

The financial situation was carefully considered throughout the whole of these conferences and consultations, and the opinion was general that the resources of New South Wales are equal to its developmental requirements, as well as to meet the obligations of current services.
We regard the disturbed condition of affairs with the utmost concern, demanding the closest possible attention of the Government.

We cannot think that the State Labor Party will, in face of the practically unanimous voice of the organisation of Labor throughout New South Wales, postpone the opening of Parliament beyond March, in order that pressing policy matters may be proceeded with, nor fail to make such arrangements as would permit of Parliament meeting earlier should some special emergency arise.

There is a transparent effort on the part of the daily Press to create mischief and friction in Labor ranks; but we feel sure that there is sufficient level-headedness and commonsense in the State Labor Party, the members of the Movement, and the general public, to draw their own proper deductions concerning the real facts of the case.

(Signed) WH Lambert, President
W Carey, General Secretary.
Macdonell House, Sydney, 21/1/21

劳工市市长

在十二月，市长选举结果产生了阿尔德曼 WH Lambert，他自1917年以来一直担任该运动的主席。尽管资本家媒体的恶意，从各个方面对 Lambert 先生表示祝贺。Lambert 先生在劳工会议上表现出色，他坚定地坚持劳工理想，使他被任命为首席大法官，特别是从劳工的角度来看，这是一件非常好的事情。

财务

1920年，执行委员会的财务状况非常紧张，负债总额超过£1,200，银行余额为£17/15 /1；但是，尽管我们进行了选举，我们成功地减少了负债总额超过£500。在这一年里，我们向分公司寻求经济援助，尽管我们没有得到我们所希望的响应，但仍然有不少分公司，特别是在乡村地区，慷慨解囊。

我们还举行了一次中奖£20彩票，这非常成功；通过这种方式和其他方式，我们成功地筹集了足够的资金来支付职员的工资，并成功地减少了负债，如上所述。

在当前的财年，我们希望从狂欢节和其他来源筹集足够的资金建立一个实质性的信用余额；毫无疑问，如果目前的联邦和州政府
out their full terms, our organisation will be well prepared, financially and otherwise, for the strain of the next election campaign.

**ALP Art Union**

Arrangements were made and permission obtained from the Attorney-General to run an Art Union for the purpose of establishing a library at Head Office, which we anticipate will prove very successful and assist in filling a want which has been growing more urgent as the Movement expands. We hope in the near future to have a library of economic and general educational value to the younger members of the Movement.

In the conduct of the Art Union, we were fortunate in obtaining the experienced assistance of ex-Senator McDougall, for many years Secretary of the Eight-Hour Movement. With no other help the venture was handled, under the personal direction of the Secretary, by our ordinary staff. A heavy additional burden of work was also placed on the Assistant Secretary (Mr W Gibbs), who was Receiver-General for the stream of shillings which flowed in from all parts of the State.

**The Labor News**

During the year *The Labor News* has increased in popularity and has exercised a splendid influence in galvanising the activities of the branches. The continued high cost of paper has made the task of establishing the journal on a sound financial footing a difficult one. *The Labor News*, however, has been for some time meeting all its liabilities from its own advertising and sales revenue. Mr Higgins states that it would be impossible, at the present high cost of production, to print, without loss, a larger paper, and continue to sell at one penny. As a matter of fact, every copy of *The Labor News* costs over a penny for printing alone, and, in the circumstance, it is a matter for congratulation that we have the services of an official organ, successfully running along without subsidy from the Organisation.

**In Conclusion**

The General Secretary desires to thank the President and Executive members for their unfailing courtesy and immediate attention given to all matters referred to them. A big and important business sheet has been placed before every meeting of the Executive, of which a record number has been held. The sincere regard of the members for the best interests of the Movement has resulted in a harmony of discussion which has greatly facilitated the consideration of the numberless matters submitted during the year for the Executive’s decision.

WM Carey, General Secretary.
Report of Federal Labor Party

Mr W Carey,
General Secretary, ALP
Sydney.

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge receipt of yours of the 10th instant asking for a report of the operations of the Commonwealth Labor Party.

Since the elections of 1919 the Party has had a very strenuous time, the House having sat continuously for nine months. During this time much legislation was introduced, very little of which is of use to the workers of Australia. Unceasing vigilance had to be maintained by the Party because of the trend of the legislation introduced. The Party returned from the hustings with 26 members out of a House of 75, and since then WG Higgs (Capricornia) has been expelled from the Party, and MP Considine (Barrier) has resigned, while Hugh Mahon was defeated for Kalgoorlie after expulsion from the House for alleged sedition. During the period, however, we regained Ballarat. After an appeal, the election of 1919 was upset, and DC McGrath was returned at the by-election. The Party now stands at 24 members in the House of Representatives, while Senator “Jupp” Gardiner stands a lone figure on the Labor benches in the Senate. The state of parties in the Senate is an example of the unscrupulous tactics used by the Nationalists in their electoral legislation. So glaring is it in its dishonesty that there have been even objections from the Nationalist Party itself.

In 1917 the Nationalists started agitation to kill the Commonwealth Arbitration and Conciliation Act, and for over three years have continued the agitation. Bitter attacks were made on the President (Judge Higgins), and while the Court was congested the Nationalist Government refused to appoint sufficient Judges to cope with the work. Consequently many organisations have had to wait for periods up to 12 months. These tactics have practically killed the Act and the Court, and have resulted in the resignation of the President of the Court (Mr Justice Higgins). This is a distinct loss to the community. With circumscribed jurisdiction, he has achieved more than any other industrial Judge in Australia.

Apparently the Nationalists, working under instructions from the employers’ organisations, have decided to make the Arbitration Act subordinate to the Industrial Peace Act. Whether the latter will be of use to the workers is highly problematical. With Nationalist administration it is hardly likely to be of much benefit to the workers.

During the election campaign the Nationalists, among many other things, promised that a Commission should be appointed to inquire into the cost of living, and to lay down a basic wage; also that whatever the finding was would be adhered to by the Government. After twelve
months’ sittings the Commission arrived at a basic wage for each State; but the Government refuses, notwithstanding the agitation of the Labor Party, to bring the wages recommended into operation.

Another promise not carried out was an election of delegates to a Constitution Alteration Convention. The Constitution of Australia is obviously inadequate, and an alteration is urgently necessary. This matter has now been shelved indefinitely.

During the session the Party has labored continuously in trying to get an amendment of the Old Age and Invalid Pensions Act, to provide for an allowance of £1 per week to the pensioners, and also secure a more liberal interpretation of the Act, with the exception of a concession to the blind pensioners, which allows of a greater earning capacity, without deduction of pension. The Party will continue to agitate for greater recognition of the services to Australia of the pensioners.

The War Precautions Act has at last been repealed; but, unfortunately the worst features have been re-enacted in a series of Acts – namely Passports Act, Immigration Act, Alien Registrations Act, Unlawful Assemblies Act, and Nationality Act. All of these Acts are of an Imperial character, inasmuch as most or all of the provisions of these Acts have been passed by the Parliaments of South Africa, New Zealand, Canada and England. There appears to be no doubt that Australia and other British Dominions have been working under instructions from Downing Street with regard to this particular series of Acts.

The past session has been remarkable for two Acts which impose great liability and responsibility upon Australia. These are the Nauru Agreement and the Anglo-Persian Oil Agreement. The former has cost Australia approximately a million and a half, as a partner with New Zealand and Great Britain in the purchase of the phosphate deposits of Nauru. The inner history of this deal would be very interesting reading. With regard to the latter Act, the people of Australia have been placed at the mercy of this powerful company. Not only has this company been handed a monopoly of oil in Australia, but it has been given charge of the development of the oilfields of Papua. Until sufficient oil is procured from Papua, the Anglo-Persian Company will continue to supply the needs of Australia. There is a feeling that oil will never be discovered in payable quantities in Papua while the Anglo-Persian Company has oil to sell.

The Party has been largely responsible for the exposing of the scheme to sell the Commonwealth fleet of cargo-carriers. This line has been a constant source of annoyance to the capitalists of Australia and England, and every possible channel has been exploited in the endeavour to remove it from the Commonwealth. So far the Party has been successful in defeating the attempt.

Ever since the end of the war there has been a powerful military clique at work endeavouring to create a huge training scheme, ostensibly
for the purpose of self-defence, but really to perpetuate the military machine and caste, with all its pomp, ceremony, and fat billets. The work of the Labor Party against this scheme has resulted in the scheme being dropped for the present; but constant vigilance will be exercised by the Party to prevent this scandal.

The Party has moved several no-confidence motions, without success. While the third party – the Farmers’ – claim to be a separate and distinct party, the members of same can always be relied upon to save the Government. As a matter of fact, several of them are pledged to support the Government in any attack from the Labor Party. If there is any difference between the Nationalists and Farmers, it is that the latter are more conservative.

Yours fraternally,
Arthur Blakeley, Secretary, Federal Parliamentary Labor Party
January 1, 1921.

Secretary Municipal Party’s Report

Dear Sir,

In reply to your communication of the 20th ultimo requesting a report on the Labor administration in the City Council, I have the honor, on behalf of the Party, to select at random various items of interest to the Movement which we have been the means of bringing into force.

Although the Party has not had the time and opportunity at its disposal to effectively enforce its municipal manifesto, you will readily concede that we have made fair progress with the conditions of employment.

Amongst the most important matters under consideration at the present time are the acquisition of a metal quarry and a coal mine, the latter proposal having received our close attention during the past twelve months without being brought to a successful issue – due to the fact that the properties recommended by our experts finally proved to be of no value for power-house purposes. We are again considering new proposals, and, with the experience already gained, are hopeful that in the near future we may be in a position to acquire a suitable municipal coal mine, thus saving the public the enormous profits paid annually to the Coal Vend, and ensuring the production of electric current under the most economic conditions.

With the limited scope at our disposal, under an obsolete Corporation Act, progress must necessarily be slow. However, with the assistance of the Parliamentary Labor Party in regard to amending the Corporation Act complained of, your representatives in the City Council will not hesitate to enforce the municipal platform of the Party.

The items mentioned above are as follows:
While the Board of Trade was deliberating in the matter of the first basic wage declaration, all employees of the Council were granted an increase of 10/- per week.

Subsequently, on the declaration of the basic wage, the minimum wage was increased by 11/6 per week to all adult male employees, 6/- per week to female employees, and 5/- per week to youths.

When the second declaration was made, the Council passed the increase of 8/- per week to all adult male employees, preserving the difference heretofore existing between the minimum wage in the Council’s service and that as laid down by the Board of Trade.

(These increases were carried despite the bitter opposition of the members of the Civic Reform Party.)

Gangers in the Electricity Department who, owing to lack of extension work, could not be employed as gangers but were reduced to the grade of laborers, to be paid an extra 1/- per day as a retaining fee to ensure their service as gangers when required.

Pay to men unloading coal at the power-house increased by 2d per ton, with an addition of 6d per truck during the overtime work.

Consideration of pay and conditions of labor for cold-storage employees.

Sick pay granted to carters providing their own horses at half regular wage payable to carters for a period of one month and afterwards at ordinary sick-pay allowance.

All officers and employees placed on uniform basis as to concessions, accident pay, overtime pay, public holidays, annual leave, and compassionate and retiring allowances.

Compassionate allowances granted in respect of employees who may die prior to completion of five years’ service.

Proportionate long-service leave granted to employees – three months after ten years’ service, and proportional for each additional year, without a limit.

Preference to unionists amplified by providing that financial unionists to whom preference is given shall continue to be financial unionists during continuance of service with the Council.

Ash Fillers at Power-house. – Shifts reduced to six hours, and men who worked beyond six hours after the date agreed upon (three months previously) to be paid at overtime rates.

Increments granted to block boys and messengers in Council’s service.

Bricklayers at power-house additions to work 44 hours, at 2/6 per hour.

All bricklayers temporarily employed given same pay and conditions granted to bricklayers employed temporarily at power-house.

Subsequently all bricklayers in Council’s service placed on uniform footing as regards pay and working conditions.
Adoption of 44-hour week referred to Finance Committee for consideration, and subsequently a 44-hour week established, with no Saturday work, and without any corresponding reduction in pay.

Employees absent through pneumonic influenza granted full pay.

Installation inspectors, Electricity Department, insured from risk from pneumonic influenza.

City Health Officer and sanitary inspectors insured for £500 each in connection with outbreak of pneumonic influenza.

Payment granted to officers of Sanitary Department who worked on Saturday, Sunday, or Easter holidays during influenza epidemic.

It was arranged that employees issued with oilskins, where specially recommended by the head of the Department, to have mackintoshes issued.

It was also arranged that a waterproof outfit be issued to motor cyclists employed by the Council.

It was arranged that in connection with holidays granted during Easter to employees, equivalent time-off to be allowed to employees who were required to work during that period.

It was also arranged that full salary or wages be paid to employees for public holidays during the peace celebrations, and an extra shift rate for those required to work on those days.

All employees granted similar concessions for sick pay, leave, overtime, holiday leave, etc.

Overalls to be supplied to engine drivers, greasers, boiler-cleaners, etc. at the power house.

Reward to employees for suggestions to be granted for employees receiving no more than £312 per annum instead of £225 as heretofore.

Journeymen who have completed apprenticeship with the Electricity Department and take outside employment to widen their experience, if they apply within three years they are to be reinstated and credited with full service given.

Delegation appointed to consider the amalgamation of Paddington with the City. Matter referred to a Special Committee for consideration and report.

Representatives appointed to confer with representatives of Randwick re absorption of Randwick into the City.

Representations made to the Chief Secretary to grant the Council direct representation on the Board of Fire Commissioners.

Superannuation Fund for employees again brought under notice, and the Premier asked to have necessary legislation initiated.

Fire Insurance Fund for Council's properties established.

Prompt returns to fishermen from the Markets assured by the opening of a Consignors' Advance Account, so that cash may be wired immediately after the sale.
Deputation arranged to wait upon Chief Secretary re old Woolloomooloo Fish Market site.

Allocation of barrowmen’s stands for sale of fruit. Conference with Superintendent of Traffic, and approval of scheme obtained.

Approval given to allocation of stands for sale of fish, etc. in City streets.

Acceptance of all excess offered in connection with loan of £850,000 approved.

Scheme for workmen’s dwellings initiated.

Representations to be made to Chief Secretary regarding provision of bathrooms, etc., in dwelling-houses; also in regard to the control of size of rooms, etc. in City buildings.

Representations made with regard to the rating of property of Railway Commissioners, Board of Water Supply and Sewerage, and Federal Government.

Provision made for fitting-up of small plant to manufacture Council’s own disinfectant at termination of present contract.

It was decided to proceed with the purchase of a road-metal quarry.

Acquisition of a coal-bearing property further considered, and a sub-committee appointed to go into the matter.

Use of enclosed portion of Hyde Park for purpose of recreation advocated, and deputation to wait upon Railway Commissioners.

Approval given to several additional matters being included in the Amended Corporation Bill.

Band performances in City parks to be given by Professional Musicians’ Band.

Yours fraternally,

W Holdsworth

Hon. Secretary, Municipal Labor Party February 4th, 1921
Annual Conference of NSW ALP, 1921

(The Australian Worker, 31 March, 7, 14 April 1921)

Day 1, Saturday, 26 March 1921

NSW Labor Conference. Addresses by President and Acting Premier. Conference Declares for Proportional Representation.

Whilst the big issues involved make the ALP Conference now sitting in Sydney one of the most momentous in the history of the Movement, so the tactics of two almost evenly balanced factions bid fair to make it one of the most exciting. Features of the proceedings so far have been addresses by President Lambert and Acting Premier Dooley, and the decision of Conference in favour of retaining proportional representation.

An unusually large number of delegates were present when President WH Lambert officially declared the annual Labor Conference open last Saturday afternoon, at the Trades Hall, Sydney. The attendance at the opening was set down at 2.50, but later on there must have been just on 300 delegates from all parts of the State in the Conference hall.

Mr C Last was appointed minute secretary, and Messrs Vernon and Whittaker filled the positions of timekeepers.

Mr A Vernon moved that the press be admitted, while Mr T Arthur moved, as an amendment, that only the Labor press be allowed to attend and report Conference. After a short debate, the amendment was carried by an overwhelming majority. It was decided, on the motion of Mr J Power, that the President, minute secretary, and general secretary constitute a press committee to supply the press at the end of each session with an official report of the proceedings.

A motion to admit the public was defeated.

Conference carried a motion congratulating the President on his elevation to the position of Lord Mayor of Sydney. Delegates said that it augured well for the Labor Movement when one of its members could be lifted from comparative obscurity and placed in the position of chief magistrate of the city of Sydney.

The President (Mr Lambert), in reply, said he appreciated the kind remarks of delegates. Personally he felt proud of the position of Lord Mayor, but his main gratification lay in the fact that, as Lord Mayor, he would have the opportunity of doing a little more for the working class than he would have had were he not occupying that position. His main object, while in the position, would be to endeavour to carry out Labor’s principles in the municipal life of the city. He suggested that radical
alterations be made in the present Act governing the Council to give it greater power to do more for the workers than could be done at present.

**The Late Mr Brookfield**

Mr CC Lazzarini, MLA, moved – “That this Conference records its deepest sympathy at the tragic death of the late Percy Brookfield, MLA”. He suggested that the motion, when carried, be forwarded to the friends and supporters of Mr Brookfield through the AMA Broken Hill. Mr Lazzarini spoke feelingly of his associations with Mr Brookfield, and said the workers of Australia had lost a sterling champion, and Australia had lost a man.

Mr R Stuart-Robertson, MLA, seconded the motion, and said he never knew Mr Brookfield to tell a lie or do a mean or dirty act. If Brookfield said he would do anything, he did it. He was first, last, and always a man of his word, and Australia had lost one of its best men while the working-class Movement had lost one of the best fighters that ever stood on the floor of Parliament House.

Mr WH Hutchinson also feelingly supported the motion.

Mr McTiernan, MLA (Attorney-General) extended the sympathy of the Labor Government. No man gave the Government more loyal support than did Mr Brookfield. Up till a few weeks ago the daily press had reviled Brookfield, and could not say enough against him, even to suggest his deportation from the country. Today they were slobbering over his memory. It was tragic that Brookfield should have had to pay such a penalty to vindicate his character in the capitalistic press of this country.

The motion was carried, delegates standing in their seats for several minutes.

**Secret Meetings Condemned**

Mr Gibbons (Ashburnham) moved – “That this Conference condemns the action of Mr JH Catts, MHR, in holding secret meetings with a view to influencing the options and minds of delegates prior to the opening of Conference”. He said that country delegates came to Sydney with open minds, and he deprecated that efforts should have been made to influence them. He thought that Mr Catts should have refused to have been a party to such a procedure, and that when the matter was first mentioned in the capitalist press he should have repudiated it. Such actions only tended to disrupt the Movement and cause disaffection amongst delegates.

The President ruled the motion out of order, on the grounds that the Conference was not properly constituted.
Messrs Rowlands, Tyrrell, and Gibbs were elected to constitute the Credentials Committee. Messrs V Kavanagh, R Bramston, TJ Smith, H Campbell and Mrs Kirwin were elected to form an Agenda Committee.

Mr J Coates (Ashfield) moved that, in order to do honour to the memory of the late EW O’Sullivan, Conference should instruct the Government to name the clock tower at the Central Railway Station, Sydney, the “O’Sullivan Tower”, and also place a bronze bust of Mr O’Sullivan in the main Assembly Hall, bearing O’Sullivan’s words, “Nothing is too good for Australia”.

The motion was seconded by Alderman J Farrell, and carried.

**Acting-Premier at the Conference**

Mr Dooley (Acting-Premier) arrived at the Conference at 4.45 pm, and was received with acclamation. He was officially welcomed by the President. In thanking Conference for the reception, Mr Dooley said he would address Conference later on in the day.

With Mr Dooley on the platform were Messrs G Cann (Minister for Labor), J Estell (Minister for Railways), AE McTiernan (Attorney-General), R Sproule (Solicitor-General) and members of the New South Wales Labor Party. Several Federal Labor members were also present.

The standing orders were adopted without alteration, and Conference adjourned at 5 pm.

**President Lambert’s Address**

When Conference resumed on Saturday night the President delivered his presidential address. After expressing gratification at the large attendance of delegates, he said:

From a general survey of the position, it seems obvious that despite the continuous and hostile and false criticism of the capitalistic press, the Movement has more than held its own in every way during the past twelve months, and particularly on the lines of solidification of the organisation.

Very many new branches have been formed, and many more unions have affiliated. Fortunately for the country the people returned a Labor Government to power at the last elections twelve months back. The Government majority, however, is a very slender one, and it is therefore handicapped to a great extent in many ways, but even so it has done a good deal of good work by way of administration and legislation.

**The Upper House**

The Government is working at a great disadvantage as regards the Upper House, where there are only two pledged Labor men out of
seventy members. Practically every measure passed by the Government has been amended or emasculated to such an extent as to very largely destroy its purpose and effectiveness.

The last Conference requested the Government to swamp the Upper House, but so far through some reason no steps have been taken in this direction, and although we have the Government in power their efforts to carry Labor’s policy out is to a great extent neutralised by the Legislative Council. The Council as at present constituted only represents the employers and the capitalists.

Re-Registration of Unions and Victimisation Matters

The Government was requested by last Conference, and also pledged itself to re-register the whole of the unions deregistered, and reinstate all workers victimised during the 1917 strike. It has gone a long way in those lines and re-registered many of the unions in question, and reinstated many hundreds of the victimised workers.

There have been complaints, however, from some unions and unionists concerned that the Government has not yet gone as far as desired in those matters, but the position in this regard will no doubt be dealt with by the Government as Conference proceeds.

The Electoral System

Since the resolution of the last Conference to go back to the single electorate system from the present system, much consideration appears to have been given to the matter by the State Parliamentary Party, and members of the Movement generally. Up to the present, circumstances seem to have prevented a satisfactory amending bill being put through. It is now the opinion of a large majority of the members of the Party and many others who have studied the matter that the principles of the present system should stand with proper modifications and simplifications.

The Conference may do well to reconsider the question, as it is of vital importance to the Movement, more particularly so in view [of the decision] of the recent Nationalists’ political annual conference, presided over by Mr Holman, to revert to the single electorates. Personally, I am of the opinion – though I have not expressed it before – that on account of the amount of time that would be required for redistribution, and the extent to which our present organisation may be disturbed, it would be better to retain the present system amended on proper lines.
Bursting Up Land Monopoly

New South Wales has an area of 195,669,000 acres, and the major portion of this huge territory is in the possession, under different tenures, of land and finance companies, the members of which are living overseas, and very seldom see the country from which their wealth is produced.

The compulsory subdivision of these large estates is an imperative necessity if we are going to become a prosperous nation in the Southern Pacific. Until we have successful land settlement in this country immigration is unthinkable.

The capitalist is promulgating the pernicious doctrine of unrestricted immigration, notwithstanding the fact that we have thousands of unemployed with us today, and they further insist that the only remedy for the absorption into industry is a wholesale reduction of wages, but Labor must insist on a high standard of living at all costs. The exploiters’ profits should be reduced instead of the workers’ wages.

It is a sad commentary, and a standing disgrace, that Australia should be confronted with a huge army of unemployed people, and this at a time when the capitalist says we must have more production. If the captains of industry require more production, then put on more producers, thus providing employment for those in need of it.

The Government has introduced a land subdivision bill that should have a good effect by way of releasing the monopolised land for settlement once it is passed through Parliament.

Unemployment

The solution of the unemployed difficulty lies in a bold and vigorous public works policy, and the money for carrying out highly necessary developmental works could be raised within the State. In 1920 our primary industries produced £100,000,000, and to say that with this huge production that money cannot be raised within the State is to assert that which is palpably untrue.

There seems to be a concerted attempt on the part of employers to throw all the men they can out of employment with a view of breaking down the standard of wages and conditions. There is more unemployment in all other States of Australia, excepting Queensland, than in New South Wales. Similar conditions exist all over the world, and have been brought about by circumstances over which the Government have had no control, and while a great deal has been done to relieve the position by providing work and relief, it is necessary for some other comprehensive action to be taken to overcome the problem.
The Government and the Executive

There has been a great deal of misrepresentation and false criticism directed against the Executive and the Parliamentary Party, and also the Municipal Labor Party, by the capitalistic press. Practically the whole of their statements and allegations were absolutely untrue, and their object for this was, and is, to try and shake the confidence of the people in the Executive and members of the Labor Party. It is a form of propaganda used for many years to defeat Labor and place representatives of the capitalists in power. While the Executive has its duty to perform on behalf of the Movement, it at all times was prepared to, and did give, the members of the Party a square deal despite what appeared in the press.

Imperial Federation

There is an underhand and secret move on the part of the Nationalists and so-called Progressive politicians and capitalists and enemies of Australia and its people to saddle the people of this country with a complete scheme of Imperialism and despotism. If this succeeds it will absolutely rob the people of their self-governing rights, and the country will then become a vassal State, and be used in the interests of English and foreign capitalists. I am of the opinion that all members of Parliament, State and Federal, and the whole Movement, should oppose this with all the resources in its power, and that a campaign of propaganda should be launched against it forthwith.

Press Attacks on President

There has been an avalanche of vindictive and spiteful abuse heaped upon me as your President right through the year by the Sydney press for carrying out and giving effect to the policy and principles of Labor. In addition, there seem to be dark and mysterious forces at work against the interests of the Movement, and with a view of its disorganisation. Notwithstanding the false propaganda and misrepresentation that is being carried on, I feel sure that the good sense of the delegates will prevail in this and all other matters that may arise, and that the interests of the Movement will be safeguarded.

I feel that I must, before concluding, say a word of praise as regards our General Secretary, Mr Carey. He has, to my personal knowledge, worked continuously and energetically in the interests of the Movement, and devoted the whole of his time and energy for that purpose. He has zealously and most efficiently carried out his duties as General Secretary, and to a very great extent as a result of this the Movement is now in a more progressive and solid position than ever before.
The President then referred to a circular which had been handed round to delegates by some person casting insinuations against his character and industrial record. As it was not signed he was not in a position to say who had been responsible for it, but luckily he was well able to disprove its contents.

Captain Toombs (Radio Telegraphists) formally moved the adoption of the President’s report.

Mr A Wheeler (Transport Workers) opposed the motion. He claimed that the Labor Government has not done as much for the unemployed as the Fuller Nationalist Government. (Dissent) What had the Labor Government done for the waterfront workers? Had it carried out the pledges made at the last general elections? He objected to people thrown out of work being forced to go to the Benevolent Society for food. That was simply degrading the workers.

The motion was carried on the voices.

**Acting Premier Addresses Conference**

Mr Dooley (Acting Premier) then addressed the Conference. He commenced by saying that he hoped and believed that delegates realised that they had met to transact important business. He expressed regret that the Premier (Mr Storey) was not present. He was away fulfilling an important mission for the Movement. Delegates would be pleased to hear that he had received an intimation from Mr Storey the other day that he hoped to be successful in that mission, which would enable the Labor Government to do something practical for the country.

This was a time when they had to realise what the future of the Labor Movement was going to be. The world was going through a period of evolution and delegates were charged with the very important mission of guiding the destinies of the Labor Movement in this country. He deprecated the action of Labor’s political enemies in raking up the sectarian issue. They were trying their best to disrupt the Labor Movement, and made no secret of the fact that they were working day and night to do so. Here was a big issue the Labor Movement had to fight. It was for them to say that Labor knew no creed or sect, but stood for the elevation of the masses, irrespective of what their religious beliefs might be. (Applause)

**Efforts to Disrupt Movement**

Sometimes he thought a serious attempt was being made to split the Movement from within. Sections outside tried all they knew how to accomplish this, and too often people inside the Movement fell victims to their schemes. He hoped the Movement would always keep itself above
such matters. Let them always remember that the only way to success
was by working harmoniously and unselfishly.

The Labor Government had many critics, but he and other members
of the Government welcomed criticism, provided it was constructive and
fair criticism. Many had disputed his right to the position of Acting
Premier. “I think,” said Mr Dooley, “my faithfulness, long service, and
loyalty to this great Movement entitle me to the position until such time
as somebody else, better fitted than myself, comes along. (Applause) Of
course there are faults to be found with the Labor Government, but as Mr
Boote (Editor of the Worker) once said: ‘Even a bad Labor Government is
better than a good Tory Government’ ”.

Parliament Should be Supreme
Mr Dooley referred to the work done by the Labor Government since it
took office. It had to be remembered that the Government was hedged in
by limitations which would have to be dealt with before they could hope
to make real progress. He thought that Parliament elected by the people
should be supreme. It was not right for commissions, such as the Railway
Administration, for instance, to be able to run counter to the wishes of
the people as expressed at the ballot box. But even if the Government
was not able to do everything it desired, it was at least some advantage
to have a Labor Government in charge of the administration. (Cheers)

Of the number of distinct promises made by Mr Storey in the policy
speech at Mudgee – 80 in all – 33 had already been fulfilled (applause)
and at least half of them had been tackled in some way. They had only to
remember that to realise that the Labor Government had not remained
idle. This had been done in twelve months, and if they did as well during
the coming session they would be in the position of having carried out
the entire policy before the close of the present Parliament.

The 1917 Men
Mr Dooley sketched, briefly, some of the many things done by the Labor
Government since it had been in office. It had recalled Mr DR Hall from
London, and no fair-minded person could be found who would
complain of their action in thus abrogating what was an indecent act on
the part of the Holman Government. They had fulfilled their pledge
regarding the IWW men. As to the 1917 strikers, the matter was not yet
finalised, but he could say, on behalf of the Government and Party, that
that promise would be carried out both in the spirit and the letter. The
last Conference had asked for a Royal Commission to inquire into the
circumstances of the 1917 strike. The Commission was now sitting, and
would shortly furnish its report. He did not wish to make any threat
beyond saying that they were the Government and would see that the
wishes of the people were carried out. In the meantime hundreds of victimised men had been reinstated.

The Waterside Workers

All the unions deregistered by the Holman Government had been reregistered. (Cheers) He could now tell them that they were throwing the scabs out of the Model Lodging House. (Cheers) While they had no control over the oversea shipping companies, at least they were taking steps to deny them the use of State property for scabs. The Coal Lumpers’ Hall had been returned to that union, and in order to prevent the Coal Lumpers being further victimised they were giving them a ten-year lease of the property. (Cheers)

The Unemployment Problem

The financial position of the country at the time of the last general elections was such that it made them very reluctant as to whether they should take office. But they believed there were many wrongs to be righted and they tackled the job. (Cheers) There was a huge unemployment problem – the worst the country had seen since the beginning of responsible Government. But they were gradually overcoming this mighty problem.

Something would have to be done in the way of unemployment insurance. They were considering the various Acts in other countries dealing with this matter, and next session they hoped to introduce the best unemployment insurance scheme possible. The Government recognised that every man had the right to work, and certainly had no right to be starved. The Labor Government would see to it that no man, woman, or child starved.

Immigration and Wages

The Government believed in immigration, provided that the country was in a position to absorb immigration. But the Government would be no party to bringing immigrants to the country to swell the ranks of the unemployed, or take the jobs of men already here. It had already made its views regarding immigration known to the Federal Government.

Referring to the attempt being made in certain quarters to reduce wages, Mr Dooley said the Government had made up its mind to fight tooth and nail for the cost of living to come down first. It would fight to the death any attempt on the part of employers to lower the standard of living to the Australian worker. Mr Dooley concluded by stating that the Labor Government had passed 44 Acts of Parliament, which was a record
for the 12 months. He contended that the Government had amply justi-
fied itself under the most trying circumstances. (Applause)

The Upper House

Mr J Power (AWU) said that while the Government had done many
things for which it had to be congratulated, he was surprised that
nothing had been done with the Upper House. It was time that some-
ingthing was done to deal with that bulwark against liberty and democracy.
Until something of a desperate nature was done the Government would
find itself hampered at every turn. He objected to Mr Dooley’s statement
about conferring with somebody 16,000 miles away as to what they
should do regarding the Upper House.

Mr Dooley: Isn’t it advisable to get all the information we can?

Mr Power: I fail to see how you can get any good advice from the
Lloyd George Government on this question. (Loud cheers) My
commonsense tells me that the Imperialist Government won’t give any
good advice to the people of New South Wales. If anything is to be done,
the people of this country will have to take action of their own. I am
certain that the people are prepared to stand behind the Government, if it
will only have the courage to tackle this problem as it should be tackled.
(Cheers) He thought the time was ripe for the Government to do
something radical. The people were entitled to full self-government.
While it was true that they could put members in the Upper House that
wasn’t the way to solve the problem. Let the Government get a
declaration from the people to abolish the Upper House – and the people
would give it – and go right ahead and abolish it. (Cheers) In the mean-
time although it was a bad policy, they should flood the Chambers with
Labor nominees.

The Financial Aspect

Mr Mills (Waterside Workers) contended that the Labor Government had
not done as much as it should have done with regard to the workers on
the waterfront. He also objected to people being forced to go to the
Benevolent Society for relief.

Mr Holloway (AWU) said that although Australia was the richest
country in the world, with bountiful wheat harvests, the people were
paying an extremely high price for their bread. That was not right. As
regards unemployment, he regretted to say that up to date there was no
practical method put forward to solve the problem. It was a strange thing
that while the British Government could lend millions of money to
foreign and bankrupt nations, it did not have any money to lend to its
own oversea Dominions. The banks should be made to realise that they
had no right to refuse accommodation to the country. With such
productivity in the land there was no need for any person to be unemployed. A Government courageous enough would solve this most pressing problem.

**Election of Returning Officer**

At 10 pm Mr Catts moved that the election of a returning officer be proceeded with. He nominated Mr R Sproule, MLC (Solicitor-General). Mr T Arthur nominated Mr W McKinnon. A division secured the election of Mr Sproule, the voting being: Sproule, 112; McKinnon, 100. There was much excitement during and after the election of the returning officer. Several delegates in the back of the hall expressed their opinions by resorting to blows.

Conference adjourned at 10.15 pm till Monday.

**Day 2, Monday, 28 March 1921**

**Sympathy with Ireland**

Mr Kelly (Newtown) moved – “That this Conference sympathises with the Irish people in their endeavour to secure self-determination, as they were participants in the world’s war. Further, we consider that they are entitled to the same considerations as other British Dominions.” He said that nobody would deny the Irish people having the same measure of freedom that the Australian people enjoyed. What was happening in Ireland should not be tolerated. In carrying the motion they were only following the lead set by the British Labor Party and Labor Socialist bodies throughout the world.

Mr Bell (Albury) moved to amend the motion – “That a cablegram be sent to Mr John Storey (State Premier) to request him in the interests of humanity and peace, to interview the Imperial authorities, including the King, for the purpose of asking them to remove the army of occupation from Ireland”. He said that what was being done in Ireland was not in accordance with the wishes of the British people or the workers of any part of the world.

The motion and amendment were carried unanimously.

**Proportional Representation**

Bondi Branch moved – “That the electoral system of Proportional Representation with simplifying amendments be retained”.

Mr Hutchinson (AWU) spoke in favour of the motion. He claimed that the Labor Party had got control of Parliament at the last election
because of Proportional Representation, and it should be retained. Mr Arthur (AWU) said that seats were won in the country under Proportional Representation that would not have been won under the old system. To retain those seats and win others, they should retain Proportional Representation.

Mr G Buckland (AWU) said that all the facts were before the last Conference, and it decided in favour of a return to the single electorates. Why should they be blowing hot and cold on the matter? The old system forced the country to line up either with or against Labor, while Proportional Representation gave new parties a chance. Mr Stewart (Dulwich Hill) also opposed Proportional Representation. It might be all right in theory, but it was rotten in practice.

**Opposition by Federal Members**

Mr A Blakeley, MHR, was opposed to any form of voting which confused the issue. He opposed Proportional Representation because it confused the issue, not only amongst the voters, but amongst their own candidates, who were fighting one another rather than Labor’s enemies. He gave instances of what Labor candidates had done against one another at the last election under Proportional Representation. It wasn’t to the interests of the Movement to have candidates fighting one another. There should be only two parties – Labor and Anti-Labor. The Proportional Representation system gave birth to new parties. He claimed that had the fight been a straight-out one at the last election they would have been better off.

Mr J Stanton (St Leonards) favoured Proportional Representation, and hoped it would be retained.

Mr JH Catts, MHR, (Enmore) said that Proportional Representation postulated the formation of new parties, and in their own ranks had created divisions that would not be lightly forgotten. Labor men were fighting Labor men at the last election. There would be the same, and greater, difficulties if the system were retained. He ridiculed the idea that candidates would regiment themselves under it. Did they do that at the last election? He claimed that intrigue had taken place in electorates at the last election under the system. He instanced Bathurst and Goulburn. Conference decided the matter last year, and the Party should have carried out the desires of Conference.

**Parliamentary Party Favours Proportional Representation**

Mr V Molesworth, MLA, stood by Proportional Representation. He denied that there had been any intrigue on the part of the Party to shelve the matter. The matter was treated by the last Conference without possession of the full facts. Since then they had secured a mass of
information which compelled them to realise that it was beneficial to the Movement. If it was retained, he felt sure that several more seats could be won. If it was turned down, some of the seats they now held would be lost at the next appeal to the country.

Mr Keiran favoured single electorates.

Mr G Cann, MLA, (Minister for Labor) said that under Proportional Representation they got one vote one value. He was surprised that Federal members opposed it after what had happened to the Senate last election. He did not think they would have had as many seats under the old system had it been retained. They figured on winning only 40. Even men in the Party opposed to it admitted that more seats could be won by Proportional Representation, and they would have won more but for Holman putting impossible conditions into the Act. He hoped the motion would be carried.

Mr J Power (AWU) stood for single seats. The country would have to be forced into two distinct camps. Mr O'Dea (Shop Assistants) supported Proportional Representation on the ground that it gave country people Labor representation they could not have get under the old system. Miss O'Sullivan (Annandale) favoured single electorates. There was endless intrigue under the present system of Proportional Representation.

President's Ruling on Matter

When Conference re-assembled after lunch, the President stated that the motion would need a two-thirds majority as the principle of single electorates was already on the platform, having been carried at the last Conference.

Objection was taken to Mr McGarry (Leichhardt) and Mrs Mullaney (King) on the grounds that they were not living in the electorate they represented. The objections were upheld.

Mr Lazzarini, MLA, said he favoured single electorates. No new arguments had been produced to alter the decision of last Conference.

Mr Tom Keegan (Glebe) was also against the Proportional Representation system, as it opened the way to intrigue. Those who favoured the system did so because they could not retain their seats under any other system.

Captain Toombs said that up to date they had not really dealt with the merits of Proportional Representation, but with abuses that had happened at the last election. He claimed that Proportional Representation, properly conducted, was beneficial to the Party. It wasn't the system that was wrong, but the abuses under it.
Alleged Dangers of New System

Mr TJ Smith claimed there would be more solidarity in the Movement under single electorates. Proportional Representation did not solidify and strengthen the Movement. He honourably carried out his contract at the last election, and as a result lost his seat. Others who did not do so secured seats. It led men to think of themselves instead of being true to the Movement. Mrs Morrison also favoured single electorates.

Mr Mark Gosling, MLA, said that they had been told that under the old system they would have got 50 seats, but the actual fact was that under Proportional Representation they had been able to get a Government. They could get at least six more seats if they retained Proportional Representation, as under it every vote was used, while under the old system many thousands were wasted.

Mr T Lavelle, MHR, opposed Proportional Representation, claiming that eventually it would rend the Movement. Mr Bates (Mill Employees) also opposed the present system. Mr T Arthur (AWU) spoke strongly in favour of retaining Proportional Representation, although he had been against it at the last Conference.

Mr McTiernan (Attorney-General) said the solid weight of the Conference was behind Proportional Representation. The question was before the Parliamentary Party for several months, and they went into all the circumstances very carefully. Members who favoured single electorates now favoured Proportional Representation. He claimed that they could not have won at the last election but for Proportional Representation. They could retain every seat they now held, and gain more if they retained it.

Messrs Bell (Albury) and Hallam (The Rock) were against the retaining of Proportional Representation.

Mr Dooley’s Opposition

Mr Dooley (Acting Premier) said he was opposed to Proportional Representation, had always been opposed to it, and was still opposed to it. There was still a strong minority in the Parliamentary Party opposed to it. The Parliamentary Party had decided that it should be considered by the present Conference. He had no personal interests to serve in the matter, as either system suited him. Whatever the Conference decided would be put into operation by the Government, but personally he thought they should return to the old system.

On the matter being put to the delegates for decision, the voting was: For the motion, 111; against 86.

The President said there was no record as to how it was before the last Conference. There was no record that it was on the agenda paper, or
how many delegates voted for it. If it was constitutionally on the
platform, it required a two-thirds majority to rescind it.

Mr TJ Smith (Fire, Brigade Employees) said the fact that it was
carried by the Conference and sent along to the Party was proof that it
was constitutionally on the platform, and needed the necessary two-
thirds majority. Mr Hutchinson (AWU) claimed that it was not constitu-
tionally before the last Conference. He dissented from the statement
that it was constitutionally on the platform.

There was considerable uproar in the hall, some delegates con-
tending that it was constitutionally on the platform from the last Con-
ference, others declaring that it was not. Mr Magrath (Printing Trades)
contended that the fact that it went into the rule book with the sanction
of the Executive was proof that it was continually there.

Dissent was moved – ‘That the motion of last Conference was not in
order, that it was not constitutionally carried, and that it was improperly
on the platform’. The dissent was carried, amidst considerable uproar by
100 votes to 83. The effect of the decision was that Proportional Rep-
resentation with simplifying amendments will be retained.

(Separate report in the Australian Worker, 31 March 1921)

The following matters were crowded out of our report of the ALP
Convention printed in another portion of this issue:

**Objection to ALP Delegate. A Question of Eligibility**

**Objection to Delegates**

The first business before Conference on Monday morning was a motion
for the admission of the press. It was claimed that the press was getting
reports of Conference, and as they were from biased sources it would be
better if the press was admitted. The motion, however, was defeated by a
large majority.

Objection was lodged against Alderman Farrell sitting as a delegate
from Darlinghurst on the ground that he lived in King electorate and not
in the Darlinghurst electorate. The President said that if the facts were as
stated, Mr Farrell was ineligible to sit. Mr Farrell contended that the
Executive had ruled that he was eligible.

Dissent was moved to the President’s ruling.

Mr C Last claimed there could be no dissent, as it was a rule of the
Platform that debarred Mr Farrell from sitting as a delegate.
Captain Toombs asked if Conference was not master of its own business.

Mr Keiran moved that Mr Farrell be allowed to sit.

The President said this could not be done.

Captain Toombs moved dissent.

The President, “There can be no dissent unless we are disloyal to the constitution”. (Uproar)

Mr Farrell: “I’m not going to be side-tracked like this. I will produce proof from the Executive that I am eligible to sit.”

Captain Toombs (to the President): “Who rules this Conference – you or the Executive?” (Uproar)

The President: “I am going to safeguard the constitution and I won’t be browbeaten by everybody.”

At this stage Mr Farrell left the Conference.

Repudiation of Tickets

Mr J Bailey (AWU) said that in view of what had appeared in the press during the last few days that he was implicated in running a ticket to capture Conference, he wished to give the matter an emphatic denial. He challenged any delegate to bring proof that he had ever discussed the matter with anybody.

Mrs Dwyer (Women Workers) repudiated her name being on any ticket. She refused to be moulded by any faction. Mr Kelly (Newtown) also repudiated his name being attached to a ticket. Mr George Buckland (AWU) said he was in the happy position of being on both tickets, but he repudiated being appointed by any faction. There were names of men on one of the tickets with which his own name had been associated who had advocated conscription, and he wouldn’t stand with them. He stood on his merits as a member of the last Executive, and would contest the election apart from any faction.

Mrs Fowler (Newtown) also refused to have her name on any ticket, as also did Mr Martin (Glebe). The latter speaker said he had never lent himself to any underground engineering, nor would he ever do so. Personally his only fault with Mr Bailey was that he was too modest and reserved for the Movement. (Laughter) He refused to be bought by anybody. In the uproar that followed the matter was dropped.

The President called on motion No 195. There being no mover, the motion lapsed.
ALP NSW ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1921

(Report in the Australian Worker, 7 April 1921)

ALP Elections. The New Executive.
Alderman Lambert Elected President.

The following is the result of the ballot for Executive positions for the ALP Executive for 1921:

President
W H Lambert (elected) 147
H J Mitchell 101
J Murrell 7

Vice-Presidents
J Power (elected) 163
T J Smith (elected) 139
S Toombs 103
W Hutchinson 100

Federal Executive
J Power (elected) 148
Senator Gardiner (elected) 141
J H Catts MHR 120
B Shiels 97

President Returns Thanks

President Lambert, in returning thanks for re-election as President for the forthcoming 12 months, said that two months ago he intended to step down from the position. He was beginning to feel the responsibility he had been called upon to shoulder year after year. But on account of the united hostility shown against him as President, he had decided to stand again. (Cheers) Notwithstanding a most intense campaign of slander and vituperation that had been in full blast against him, he had retained the confidence of the great assembly of Labor in New South Wales. The forces arrayed against him consisted of the capitalistic press, and certain weekly gutter-rags, boodlers, adventurers, thieves, rogues, enemies of the working class, and wasters of every kind. He considered it a great compliment to be elected to the position for the fifth time in succession - a record in the Movement, not only in Australia, but throughout the world. He stood for no factions, but for the good of the whole Labor Movement. He was not one to stir up disaffection in the Movement, and nobody could say that he had had any hand in stirring up factions within it. His sole aim was to do good for the Movement and weld it together as much as possible. For the future, his sole aim would be to carry out the desires of Conference, and the principles and policy of the Labor platform. (Cheers)
Interstate Conference

J Power 127
J H Catts 100

Six delegates should have been elected, but owing to a typographical error only two votes were asked for. The other four delegates required will be elected by Conference.

Central Executive

The following 30 were elected as members of the Central Executive: Messrs J Andrews, G Buckland, JB Dooley, N McPhee, Mrs Dwyer, Messrs W Gibbs, J Higgins, G Rowlands, EC McGrath, T Bartle, E O'Dea. Miss O'Sullivan, Messrs J Farrell, C Last, J Tyrrell, T Arthur, R Bates, J Grant, R Bramston, T Holloway, D McLelland, A Vernon, W Brotherson, JF Coates, W Martin, JJ Sheils, Mrs Kirwin, Messrs JP Dunn, James Kelly and H Campbell.

Methods Criticised

Mr T Lavelle, MHR, in moving the adoption of the Returning Officer’s report, said that the result was a fitting answer to the capitalist press, which had tried to stampede delegates into electing a reactionary Executive. He did not think it fitting, however, that a Minister of the crown should have allowed himself to be used by a faction.

Delegates: He was elected by a majority of this Conference.

Mr Lavelle also complained about the way the ballot had been conducted. For the first time in the taking of an ALP ballot detectives had been brought into the building. Two were always present, and at one time no less than six detectives were in the vicinity of the ballot box. (Shame) That was an insult to the Labor Movement. He objected to statements made by a certain delegate that if a certain section did not capture the ballot by votes it would rush the ballot box and carry it away. (Uproar) He contended that the action of the Returning Officer in compelling certain delegates to sign statutory declarations to establish their bona-fides had intimidated country delegates. He also protested against the figures being made known in the press before being formally announced by the Returning Officer. However, he was satisfied with the result of the ballot and the men and women selected.

Mr McGarry seconded the motion.

“All Feeling Should be Sunk”

Mr Catts, MHR, asked that Conference extend its thanks to the Returning Officer and scrutineers. He congratulated those delegates who had been
selected for office, from the President down. (Laughter) It was a capable and representative Executive. Conference had shown good judgment by refusing to elect en bloc one ticket or the other. He was satisfied with the result and intended to give the new Executive his whole-hearted and loyal support. This was a time when all feeling could be sunk and everybody work together for the good of the Movement. (Cheers) Of the Executive elected, 14 were from his ticket, 12 from the Bailey ticket, and 4 who were on both tickets. That was nothing to be ashamed of. He denied statements that he or the Government were behind the ticket submitted by his party. He concluded by asking that the Executive elected should receive the loyal support of the Movement from one end of the State to the other.

**Mr Sproule Explains**

Mr Sproule, MLC, denied that he was responsible for the presence of detectives nor had he seen them about the building. Probably reports in the press that an attempt might be made to seize the ballot box were responsible for their presence. As to the alleged intimidation of voters, he gave every courtesy to delegates whether hostile or friendly. Certain delegates were asked to make statutory declarations, but they were challenged by the scrutineers. He then called in the qualifications committee, who decided to secure declarations in order that Conference would be satisfied with the result. He denied giving any information regarding the ballot to the press. He did not know who gave the information – he certainly did not.

**Satisfied with the Result**

President Lambert said that he was quite satisfied that the Conference had elected a body of men and women capable, sincere, and honest, to conduct the affairs of the Labor Movement as they should be conducted. “We hear”, he said, “a great deal about splits, and so on, but there is no truth in anything that has been said in that direction in the capitalist press. When the general elections come around it will be seen that notwithstanding the arguments that may take place in the Council, the Labor Party and the whole forces of Labor will be solidly behind its candidates and the Executive. The slogan is ‘solidarity’, and if the whole of the workers stick together we have nothing to fear as far as the political fight is concerned.”
Opposition to Militarism

Mr G Buckland (AWU) secured a suspension of the standing orders, and moved the following motion: “That we as members of the Australian Labor Party, pledge ourselves individually and collectively to refuse to participate in any war outside the Commonwealth of Australia”. He suggested that organised Labor throughout Australia should speak with one voice on this matter, so that it would have the effect of hamstringing Hughes when he went to the other side of the world next June. They believed that Hughes intended to pledge Australia to Imperial Federation, and it was imperative that organised Labor, representing 30 per cent of the workers of Australia, should make itself heard.

Mr T Thick (Darlinghurst) seconded the motion, Australia was becoming more Imperialistic than ever. It has been admitted by men like Bonar Law that England could not have won the war without the help of the overseas Dominions and no doubt every effort would be made to bring Australia into any future trouble that the Imperialists of Britain might have. That possibility had to be fought by the workers of Australia.

The motion was carried unanimously. It was also decided that a copy of the motion be sent to the Victorian State Labor Conference with the request that it be passed by that body.

Workmen’s Compensation Act

Mr Mitchell (Vice-president) moved, on behalf of the Executive, the following motion urging amendments to the Workmen’s Compensation Act: - (1) “That Clause 4 should be amended by deleting the words in the 7th, 8th, and 9th lines – ‘Employed whose remuneration exceeds £312 per year or a person’. (2) That Schedule 1 (Clause 1, section B) be amended to provide: ‘Where total or partial incapacity for work results from injury a weekly payment equal to the living wage be declared by the Board of Trade shall be made, and the total liability in respect thereof shall not exceed £1500’. (3) That Schedule 3 be amended to include health inspectors, persons employed in hospitals, or any person employed in any industry who contracts an infectious or contagious disease while in such employ shall be deemed to be subject of this Act.

Mr G Cann (Minister for Labor) pointed out that the Government had made the amendments urged, following the decision of last Con-
ference, but the Upper House had forced them to accept amendments to the bill, which as amended, came into operation last January.

Mr Mills (Waterside Workers) moved to strike out all words after “made” in clause 2 and add: “That the Government be urged to bring in a bill providing for an Employers’ Liability Act”.

Mr Holloway (AWU) seconded the amendment. It was necessary in view of the way by which the present law was hedged in with all kinds of limitations. The amount of liability under the present Act was altogether too small.

**Question of Liability**

Mr Stuart-Robertson, MLA (Camperdown), also supported the amendment. There should be no limit to the compensation paid. The liability should be taken over by the Government which, in turn, should compel employers to pay. Under the present Act he knew of men who were not getting compensation because the employers had gone insolvent. He claimed that full and complete compensation should be paid so that a disabled man’s family should have the same opportunity as if he was working.

Mr Lazzarini, MLA, moved a further amendment: “That the incoming Executive in conjunction with the Parliamentary Party, be deputed to draw up a satisfactory scheme”. He pointed out that the Government had drawn up a bill without limitation, but the Upper House wouldn’t stand it, and forced them to accept a limitation clause. If this Conference ordered a measure without any limitation and they were forced to accept a limitation again from the Upper House, they would be breaking the Labor platform. He referred to the comprehensive measure of unemployment insurance that was to be brought in next session, and asked that delegates’ hands should not be tied.

Mr Wheeler foreshadowed, as a further amendment: “That this Conference recommends the State Government to initiate a system of insurance to cover sickness, accident, unemployment, etc.”

**Queensland Act Favoured**

Captain Toombs (Radio Telegraphists) said something should be done to cut out the legal expenses which employees had to spend to get compensation. It had been done away with by the Queensland Government, and should be done away with here. In 99 cases out of 100 [employers] paid up without any fight in the Courts.

Mr Mitchell met Mr Mills’ suggestion by agreeing to the insertion of the words, “to be paid during the whole period of incapacity, or in the case of death, the sum of £1500 to be paid to the dependents of such persons. Further, that Conference directs the Government to introduce
necessary amendment to give effect to the matter, and also take immediate action in regard to accident insurance.”

After further discussion the motion and amendment were defeated, and Mr Wheeler’s further amendment was carried on the voices.

**Election of Lord Mayor**

Marrickville League moved the following motion: “That the Lord Mayor be elected in caucus by the city aldermen each 12 months.” Mr Lazzarini, MLA, said that any other system of election could not be tolerated. Unless it was done along the lines suggested in the motion, it would mean that persons not living in the city area or subject to the city franchise would take part in the election of Lord Mayor. Mr Mills (Waterside Workers) suggested that the motion should stand over till the Executive’s report was dealt with by Conference. Then it could come up for discussion. This was agreed to by the Conference.

**Shop and Factory Inspectors**

Mr T Keegan (Glebe) moved: “Amendment to Industrial Arbitration Act – That all secretaries and organisers of unions be appointed honorary inspectors under their respective awards”. He claimed that no persons were more capable of looking to the carrying out of awards than the union officials. There was much difficulty at the present time in getting awards adhered to, owing to the fact that there were not enough inspectors. If the motion was carried it would involve no extra expense to the country, as the union officials would carry out the duties in an honorary capacity.

Mr O’Dea (Shop Assistants) seconded the motion. He said that at the present time the Department of Labor and Industry would only sue after an inspection by the departmental inspectors. He had made applications time and again to the Department to have inspections made, but had been turned down, unless he was asked to furnish minute particulars. The Department was overloaded with red tape. It was imperative that Conference should not only pass the motion, but see that it was enforced.

**Some Grave Charges**

There were instances where workers were paid less than award rates, where girls were indecently molested, and all kinds of immoral suggestions made to them. In many cases girls were not even safe when visiting the lavatories set apart for their own use. In other cases, such as in Greek shops, there was only one lavatory for males and females, and it was no unusual thing for girls on visiting the lavatories to find men in
them. In many of the shops the employees were locked up like rabbits – an ever-present danger in case of fire.

There were cases where complaints had been launched for breaches of the awards, but no prosecutions had followed. Out of 2000 prosecutions laid last year, 1987 were won, yet the employers were only fined £330 – something like £1 for each breach. It paid employers to break the regulations. If he liked he could get prosecution after prosecution against the employers, but many complaints he had sent to the Department six months back were not yet dealt with. Every secretary of a trade union was complaining of the treatment received from the Department.

**Mr Vernon’s Objection**

Mr Vernon (United Laborers) moved, as an amendment: “That the Government appoint more inspectors immediately to carry out the work of the Department”. He claimed that union officials had enough work to do at present, and to take on this new job was like asking them to blackleg. There were men paid to do this work, and the Government should see that they did it.

Mr G Cann (Minister for Labor) admitted that there were not enough inspectors under the Act. He wanted more, but owing to the financial position could not get them. Some of the charges made by Mr O’Dea were untrue. He challenged anybody to say that any complaint sent to him personally had been neglected. It wasn’t his duty to send the inspectors on fishing expeditions, when union secretaries could give them exact particulars of breaches of the awards. What sort of unionists were they who worked in places where the awards were being broken without reporting the matters?

Mr Cann was subjected to considerable interruption while he was speaking. A delegate charged him with sending men to scab on the waterfront workers. Mr Cann denied this, claiming that three men sent there were sent by mistake by one of his officers. He was an out-and-out unionist, and ran his office on unionistic lines. He asked any union secretary who had a grievance to bring it forward and he would get it attended to at once.

**Tardy Justice**

Mr E Stein (Railway Workers, AWU) also complained of delays in dealing with breaches of the awards. The Minister should force his officers to give justice to the workers. He knew many cases extending over the past six years, where complaints had been lodged, but no prosecutions followed. They got answers two or three months later saying an investigation had been held, but that it did not disclose any ground for prosecution. He knew cases where men were unable to get
justice for nine months. There should be some method of expediting business so that complaints could be dealt with in, say, two or three weeks.

Mr Flannigan (Newcastle) supported the motion. There was a great deal going on in the Department with which the Minister was not familiar. He knew cases where employers refused to show their books to the investigating officers, even when they were accompanied by policemen.

Mr Vernon’s amendment was added to the motion and carried on the voices.

Providing Against Exploitation

Mrs K Dwyer (Women Workers) moved: “That industrial wage awards be supplied to boys and girls’ schools and hung in conspicuous places. Teachers to be instructed to call pupils’ (of 13 years and over) attention to the various trades and callings, with wages and conditions”. She said that too often children going to work at an early age were exploited because of their ignorance of the awards. The motion was carried.

Preference to Unionists

Mr Mitchell (Vice-President) moved: “That an absolute Preference to Unionists Act be immediately given effect to”. The Act should also include public servants. Captain Toombs seconded the motion, which was carried after a short discussion. It was also decided that a copy of the motion be forwarded to the Federal Labor Party for inclusion in its platform.

Day 3, Tuesday, 29 March 1921

ALP Executive’s Report

[The report in the Australian Worker at this stage provides a summary of the Executive Report, which has been reproduced in its entirety at the beginning of this chapter, so is not repeated here.]

Healthy State of Finances

In presenting the report, the General Secretary (Mr W Carey) said that financially, the NSW Branch was in a very healthy state. At the end of March they would have cleared off all debts and have a balance of £1300 in the bank. (Applause)
Mr Wheeler (Transport Workers) protested at no mention in the report of industrial matters, particularly the waterside workers. He claimed that the Government by not taking action was giving encouragement to scabs. He claimed that the Executive was responsible for not seeing that the Government carried out its pre-election pledge regarding the 1917 men. The scabs should have been rooted out long ago, and had there been a proper Labor Government this would have been done.

There was considerable uproar while Mr Wheeler was addressing Conference.

Who Should Rule?

Mr J Power (AWU) also regretted that the 1917 matter had not been dealt with in the report. The report was altogether too brief, though he admitted it was impossible to embrace everything that had been done in a small report. Probably the Executive thought it best to deal only with outstanding matters. After stressing the need for some machinery to restore harmony within the Movement, Mr Power said the Labor Movement should not permit the Parliamentary Party to run the business without knowing what was being done. The acts of Labor Ministers were not their own business, but the concern of the Party and Executive. Members of the Executive had not been consulted on some of the important matters that came before Parliament. Conference would have to lay it down very definitely as to who was to rule in this matter - whether the Parliamentary Party should speak for the Movement, or whether the Executive should be the commanding voice. The better grip they kept on the Party the better it would be for the Movement.

Dealing with the Upper House question and the closing of Parliament for several months, Mr Power said he objected to Mr Storey journeying to a bankrupt country, mortgaged up to the hilt, to borrow more money to still further mortgage the State. The Executive rightly or wrongly said this should not have happened. Regarding the Upper House, he was of the opinion that unless they did something drastic to remove the real obstacle to Labor legislation they were in the position of a doctor trying to cure a cancer by the application of Zam-Buk ointment. They could go on for years, but unless they took steps to remove the Upper House they could do nothing.

Mr Storey and the Governor

He did not believe that if men were nominated to the Upper House they would take no steps to vote it out. He believed he could get enough men that night who would vote it out in 24 hours. (Cheers) They could flood the Upper House if they so desired. Mr Storey went to the State Governor, who told him that no more men should be put in the Upper
House. They should have told the Governor that they were the Government, and if he wouldn’t make the appointments they would take steps to deal with it. Mr Storey should have told the Governor that the Executive were the advisors of the people and that it wanted its wishes carried out. If he declined, the British Government should have been told that as the NSW Government was supposed to have self-governing rights it intended to exercise them. (Applause) The matter should then have been made a live question before the people of the country. “When Mr Storey came to the Executive with the letter from the State Governor on this matter”, said Mr Power, “the Executive should have come down to Conference, asked the Conference to stand behind it, and force the wish of Conference on the Government”.

**Press Attacks on the President**

Referring to the press attacks on the President Mr Power said it wasn’t Lambert personally they were attacking, but the Labor Movement, which was growing strong and likely to interfere with the privileges of the exploiters. Amongst those attacking Mr Lambert most was Joynton Smith, who had been put in the Upper House by a Labor Government. Joynton Smith who had been put in the holding more jobs than one [sic]– but what about Joynton Smith? Mr Power closed by further protesting against Mr Storey going to London to borrow money from the Jews, and mortgage the lives of the unborn in this country.

Mr Seale (Waterside Workers) also protested at no mention in the report of the industrial position. There was nothing more important than the question of the 1917 men, yet not a word appeared in the report about them. The waterside workers did not get a fair deal from the Government, whose duty it was to see that the victimised men got justice. Personally, he thought Mr Cann was prepared to do much for them, but apparently he was checkmated by other members of the Cabinet. The report had plenty to say about the Upper House, possibly because certain men from the Executive had not been appointed there.

**Ministers Blamed**

Mr Magrath (Printing Trades) claimed that the Executive had done its best to have the decisions of Conference carried out. The fault lay with the Ministers – including some who were on the platform that night. Ministers pledged themselves at last Conference to deal with the Upper House, but nothing had been done. Mr Storey came to the Executive and said he had been to the Governor, who said that the work of the Upper House did not warrant any fresh appointments. The Governor also said that it was an age-long custom to send to the Upper House men who had rendered signal public duty to the country. The only signal duty some of
the former appointees had done was to exploit the people for their own profit. Mr Storey didn’t even report this matter to some of his colleagues till he came before the Executive. Wasn’t it right [that] the Executive should take some action and force the Government to stand up to the Upper House pledge? He protested against the closing of Parliament for six or seven months. There was plenty of work to be done. The excuse for closing Parliament was that it was an age-long custom to close Parliament for a long term after the first session. But would Labor follow an age-long custom? The Government was sent to Parliament to do work, not to follow the custom set by Tories. Referring to Mr Storey’s trip to London, the speaker claimed that it was not necessary. Sir Timothy Coghlan had informed them that what Storey was wanted for was not finance matters at all.

**Mr Dooley’s Explanation**

Mr Dooley (Acting Premier) who was considerably heckled, told Conference what the Government had done since he took office. He spoke mainly along the lines of his speech to delegates on the opening day of the Conference. He urged that instead of abusing the Government, the leagues and unions should work with it, and better progress should be made. Except [for] Mr Estell and himself and the Premier, there wasn’t a Minister who had had previous experience. It took some little time for them to get set in their positions. He asked where was there an Australian Government that had done as much as the Storey Government during its first year of office? Even if they did adjourn for six months they were not idle, but always doing something. It was unfair to delegates to complain against the Government which had tackled half its pledges within twelve months. If the Upper House could have been abolished by resolutions it would have been abolished long ago. In Queensland they had not abolished it. They had swamped it. There were many difficulties in the way of dealing with the New South Wales Upper House. When the Government did deal with the Upper House it hoped to place enough men there to give them a majority to pass Labor legislation. It would see that all men appointed were tried and trusted members of the Labor Movement.

Mr Mills (Waterside Workers) also objected to omissions from the report regarding the industrial position. Conference should instruct the Government to do something more than make Ministerial statements to Conference.

**The Motherhood Endowment Bill**

Mrs Dwyer (Women Workers) said that the Executive had not neglected the wishes of Conference. Any neglect was due entirely to the
Government. Something should have been done with the Motherhood Endowment Bill. Even if there was no money in the Treasury the bill should have been passed to show the women of this country that the Government was sincere. When Mr Storey said there was no money to finance the measure Mr Catts criticised Mr Storey. Now he was with him. It seemed to her that before the Executive Mr Catts ran with the hares, while before the public he hunted with the hounds.

Mr Cann (Minister for Labor) replied to criticisms levelled against his department in connection with the victimised 1917 waterside workers. The Executive had done its part in trying to get the matters settled. The Government had done, not everything, but all it could do up to the present.

**The Victimised Men**

Mr T Keegan (Glebe) said that all men dismissed in 1917 by executive action could be restored in the same way if the Government had only the courage to do it. There was no necessity for Mr Storey to go to London for money when they had so much wealth in the country. Mr Coats also took the same view. He thought that as any amount of money could have been raised for war, money could have been raised for public works and the Motherhood Endowment Bill.

Mr Keiren (Leichhardt) objected to a Labor Government being dictated to by an imported Governor on the question of the Upper House. If that was allowed to continue, where was the responsible government they were supposed to have? Conference should force the Government to deal with the Upper House question or wipe it off the platform altogether. Mr Paull (Tramway Workers) said that while many of the 1917 men had been re-employed, none had been reinstated. He wanted them reinstated to their former status. Mr Toombs (Radio Telegraphists) charged both Executive and Government with blowing hot and cold. Some of the things done by the Central Executive would be hurled at the Labor Movement at future elections.

At this stage the President declared the Conference adjourned till the following evening (Wednesday).

**Day 4, Wednesday, 30 March 1921**

**Defence of AWU**

Discussion on the Executive’s report was continued on Wednesday night (March 30). Mr George Buckland (St George) said an attempt was being made to lead delegates to believe that the AWU “bossed” the Conference.
That was untrue. The AWU had no more representation at Conference than it was entitled to. Delegates should not forget the important part played by the AWU in the making of the Labor Movement, not only morally but financially as well. The AWU carried the banner for Labor long before the political movement had taken shape. Its members preached the Labor gospel into the highways and byways of the land when it was unpopular to stand behind the Labor banner. More than any other organisation in the Commonwealth it had helped to make the Labor Movement what it was. Where would the Labor Movement have been today but for the AWU, with its power as a union, its finances, and its chain of Labor papers? Where would it have been during the conscription issue but for the AWU and its press? Those were matters delegates should remember.

**Captain Toombs Attacked**

It was very strange to hear Captain Toombs accusing the Executive of blowing hot and cold. Who, more than Captain Toombs, had blown hot and cold? Who was Captain Toombs? What did Captain stand for, anyhow? Where was he during the conscription issue? Wasn’t he the man who stood in Parliament and said that we would have to make our marble as to whether we would go and fight or not? That was the Captain Toombs who stood for conscription, and later on stood for anti-conscription. When a split was threatened in the Labor Movement where did Captain Toombs stand then? He stood with the ‘breakaway’ party. (Uproar and shouts of “Liar”) He was with the ‘breakaway’ section when he thought that Labor was going to fall, but when he saw that the ‘breakaway’ had failed he proved a traitor to the ‘breakaway’ section. (Uproar and cheers) Wasn’t it Mr Storey who told us that when Holman wanted a lapdog he called in Captain Toombs, well knowing that the dirty work would be well and faithfully done. The Captain was like a barrel – all wind and sound, but very little substance.

**Appointment of Lord Mayor**

There had been a lot of talk about the Executive’s action in electing the Lord Mayor of Sydney. But did delegates know that the Executive acted on the wishes of the city leagues? Why were certain aldermen opposed to the Executive’s action? Wasn’t there some underlying motive? Be sure there was a reason for it. Dicky Bramston and others had appointed a former Lord Mayor who profiteered on the people. There was something that influenced them against the best man of the Party then.

What had been done by the present Lord Mayor since he had been appointed? Hadn’t he justified his appointment? Hadn’t he been approved throughout the length and breath of the country? Anyhow, who
was going to rule the Labor Movement – individuals or the Executive? “I say emphatically”, added Mr Buckland, “that the destiny of the Labor Movement should rest with the Executive”. (Cheers) “The Executive did the proper thing when it took the appointment of the Lord Mayor in hand. It called for nominations and took a ballot. Was there anything wrong with that? (No) I am going to vote for Bill Lambert because I think he is the man best fitted to carry Labor’s banner in this country.” (Cheers)

**Parliament Should Meet**

Regarding the complaints that the report was not full enough, Mr Buckland contended that it was a fuller report than that of former years, and while many things had been omitted, that did not mean that the Executive had neglected them. He contended Parliament should assemble and get on with Labor’s policy. What did they care what former Parliaments did? The fact that the Executive was attacking the Parliamentary Party for closing down Parliament for six or seven months showed that it had the interests of the Movement at heart. He claimed that the record of the past Executive was good enough to secure its re-election.

Mr Gibbons (Ashburnham) said he wasn’t pledged to any faction. He stood for the Labor Movement. Some people had said the Movement was ruled by the AWU. The AWU was a fighting organisation when Labor was struggling in its babyhood. When Beeby placed laws on the statute book of NSW to close the doors of the ALP it was the AWU that defied him. That gave the people of the country a sense of security. The past Executive was, in his opinion, the best that had ever existed. Anybody who was against the Executive was helping Labor’s enemies to down Labor. He claimed that the AWU hadn’t its rightful representation at Conference when compared with the representation of smaller organisations.

**President Lambert’s Record**

He didn’t know Mr Lambert too well, but he knew his record as a Labor man. Mr Lambert was known and respected throughout the State. When they heard in the country that Lambert was to be Lord Mayor of Sydney they knew that Labor’s interests would be protected.

Mrs Bailey (Caterers) drew attention to some literature issued by opponents of the Executive, particularly a leaflet “Bust Boss Bailey”. “A cat is a clean animal – sometimes. (Laughter) But how can a cat be clean in its public affairs, when it is not clean in its domestic affairs?” (Laughter)
Mr Allam (The Rock) referred to the press attacks on the President and the Labor Movement. The capitalist press, he said, would give anything to see Mr Lambert removed from his position. Did delegates think that if Mr Lambert had been a weak man, the press would have attacked him? It was because he was a strong leader for Labor that the press was attacking and abusing him.

A delegate drew attention to voting instructions being sent through the post to delegates. An attempt was being made to canvass for votes. The letter was signed by Mr Catts. (Disorder)

Mr Shearer (Jewellers) suggested that the various matters in the Executive’s report be taken seriatim. He drew attention to there being no mention in the report to the alteration in the rules. Rule 13, he claimed, had been wiped out without the consent of the Conference.

Trouble at the Polling Booth

At this stage attention was drawn to the congestion around the polling booth. Because of the crowd, delegates were unable to get in to vote. The President stated that if the passage-way wasn’t cleared he would take steps to have it cleared. Later it was reported that three policemen were stationed in the proximity of the polling booth. This brought angry shouts from delegates. The President thought there was no necessity for this, and after some discussion it was decided to appoint two doorkeepers to keep the crowd back. Messrs Mullins and Hackett were appointed. An angry scene followed. It was contended that Mr Hackett was not elected on the voices of Conference, while Mr Smith wanted to know why the name of a delegate he nominated had not been submitted to Conference. Much excitement prevailed. Later on Mrs Dwyer complained that she was unable to vote, as a few people were monopolising the polling booth and preventing others from voting. The President gave orders that the voting should be expedited, as many delegates were leaving for the country on the morrow. Eventually the matter quietened down, and consideration of the Executive report was continued.

Should Work in Harmony

Mr A Vernon (United Laborers) said that many who were now denouncing the Ministry were the first to wait on the doormats of Ministerial offices.

Mr Gavin Sutherland (Darling Harbour League) made an attack on Mr Bramston in connection with something that happened years ago, when, he alleged, Mr Bramston stood on the platform of an anti-Labor candidate. Mr Bramston denied the allegation.

Mrs Morrison (Petersham) said it was a question of who was going to govern – the Government or the Executive? She had no time for
factions, and worked for the Movement without fee or reward. She intended to elect members to the Executive on their merits. She claimed that the Government was doing its best under great disadvantages. She suggested the Government and the Executive working in harmony for the good of the Movement as a whole.

**Mr Bailey and Returned Soldiers**

Mr Stewart (Dulwich Hill) read a newspaper extract which he said stated that Mr J Bailey told a Goulburn audience that he would do his best to prevent the repeal of the Returned Soldiers’ Preference Act.

Mr Bailey denied the statement. Mr Stewart said that Mr Bailey’s place was to deny the statement in the press where it was published. Why hadn’t he done that? He denied that the faction he stood for was out to disrupt the Labor Movement, or that it engaged in wire-pulling. Some of the actions of the Executive he applauded; others he condemned. He was against the Executive electing the Lord Mayor.

Mr Clear (Albury) criticised the administration of various departments by Ministers, and their lack of looking after country interests. The wants of farmers should be considered just as much as those of the city workers.

**“Bossism” Denied**

Mr C Last (AWU) also referred to the part played by the AWU in the building of the Labor Movement. He mentioned how, during the conscription issue, the AWU not only helped throughout the land, but lent money for the fight, and opened a credit for the Party with The Worker office. Where would they have been but for the powerful help given them by The Worker and its editorial staff? (Cheers) Yet because it asked for adequate representation for 45,000 members it was told that it was “bossing the show”. Charges of corruption had been made against the Executive, but he challenged Mr Catts or anybody else to produce one item of corruption that could be laid at the door of the Executive. He claimed that Catts had men on his ticket who had raised the sectarian issue at last election, and who had voted more than once. The main bone of contention was the closing of Parliament. The Executive wanted it opened for business. Mr Catts favoured that course up to a few weeks ago – now he was backing and filling about it. It was wrong to shut Parliament. Mr Storey should never have gone to England. What the Executive did, it had done in the best interests of the Movement.
**Why Executive Elected the Lord Mayor**

“You want to know why we took in hand the matter of electing the Lord Mayor?” said Mr Last. “Well, I’ll tell you. The Moore Street extension scheme was on. There was to be a little commission of £100,000. But that seemed too much, so it was reduced to £40,000. Wasn’t it time that the Executive stepped in and took a hand in the business when that kind of thing was going on? (Applause) I tell you, delegates, the Executive was well justified in the action it took in electing the Lord Mayor. It seems that Mr Joynton Smith is very much concerned that Bill Lambert is Lord Mayor. Of course he is. So would you, too, if you were Joynton Smith. This gentleman is not attacking Bill Lambert week after week for nothing.” Referring to the ticket being circulated against the present Executive, Mr Last defied Mr Catts to point to one wrong thing in his life. It was an open book. He had done spade work in the Movement without fee or reward. “But Mr Catts”, added Mr Last, “always saw to it that he had a paid position”.

**Mr Bramston’s Opposition**

Mr Bramston thought the Parliamentary party could answer for itself. He wanted to see the scabs removed from the various public departments who were causing irritation to the true unionists. He referred to the scab bosses. If that were done the rank and file were quite content to await a settlement of their grievances until the Commission’s report was issued. He opposed the selection of the Lord Mayor by the Executive, and claimed that by so doing the Executive had placed the Municipal Party in a position of humiliation. The Municipal Party had rules for the election of Lord Mayor. Why were they not adhered to? The Municipal Party had done much towards carrying out the Labor platform. It instituted the 44-hour week, and didn’t want a Commission to settle it for them. He objected to the criticisms against some of the Ministers – especially those who had had no former experience. They should have been given a fair chance.

Mr Doyle (Belmore) upheld the Executive’s action in appointing the Lord Mayor. No rule had been broken in appointing him. He also opposed the closing of Parliament for six weeks.

**Day 5, Thursday, 31 March 1921**

Finality was reached on the debate on the Executive’s report on Thursday evening last. Mr E Stein (Railway Workers) said they had been debating the matter for over seven hours, and he thought it was time
they took a vote on the matter. There was much business sent along by the leagues and unions to be dealt with by Conference.

The resolution adopting the Executive’s report was carried on the voices amidst cheers.

(Report in the Australian Worker, 14 April 1921)

NSW Labor Conference. Government and Waterside Workers. Labor Policy and Rural Interests

Wants of Policemen

Messrs T Pauling and G Gavin, of the Police Association, addressed Conference. They asked the assistance of Conference in securing the amending of the Arbitration Act to allow the police to be registered as an industrial organisation, also that a Police Appeals Board should be constituted. Conference will consider their claims at a later date.

Scab Labor on the Waterfront

Mr Mills (Waterside Workers) secured the suspension of the standing orders, and moved – “That it be an instruction from the Conference to the Government that where it has power it should cancel the leases of all premises held by employers when such premises are being used for the housing or engaging of loyalist labor. Further, that this Conference is of the opinion that all Government Labor Bureaux should be under the supervision of men who are in sympathy with the Labor Movement.” He said the time had arrived when Labor’s policy of Preference to Unionists should be put into operation, particularly on the waterfront. It took the Nationalist Government less than a week to inaugurate the scab bureau, and should not take the Labor Government long to abolish them. He demanded that Conference tell the Government to put the Labor policy regarding the scabs into operation at once. The Department of Labor and Industry was trying to break down unionism, and defeat the Government’s policy. Officials who did the duty work of the Nationalist Government were still there, and how could they serve two masters? How could they give sympathetic administration to Labor’s policy? Instructions from the Minister for Labor were not being carried out by the Department. Conference should not tinker with the question, but force the Government to do its duty.
The Government’s Sincerity

Mr T Payten (Darling Harbour) seconded the motion. They had repeatedly asked for the removal of the scabs, but the scabs were still there. The Government either believed in scabbery or it did not. If it did not, it should remove the scabs. Since 1917 there had been nothing but poverty and want in the homes of the waterside workers. The wives and kiddies had put up a brave fight with their husbands and fathers, and the Government should do something to end the struggle against hunger that had lasted nearly four years.

Mr Wheeler (Transport Workers) read a report submitted to Cabinet on the matter. He hoped the resolution would be carried. Mr Gallagher (Tramway Union) said the resolution did not go far enough. A stop should be put to the backing and filling on the part of the Government regarding the victimised men. What applied to the waterside workers also applied to the railway and tramway men. He thought it damnable that under a Labor Government railway and tramway men should be forced to attend a Royal Commission and show the difference between victimisation and vindictiveness.

Nationalists and Shipowners

Mr Lang (Treasurer) said that when he assumed office one of the first documents placed before him was a proposal by the Holman Government to give the shipowners a 15-year lease of the Model Lodging House. The Nationalists tried to get it signed before they left office, but missed by a day. He refused to sign the leases. (Cheers) As the shipowners were in under a yearly tenancy, the Government was unable to do anything until the other day, when it stepped in and resumed the property, giving the shipowners notice to quit. Had they thrown the shipowners out before, they would have had to compensate them for the full period of the proposed lease. The Government had also issued notices to quit at other bureaux, while the Harbour Trust had been instructed not to re-lease State property to the shipowners. If delegates did not believe them, they could come to the Treasury, where they would see the papers. The Government had already done what Conference was asking them to do. Mr McTiernan (Attorney-General) supported Mr Lang, and explained the legal aspect of the matter.

Armed Protection for Scabs

Mr Seale (Waterside Workers) said that under the present Government men had been sent along to protect scabs working at Darling Island, and each one of them was armed not only with the regulation revolver, but
with an extra revolver as well. (Shame) He got his information from a police officer, whose name he could not divulge.

Mr EJ Kavanagh (Vice-President of the Executive Council) said the Government would leave no stone unturned to do everything to rectify what had been done by the Nationalist Government in the 1917 strike. He thought that having heard what the Government was doing, the men in the waterfront would say that the Government was doing its best for them, and would leave it to the Government to secure further justice for them. The Government could establish Government bureaux, but they could not force the employers to get their men from them. In any case, they would have to give preference to returned soldiers, because of the Returned Soldiers Act. The Government did not wish to establish the bureaux. Regarding the charge that scabs had been sent by the Department of Labor and Industry to the waterfront, it was by an error. Mr Belmore had not gone out of his way to thwart the Government’s policy. On the other hand, Mr Belmore was a good Labor man, and a member of a Labor League.

Mr Gibbons suggested that the matter be referred to the incoming Executive for consideration, with a view to having it cleared up.

**How Scabs Should Be Handled**

Digger Dunn said that the Government promised to deal with the scabs when it got into office, but had not done so. There were 6000 men on the waterfront, with 15,000 persons depending on them, who wanted justice. If the Government wanted to retain the confidence of those people, it was time they did something to deal with the scabs. The game had gone quite far enough.

Acting Premier Dooley said nobody was more earnest to do the work of clearing out the scabs than the Government.

A Delegate: Well, it is not being done.

Mr Dooley said if the bureaux were abolished, nobody would be more pleased than the Government. But the State Government had done its part. What remained to be done was a matter for the Federal Government, and the waterside workers knew it. It was useless for Conference to carry a resolution asking the Government to do something that it had already done. That was only wasting the time of Conference.

Mr Seale asked why, if the abolition of the bureaux was a Federal matter, every member of the State Labor Party at the last election was pledging themselves to what would be done if they were elected.

Mr Dooley said they only had control of the coastal shipping, and they had abolished the scabs there.
Extension of Banking Facilities

The motion moved by Mr Mills was carried on the voices.

Shortly before the adjourning of Conference on Thursday night, the following motion was called on: “That the functions of the State Savings Bank be extended to the Bank of Trade and Commerce”.

Mr Lang (Treasurer) said the Labor Government had already carried out the principle. There was a clause in the Rural Bank Act providing for it. The Government Savings Bank could be made a trading bank at any time.

Mr Holloway (AWU) contended that Mr Lang’s statement was not a correct one. What had been done only referred to the farmers, and not to the general community.

Day 6, Friday 1 April 1921

Imperial Federation

Friday evening was devoted to dealing with a big batch of correspondence which had been addressed to the Conference. Arising out of a letter forwarded by the “Sons of Australia” on the question of Imperial Federation, Conference carried the following resolution: “That this Conference is opposed to all forms of Imperial Federation. That the incoming Executive be instructed to watch any development in that direction, and to take any action they deem necessary in order to combat it.”

The Ben Fuller Gift

A lively discussion took place as the result of a letter from the Professional Musicians’ Union protesting against the acceptance by the Labor Government of the recent monetary gifts from Mr Ben J Fuller for educational purposes. Mr AE O’Brien moved that the letter should be brought under the notice of the State Parliamentary Party. This was agreed to on the voices.

The Unemployment Problem

The question of dealing with the vital matter of unemployment was raised by Mr J Power. The problem was greater today than it had been for the last 20 years. He moved – “That a committee of seven be appointed to confer with the Labor Government on the question of unemployment, and report back to the Conference by the following Wednesday. It was pitiful to think that in such a rich country people should be thrown helpless, workless and destitute on the labor market. It
was a slur on their present form of government that the big financial interests could say that in such a wealth-producing country men should starve.

Mr Gibbons supported the motion. He protested against the unemployed being treated like paupers. They should be provided with work.

Mr Geddes (Boilermakers) suggested that as a committee had already been formed at the Trades Hall, the committee appointed by Conference should work in with the Trades Hall Committee.

**How to get the Money**

Mr MA Davidson, MLA, supported the motion. He contended that instead of going to the capitalists, cap in hand, and begging for money at high rates of interest, the Government should use a little ‘direct action’. The Government could get all the money it wanted by a graduated wealth tax, a graduated land tax, and other methods. It was time the Government stopped mortgaging the country to the financial Jews in London. It had no right to pawn posterity to such men. Mr Storey had been told that unless he modified certain legislation he would get no money. If that was the only condition on which the Premier could get money, then he (the speaker) hoped that Mr Storey wouldn’t get a brass farthing. Mr Storey should tell the London capitalists that the Labor Government would not be dictated to by them. It was deplorable that men should have to walk up and down the streets and be debarred of the right to work and live.

Mr EC Kavanagh, MLC, welcomed the appointment of a committee to suggest some method by which the problem could be solved. Referring to the recent alleged batoning of unemployed by the police, he had asked for a report. The police protested against the statement that batons had been used. The speaker said that if any delegate could give him proof that a police officer had used his baton on the unemployed he would deal with him. The Government wouldn’t be doing its duty if it allowed policemen to baton unemployed men on the streets.

Mrs Morrison said that her daughter and others were working quite close to the scene where the batoning took place, and were prepared to furnish affidavits on the matter. They had witnessed the police drag an old man up a side lane, and, although he pleaded that he had done nothing, they manhandled him. (Shame)

The motion moved by Mr Power was carried on the voices.

**Insane Asylum Administration**

Dr Thompson addressed Conference on alleged misadministration in lunatic asylums and the need for repealing the present antiquated Lunacy Act and introducing a more modern Act. He also urged that a
Royal Commission be appointed to investigate the Farr case, and other cases of a similar nature.

After discussion regarding the Farr case, and the general administration of asylums under the Lunacy Act, a motion was carried instructing the Cabinet to set up a Public Service Commission to inquire into the cases of sane and insane persons who might be detained in any asylum against his or her will.

Day 7, Saturday, 2 April 1921

Shooting of Mervyn Flanagan

The first business on Saturday night was a motion submitted by Mr Stuart-Robertson, MLA, who moved - “That it be a direction to the Attorney-General that every effort should be made to bring about the prosecution of Wearne, who shot Mervyn Flanagan in Bridge Road, Camperdown, in 1917”.

Mr McGarry seconded the motion. Mr Sproule (Solicitor-General) asked that the debate be deferred until Mr McTiernan and himself had a chance to go into the matter and place their views before delegates.

On the suggestion of Mr McTiernan, Mr Stuart-Robertson altered his motion to read - “That this Conference requests the Attorney-General to consider all the evidence and circumstances surrounding the death of Mervyn Flanagan, to decide whether any person should be put upon his trial or not”.

Trading Bank Facilities

Mr Kelly (Newtown) moved - “That the functions of the State Savings Bank be extended to a Bank of Trade and Commerce”. Although the Treasurer (Mr Lang) had stated that the Rural Bank Act gave effect to the motion, they wanted some suggestions as to when the functions of the Savings Bank would be extended to help persons with small means. If it was good enough for rural communities, surely it was good enough for others, especially those in the metropolitan area. Conference wanted to know from the Minister when the Act was likely to be put into operation. Mr Gibbons (Ashburnham) said something should be done immediately to stabilise credit for producers. There was a great need to provide for the conservation of fodder. Unless some such provision was made there would be more unemployment in the future than at present.

Mr McTiernan (Attorney-General) said that it was a coincidence that only last week the Cabinet had appointed a sub-committee to consider a
scheme for fodder conservation. The sub-committee was going into the matter, and legislation would be passed next session.
The motion was carried on the voices.

**Housing the People**

A lengthy discussion took place on the question of housing. Eventually it was decided “that Conference appoint a special committee to submit a housing scheme for the working class and regulate rents”. A committee of five was appointed.

During the discussion Mr Dooley (Acting Premier) made an important announcement regarding the Government’s housing policy. He said the housing of the people was one of the most important questions that Conference could deal with. He hoped the time would come when nobody would be living in the slums. The Government had decided that it would purchase no more land from the capitalists while there was Crown land available. The Government wasn’t satisfied that it was getting a fair and square deal from the landowners. They had to consider the question of providing homes for the workers at a reasonable price. He had consulted all bodies interested in building, and had come to the conclusion that the piecemeal system was futile. The only thing to be done was to build the houses in bulk, and this would be done when the Government had the money. Mr Dooley intimated that 1000 houses would be built by the Government in the near future. Notwithstanding the boast by the Railway Commissioners that travelling in New South Wales was the cheapest in the world, he contended that train and tram fares would have to be considerably cheapened to induce people to live out of the city area. The Government would not build homes in the slums. It would build decent homes, with three bedrooms, and would give first preference to people with children. By starting a comprehensive scheme, utilising the State forests for timber, the State mills for preparing materials, and buying all other requirements in bulk, and thus cutting out all middlemen, the Government would be able to build homes at least £200 below the present price. He had received a cable from Mr Stokey which seemed to indicate that they would get money, and when it was available the Government would go ahead with a comprehensive scheme.
Day 8, Monday, 4 April 1921

**Forty-Four Hour Week**

On Monday evening (April 4) Liquor Trades delegates submitted – “That the Conference bring forward a bill establishing a 44-hour week”. Delegates speaking to the motion contended that the Government should make the 44-hour week mandatory. At the present time, while strong unions were able to force the 44-hour week, smaller and weaker unions were unable to do so. It should not be left to any Commission to decide. The Government should have backbone enough to say that it was the policy of the Labor Movement, and put it into operation throughout the whole of the State. The motion was carried unanimously.

**Women JsP and Jurors**

On the motion of Mrs Fowler, supported by Mrs Gray and Mrs Dwyer, it was decided that the Chief Secretary be instructed to immediately appoint women to the Commission of the Peace, also women jurors.

**Disarmament**

The following motion was submitted by Bondi Labor League: “The complete elimination from the ALP platform of all matters relative to defence and the substitution of a plank providing for the total abolition of all military and naval preparations within the Commonwealth. The Interstate Executive to vigorously prosecute a campaign for world-wide disarmament by getting into touch with all pacifist groups in other countries, industrial, political, or otherwise, in order to devise common action for the total abolition of military preparation.”

The motion was responsible for a lively discussion – argument centring principally around the first clause of the motion. Mr J Power moved as an amendment that the first clause be deleted. He said that there were already many drastic alterations to the Defence Act to be put into operation when Labor came into power in the Federal Parliament. The proper thing to do was to get a Labor Federal Government elected. Then they would be able to guard themselves against wars with the workers of other nations. As an ideal the complete elimination of all forms of militarism was a grand thing, but they had to realise that the time would have to come when the workers would have to defend themselves not only from foreign aggression, but from the capitalists in the country. Did they think that if the time came when the capitalists were called upon, constitutionally, to give over their hold on the country and its wealth they would do so willingly? The workers may have to resort to force to get
what the capitalists would not give them constitutionally. Wasn’t it time the workers considered that aspect of the matter?

The amendment was carried by 88 to 16 – it reading as follows: “This Conference is of the opinion that the Interstate Executive should vigorously prosecute a campaign for world-wide disarmament by getting in touch with all pacifist groups in other countries, industrial, political, or otherwise, in order to devise common action for the total abolition of military preparation.”

Conference adjourned till the following evening (Tuesday).

Day 9, Tuesday, 5 April 1921

Country Business

Tuesday evening (April 5) was devoted to the consideration of country business. A country committee, appointed by the Conference at a former session, met during the day and submitted the following set of resolutions for consideration by Conference:

(1) That in the future, immediately Conference assembles, committees be appointed to deal with sectional matters placed upon the agenda paper.
(2) That this meeting of delegates representing country interests [places] on record its disapproval of the running of tickets, and that we believe the time has arrived to get back to an open Conference.
(3) That we support the following motions on the agenda paper:
   (a) That running of a ticket amongst the delegates to the ALP Conference for election to any of the committee, official positions, or as delegates to any other conference shall merit the disqualification of the persons concerned, and that the same principle shall apply to the government of leagues.
   (b) That any person or persons guilty of running tickets or combining to run a ticket to secure a position of the ALP Executive, shall be disqualified from running for a selection for any position in the Movement, and also be disqualified from holding any position in the Movement for three years.
(4) That this Conference directs the Executive to arrange for the country delegates to meet at 10.00 am on the day after Conference opens, to discuss country business.
(5) Wheat Industry: That a thorough inquiry into all phases of the wheat industry be at once carried into effect, such committee to consist of a chairman, nominated by the Government, two
delegates nominated by the Conference, and two delegates representing accredited farmers, also that the whole personnel of the committee consist of bona-fide farmers.

(6) That the electoral provisions of the Local Government Act be amended to provide for adult suffrage in shire and municipal elections, and that all elections for shire and municipal councils be held on the last Saturday in January.

(7) That the following new section be added to Plank 2 (Effective Land Settlement): ‘The necessary legislation be introduced to abolish plural voting in co-operative companies handling primary production’.

(8) Export of Primary Products: That for the purpose of defeating the capitalistic exploiters of this country, who, for their personal benefit, would reduce the toiling consumer to the lowest depths of poverty, the export of Australian products be prohibited until all local needs are guaranteed. That there be no regard for the catch-cry of Conservatism known as “world’s parity”. And that the producer be allowed a reasonable profit, as based on local markets, assistance to be rendered by the State in securing the highest possible values for any exportable surplus.

Objection to Pitt Street Farmers

Mr Gibbons (Ashburnham) moved: “That Conference adopt the report of the country committee”, and during a lengthy statement he dealt with many of the difficulties besetting farmers. Mr T Clear (Albury), in supporting the motion, said that at the present time the life of a share farmer was little better than slavery. Something should be done to get them out of that slavery. It was no good asking men to go on the land unless inducements were held out to them. He objected to ‘Pitt Street farmers’ coming along to Conference and claiming to know more about rural matters than the farmers themselves.

Mr Mills (Wharf Laborers) moved, as an addendum to clause 2, the following: “That this Conference repudiates the running of tickets for any position at the Annual Conference, and further than any member or members found holding secret meetings for the purpose of organising a section or faction, be reported, and that they be not allowed to take his or her seat at Conference, and that such members be not eligible to hold office in the Movement”.

This was accepted, and became part of the motion.

Mr Allam (The Rock) supported the motion. While it was true the Labor Government had done more for the farmers in three weeks than the Nationalists had done in three years, the Labor Government would have to keep moving or it would lose the support of the farmers. Referring to the clause dealing with shire and municipal elections, he
moved as an addendum: “That all articles or letters in newspapers dealing with State, shire, or municipal elections after nominations are received be signed by the author”. This was agreed to, and became part of clause 5 of the motion.

Mr Mitchell (Hospital and Asylum Employees) and Mr AE Roberts (Elong Elong) also supported the motion. Mr Hutchinson (AWU) said that at the incoming session of Parliament the Labor Government should carry out the policy already laid down of placing a super-tax on all land adjacent to railways for the purpose of opening up the land, compelling it to be put to use, and making the railways a paying proposition instead of a losing proposition as at present. The motion was carried unanimously.

**Minister for Agriculture Speaks**

During the course of the evening Mr Dunn (Minister for Agriculture) dealt with agricultural matters at some length. He did not object to the motion, so far as it concerned his department. Referring to the suggestion to appoint a committee to go into the wheat industry, he thought this would be a very difficult matter to inquire into, but if it could bring forward some good recommendations nobody would welcome it more than himself. As wheat yields differed in various years, it was difficult to say what was a fair cost of production. One year’s cost might be quite different to that of another year. That was why the Labor Government had proposed, in estimating the cost of production, that it should be spread over a period of five years. The cost of production during the present year, because of the remarkably good harvest, would be around 5/- per bushel, but if it was reckoned over the lean years during the past five years it would be found that an average cost of 10/- per bushel would be nearer the mark. He believed in the farmer getting a fair return based on the cost of production plus a reasonable profit, and was quite prepared to make that the price to be paid.

Referring to the operations of the wheat pool, Mr Dunn said the present year’s pool had been the best ever. Had the pool not been established, the commercial interests would have got to work, and, taking advantage of the financial situation, forced the farmers to accept the prices they would have laid down. The farmers of New South Wales should realise that the Labor Government had saved them from disaster.

**Critics Answered**

As to the various criticisms levelled against the administration of the wheat pool, as far as New South Wales was concerned, he was always willing to remedy any defects in administration if they were pointed out to him. If anything was being done detrimental to the Labor policy the
matter was remedied as soon as his attention was drawn to it. The Labor Government had experienced many difficulties in financing the pool. While the banks fell over themselves to help other Governments, they showed no eagerness to come to the assistance of the Labor Government. In the few months the Labor Government had been in office it had saved the farmers and the country millions of pounds.

Mr Dunn said that under the present pool all possibilities of fraud or corruption were eliminated. The agents were compelled to sign stricter agreements than ever before. That was why they were carrying on a campaign of misrepresentation against the Government, the silos, wheat pool, and even the Minister for Agriculture himself.

Mr Dunn also dealt with the additional 2/6 per bushel guarantee, and said it had been responsible for the planting of 2,000,000 more acres of wheat than would have been planted had the guarantee not been given. He justified the sales of wheat to Germany, but denied the statements that wheat had been sold to that country at a price lower than that sold for consumption in Australia.

Day 10, Wednesday, 6 April 1921

Alderman Connelly’s Case

When Conference reassembled on Wednesday evening (April 6) Mr T Lavelle, MHR, presented the report of the committee appointed to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the expulsion of Alderman Connelly, a member of the Waterloo Labor League, some time ago. The committee recommended that Alderman Connelly be re-admitted to the Movement. This recommendation was endorsed by Conference – the voting being 73 to 50.

Public Service Board

Mr Stuart-Robertson (Camperdown) secured the suspension of the standing orders and moved: “That in the opinion of Conference, the Public Service Board of New South Wales is merely an expensive encumbrance and should be abolished, and that its attitude in connection with certain inspectors appointed by the Attorney-General under the Profiteering Prevention Act is against the best interests of the Labor Movement”. Mr Stuart-Robertson claimed that the Board was doing no useful work. It should be abolished and a business board set up. Mr Mitchell (Hospital and Asylum Employees) thought that motion 152 on the agenda paper would meet the case and favoured that as an amendment. However, with Mr Stuart-Robertson’s consent, paragraph 2
of that motion was added as an addendum to the motion. The addendum read as follows: “The appointment of an independent appeal board for the whole of the Public Service, an independent chairman, a representative of the department, and one from the employees”.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Lunacy Administration

The President read a letter from Mr McGirr (Minister for Health) asking Conference to consider a motion carried on the previous Saturday relative to the case of Mrs Farr, who, it was alleged, was illegally detained in a mental asylum. He made certain suggestions as to how Mrs Farr’s case might be inquired into. Conference decided to appoint a committee of five to inquire into the case of Mrs Farr and the allegations of Dr Thompson into the workings of the Lunacy Act. Mesdames Dwyer and Gray, Miss Golding, and Messrs Kelly and Martin were appointed to the committee.

Manufacture of Armaments

Mr Singleton (North Sydney) submitted the following motion: “That all manufacture of armaments shall be the exclusive industry of the Commonwealth, thus eliminating the individuals who grow wealthy by the manufacture and sale of the implements of war, and with a view to bringing about a limitation of the manufacture of same”. The motion was carried unanimously after a short debate.

The debate on the question of re-admitting Mr RD Meagher and other conscriptionists to the Movement appears on another page of this issue.

(Separate report in the Australian Worker, 14 April 1921)

Expelled Conscriptionists. Motion for Re-Admission before ALP Conference. Decisive Rejection by Delegates.

There was a big gathering of delegates at the Labor Conference on Wednesday evening (April 6) to consider the question of re-admitting to the Labor Movement Mr RD Meagher and others who were expelled because of their attitude on the conscription issue.

Delegates left no doubt as to their feeling on the matter. When the motion and the two amendments having for their purpose the admission of the conscriptionists were put to the delegates the opinion was a decisive “No” roared from over a hundred voices. When president Lambert declared the motions lost, delegates jumped to their feet and
burst into wild cheering for several moments, showing in no unmistakable manner their opposition to the re-admission of traitors and renegades to the Labor Movement.

The first motion was moved by Mr Doyle, on behalf of the Belmore Labor League, and read as follows: “That in view of Mr Meagher’s support of the workers in the big strike of 1917, and the consistent support of Ald Meagher both in the Legislative Council and the Sydney Municipal Council of Labor principles, this League recommends to the next Labor Conference an amendment of Rule 2, so that any person excluded for supporting conscription and who since such exclusion has not joined any party hostile to Labor may be readmitted to the Movement with full continuity of membership”.

Mr Doyle claimed that Mr Meagher, along with Messrs A Griffith and A Gardiner, MLA, were in a different category to other conscriptionists, inasmuch as they had never joined any other political movement.

**Objections to the Motion**

Mr Gibbons took a point of order that it was incompetent for Conference to deal with the motion. The rules laid it down that any person who had opposed Labor candidates could not be readmitted to the Labor Movement. The President ruled that the motion was rightly before the Conference, and, if carried, it would amend the rule. Conference could make amendments to the rules if it so desired.

Mr Doyle (continuing) said that the Belmore Branch discussed the motion in the light of the past services rendered to the Labor Movement by Mr Meagher. Meagher was not on the same footing as Hughes and others. (Shouts of “Yes”) He claimed that Meagher had gone out of his way to help Labor in the 1917 strike.

Delegates: “To get limelight for himself”. Mr Doyle thought the Labor Movement should be prepared to hear and pass judgment on those men who came before them as penitents.

Delegates: We’d have had a second Ireland if Meagher and others had had their way. (Cheers)

**Should They Be Always Debarred**

Mr Stanton (St Leonards) said that he did not wish to glorify Meagher. It was a matter of dealing with the question in a broad way, not of dealing with individuals. The point was should the door be barred, bolted and locked for all time against men who were otherwise true to Labor, and who were prepared to be loyal to Labor in the future? (Shouts of “Yes) He claimed that motion 158 provided safeguards regarding the admission of such persons and moved it as an amendment.
Motion 158 was as follows: “Any person excluded for supporting conscription, who, since such exclusion has not joined any party hostile to Labor, may be readmitted to the Movement with continuity of membership on application made to and approved of by the ALP Executive”.

He claimed that the Movement was so big that it could not live by seclusion, but by those who supported its ideals. He did not think the door should be barred for all time. The Movement wanted men who could lend support.

**Spirited Opposition to Motion**

Mr Lazzarini, MLA, said that if the motion was carried it meant sticking a knife into the back of the Movement. (Cheers) He didn’t approach the matter in a personal spirit. Meagher and others had broken the Labor pledge and should be excluded for all time. (Cheers) After all, what great service had Meagher rendered to the Labor Movement? He only came into the Movement in 1911, when the going was good. Hughes and Holman had done far more for the Movement in the times when it was unpopular. But was there any talk of admitting them. (“No”) Then why all this cheap sentiment about Meagher? Meagher had opposed Labor men in the past, and had not always stuck for Labor since he was expelled. Didn’t he oppose Jack Doyle for Phillip? Didn’t he vote against the Labor nominee for Mayor? Didn’t he oppose Labor candidates at the municipal elections? If they were to readmit Meagher they were doing infinite harm to the Movement. Other men in the future, having tempting offers made to them to betray Labor, would say, “Well, I can take this, and if it fails I can crawl back into the Labor Movement”. (Cheers) The worst day’s work the Conference could do would be to admit the conscriptionists. (Cheers)

**“Keep the Movement Clean”**

Mr Gibbons (Ashburnham) opposed the motion. These men were only trying to get back into the Labor Movement because it was again becoming popular. Meagher only came into the Movement when it was popular, and left it when he thought Labor was going down in the conscription issue. If his heart had been in the right place he would have stood by Labor through thick and thin. (Cheers) They could not get away from the fact that he and others were prepared to sell the Labor Movement in the conscription issue. Were they prepared to take those men back into the Movement again (“No”) where possibly they could do more harm in the future? He could understand an ignorant and unlearned man making a mistake, but men like Meagher were educated and knew what they were doing. That made their sin all the worse. They calmly, coolly, and deliberately set out to plot and sell the workers to the
capitalists and militarists of this country. He wanted to know if Meagher had made application for readmission. Had he? And to what leagues? To what persons? He wanted to know who they were so that they could place their finger on the people in the Movement who would be a party to readmitting rats, traitors, and renegades. (Cheers) He objected to delegates coming to Conference with such motions to play on the impulses of their fellow delegates. What guarantee had they that men like Meagher would not again sell them when faced with the bigger issue of Imperial Federation now looming on the horizon? They had cleaned the Movement by expelling the traitors, and never let it be said that they were prepared to pollute it with the presence of those men who in Labor’s darkest hours were prepared to sell the workers, body and soul to their enemies. (Cheers).

Mr Colbin (Petersham) moved the following further amendment: “In view of the fact that the Labor platform was silent on the question of conscription for oversea service, and that the same is now a dead-and-gone issue, this Conference hereby authorises the incoming Executive to readmit to the organisation those Labor men who, though expelled from the Movement on the conscription question, abstained from joining any hostile organisation and retained their union membership”.

A Returned Soldier’s Viewpoint

Digger Dunn opposed the motion, and told how the soldiers were misled over the conscription issue and coerced into voting for conscription. If they were prepared to let Meagher back into the Movement they would have to re-admit others. He would sooner see his right hand cut off than see the conscriptionists re-admitted again.

Mr Humphries supported the St Leonards amendment.

“Labor Must Keep Faith”

Mr J Power (AWU) in the course of a lengthy speech, said he regretted that such a motion had come before the Conference. If it was carried it would do a great deal of harm to the Movement. They were charged with the work of keeping the Movement clean and stable. It was not a question of individuals, but the Movement as a whole. If it went forth that they were prepared to readmit, in 1921, the men they expelled as traitors in 1916, what would the people of Australia who placed their trust in the Labor Movement think of them? Wouldn’t it shatter their belief in the ideals of Labor? It was dealing a staggering blow at their solidarity to even suggest that these men should be readmitted. The Movement laid down its policy in 1916, and any man who opposed it then was a traitor and a rat. (Cheers) These men had done that deliberately. The same trouble might arise again – even the greater issue
of Imperial Federation. Having tried to sell the Movement once, wouldn’t these renegades try to do so again? (“Yes”) It might even devolve on the votes of these men to decide the future policy of Labor on those great issues. What a nice position to be in. Had the Labor Movement sunk so low as to even give a moment’s consideration to such a motion? (“No”) What Labor did, in laying down the policy in 1916, it did deliberately. Those who opposed that policy then should be for ever excluded from the Movement. They were charged with the duty of keeping the Labor Movement clean and honest, and for God’s sake let them not betray that trust. (Cheers)

**Delegates Reject Motions**

The two amendments and the motion were unanimously rejected on the voices of delegates, great bursts of cheering punctuating the announcement by the President that the motion and amendments were lost.

**Day 11, Thursday, 7 April 1921**

**Concluding Session**

There was a poor attendance at Conference last Thursday night (April 7). Being the last session, business was transacted with greater speed than usual – most of the motions being carried on the voices with little or no discussion.

Mr Allam (The Rock) moved: “That the Executive take steps to amend the rules to provide for representation at Conference in accordance with the new electoral boundaries”. The motion was carried.

**The Breakaway Section**

Mr Singleton (North Sydney) moved the following motion dealing with the readmission of members who broke away at the 1919 Conference: “That the time has arrived in the interests of the Movement to hold out the olive branch to the breakaway section and they be asked to link up with the Movement again.”

The President ruled the motion out of order as being in conflict with rules 2 and 40. Mr Wheeler moved a motion of dissent, but the President refused to accept it. He added that it was open to any trade unionist or Labor man to join the Party so long as he complied with the rules of the organisation.
Workers’ Children Penalised

Mrs Dwyer moved: “That University fees be abolished”. She said that recently the University authorities had increased the fees, making it prohibitive for anyone not winning a scholarship to enter the University. West Australia had a free University and New South Wales should have the same. Mr Kelly (Newtown) supported the motion, and claimed that the sons of workers were excluded because of the higher fees. There was a suspicion that this had been done deliberately by the conservative element controlling the University. The motion was carried.

Mrs Dwyer moved: “That the qualifying examination be abolished and a certificate of general proficiency be awarded by school inspectors and headmasters”. She favoured a return to the old system of certificates by masters. The present system was farcical and not fair to the children. Mr Gibbons (Ashburnham) contended that it was often impossible to get a proper test of a child’s educative skill, owing to the nervousness of the surroundings and the fact that it was a tax on the child’s mind. The motion was carried.

Encouraging Australian Sentiment

Mr Allam (The Rock) moved: “That the Executive appoint a committee of educational experts to draft text papers and books for primary and secondary schools along lines of social and economic subjects”. He thought the time had come for something more modern in the school books instead of the present Imperialistic and jingo matter now being crammed into the heads of school children. Mr Kelly seconded the motion. It was nearly time they took control of the schools, and saw that the children were taught Australian sentiment and that the school books be made to conform with Australian ideals. Several other delegates expressed similar views. The motion was carried.

University Reform

Mrs Dwyer moved: “University Reform Bill – (1) That the University Amendment Act of 1912 be amended to provide the ages of students eligible for exhibitions shall be between the ages of 16 and 21, instead of 17 and 20, as at present; (2) that these exhibitions shall be awarded only to students whose parents or guardians are in receipt of an income of not more than £600 per annum; (3) that the number of exhibitions allotted to students from evening tutorial classes shall be increased from 5 to 10 per cent of the total number of exhibitions; (4) that these exhibitions shall cover all professional courses”. She claimed that many children of wealthy parents took exhibitions which rightly belonged to the children of working class parents, to the detriment of the latter. The Act would
need alteration, and she forecasted a great deal of opposition to this from the Upper House. The motion was seconded by Mrs Gray and carried.

Mrs Gibbons moved the following motion: “That the State Labor Party bring in an amendment of the Education Act to provide for the mandatory age for leaving school be sixteen years.

“That an Endowment Act be passed to provide an allowance in all families up to the age of sixteen years.

“That a Chair of Agriculture be established at the University, and that an amount of £30,000 be placed on the 1921-22 Estimates to provide the upkeep.”

After a short discussion the motion was carried with the addition of the following addendum to Clause 3, moved by Captain Toombs: “And that in all professional courses students may be allowed to take courses in broken periods”.

**Police Association and the Conference**

Mr Kelly (Newtown) on a matter of urgency, drew attention to the fact that following the appearance before Conference of members of the Police Association certain action was being taken which might penalise the delegates in question. On his suggestion the following motion was carried by Conference:

“That this Conference of the ALP gives its whole-hearted support and power in the matter of assisting the Police Association of New South Wales to obtain the necessary alteration to the Arbitration Act, so as to allow the association to register as an industrial organisation under such Act, and to obtain the full privileges of the Act. Further, that this Conference gives the association similar support to obtain a Police Appeals Board, to be constituted of a tribunal of three members as follows: an independent chairman, to be elected by the Government, after consultation with the Police Association; one member to be appointed by the Police Department; and one by the members of the Police Association.

“Further, that it be an instruction from this Conference to the Government to have the matter dealt with at an early date at the next session, and that the Chief Secretary (Mr Dooley) be asked to endorse the action of the police delegates who appeared before the Conference.”

**Lunacy Act Amendment**

Mr Mitchell (Hospital and Asylum Workers) moved the following motion: “That the Government be urged to amend the Lunacy Act of 1898 to permit the abolition of the office of Master-in-Lunacy and the position of Inspector-General of Mental Hospitals, and to provide for the Public Trustee administering the estates of mental patients and the Board or Commission administering the Department of Mental Hospitals”.

The motion was seconded by Mrs Gray, and carried on the voices.
Protest Against Slavery

Mr Mitchell also moved the following: “That the Government be advised that this Conference condemns the employment of inmate labor at any State Hospital other than those State hospitals especially established for the care and treatment of such inmates, and urges the Minister in charge of this department to take the necessary steps to secure the discontinuance of the objectionable practice”.

He said that at the Coast Hospital, Little Bay, there were 100 inmates from various asylums doing work at 1/- per day to the detriment of bona fide unionists. (Shame) This should be stopped. If they were debarred from doing this work, and it was given to bon-fide workers, some 50 or 60 men could be employed. He said the Government had no right to use these people at less than award rates. The motion was carried unanimously.

The following motion, moved by Mr Gibbons, seconded by Mr Mills, was carried without discussion: “That the Stamps Duty Tax of 1920 be amended to abolish duty stamps on pay dockets”.

Hours of Firemen

On the motion of Mr TJ Smith (Fire Brigades Employees’ Union) the following proposal was carried: “That it be an instruction to the Government to bring in a bill to provide a 44-hour week for employees engaged in all industries, including the members of the Fire Brigade”. Mr Smith pointed out that these men were liable for service for 138 hours per week. That was not fair. They were just as much entitled to a standard working week as other workers.

A National Policy Urged

Mr Amos (Waverley) moved that the following matter be sent along to the Federal Labor Party to be dealt with:

“That in order to secure for the people of Australia a more equal opportunity of obtaining their undoubted right to live in a high degree of comfort in this land of plenty, this Conference recommend the adoption by the Federal Labor Party of one comprehensive National Scheme, to provide for:

(a) The prohibition of export, except by license, of all raw and partially manufactured product used in the manufacture of the necessities of life, and the fixation of a standard home price for same, with a view of stabilising the cost of live.

(b) The fixation of a basic wage for a man and wife based on the stabilised cost of living.

(c) The maintenance of all children of the nation by a direct charge on the whole community by means of a graduated tax on all incomes.”

The motion was seconded by Mr Brotherson and carried.
Dealing with Drug Profiteers

Mr Mitchell moved the following motion, which was carried without discussion: “That the Wholesale Drug Depot, at present attached to the State Treasury Department, be transferred to the Health Department, and be extended so as to provide all drugs necessary for State hospitals as well as public hospitals, with a view to preventing private drug companies from making exorbitant profits from charitable institutions which cater for the sick and the suffering.”

On the motion moved by Mr Andrews, seconded by Mr Kelly, it was decided that Conference adjourn sine die, and that all business remaining on the agenda paper be referred to the Executive for consideration. A vote of thanks to the chairman, cheers for Labor, and the singing of “Solidarity for Ever” brought the Conference to a close.