CHAPTER 9
Australian Labor Party,
New South Wales Branch
Annual Conference, 3 – 6 April 1931

Report in The Sydney Morning Herald

When this Conference was held JT Lang had been Premier for nearly six months since the sweeping victory at elections in October 1930. James Scullin was still the Labor Prime Minister, struggling to come to terms with the economic crisis of the Depression. He was not helped by absolute opposition from Lang, whose ‘Lang Plan’ was completely opposed to the acceptance of the Bank of England’s demands that the first step in recovery was for Australian governments to repay their debts to Britain. Lang insisted that there should be a moratorium on the payment of interest on such loans until the economy improved. (The Herald report reproduced here incorrectly, and maliciously, referred to the policy as ‘repudiation’, not ‘moratorium’.) Although the final break with the Federal Party (the decision of Lang Labor Federal MPs to bring down the Scullin Government in November 1931) was still in the future, a formal split already existed. Federal Conference had expelled the NSW party, and Lang’s ‘State Labor’ was already working to set up its own Federal Lang party. For its own part State Labor had expelled EG Theodore, who represented the NSW electorate of Dalley.

Defence of the Lang Plan was the main business of this Conference. Lang’s address was an eloquent explanation of his reasoning. In later years Lang’s rhetoric would make one suspect that he had only a tenuous grasp on economic and political reality, but in 1931 his arguments were strong and he was very persuasive. This is not to say that ‘Lang was right’, but that it is impossible to understand the importance of Lang in the early 1930s without appreciating the very large proportion of the labour movement which was convinced that he was right.

The AWU had rejoined the Labor Party in NSW, and had six delegates to Conference as well as representation on the Executive. However, it was still very sceptical about Lang and would soon abandon the party again. One of the significant debates in this Conference was a motion from the Socialisation Committee to commit the State Labor Party to a three-year plan for the nationalisation of all industry. Against the Inner
Group’s opposition the motion was narrowly passed – with the AWU cynically supporting the Communist fellow-travellers who had moved the motion. Garden and the Inner Group had the motion resubmitted next day, after extensive arm-twisting, and the motion was rescinded. Still, there was clearly a firm group of nearly a third of delegates who resisted the persuasion and supported the rapid introduction of socialism. More would be heard from them in the future.

Executive Report of NSW ALP for 1930-31

(Mitchell Library Manuscripts, 329.3106/3)

Australian Labor Party, State of New South Wales
Executive Report, 1930-1931

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The 40th Annual Report and Balance Sheet of the Australian Labor Party, State of New South, Wales, are hereby submitted for your consideration.

Since the presentation of the last report the Movement has been beset with difficulties unprecedented in the Movement’s history, brought about by a set of circumstances engineered by the financial controllers which placed thousands of our members on the unemployed list and caused untold misery and intense sufferings. Notwithstanding the difficulties encountered, our membership has continued to improve and new Branches have come into existence in both the Metropolitan and Country areas as herein set out:

Country
East Greta, Grong Grong, Barellan, Brayton, Matong, Muswellbrook, Ardlethan, Curlwaa, North Wollongong, Premier, Carrathool, Bungendore, Candelo, Canberra, West Cessnock, Springridge, Ingle-Mac-Glen, Moulanine, Loftus, Denman, Breeze, Lismore, Grafton, Mullumbimby, Quirindi, Peak Hill, Hillston, Port Macquarie, Ashford, Holbrook, Tenterfield, Hay, Greta, Martin’s Creek, Jerildierie, East Kempsey, South Kentucky, Blackhalls, Wauchope, Ben Lomond, Wingham, Ballina, Woonona, Bargo, Naradhan.

Metropolitan
Pitt Row, Naremburn, Homebush West, Forest Lodge, Dumbleton, East Croydon, Camdenville, Dundas West, Prospect, Harbord, Lauriston Park, Brookvale, North Ryde, Newtown East, Cronulla, Como, Rooty

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Executive Attendance

During the term 38 meetings of the Executive were held, the attendance being:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
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<tr>
<td>JJ. Graves</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>F Saidy</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WD Jones</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>R Tucker</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Macpherson</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>C Townsend</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>JB Martin</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>F Watson</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>AH Anderson</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>FA Welfare</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs M Bagnall</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>J Smithenbecker</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs CH Barrett</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>(Sick Leave)</td>
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<tr>
<td>M Conaghan</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>BW Cunningham</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Denchfield (resigned 6/6/30.)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>W Neilsen (Withdrawn)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WJ Dwyer</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>F Louden</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>AC Fox</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>TP Devane</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>S Green</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>M. Manion</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>EA Hill (Elected 17/4/30)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>JH Stone (Elected 17/4/30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C Jackson</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(Elected 2/5/30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Luchetti</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>EJ Harrison</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs J McGowan</td>
<td>38</td>
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<td>CH Matthews</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>GH Buckland</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Middleton</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>(Elected 29/8/30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>G Pickford</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>D Ross</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>G Pomfret</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>H O’Regan</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>G Sutherland</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>F Roels</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>(Elected 28/5/30)</td>
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The State Election, the first held under the new distribution of seats, took place on the 25th October, and notwithstanding the fact that it was manoeuvred to weaken our Party by giving the Country more representation at the expense of the Metropolitan and Newcastle Areas, the result proved that the whole of the State was definitely opposed to Nationalist control, which has brought about stagnation and starvation upon the masses whilst fortifying the position of the financiers. Out of the ninety seats, our Party contested 89, the only seat uncontested being Byron, and after waging an expensive and extensive campaign, our Party was returned to power, having succeeded in capturing 55 seats out of a possible ninety; many of the strongholds of Nationalism and their allies (the Country Party) turned to our policy for salvation, and it is fervently hoped by our Executive that under the leadership of JT Lang, our State
will recover from the deplorable condition brought about by the ineptitude and class-biased management of the Nationalist Party.

We would issue a warning note to the members of the movement not to expect miracles to be performed. It will take months of labor and untold sacrifice to restore our State to a decent standard, the whole of the conditions and awards which members had taken years to build up, having been sabotaged by our opponents and the financial position being left in such a deplorable condition, it will be humanly impossible to rehabilitate our resources, and your Executive would forcibly bring under the notice of members the fact that the old system has broken down, and it will require strong and earnest intelligent men at the head of affairs to evolve a new system to successfully cope with the situation, and it is hoped that the Federal Party will see the wisdom of adopting drastic measures to cope with a most serious situation, and all States where Labor Governments are in control will realise that unless they are prepared to recognise that a complete reorganisation of the system is essential and wholehearted, and united action is taken to protect the community they must be swept away, relegated to oblivion. This Labor Movement dare not stand still or hesitate to determinedly end the horrors existing where, in the midst of plenty, thousands are starving. Your Executive would be lacking in their duty if they do not point out to you and the party representing you in Parliaments of the Commonwealth the serious position facing them, and the absolute necessity for drastic remedies to be applied to a virulent disease.

Since submitting our last report a municipal election has taken place, the city being divided into five wards, which were entitled to elect three aldermen for each ward; candidates to represent Labor were chosen, and contested the respective wards; but we regret that some of the members of our movement were not loyal to their pledge, and considerable opposition was put forward to the endorsed candidates, which materially assisted the Civic Reform Party in defeating our candidates, with the result that we were only successful in obtaining six aldermen in a council of 15, who, notwithstanding the fact that they are in a minority, are exercising a considerable check upon the activities of the Civic Reform Members, preventing them from giving full scope to their desires to work in the interest of the forces opposed to our ideals.

Our provincial conference, held at Tamworth, proved to be a wonderful success in the face of the fact that owing to the distance delegates are called upon to travel in order to attend operates against a full attendance. The agenda paper was composed of resolutions of great importance, and our country policy, as adopted at the conference, was largely responsible for the greatly improved vote recorded our members, and materially assisted in the return of Labor candidates in seats hitherto opposed to Labor, and every consideration and credit must be given to the country conferences, where excellent work is performed by delegates.
conversant with country requirements, and the high standard of intelligence displayed by the delegates, and the expediency with which the business sheet is disposed of is highly commendable and is of great benefit to the movement.

The metropolitan conferences are more largely attended and the industrial and social welfare of the movement is greatly advanced by the earnest manner in which the items on the agenda are dealt with.

During the year an important matter relating to the New Guinea gold leases was brought to finality by the committee appointed to deal with it, and a report is herewith attached, the final result being the appointment of an inspector with a special knowledge and power to attend to matters and see that the rights of the small man are protected against the machinations of the mining syndicates.

\textit{Report of the New Guinea Inquiry}

The New Guinea Inquiry Committee set up by the Annual General Conference of 1930, consisting of Mr JJ Graves, president of the ALP, Mr F Saidy, Vice-President, representing the Australian Labor Party, State of New South Wales; Mr JB Chifley, representing the Federal Government; Mr MA Davidson, MLA, representing the State Labor Party; and Mr T Keogh, representing the Morobe Miners’ Association; met at the ALP Headquarters on Monday and Tuesday afternoon, 23rd and 24th June respectively, commencing at 2.30 pm, and terminating 5 pm. All representatives were present throughout the inquiry.

Mr Keogh, in a lengthy statement, placed before the committee the whole of the facts in connection with the grievance under which the New Guinea miners were laboring, and suggested that measures should be taken to overcome the grievance complained of.

Mr Keogh very emphatically stated that the Working Miners’ Association, of which he was an officer, did not make any charge or even suggest a wrongdoing of any description of any Federal Minister or other politician, nor were they in any way responsible for the adverse criticism levelled at certain members of Parliament by the Press and others. Mr Keogh then submitted a number of typewritten documents and papers in support of his case.

Mr Chifley very ably presented to the committee the mining position in New Guinea. This information had been gathered from many sources by the Federal Government, who had made very exhaustive inquiries regarding the whole of the matter. Mr Chifley presented a number of papers on this matter, and informed Mr Keogh that they were not only prepared but very anxious to assist.

Mr Keogh expressed satisfaction at the very clear and concise statement of Mr Chifley and of his Government, because they were so well informed in these matters and to have their assurance that they would favorably consider the request of his organisation.
The committee then discussed the matter at a considerable length, and their findings are as hereunder:

We, the New Guinea Inquiry Committee, appointed by the Annual General ALP Conference, 1930, find, on the evidence before us, that there are very strong grounds for an investigation by the Federal Government on the mining position in New Guinea, particularly in connection with the Edie Creek Field.

1. We recommend to the Government that a competent man, with a wide knowledge of alluvial mining, dredging, and sluicing, be sent to New Guinea to make an investigation with full powers to conduct an exhaustive inquiry, including the calling and examining of witnesses.

2. The person appointed to inquire as to whether leases have been granted for land on which ground suitable for alluvial mining exists, and if so recommend as to what means should be taken to permit miners to peg claims.

3. To inquire and report as to whether there has been a granting of exemption from labor conditions on leases without justification.

4. To inquire and report upon a reasonable acreage that should be contained in special areas, and as to whether there is a necessity for a modification in labor conditions as existed prior to the gazetted of Ordinance 44a.

5. To inquire and report on the advisability of allocating portion of the royalties received from gold won in New Guinea for prospecting purposes. We recommend to the Minister:
   1. That any administration lands and/or abandoned claims be retained and/or abandoned claims be retained as Administration lands and made available for alluvial mining.
   2. To consider the fixing of a royalty on the basis of the exemption of gold won up to the value of £500 with a graduated scale on all gold won in excess to this value.
   3. Consideration be given to the advisability of all gold won in New Guinea being traded through the Commonwealth Bank.
   4. That no holder of miners’ rights shall be entitled to more than one claim.

The committee urge the Minister to give immediate consideration to the foregoing matters. On behalf of the committee,

I am,
Yours respectfully,
(Signed) Jas J Graves, Chairman of Committee
During the term the Socialisation Committee appointed have been most energetic in the fulfilment of the duty cast upon them and are deserving of the thanks of the movement in their efforts to educate the public mind in this important matter. Attached is a report of the committee submitted for your approval.

“The committee operating under the chairmanship of Mr Townsend have pleasure in submitting a report of their activities in connection with the conduct of the debating classes and the competition now in operation, which must materially improve the debating and speaking strength of our movement and should commend itself to the members, particularly the younger section, to whom it should be an immense benefit.

“Your executive finds that the Rules relating to Municipal Assemblies and Labor Aldermen are not sufficiently defined to make for success in the control of those bodies and recommends an alteration, and believes that it is essential for Labor aldermen to meet in conference at given periods in order to have unanimity of action brought about, and the policy of the party given effect to.”

During the term which has been the most strenuous and remarkable period in the movement’s history, it became necessary to have conferences with the Federal representatives with a view of having action taken to further the interests of members of the movement and the community generally, most important discussions, as the defining of a policy to overcome the deplorable condition of the coal industry, and an endeavor to force the hands of the Government to adopt a drastic and progressive policy to assist and protect the members of that industry, which has been most sadly neglected, and has drifted into a state of chaos for the want of thorough reorganisation and political attention.

Another most important and essential conference was that relating to the alteration of the basic wage and lowering of the standard of living of workers, and it must be here definitely stated that it is a sad commentary upon a Labor Government that it should have become necessary to enforce pressure to have the most vital interest of the people protected, and it must be made quite clear to our members that laxity in an endeavor to give effect to Labor’s policy cannot be tolerated.

We are passing through the most critical period, not only of this country’s existence, but of the whole world, and it is abundantly clear that the system has failed, and drastic steps must be taken to protect our people. We have the deplorable spectacle facing us that in the midst of plenty, want and starvation are rampant, and in the name of civilisation it cannot be allowed to continue. If our legislators are not prepared to formulate a policy to protect us they must be stood aside, and progressive members elected and compelled to act.

During the selection of candidates to contest the last State election, numerous protests had to be decided, and considerable work entailed. Amongst the number, and around which most controversy centred, were
Barwon, Monaro and Albury. The decision of conference ordering another ballot to be taken in Barwon was conveyed to the Council, who replied that owing to the financial strain they were unable to comply. The General Secretary visited the electorate, and having addressed the Council, the leading candidates, Messrs Cummins and Heffron, decided in the interest of harmony to withdraw, the Executive then called for nominations and submitted them to the Barwon Council, who selected Mr Ratcliffe, who eventually won the seat.

Monaro selection was also the subject of considerable controversy, and protests which were fully investigated, and finally Mr PV Stokes was elected to contest the seat, but we regret to report that he was not successful.

Albury was another storm centre, which necessitated an officer being sent to endeavor to affect a reconciliation. The General Secretary attended and addressed the Council, and whilst dissatisfaction still exists, and certain features are still under review, Mr Fitzgerald, the endorsed candidate, was successful in winning the seat.

Summing up the whole of the year’s activities, it will be readily seen that the amount of work and expense in conducting elections has been unprecedented and has completely drained our resources, our financial obligations being tremendous, with a very limited field to operate upon, owing to the abnormal amount of unemployment in the ranks of our affiliated unions and branches, and at the present time the outlook is far from bright, and it will necessitate a complete change of action by our political representatives if we are to restore the community to a decent state of prosperity, and we feel sure that responsible persons will recognise it, and utilise all means within their power to make for improvement in the general welfare of the movement.

A report would be most incomplete, which did not give credit to the loyal support accorded the movement by each and every member of the staff. In order to afford a better opportunity to have the increased work of the movement accelerated, a complete alteration of the offices was found necessary and put into operation, and whilst the work was being proceeded with, the staff were compelled to put up with immense disabilities at a time when they were endeavoring to cope with the busiest period ever experienced in the life of the movement, and great praise must be accorded each and every member who worked uncomplainingly and cheerfully from early morning till well on to midnight. The amount of work done was tremendous, and really needed extra assistance, but owing to the financial stress existing, it was found impossible to meet the actual requirements, and if the slightest inattention has been occasioned the members, we feel sure that if the facts were fully known, no condemnation would be forthcoming.

JJ Graves, President.
S Bird, General Secretary.
State Parliamentary Report

Since the previous Annual Report was made the General Election has been held, which resulted in the return of Premier Lang with a Party of 54 Labor members.

Your State Parliamentary Party took office at the most critical time in the history of the State. The Bavin Government had in many cases suspended Arbitration Awards, reduced wages, caused unprecedented unemployment and left the Treasury with a deficit in the Cash Account of £15,000,000.

On the day he was sworn in, the Premier had his first interview with the Governor for the purpose of arranging for the passage of the Upper House Abolition Bill, with a view of putting into operation the first plank of the Labor Party’s platform. This legislation was passed during the first month of Parliament, but it is now being contested in the Law Courts.

We also found that the Bavin Government had permitted the Railway Commissioners to join in the application before the Federal Arbitration Court for a reduction in the Basic Wage. Under the Government’s instruction, the New South Wales Railway Commissioners withdrew their appearance and saved the railway men from the 10 per cent reduction subsequently made by the Court.

The restoration of the 44-Hour Week was made by Parliament during its first month, and the rationing law which permitted the shopkeeper to work his staff for a couple of hours each day, was abolished also.

In addition, the Government decided as a matter of policy that no further application should be made of Bavin’s Wage Reducing Act.

Instructions have been issued that no Government contract is to be let to any firm that does not conform to the 44-Hour Week and other industrial laws laid down by the Government.

Our country legislation during our four months of office included the repeal of Bavin’s iniquitous Western Lands Amendment Act.

Through our Lands Department we have given much assistance to settlers, and since we took office over 2,000 farmers and land owners have secured relief in the way of having payment of their arrears deferred, and their current payments postponed for a number of years.

The wheat farmer was in a serious condition. The Government found that not only had most of the crop been harvested, but a good deal of it had been sold, and any question of pooling the crop was not practicable.

Every assistance through the Rural Industries Board has been given by the Government, and a measure of relief to necessitous farmers will be provided by the Flour Acquisition Bill.

The unemployed position was governed by the difficulty of finances. The Government found that while much money had been promised by our predecessors in unemployment works, the actual cash position in the Treasury was such that there was barely sufficient to pay the wages of
the ordinary services of Government, let alone embark upon schemes of unemployment relief.

Means were found, however, of creating further governmental works. Employment of an additional 5000 men weekly on Water Board work has been put in hand, a scheme to provide country employment is in contemplation and legislation along other lines will probably be passed before this Conference meets.

Realising that the solution of the financial problem will mean the solution of unemployment, the Government devoted much time to the condition of the Treasury, and came to the conclusion that the only hope of relief would come from the adoption of a scheme which is now known as the Lang Plan.

Shortly, this Plan provides that money which otherwise would be paid out as interest shall be, temporarily at least, diverted for the relief of unemployment.

One measure which of itself is almost sufficient to justify the existence of the Labor Party is the Moratorium Act.

This Measure has saved for the people their homes and for the farmer his farm. At the time it was introduced no other form of legislation was so urgently needed.

As all this has been accomplished almost within three months of taking office, Conference will realise that the State Labor Party is determined to govern in the interest of the people.

We believe that the work performed in the short space of time under review is an indication that when we have had twelve months of office, the people of our State will be well on the road to prosperity.

M O'Sullivan, Secretary Parliamentary Labor Party

Organising Secretary's Report

I have much pleasure in submitting to the Annual General Conference a report of my activities as organising secretary since my appointment, twelve months ago.

As a State election at some time of the year was certain, I immediately commenced to get the campaign machinery in order. Naturally, the electorates upon which I concentrated my attention were those where the prospects of winning were brightest.

I began with the Barwon electorate, and visited the following centres: Moree, Gravesend, Inverell, Warialda, and left all centres working in harmony. Today the Barwon is a Labor seat.

On the way to the Barwon electorate I visited supporters and branches at Cessnock, Singleton, Scone, Murrurundi, Muswellbrook, Quirindi, Gunnedah, Tamworth, Glen Innes, Armidale, and many small towns en route and set the work going for the approach of the elections.
An extended itinerary was then undertaken with a view of covering the electorates of Goulburn, Yass, Cootamundra, Temora, Wagga, Corowa, Albury and the Murray, a substantial increase in local activities being the result. Unfortunately, the tour was interrupted by the Lane Cove by-election, and I was recalled from Albury to assist in the campaign. Although we were not successful at this by-election, the hard work of the supporters and Trade Union officials, who offered their services and their cars, must not be overlooked, but special praise given to them.

After this election I returned to the south-western portion of the State and completed the work still to be done there. This included a fortnight’s tour of the Murray electorate, visiting Conargo, Carrathool, Gunbar, Hay, Booligal, Mossigiel, Clare, Balranald, Benanee, Euston, Coomealla, Pooncarie, Wentworth, Toolebuc, Swan Hill, Moulemein, Wakool, Barham, Wamboola, Moama, Mathoura and Deniliquin, in company with Mr J Donovan, who is now its State representative.

I next turned my attention to the Ashburnham electorate and organised Labor’s forces at all centres and with Mr W Keast, the present member for the Ashburnham electorate, addressed open-air meetings to large and appreciative audiences at Parkes, Forbes, Eugowra, and Canowindra. This seat was also added to the list of Labor gains. On the way I made contact with the Labor enthusiasts of Orange and Bathurst, where I addressed the branch.

Monaro was then organised, in company with the candidate, Mr PV Stokes. I visited and held meetings at the following places: Queanbeyan, Michelago, Bredbo, Cooma, Berridale, Adaminaby, Jindabyne, Dalgetty, Nimitabel, Bibbenluke, Holts Flat, Bombala and Delegate. By this time it was evident that the elections were to take place sooner than at first expected, consequently I returned to Sydney to organise the metropolitan seats, and see that the head office machinery, which is the pivot upon which the whole organisation swings, was in order. Contrary to the expectations of our opponents, the elections found us prepared. Campaign speakers were all organised from head office, thus assuring a fair distributions of speakers in all electorates, giving justifiable preference, of course, to those electorates that looked like possible gains.

The election was the most momentous that the State has ever faced. It is true there was a swing to Labor, and it is likely we would have polled well in any case, but it must not be forgotten that never was the power of our opponents used with such vigor and bitterness. It can be said, therefore, that the great victory which crowned Labor’s efforts, was due, in a very large measure, to the fact that an extensive organising campaign was begun early, and was persisted in to the end. I desire here to pay a tribute to the members of the staff for their untiring efforts at all time to assist me in my duties, particularly during the State campaign,
very often they worked seven days a week and fourteen hours a day, but with one aim in view – to achieve victory.

Besides the work of organising the electorates, other necessary work fell to my lot. I had to keep in continuous and close contact with the Trade Union officials, and owing to the vagaries of Federal politics, I had, in company with the General Secretary, to make several trips to Canberra. The importance of keeping close contact between head office and the Parliamentary Party cannot be overestimated.

Much has been done. There is still a great deal to do. The abnormal times through which we are passing makes politics more than ever uncertain. No Parliament can be sure of running its full three years. It is imperative, therefore, that Labor must keep its machinery moving and ready to be speeded up at a moment's notice. The work of organising must not be slackened, and I hope, during the coming year, to see that Labor is active in every centre of any size, both in the metropolis and the country.

JB Martin, Organising Secretary.

**ALP Socialisation Committee**

**First Annual Report — Easter 1930 to Easter 1931**

(This is but a brief resume of the full report of the ALP Socialisation Committee. This committee considers its report to be of sufficient importance to the whole of the party to be dealt with fully in a separately printed report, which will be made available at conference to all delegates.)

The ALP Socialisation Committee was brought into existence by the annual conference itself of 1930 to “devise ways and means to propagate the first and principal platform, the Socialisation of Industry”.

Its task has been, and is, therefore, no less a one than that of bringing the objective of the party, so long relegated to the background, right into the realm of practical politics, and that as soon as possible.

With a due sense of its responsibility, the committee has set about that task. Conference had scarcely completed its deliberations than the committee held its first meeting. It has met practically once a week since then, and has progressively continued to extend its influence, until today it can fairly claim that it has, in conjunction with the economic circumstances, helped in no small measure to give a fighting lead to the party, which otherwise might have continued (to a greater extent than it has), to maunter round in the futile by-paths of mere Reformism and Capitalism.

How has the committee given this lead? Briefly (for details will be given in our separately printed report) we will set out our activities.
I. — Propaganda within the party itself.

A. Socialisation Propaganda Units

The committee early realised the need for educating and ‘gingering-up’ party members themselves, many of whom had either forgotten, or did not even know, that the Socialisation objective was the first plank of the platform. Accordingly, it set out to establish Socialisation Propaganda Units in the ALP Branches and Unions. It has succeeded beyond its hopes. Already it has succeeded in gaining sympathetic responses from the majority of branches, of whom a large proportion have formed definite Socialisation Units.

Much has still to be done to bring all these units to the effective point, so that they will act as a leaven upon the mass of the party members, but a great deal of necessary groundwork has been accomplished.

B. Lectures to Branches.

Members and representative speakers from the committee have addressed a great many branches on questions connected with Socialisation.

C. Printed Propaganda.

Through its units and otherwise the committee has disseminated thousands of leaflets on Socialisation throughout branches and unions.

D. — Debates.

The committee has encouraged its units to undertake debates; it has seen to it that among the subjects for debate in the ALP Debating Competition are subjects that deal with Socialisation.

E. Study Circles.

Study circles, based on the definite study of some text-book on Socialist Economics and Theory have been formed and encouraged in many branches and units.

F. Parliamentary Representatives.

The committee can claim to have brought the need for Socialisation knowledge and activities very effectively in front of our Parliamentary representatives. Many have given both financial and other assistance, but, many have (up to the date of this report), done neither.

II. Propaganda Outside The Party

A. Public Meetings.

An important part of the Committee’s activities has been the park, street, and hall meetings open to the general public. The committee has held hundreds of these meetings with wonderful effect and increasing enlightenment of the masses.

B. Leaflet Distribution.

In addition to the thousands of leaflets distributed among party members, the committee has also distributed many thousands to the general public. This side of our activity – perhaps the most important – must be
multiplied a thousandfold before we can really claim to have done our duty. Financial and other difficulties have to be surmounted, but with adequate party support we see only success ahead.

III. General Propaganda
A. Newspaper and Educational Propaganda.
In addition to the above, the committee has continued directly, or through some of its most active units, to obtain publicity for many excellent articles on Socialisation in the Press, (city, suburban and country.)

The committee herewith places on record its deep debt of gratitude to the Labor Daily for its splendid contribution of space in the Saturday supplement of the Labor Daily, and for its unfailing willingness to give space to our appeals for funds, notices of meetings, reports, etc.

B. Other Miscellaneous Propaganda.
The committee has endeavored as far as possible to keep its proposals before Labor bodies – it has been instrumental in getting resolutions on to the agenda of conference, has participated very prominently in great Labor displays and functions such as the Eight-Hour display, State Election procession, ALP picnic, and has been partly instrumental in opening what it hopes to be merely the first of many other such clubs (based on Socialisation education), as the “Workmen’s Club” at Lane Cove.

Its influence has extended to all the other States, and in Queensland and Victoria powerful influences are working to bring the Labor Parties in those States into line with ours on the question of Socialisation.

The committee is of opinion that the conference of 1930, in creating an instrument for the mobilisation of Labor opinion around the fundamental vital Socialisation objective of the party, actually took one of the most important, far-reaching and hopeful steps in the history of its activities to date, and now calls upon the conference of 1931 to justify the faith of those Labor pioneers who have sacrificed themselves in the past for something more than mere Reformism, by not only renewing the committee’s mandate for a further term, but by considering ways and means for office and other facilities for propaganda, specific financial resources and increased powers.

Further details and recommendations will be submitted in the separately printed report which the committee puts before conference as one that is fraught with the greatest consequences – full of hope for the long-deferred striking from the people of the chains of Capitalism and the entering by them, freed at last, into the saner, freer, more truly human Socialised Commonwealth.

For the ALP Socialisation Committee, (F Saidy, D Grant, E Cook, E Barker, Mrs L Lynch),

J Kilburn (President).
W McNamara (Hon. Sec.)
Women’s Central Organising Committee

Fellow Delegates,

1930, the 26th year of the Women’s Central Organising Committee, was a year of strenuous fights. The State and City Municipal Elections, the revolt against deflation, and its reduced real wages and unemployment.

State Women’s Convention

The State Convention of Labor Women, held from 5th, to 10th April, was opened by the State President, Mr Graves, who, in a stirring address, stated: “That until women insisted on equality as a right, instead of asking for it as a privilege, they will never attain it.”

Papers were read and thoroughly discussed by

Matron Angermundie: “Pre-natal Care”.
Mrs Green: “Mandated Territories”.
Mrs Houghton: “Married Women in industry”.
Mrs Browett: “Unemployment”.
Mrs Seery: “The Delinquent Girl”.
Mrs Shields: “Municipal Laundries and Kitchens”.
Mrs Connop: “Housing”.
Miss Nyhan: “Cause and Effect of Women in Industry”.
Mrs Wills: “Scattered Homes”.
Mrs Steel: “National Health”.
Mrs McNamara: “Banking and Finance”.
Mrs Fox and Mrs Taylor: “Cremation”.
Mrs Piddington: “Sex Training”.

Resolutions were passed, adopting all papers, excepting those on “Cremation” and “Married Women in Industry”, which were referred to The Women’s Inter-State Conference.

Colored Races

Included in Convention business was the resolution, “That we deplore that the ACTU turned down affiliation with colored races”, whilst Mr Scullin welcomed members of Rotary Club Convention from same colored races.

Interstate Women’s Conference

At Federal Conference held at Canberra this State was represented by Mrs Dunn, Mrs Francis and Mrs Lynch.

The Prime Minister opened the conference, supported by Mr Blakeley, Minister for Home Affairs.

The President also introduced a visitor, Mr Slater, Attorney-General in Victorian Labor Ministry.
Miss May Holman was re-elected president. Mrs Wallace was elected secretary.

Conference business was extensive and occupied four days.

**Pan Pacific Conference**

All the important Melbourne discussions were reaffirmed. Arising from conference, the Federal Government was approached on the matter of Labor women representation at Pan Pacific Conference.

**Dame Janet Campbell’s Reports**

Also giving effect to certain parts of the Dame Janet Campbell Report on “Maternal and Child Welfare”. The Prime Minister was in sympathy with both of these, but regretted no money was available for them.

**Unemployment Insurance**

Conference to urge Federal Government to give effect to the Labor policy of “Unemployment Insurance”.

**Government Education Film Library**

Also the formation of a Government Educational Film Library.

**Moratorium**

That the Governments be urged to legislate for a moratorium was also decided at conference. This has been done in New South Wales by Mr Lang.

**State Election**

The committee practically suspended operations during State Election Campaign to allow its members to devote their energies to the fight, which resulted in the triumphant return of Mr Lang and fifty-four supporters.

**Civic Elections**

The civic elections were nearly as strenuous in the city, but owing to an absurd system of balloting a Labor City Council did not materialise.

**Deputations**

Many deputations were made, including:

- To the Prime Minister re Victorian barracks for unemployed.
- To Mr Beasley, assistant Minister for Industry re unemployment.
- To Mr Farrar, MLC, Chairman, Unemployment Relief Council, re earmarking portion of unemployment tax for women workers.
To Mr Gosling, Chief Secretary, re Consorting Act and Police matters.
To Mr Ely, Minister for Labor and Industry, re Labor Bureau method, with unemployed women.

Donations
Our thanks are due to the State Executive for a donation of £25 for expenses to Interstate Women’s Conference; also to Mr Beasley, MHR, Assistant Minister for Industry for his assistance.

Relief of Distress
Members of committee performed great work raising funds and generally helping to relieve acute distress caused by unemployment.

Representation
Following on resolutions from conferences that representations by Labor women be made on National and international Conference, Boards, Institutions and Industrial Bodies, has resulted so far in Miss May Holman securing the Australian delegation to Geneva, and Mrs Lena Lynch being appointed a member of the Film Censorship Board.

The committee regrets that, despite the amount of work put in by women as speakers, canvassers, collectors and workers generally, we are still without women representation in either State or Federal Parliaments.

Lena Lynch, Hon. Secretary.

Report of Progress of ALP Debating Competition
Under the control of the Organising Committee, ALP Executive, Messrs Green, Williams, Hackett, Douglas, and Townsend.

In order to promote an organised system for the formation of debating classes, representatives from each branch were invited to Head Office and the groups formed, group secretaries elected, and a group committee consisting of one representative from each branch set up and made practically autonomous in such matters as the draw of rounds of debates, dates and places, and the appointment of adjudicators, etc.

The following were the groups set up:

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With all difficulties disposed of, the committee then centred their attention on the Unions, but only four were prepared to take part – not enough to form a group. Whether the Union officials were too busy fighting their losing fight with unemployment, or for other reasons, has not been ascertained, but it is hoped that when prosperity again returns, members of unions will also delve into debate and correct English.

Matters now being adjusted and reasonable time having elapsed for teams to be tried out, the competition was nicely underweigh when the State elections burst upon us. The elections were the only things that
mattered; all debates were cancelled or allowed to stand in abeyance until after polling day.

After the elections, the matter was again taken up, and the debates launched in some groups, while in others previous debates were scrapped and a new start made. The City and Randwick and Waverley groups failed to continue, and no effort at resuscitation aroused any response. Possibly their labors in returning Messrs Landa, Clementson, Flanagan, and Heffron to the State Parliament left them incapable of further effort. All other groups are proceeding with the debates. Some delay has been caused by the annual election of branch officers, while another serious hitch will be caused by the financial crisis between the Federal and State Executives, for you will understand that matters of such importance as the above receive most of the time and attention in the branches – and rightly – so to the detriment of other things.

The spirit developed in the competition, both by its officers and among the competitors, is very fine, many teams entering with the object of gaining experience and not hoping to win a great many debates.

The competition was launched in a time of political and industrial trial and stress unprecedented in Australian history, a time of anxiety for the worker and the would-be worker, when he had much to occupy his mind besides debates. Notwithstanding that, the framework of a powerful and useful organisation has been set up. The debates are continuing, and will continue to a successful conclusion.

With the machinery set up and the experience gained, we hope in the near future to control the finest debating competition ever held in the metropolitan area, and from it produce a better class of public speaker with a better understanding of the aims and aspirations of the Labor Movement.

A list of subjects for debate is set out:

**ALP Debating Competition. Subjects for Debate.**

1. That the Labor Party should make its socialisation objective the basis of every appeal to the electors.
2. That socialisation can be achieved without civil war, through Parliamentary action.
3. That Russia has developed much more under the Communist Party Government than it would have done under any Capitalist Government.
4. That the NSW State school curriculum operates against the interests of the majority of the working class.
5. That sex knowledge should be imparted at school to all children.
6. That a Soviet form of government is preferable to any other.
7. That State monopoly of the liquor traffic is better than total prohibition.
8. That the Commonwealth Government can solve the present Australian unemployed problem by an expansion of credit.
9. That industrial unionism is a more practicable and superior form than craft unionism.
10. That the State should endeavor to give full instruction in birth control to all adults.
11. That all forms of gambling should be suppressed.
12. That the White Australia policy should be scrapped.
13. That the only alternatives before us are either a dictatorship of the working class or a dictatorship of the owning class.
14. That a censorship of literature, the theatre, and the cinema is desirable.
15. That the League of Nations is a real safeguard against war.
16. That the monarchy in England is obsolete and ought to be abolished.
17. That the Churches have been a barrier to progress.
18. That socialisation of industry would greatly reduce crime.
19. That direct action is as important to the working class as political action.
20. That the workers should have nothing to do with State or Federal Arbitration Courts.
21. That Australia should set an example to the world by adopting a policy of complete disarmament.
22. That if all members of Parliament and all union secretaries received no more than the basic wage, working-class interests would benefit much more than at present.
23. Is Arbitration of more benefit to the workers than direct action?
24. That the Customs Tariff of the Scullin Government is in the best interests of Australia.
25. That Capitalism can be transformed into Socialism by the workers forming and developing their own cooperatives.
26. That the workers should accept the results of the developments of machinery as an inevitable evolution of industry.

The thanks of the committee are extended to Mr W McNamara, of the Socialisation Committee, for advice and assistance, and to the Labor Daily for its generous treatment of our articles.

C Townsend,
Chairman, Organising Committee.
Annual Conference of NSW ALP, 1931

(The Sydney Morning Herald, 4, 6, 7 April 1931)

Day 1, Friday, 3 April 1931


The repudiation policy of the State Premier (Mr Lang) embodied in the scheme known as the Lang plan, was adopted by the State Easter Labour Conference last night by 122 votes to 1.

The conference also adopted the resolution of the metropolitan Labour conference, declaring that the Federal Treasurer, Mr Theodore, had placed himself outside the Labour movement.

The New South Wales ALP executive was instructed not to endorse for selection any member of the Labour party who did not recognise the authority of the State party. The executive will insist immediately that the fourteen Federal Labour members who supported Mr Theodore shall pledge allegiance to the State body.

The Premier (Mr Lang) caused a sensation by a straight out advocacy of the socialisation of industry as the solution of Australia’s difficulties. He declared that the Interest Reduction Bill was a ‘stepping stone’ towards the achievement of the objective.

Disorderly Scenes

Disorderly scenes marked the opening of the conference.

During a discussion on the balance-sheet and annual report the former organising secretary of the ALP (Mr AJ Macpherson) alleged that a ‘bash gang’ had been employed by the ALP to stifle interruptions, uproar followed the speech of Mr Macpherson, and a motion was unanimously carried that he should be no longer heard.

The total number of delegates was 128, of whom 45 were from the country.

Those present included the Chief Secretary (Mr Gosling), the Minister for Health (Mr McGirr), the Minister for Labour (Mr Baddeley), the Minister for Justice (Mr Lamaro), the Attorney-General (Mr Lysaght), the Minister for Lands (Mr Tully), Messrs. Quirk, Olde, O’Sullivan, Cahill, Heffron, Byrne, MsLA, Senator Dunn, and Mr E Ward, MP.

Mr AJ Macpherson, assistant secretary and organiser of the Postal Workers’ Union, said that he wanted more particulars about the
secretary’s travelling expenses at the last conference, and he also wanted to know under what heading the wages of 30/- a day paid to the ‘basher gang’ employed at the conference last year appeared.

The president (Mr JJ Graves) said that at the last conference there was a disturbance at the back of the hall. He stated at the time that extra doorkeepers were required, and four of these were engaged at the same rate of pay as the other doorkeepers. One of these men had occasion to speak to Mr Macpherson.

“It is a deliberate lie that I was dealt with. You think you will get away with this at this conference, but there are other days coming”, declared Mr Macpherson. “The men you employed spent long periods in gaol as garrotters and thugs”.

The president: If these charges are to be made they must be made in a proper manner.

A voice: He should be made to withdraw.

“If they were thugs, as you say, the branch would have dealt with them”, replied Mr Graves. “One man did spend some time in gaol over the timber workers’ strike, and while he was in gaol the movement thought fit to keep his wife”.

“That was not the man I was referring to”, said Mr Macpherson.

Voices: Name them.

Mr Hutt (Meatworkers): He is trying to discredit this movement in New South Wales. I challenge him to name them. He is trying to besmirch the name of this conference.

“I do not know the name of the man”, said Mr Macpherson.

Uproarious scenes followed.

Mr Kelly (Botany) moved that Mr Macpherson be no longer heard, and this was carried.

Secretary resigns

The resignation of Mr S Bird as general secretary came as a bombshell at the opening of the afternoon session. The resignation was accepted with regret, and it was decided that the Labour party should devise means of recognising Mr Bird’s services.

The entry of the Premier (Mr Lang) was the signal for an enthusiastic outburst of applause, which lasted some minutes.

“Three cheers for Jack Lang”, a woman shouted, and they were given.

The chairman said that there was no need to appoint delegates to the Federal Labour party as the Labour movement had not yet “set up a Federal body”.

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Presidential address

The chairman (Mr JJ Graves), delivering his presidential address, said that some of the members of the Federal Parliament seemed to believe that they stood in opposition to the State Parliament. This was shown when Mr Scullin had failed, although pressed, to congratulate Mr Lang upon his success at the election in October. "Within 24 hours of the time that Mr Lang said that he could not pay interest on oversea debts, Mr Scullin paid £700,000 to England. If this is what the members of this conference think they are behind these Labour representatives for, it were better they were expelled from such a body", declared the president amid cheers. "If the Labour movement stands for anything it is for flesh and blood. (Cheers.) We are here to see that the weak are protected, hungry are fed, and the oppressed taken care of. We must decide whether we will purify the Labour movement or have a movement which merely serves as a background for political opportunity and ambition".

"Since the conference adjourned last year events of tremendous importance to the Labour movement have occurred", said Mr Graves. "The Federal Labour Government considers the interest of the bondholder paramount to that of unemployed Australians, and the Federal Parliamentarians are attempting to deprive the rank and file of its control of the movement. Wages have been reduced, unemployment is rampant, misery has touched homes never before affected. In fact, almost every phase of the life of the community is suffering from financial manipulation. One section alone remains untouched - the recipients of Interest Income. To deal with this pressing problem the State ALP executive and the State Labour party adopted a series of financial proposals known as the Lang plan. According to newspaper reports, this decision so angered the Federal Parliamentary Labour party that it caused a special meeting of the Federal Conference to be held, at which the Labour movement in New South Wales was expelled from the Federal Conference. The Federal Labour Ministry, which is supported by 15 Labour members from New South Wales, paid away in interest to oversea bondholders £700,000, which this State Government refused to find for the purpose.

"At different times our own unions, the Labour movement in this State, even the Federal Labour Conference, have asked the Federal Government, in fact pleaded with it, to make money available for the relief of unemployment. The reply has always been that it was impossible for the Government to find any extra money to relieve suffering in Australia. It is easy to take from the weak and suffering and give to the strong and wealthy. That has been going on since history began."
Labour Party’s Mission

“If Labour has any mission in politics, it is to see that the weak are protected, the hungry are fed, and the oppressed are raised up to a decent standard of comfort and security. The period we are going through is very similar to the conscription issue of 1916. Tests which were applied then are being applied now, and, unfortunately for the people of Australia, it seems that those tests are to have similar results.

“The second point relates to the principle of rank and file control. Your executive unhesitatingly adopted the attitude that it could not permit New South Wales delegates to take part in a conference which contravened decisions of our own annual general conference. After many years of fighting, we in 1927 adopted a constitution which gave the rank and file complete control over its Parliamentary members. We felt that in no circumstances could we surrender this fundamental principle, and for that reason it was decided that the New South Wales delegates should not attend the Federal Conference”

Mr Lang’s Speech

“The Labour movement in this State requires more solidarity than ever before”, said the Premier, Mr Lang. “We must press on to our objective and do it quickly. Your agenda paper at this conference is full of references to socialisation, but you, the members of the Labour movement, must do your work before we can do ours. You must get out among the people, you must point out to them the benefit of socialisation, you must make them ready to receive it. Nobody is keener on our objective than I am, but how can we do it in Parliament when the greatest obstruction is met within our own ranks?

“The plan which we have placed before the people is a step towards our objective. With a bill to reduce interest we merely touch on the fringe of the socialisation of credit, but look at the result. A nominee Upper House, a nominee Governor, nominee Courts, and a Federal Labour Government have all combined to defeat even that small step along the road to socialisation. In the Labour party’s platform and objective is to be found the true solution of Australia’s problems. But you men and women in the movement, who have a thorough understanding of what socialisation means, and have the ability to place that knowledge before the people in a way that they will understand it and appreciate it, must intensify your campaign among our own Labour people before a Labour Government will be able successfully to legislate for socialisation.

“Here in the plan which the movement has adopted is an important, practicable step towards our objective. If we can have it enacted in either the Federal or State Parliaments the benefits from it will be so quickly and fully appreciated by the people that our objective will be brought
nearer to achievement. This is a time for the Labour movement in New South Wales to use all its powers, whether persuasive or disciplinary, for legislation along the lines of the New South Wales plan, which is a step towards the objective of the movement.”

**The Lang Plan**

Mr Lang proceeded to recapitulate the principles of the Lang plan and the criticism levelled at it.

“We have come to the conclusion that Australia has been most unjustly dealt with by the oversea financial interests in regard to the annual tribute which is being taken from our country every year”, Mr Lang proceeded. “It is a burden that the country was barely able to carry even in prosperous times, and impossible for her to attempt to carry now. It is inevitable, if we attempted to maintain the payment of £36,000,000 a year overseas, that the starvation and misery among Australians must increase.

“To meet this situation Labour in New South Wales decided that the oversea financial interests should be called upon to give Australia similar treatment at least to that which England obtained from the United States, and that until an agreement along those lines was reached the £36,000,000 a year which hitherto was sent abroad should be retained in Australia and devoted to the relief of unemployment.

“The second point in our policy related to interest due from Australian Governments to the bondholders within our own shores. While price levels, wages, and almost every other factor in our economic life have fallen, interest rates remain untouched. While the Australian Governments have to find the money for these exorbitant interest payments they are being hampered in the task of relieving unemployment.

“It was decided that to bring the incomes from interest of bonds into harmony with other incomes, the interest rate to the Australian bondholder should be reduced to 3 per cent. Every newspaper and every political leader has been hammering into us for the past 12 months ‘costs of production must come down’, but insists that the saving should be made in the workers’ wages. The Labour party holds that the greatest and most unproductive item in the cost of production is interest, and if industry is relieved of a portion of the interest burden it is carrying, a revival in employment and production will follow. A bill to reduce interest to reasonable rates was passed through the Lower House and rejected by the Council.

**Gold Standard**

“The other proposal was that the gold standard of currency should be abandoned and a form of currency based on the wealth in production of
Australia should be introduced. So long as the gold standard continues as our currency it will always be subject to the manipulation of the financiers and these crises will return with added violence at every recurrence. This plan was put forward not as a complete cure of our industrial ills but as the only means to give speedy and effective relief in Australia. Its adoption would put our unemployed at work, remove the spectre of starvation from the homes of our people, and enable the Labour Governments both Federal and State to go ahead in earnest with the Labour platform in which the real cure for Australia’s troubles is to be found.

“Your Government in this State then proceeded to give legislative effect to those sections of the proposal which were applicable to a State Government alone”, said Mr Lang.

“The plan has been the chief item of controversy in Australian politics since it was announced and there is great rivalry between the Nationalist and the Labour Governments as to which shall be most clamant in their condemnation. The facts on which our case was built however were too strong for our critics and those who reluctantly admit the force of our arguments have but one form of criticism. They say there is a good deal in the Lang plan but we object to the way in which it has put to the bondholders. We have been accused of a lack of courtesy. It has been said that we should have tried to negotiate with the bondholders.

Sir Otto Niemeyer’s Visit

“In August of last year Sir Otto Niemeyer and Professor Gregory came to Australia on behalf of the financial interests. Their object was to compel Australia to abolish arbitration, reduce wages, cut pensions, and eliminate social services. Did Sir Otto attempt to negotiate with the Australian people? Not a bit of it. He walked into the Melbourne Conference and informed the Premiers that the City of London had decided that no more money would be available to Australia until she complied with the conditions laid down by the oversea financial interests. If Sir Otto Niemeyer and his crowd can say that to Australia why cannot Australia say to the financial interests: Not another penny piece in the payment of interest shall leave Australia until Sir Otto Niemeyer and his kind will give us the consideration they have given to almost every other nation in the world? That is the method which the money power adopts whenever it wants to get something done and surely the people of Australia, who have a far better case, should be permitted to adopt the same attitude. Those Federal members who think New South Wales Labour is lacking in courtesy are almost in the same breath defending the infamous Niemeyer Agreement, and in defending that they are defending Sir Otto Niemeyer and his methods.
“The next objection was to our bill to reduce interest. Our Federal critics said that mortgages and overdrafts were sacred contracts and should not be attacked directly. When Mr Bavin wanted to reduce wages, he brought in an Act of Parliament which ordered that after a certain date all wages should be reduced by 8\(\frac{1}{3}\) per cent. Why then, cannot a Labour Government, when it wants to reduce interest, bring in an Act to say that after a certain date all interest shall be reduced by a certain amount?

**Federal Government Criticised**

“If the Niemeyer and the Bavin methods of procedure are wrong and our method of going about it is wrong, let us have a look at the system of the Federal Government and see if that is right”, continued Mr Lang.

“At Canberra the Federal Treasurer said ‘Mr Lang said that it may lead to the creation of a new currency. It need not necessarily mean that. It is to be hoped, for the sake of the disturbance it would cause, that it can be avoided, that it will not necessitate that’. Yet the Federal Government now has a bill before the House to create a new currency, not a complete reversal of our form of currency such as New South Wales proposed to the Canberra conference, nor that provided for in the Labour platform, but a kind of Mahomet’s coffin, beginning nowhere and ending nowhere. The amount of currency which it is proposed to create will give little more benefit than the distribution of unemployed money during Christmas week, but sufficient to cause that disturbance which Mr Theodore said he wished to avoid.

**Reduction of Interest**

“The other portion of the plan which the federal Government has adopted is reduction of interest”, said Mr Lang.

“Thiers is not a ruthless, discourteous method such as New South Wales adopted – they will not fix a date on which all interest will be automatically reduced. Their legislation proposes to set up a committee of five. The composition of that committee will be one from the Commonwealth Bank, probably Sir Robert Gibson, one from the trading banks, either Mr Trantor or Mr AC Davidson, one from the primary industries, probably Mr Drummond or Mr Trethowan or Sir Adrian Knox, Mr Heathershaw, Under-Secretary of the Federal Treasury, and an unspecified fifth. That is how the Federal Government proposes to reduce interest. It is going to ask Sir Robert Gibson, Mr AC Davidson, and Mr Drummond or Sir Adrian Knox to take up the case for the manufacturers and primary producers against the financial interests. Which of the two methods could the Labour movement support? That is
the substance of the criticism aimed at the proposals of the movement in this State.

“Our attempt to reduce interest in the private finance of this State has been prevented by the Legislative Council. Our efforts to avoid payment of overseas interest is about to be prevented by a combination of the Federal Labour Government, the Commonwealth Bank, and the High Court of Australia. This is the position which I want the people of Australia to understand. Time after time Governments have asked the Australian banks for accommodation to help them relieve unemployment and every time the banks have replied that they are unable to meet the Governments because they could only do so by calling up the overdrafts of the farming and business community. At the end of March the State Government in New South Wales had not the money with which to pay its interest.

“The Federal Government offered to arrange for the Commonwealth Bank to advance this money. Having in mind Sir Robert Gibson’s statement that the banks themselves were in a precarious position, and also the statement that credit for Governments could only be obtained by depriving commercial and primary industries of their advances, this Government refused to take the money for interest purposes. But the Federal Labour Government took it. Apparently it does not matter to them that industry is to be robbed of £700,000, that, according to Sir Robert Gibson, the banks themselves are in a precarious position. Interest must be found though everything is smashed. Perhaps the Federal Government believes, as we do, that the bankers are not speaking the truth when they say their banks are in a precarious position, and they cannot accommodate Governments. But, if they hold that belief, and they still want to pay the interest, why don’t they go to the bank and say, ‘Unless you advance us £2 for unemployed relief for every £1 you give us to pay interest we will not take the money, but default on our overseas payments?’ That is the only thing the financial institutions fear. It does not hurt them if our people are unemployed; it does not hurt them if misery is rampant in Australia; it does not hurt them if the crops rot on the ground, but if we default in our interest payments, it would be a vital wound that the financial interests would take all steps to avoid.”

**Mr Beasley’s speech**

Mr JA Beasley, MP, said that he and the others who had broken away at Canberra were behind the ‘Lang plan’, and they felt they would be successful.

He traced his movements since the Parkes by-election. There, he said, when all Australia was awaiting some definite policy from the Prime Minister, who had only recently returned from England, no financial policy was placed before the people, nor had there been one laid down
since Mr Scullin’s return, although it was the most important thing that Mr Scullin had gone abroad for. After his speech the whole meeting fell flat, and it was realised that some ginger would have to be put into the campaign to allow of Labour’s winning it. “Labour could not be expected to win the seat under such great difficulties”, said Mr Beasley. The East Sydney by-election, he said, was a great victory for Labour, although the influences against them and the means employed were the most despicable. Mr Scullin was a shuffler of the worst kind.

**The Resolution**

Mr J Hooke (Moulders) then moved the following motion: That annual general conference commend the executive for its resolute handling of the many matters of major importance which occurred in the recent months, particularly in regard to: (1) The conduct of the East Sydney by-election; (2) The adoption of the financial proposals known as the 'Lang plan'; (3) Its decision to abstain from attendance at the Federal Labour conference while that conference arrogates to itself the right to encroach upon the declaration of local autonomy made by the 1928 annual general conference. (a) This conference adopts the resolution of the metropolitan provincial conference, 1931, whereby EC Theodore is declared to have placed himself outside the Labour movement. (b) That the executive shall not endorse the nomination for selection of any member of the movement who does not accept the declaration of local autonomy made by the 1928 conference. The executive shall take whatever steps it thinks fit to obtain this allegiance.

Mr J Hooke said that Mr Theodore was out of step with the movement. Mr Theodore and his party were political mountebanks and charlatans who had betrayed the most cherished ideals of the Labour movement. “Anyone with any vision could see long ago that this was coming”, said Mr Hooke. “Last year it was obvious that the Federal Labour Executive was dominated by the Federal politician, who was in turn dominated by the men behind them”.

**Mr Beasley’s Position**

Mr A McPherson (Postal Workers) created a sensation when he asked if it was not a fact that Mr Beasley was one of the most active wirepullers before the Parkes by-election, in endeavouring to get Mr Theodore re-elected to the Cabinet?

The chairman ruled that the question was not in order.

Mr Conway (AEU) submitted as an amendment that the executive should be instructed to withdraw the endorsement of Federal members in New South Wales who failed to carry out its instructions in the East
Sydney fight and that steps should be taken to select candidates for all Federal seats in New South Wales.

A conciliatory speech was made by Mr G Buckland (Australian Workers’ Union), who moved an amendment that a committee be appointed to negotiate in an endeavour to effect a reconciliation and report back to the conference by next Monday.

“We may not be satisfied with all the Federal Parliament has done”, he said amid derisive laughter. “I have been one of the Federal Government’s active critics. I am not a supporter of those members of the Federal Parliament who are absent nor would I be a supporter of theirs at the selection ballots. I am not concerned with Mr Theodore but with the future of the Labour movement. We are not going to smash the party just because a few people do not suit us. We must deal with larger matters before Labour is destroyed”.

The speaker added that the movement must have solidarity otherwise there could never be a Federal Labour Government. The differences between the two factions was not so great that they could not be bridged.

The amendment was seconded by Mr Keller (Southern Miners) who said that if the quarrel went on, the Labour movement would be smashed.

Bitter Debate

Mr C Matthews (executive) opposed Mr Buckland’s amendment. He said he failed to understand a fellow executive member putting forward such a proposal in view of the definite stand that had been taken by New South Wales members.

“The action of the conference in dividing the movement will wreck the Federal and State Labour Governments”, declared Mr A McPherson (Postal Workers) in supporting the amendment. “We must not forget that it is far better to be under the worst Labour Government than under the best Nationalist Government”.

“The difference between the Lang plan and the Theodore plan is the difference between Tweedledum and Tweedledee”, he added. There was a stir in the gathering when he read a letter from the president (Mr Graves) to Mr Theodore, dated October 18, 1930, which concluded as follows: “If I can judge the feelings of the executive I feel sure you will succeed in your action in again taking your place in the Federal House. With best wishes for your ultimate success.”

Mr J Kilburn (Bricklayers) said that the history of the Labour party showed a series of betrayals on the part of the Labour politicians. If the conference did not carry out the expulsions the executive would.

Alderman J Garden, who wore a large red dahlia in his coat, said there had been a plea for unity, but there was only one type of unity – the
unity of the working classes of Australia. “I cannot understand anyone who urges a unity which means an adoption of the Niemeyer Plan and the great capitalist concerns”. Facing the Water and Sewerage Board delegates, the speaker charged them with having issued an attack upon the Premier under the name of their secretary, which was drafted by Mr Theodore. “The statement is a lie, and Mr Theodore and Mr Macpherson know it”, shouted Alderman Garden excitedly.

“Let us be united here and then go to the other States and tell them this is the voice of Labour in New South Wales, and they will follow us”, he concluded.

Mr C Tannock (Ironworkers) said it was the duty of the Federal executive to approach the State organisation if they desired unity. It was ridiculous to suggest that the State Labour movement should approach the people who had been deliberately ‘chopping off the heads’ of the executive. The door was open for the Federal people to approach the State if they desired unity.

Mr FE Miller (Transport Workers) said that the people who had expelled the State executive were doing their level best to smash the Labour party. “It makes one hang his head in shame when one thinks of what the Scullin Government has not done”, said Mr Miller. “We want to be a nation. We will not be subservient to the Shylocks from overseas”.

Mr Savage (Water and Sewerage Employees), referring to Alderman Garden’s allegations regarding the statement issued by the secretary of the union, said that employees of the Water and Sewerage Board were being crushed between Mr Lang and Mr Theodore. Fifteen hundred men had been discharged from the board, and the attitude of the union was that almost any means were justifiable in keeping its members in work. They were not going to apologise to Alderman Garden.

**Commonwealth Bank Attacked**

“That is not correct”, shouted Mr Savage, (assistant secretary of the Water and Sewerage Employees’ Union), when the Premier declared that when he made arrangements for 4000 men to be employed by the Water and Sewerage Board, representatives of Mr Savage’s union waited on his doorstep and demanded that they should be members of the Water and Sewerage Employees’ Union.

“Mr Baddeley, Mr Davidson, and yourself know it is correct”, retorted Mr Lang. “We will produce a letter from the Parliamentary Labour party to prove it. When Mr Cooper (president of the Water and Sewerage Board), endeavoured to arrange for £1,100,000 I suggested he should make it £1,500,000. The Commonwealth Bank replied that it would give the money if the Government would agree to forego £600,000 which the board has to pay to the Government before June 30. I, as head of the Government, said emphatically, ‘No, you can go smash if you like, but
the Commonwealth Bank will not dictate to the Government of New South Wales’.” (Applause.)

Mr Beasley, MP, in a personal explanation, said that Mr Theodore had been re-elected to the Cabinet because he put forward the Gibbons [Gibson?] plan. He had supported Mr Theodore because he brought forward that plan. He had withdrawn that support because the Federal Treasurer had let his supporters down, and had not put the plan before Parliament.

Mr Hooke, who moved the motion, said, in reply, that the Federal organisation obviously did not desire unity, for it had declined to send delegates to the State conference. “It has slammed the gate in our faces. All those who do not support the Lang plan must be brought into line, and let it be soon”, said Mr Hooke.

Both amendments were lost, and the motion was carried with only one dissentient – Mr A Macpherson. As he stood up alone when the division was taken he was boo-hooed by a section of the delegates.

The result of the ballot when announced as 122 votes to 1, was greeted with applause.

**Government Insurance**

A resolution on the agenda paper that employees have representation on conferences held by the heads of departments in the railways, tramways, and other public utilities was carried.

It was also decided to ask the Government to provide that no doctor acting for any insurance company be allowed to sit on any Workers’ Compensation Board, and that the whole of the insurance business in the State be made a Government monopoly.

**Why Mr Bird Resigned**

Mr S Bird has tendered his resignation as general secretary to take up a government position, details of which will be announced in a few days.

It is understood that the State president (Mr J Graves) will be appointed to the vacancy, and that Mr P Keller (Southern Miners) will take over the presidency of the Labour party.

**Boycott of AFA Employers. ALP Decision. Part of Labour Army Plan.**

The ALP State Conference has decided to organise battalions, divisions, and brigades of the Labour army, and to boycott all employers who support the All For Australia League or allow its employees to wear AFA badges.
The committee of the Australian Labour Army submitted to the Labour Conference last night a series of recommendations, which were read by Mr JM Martin, president of the army committee.

The recommendations were to the effect that a brigade be formed in each State electorate area and set up a headquarters, and that organisation of battalions be left in charge of each division. That all members of the working class be eligible for membership, and that a State council consisting of members to be appointed by the conference, and a representative from each division be set up in Sydney.

The committee further recommended that a boycott be immediately instituted upon all tradespeople and firms who are members of the AFA, and who allow their employees to wear the badge of any of the organisations declared bogus by the Metropolitan Provincial Conference whilst on duty; and that immediate steps be taken in every division to have a complete list furnished to each divisional headquarters for the purpose of effectively applying the boycott. That all trade union officials and Parliamentarians should be called upon to place themselves at the disposal of the Australian Labour Army Committee for the purpose of addressing meetings in furtherance of the objective.

A delegate caused some merriment by asking how many Lewis guns the membership fee of sixpence would purchase. The recommendations were adopted.

The following committee was elected to represent the conference on the State Council of the Labour Army: Messrs J Hooke, Burnett, JM Martin, F Hutt, and Nurse Francis.

**Day 2, Saturday, 4 April 1931**

**Socialised State. Industries and Property. Three Years Plan Adopted by ALP Conference. Party to Handle Nation’s Output.**

The Easter Labour conference last night adopted a scheme based on the Soviet five year plan, for the socialisation of industry and specified property in New South Wales, within three years.

Followers of the Lang-Garden group voted against the scheme, but the socialisation committee, with the support of the delegates from the AWU, won the vital division by 57 votes to 44.

The action of AWU delegates in supporting the three year plan caused a sensation at the Trades Hall because of the decision of the AWU leaders in other States to fall behind the more moderate policy of the Federal Labour party.
The Proposals

Proposals for the complete socialisation of the industries of the State and specified property were placed before the conference in the report and recommendations of the socialisation committee, which was set up by the 1930 Easter conference.

The report was read by Mr W McNamara, secretary of the committee, who said that the socialisation committee had heard Mr Lang’s declaration regarding socialisation with great joy.

The principal recommendations of the committee were: That a plan, to be known as the Three Years Plan of Social Transition, be propagated to provide for government by regulations, such regulations to aim at the establishment in three years of a socialised State by the vesting in the people’s Government all rights, ownership, and control of all specified property; by the administration of specified industries, including banking, by national and industrial commissions and sub-commissions, with direct workers’ and producers’ control during the three-year period; by the establishment of compulsory pools for the handling of the nation’s entire production.

It was also recommended that the details of the plan be worked out with the ALP socialisation committee in conjunction with the executive, the Labour Council, and the Parliamentary Labour party.

The report, which was signed by the president (Mr J Kilburn), stated that the committee had done much to give a fighting lead to the party, which might have continued to muddle round in the futile bypaths of mere reformism and capitalism. It had established over 100 socialisation propaganda units in ALP branches, and others in unions, conducted lectures, debates, public meetings, secured newspaper propaganda, and distributed large quantities of leaflets. It had also brought the objects of the committee before Parliamentary representatives, and had extended its influence to Queensland and Victoria.

Mr McNamara moved that the policy for development of the socialisation of industry should include: The development by intensive and extensive socialisation propaganda at all times of an ideology favourable to socialisation, so that when the time was ripe, the political and economic change from capitalism to socialisation may be accomplished, and parts (executives, Parliamentary representatives, sub-committees, branches, affiliated unions, and individuals) to exert their energies towards the accomplishment of socialisation.

The encouragement through every political channel of the displacement of craft unionism by industrial unionism.

“We hope that Mr Lang will not be stampeded by adverse criticism and bitter attacks, or be side-tracked from his stand”, said Mr McNamara. Referring to the leading article upon socialisation appearing in Saturday’s
Sydney Morning Herald, he said the journal was trying to dictate to conference regarding the action it should take.

Discussion on the report was adjourned to permit of country matters being dealt with.

Subsequently the secretary of the socialisation committee moved a motion (which was adopted) that a committee of seven should be elected to carry on the work of socialisation for twelve months, with power to co-opt one member from each of the industrial and electoral groups not already represented on the conference, the endorsement of co-opted members to be submitted to the executive for approval.

Mr J Kilburn (chairman of the socialisation committee) said: “We want to get to the people in this and other States. The times are pregnant with great possibilities. Parliaments are losing their functions. I want to sound this note of warning. The capitalistic financial group has arrogated to itself complete powers in shaping the destinies of Parliament. As the Premier pointed out, Governments have become futile.”

Mr AJ Macpherson (Postal Workers) caused much uproar when he referred to “an oligarchy” in charge of the conference.

The chairman (Mr JJ Graves) warned Mr Macpherson that if he did not withdraw the remark he would overlook him as a delegate.

“I was only referring to an oligarchy of wire-pullers that is trying to side-track the socialisation committee”.

A woman delegate: “The only oligarchy you know anything about is the oligarchy of corruption”.

Mr Macpherson subsequently explained that he was not referring to the conference when he used the term oligarchy. “If the delegates take the view that I described the conference as an oligarchy I withdraw the remark”, he added.

The following committee was then elected: Messrs J Kilburn, JS Garden, JJ O’Reilly, W McNamara, D Grant, J Stewart, and E Barker. An application for a recount of the ballot by an unsuccessful candidate (Mr F Saidy) was rejected.

It was decided to allow one member from the Australian Labour Army and the socialisation committee to attend meetings of the ALP executive without the right to vote.

Mr W McNamara moved that the State objective be altered to read simply: “The socialisation of industry production, distribution, and exchange”. This was carried unanimously.

It was further decided, upon the motion of Mr McNamara, that the pledge signed by Federal, State Parliamentary, and municipal candidates should contain an undertaking to actively support and advocate the socialisation objective at all times, and to furnish a report in January and June of each year to the committee of the executive of their activities in this direction. It was also agreed that the membership ticket signed by
branch members should contain a specific pledge to the socialisation objective.

A motion from the Metropolitan Provincial Conference was: That in order to assist in achieving the policy of the party as regards socialisation of industry, the Government be asked to immediately institute an inquiry into all industrial undertakings and the potential productivity of the State with a view to ascertaining the following – The number of hours required to be worked by the working class population to produce sufficient commodities as could be purchased with that wage; the number of commodities necessary to be produced and the hours of labour required to be worked by the working-class population to meet interest payments administrative expenses, etc.; the number of hours that would be required to be worked by the whole of the population to produce as many commodities as can be purchased with the basic wage.

This was carried.

**Three-Year Plan**

The discussion of the proposed three-year plan aroused intense interest. Alderman Garden opposed the adoption of such a plan, and submitted an amendment for its rejection. He had never heard of the like of such a scheme and if it were adopted it would be laughed at by every revolutionary organisation in the Commonwealth. A three-year plan was impossible. It was impossible to fix a time for any plan of socialisation.

Mr F Roels (Enginedrivers) said the adoption of such a plan would be foolish and the plan would fail.

“I think some of those opposed to the plan are suffering from a fear complex”, declared Mr J Kilburn (chairman of the socialisation committee). “Labour Governments have been in power for 40 years, and now the position of the worker is more difficult than ever. It is no use our telling the people things unless we have a definite plan. We must have a plan to take the place of capitalism, which is in its declining years. Capitalism has failed and socialism must have its trial. The necessity of change must be brought before the people.”

“Governments have fallen in the estimation of the public. Parliaments are stinking in the nostrils of electors and already the master classes are moving in the direction of Government by commission”, he said

Mr Donald Grant said the introduction of the plan would be sheer nonsense. It was absurd and if passed would make the movement look stupid to every student of socialism. It would make the ALP a laughing stock.

“Socialism can never be brought about by the ALP”, declared Mr C Tannock (Ironworkers). “If it could it would be in operation immediately, for the 150,000 unemployed would be able to bring it about. The
Labour party is a constitutional party and it has no chance whatever of bringing about socialism. The most it can do is to nationalise certain State industries.

Mr McNamara said that the Labour party could not have been held up to more ridicule than it was now. “A critical situation has arisen”, Mr McNamara said. “A people’s Government must take over control”.

Alderman Garden’s motion was defeated after a division, by 50 votes to 49. When a division was taken upon the motion it was carried by 57 votes to 44. The chairman’s announcement to the effect was greeted with applause.

**AWU Tactics**

Unionists stated last night that AWU delegates voted for the three-year plan as a matter of tactics, the object being to bring ridicule upon the State ALP executive.

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**Day 3, Sunday, 5 April 1931**

**State ALP Conference. Increase in Unemployment Relief Announced by Premier. Mr Griffith Refused Admission.**

The Premier (Mr Lang), at the State Easter Labour Conference yesterday, announced that the Government had decided to increase the food relief allowance to unemployed by 25 per cent.

Referring to the financial position of the State, the Premier declared that New South Wales was in a stronger position than it had been in the past two years.

Mr Macpherson (Postal Workers) bitterly attacked the Premier. “We should call him Machiavellian Mr Lang”, he said.

**Conference Decisions**

The conference carried a number of motions dealing with Labour aldermen in municipal councils, and decided to instruct the central executive to devise ways and means of paying the expenses of country members attending executive meetings.

**Land Policy**

The Minister for Lands (Mr Tully) said that the Lang Government had done more for the farmer and settler than any previous Government. It had repealed the Western Lands Amendment Act which was so obnoxious to the mass of the farmers. It had prepared a bill providing for the
reclassification of the western lands, especially those in the eastern portion and adjacent to the rivers. This legislation would allow the settler who had less than a living area to build up his holding. The department had found that there were 2,000,000 acres of Crown land which had not been taken up because of the one-eighth resumption clause. It was hoped that a great deal of this land would be made available to settlers. Another bill was being prepared which provided for the subdivision of large estates and the promotion of agriculture. It was hoped this bill would also relieve land-locked country towns. In addition, the Prickly Pear Commission was being reorganised and placed under the control of a superintendent under the Minister. This would mean that a saving of £3000 per annum would be made. Apart from this the Government had helped the settler by sympathetic administration.

With regard to the adjustment of capital values on holdings the proposed Crown Lands (Amendment) Bill will meet the position as provision is therein made for extension of a further right of reappraisement to all settlers. With regard to annual payments of installments or rent to the Crown every deserving case has received generous and sympathetic consideration at the hands of the Government. Not one forfeiture has been declared by the Lang Government since taking office, except where holders have voluntarily abandoned their farms said Mr Tully.

An estimate of the monetary value of relief afforded can reliably be set down at more than £839,000. In about 60 cases soldier settlers were given very special concessions by means of the Crown foregoing entirely a large portion of the amounts in arrear. In a number of cases also additional areas were specially provided to enable soldier settlers to re-establish themselves. In addition, special consideration was given to soldier settlers on orchards on the Young Soldiers’ Settlements by provision of additional areas and further advances to certain settlers and by writing down indebtedness generally.

The Government’s policy in relation to concessions in respect of arrears of payments by settlers has generally taken the form of funding the amounts in arrear and spreading payments over long periods up to 20 years free of any penal interest charges whatever. In addition, numerous payments in respect of holdings under the Closer Settlement Act have been deferred for a number of years or postponed to the end of the terms of the purchases, added the Minister.

Concessions allowed by the Government were as follows, he continued: Payments on Crown lands carried over by the Government and spread over a number of years free of penal interest, £160,000; payments on closer settlement and soldier settlement areas postponed indefinitely, £27,000; deferred for definite periods, £373,000; interest and fines waived, £35,000; amounts written off advances to soldier settlers, £15,180;
deferred for definite periods, £158,440; penal interest forgone by the Government this year, £70,000.

The Government had also classified and made available for settlement a total of 185,000 acres; of this area 175,700 had been selected.

“It has been found that the private banks had not been playing the game with the small farmers. Many of these people have large mortgages and in addition owe money to the storekeeper and the Lands Department”, said Mr Tully. “When they receive payment for their wool and wheat the bank retains most of the money to liquidate the mortgage, and the shopkeeper and Lands Department receive little or nothing. It is up to the settler to see that the private bank is not always going to get all his money, and that the storekeeper and department receive a fair share. I would suggest that they transfer their accounts to the Rural Bank which would pay something off the mortgage and see that the storekeeper and the department receive a fair portion.”

He added that many of the people associated with the sedition and secession movements in the country districts had approached the Government for extraordinary concessions. The Government had taken no action against these people because such action would tend to make martyrs of them.

**Concessions to Settlers**

Mr Dunn, Minister for Agriculture, said that the Government had carried out nearly all its election promises with regard to agricultural matters.

The seepage question in the irrigation area had been dealt with, and a reappraisalment of the values of the holdings of ex-Broken Hill miners and TB men had taken place. A total of 146 cases had been reviewed, and a reduction of £170,000 in capital values had been made. The Government had also undertaken to purchase 1600 tons of peaches at £7 per ton and had assisted with guarantees various sections of producers to market their crops. It had further through the Rural Industries Board assisted settlers to the extent of £750,000, the greatest amount advanced by any Government in one year. Mr Dunn added that the Marketing Act was to be amended to provide that producers could establish a pool in any industry provided a simple majority of them was in favour. A bill for the abolition of PP boards was also to be introduced in the near future.

A motion asking that voting at municipal and shire elections be made compulsory was carried, but a move to secure payment of aldermen was defeated.

A further motion was agreed to that all persons employed in the manufacture and distribution of foodstuffs be medically examined periodically. In the event of any person found to be suffering from contagious disease losing his position, the Government to find him a suitable position or provide him with a pension.
Mr A Griffith’s Readmission

“I have been 16 years outside the Labour movement because of the conscription issue”, said Mr A Griffith in applying for re-admission to the Labour party.

Moving a motion for his readmission Mr A Thompson (Milk and Ice Carters) said that the Labour movement should not stand for vindictiveness. “If Mr Griffith should be outside the movement so should I”, he said. “I went over the other side and actually shot men for the capitalists”.

Opposing the motion, Mr P Keller (Southern Miners) said that the Labour movement had to deal ruthlessly with those who opposed it. There should be no sentiment.

“There should be no place in the Labour movement for those who stand for the conscription of life”, said Mr F Hutt (Meat Employees).

“The question is whether a life sentence should be handed out to a man who has made a mistake”, declared Mr J Rosevear (Leichhardt). “The Labour party still have in responsible positions men who support conscription of men by unemployment and starvation – a more contemptible form of conscription than Mr Griffith supported.

Mrs McGowan, a member of the ALP executive, stated that the Labour party did not want any arch traitors in its ranks.

“The Labour movement does not live on emotion”, said Mr F Roels (Engine-drivers), opposing the motion. “Mr Griffith should have taught you that. When the acid test was applied he failed you”.

Mr Simpson (Northern Miners) said he spoke for 12,000 miners when he supported Mr Griffith’s re admission.

“Does Mrs McGowan know that Mr Jack Cusack, MP, was endorsed for Monaro without opposition and he supported conscription?” asked Mr Bollard (Printers) supporting the motion.

“It is camouflage when Mr Griffith says he does not believe in sending interest payments overseas”, said Mr C Tannock (Ironworkers). “He believed in sending human life overseas. Why not let Billy Hughes back? Why not let Holman back? Let us go the whole way?”

Mr A Thompson, in reply, read a statement from Mr Griffith that as anti-conscription was a plank of the Labour platform, he would support it. “Why do you not expel people in the movement who opposed the Lang plan?” Mr. Thompson asked. “That is a far more critical matter”.

When the chairman announced, amidst excitement, that the motion for readmission had been defeated by 53 votes to 48, there were loud demands for a division. The division resulted 51 votes all. Amidst uproar, the chairman gave his vote against the motion for readmission, which was lost.

When the excitement had subsided, Mr Graves announced that Mr Rosevear, who, with Mr AJ Macpherson, was allowed to assist the teller, had complained that his vote had not been counted. Some delegates had
left the room, and it was impossible to have a recount. The matter was then dropped.

**Unemployment**

When the Premier (Mr Lang) attempted to give a report on behalf of the unemployment committee, Mr Macpherson claimed that as Mr Lang was not a member of the committee he was not entitled to give a report.

The chairman ruled against him.

Mr Lang then stated that up to date the amount collected by the Government from income taxation and the unemployed stamp duty was £2,312,405/5/4. “We have spent in relief and unemployment £2,651,051/12/5”, said Mr Lang. “We have expended in unemployment relief half a million more money than we collected in taxation. In charitable relief, that is, in food relief supplies, we have spent £959,154/18/10. From the Child Endowment Department we have spent £69,845/17/9. The total spent in food relief, rent relief, and similar charitable reliefs is £1,280,999. We have supplied work for 15,000 men. If we could devote the £1,000,000 spent on food relief in work we could give work to 30,000 of our men. This is a mere drop in the bucket. The unemployment problem is an extraordinary one. We have 100,000 unemployed. We have still a big leeway to make up. We must feed the people whatever happens. As this is a most pressing and urgent matter, the Government must do something more than it has done. With the cold winter months approaching we cannot continue along the lines we are going. We have agreed that from May 1 the present food relief will be increased by 25 per cent. (Applause.) We are not saying for a moment that this is sufficient. We hope to provide a great measure of relief by two measures. They are both ready for submission to Parliament. The first measure is the Transport Bill, which places all transportation, including railways, tramways, motors, and air, under the control of a Minister for Transport. (Applause.) Nobody can say we have not got a mandate. From every platform in the city and country I said that one of the central points of my policy was the granting of a transport monopoly. Another measure is the Greater Sydney Bill. That will enable the Government to have the assistance of a friendly instrumentality in finding work for our people. If the Upper House rejects these measures it will do it in defiance of my Cabinet, 55 members of Parliament, and in defiance of the people of New South Wales. (Applause.) We have a three years’ programme, but most of it will have been attempted before the completion of the first session. (Applause.) As Treasurer I can say that on March 31 the State was in a stronger position than it has been at any time during the last two years. (Applause.) I told the Governor that we would restore the endowment. We are ready to do it. We cannot move until the Arbitration Bill goes through. His Excellency must take his full share of
responsibility in allowing the Upper House to hold up the bill, because he does not agree with the details of it.

A voice: Give it to him, Jack.

Mr Lang: That bill has to go through as the Government wants it. (Applause.) If anything happens to your Government it will go down with its flag flying. We will go down fighting. We will not bend the knee to anybody (Cheers.)

Uproarious Scenes

Disorderly scenes were witnessed when Messrs AJ Macpherson (Postal workers) and L Kirkwood (Water and Sewerage Employees) bitterly attacked Mr Lang. “The Government has not stood up to its duty”, said Mr Kirkwood. “The Government is out to smash union awards and conditions”.

When Mr Macpherson opened his attack a motion was submitted that he should no longer be heard, but it was lost. “Instead of calling him the Honourable JT Lang”, Mr Macpherson said, “we should call him Machiavellian Lang. (Uproar.) I will express my convictions.”

A voice: Mr Theodore’s.

Mr Macpherson: Unemployment is keener today and worse than when Mr Lang came into office. This great man is going to increase relief by a miserable 25 per cent. The unfortunate unemployed gets a pittance of 4/10½.

A delegate: What did Mr. Theodore give the miners?

Mr Macpherson: This generous, this kind hearted, this noble Mr Lang, will increase this miserable 4/10½ by 25 per cent. I heard this same man say when he was attacking the Scullin Government three weeks after he was elected that if he were Mr Scullin he would do things first and legislate afterwards. In other words, he was criticising Mr Scullin because he would not seize the mines. I would like to ask this same man whether he will seize the banks.

A delegate: He has taken their money.

Mr Macpherson: I have never listened to such cant and hypocrisy ... At this stage Mr Macpherson’s time expired, and he resumed his seat.

Mr Lang, in his reply, said that the Government had done nothing without the full concurrence of the union secretaries and the ALP. Mr Scullin had neither legislated nor acted. “Why am I called the mad bull or dog of politics?” he asked. “Is it not because I have acted and legislated after I have spoken?” (Applause.) “It cuts me to the quick to think of the suffering and poverty. It is that suffering that makes me do some of the things for which I am attacked in the Press. I have done them and I am unrepentant”. (Cheers.)

The report submitted by Mr Lang was adopted.
**Election of Officers**

The annual election of officers resulted: President, Mr PJ Keller; secretary, Mr JJ Graves (for a period of three years); vice presidents, Messrs CH Matthews and J Howell.

At 10.30 pm the conference was adjourned until 10 am today.

**Head-Hunters on Warpath. Mr JJ Kenneally’s Statement**

“It is interesting to note that even some of those Labour leagues which profess to believe that the Easter Conference of the bogus breakaway New South Wales executive will settle all the difficulties of the present situation are by no means willing to wait for its decisions”, said Mr JJ Kenneally (president of the Federal executive of the ALP) yesterday.

“Already the head-hunters are on the warpath, and in some electorates where the sitting Labour member has been faithful to the ALP and the Federal Labour executive policy and decisions, arrangements are already being made for nominations to be called so that the feast may be spread in sight of the political cannibals ready and anxious to devour their mates, whose only crime is that they have put loyalty to the Australian Labour movement before any suggestion of self-seeking or personal aggrandisement. Head-hunting is no new performance. It is always the front line of action of the renegade, who must justify himself by excessive bitterness against erstwhile comrades. The method is one in which the members of the breakaway executive of this State are specially qualified experts. It is, however, still true that, while it is quite easy to fool some of the people some of the time, and even all the people some of the time, it is quite another matter to fool all the people all the time.”

**Mr Lang to Visit Other States**

Elaborate plans to have the Lang repudiation policy adopted by the Labour movement throughout Australia have been arranged. In response to requests by militants from other States the Premier (Mr Lang) will address mass meetings in Melbourne and Adelaide next week. The organising secretary of the ALP (Mr JB Martin) and the secretary of the Labour Council (Mr JS Garden) will leave for Melbourne tonight to make arrangements for the Melbourne meeting. Two members of the State Parliamentary Labour party, Messrs J Byrne and W Clementson, will also leave Sydney today to prepare for Mr Lang’s visit to Adelaide. The two Parliamentarians will first visit Broken Hill and then proceed to Adelaide.

The Easter Labour Conference yesterday, by 65 votes to 35, revoked its decision reached the previous night, by which it adopted a three-year plan for the socialisation of industry and specified property in New South Wales.

Socialisation will still be retained as the main objective of the State Labour party, but the three-year plan was supplanted by a resolution, sponsored by the Lang-Garden group, watering down the programme of the socialisation committee and providing merely for the propagation of the aims and ideals of the committee.

Instead of being ordered to take immediate steps for the socialisation of industry and the control of all specified property, Labour Parliamentarians will be invited “to exert their energies for the accomplishment of socialisation”.

The decision to shelve the three-year plan represented a sweeping victory for the Lang-Garden group, who considered that the adoption of the plan would embarrass the Premier, Mr Lang, and would destroy all election prospects.

Reasons For Rejection

An important factor which inspired the Lang-Garden group to organise intensively for the rejection of the plan was the fear that its adoption would split the State Labour party and could strengthen the position of the followers of Mr Theodore, who are attempting to form a new Labour party in New South Wales. Members of the Lang-Garden faction bitterly criticised the action of the AWU delegates in joining hands with the socialisation section to have the plan carried the previous night.

One supporter of the Lang-Garden faction (Mr F Roels) told the conference yesterday that a number of delegates who supported the plan had voted against their principles to bring about the downfall of the Lang-Garden faction.

Intensive lobbying took place before the conference opened yesterday, and every delegate was canvassed for his vote. The supporters of the socialisation committee were also active and strenuously endeavoured to retain their majority. However, the division revealed that many who supported the committee the previous night were found on the opposition benches, and the Lang-Garden faction had a comfortable win – a majority of 30 votes.
Members of the Lang-Garden faction are now confident that they will have no difficulty in directing the future activities of the socialisation section along the lines they desire, since the majority of the members of the new socialisation committee are said to be followers of the controlling faction.

The AWU faction, which created a surprise at Sunday night’s session by voting for the three-year plan, failed to record a block vote. Three AWU delegates supported the three-year plan, but the other three delegates voted for its rejection.

The Debate

The atmosphere of the conference was electrical when Mr J Hooke (president of the Trades and Labour Council) secured the suspension of the standing orders in order to move for the recommittal of the motions carried at the previous session with regard to the socialisation of industry and the three-year plan. The voting resulted in 60 to 31 in favour of the recommittal.

In moving the rescission of the resolutions dealing with the adoption of the three-year plan of social transition, government by regulation, the vesting in the Government of the rights and control of specified property, and the administration of specified industries, including banking institutions, by commissions, Mr Hooke said the adoption of these aims would make the conference look ridiculous.

He also moved that the following additions be made to the policy for the development of the socialisation of industry:

“The encouragement through every political channel of the displacement of craft unionism by the organisation of the OBU.

“That there should be development by intensive and extensive socialisation propaganda at all times of an ideology favourable to socialisation, so that when the time is ripe the political and economic change from capitalism to socialisation may be accomplished, and that this conference instruct the whole of its component parts to exert their energies towards the accomplishment of socialisation.

“That the Socialisation Committee be instructed to draw up a plan of operation indicating the steps to be taken as the various stages of transition are reached, and that until socialisation of credit is achieved Labour Governments make provision for cooperative societies to engage in banking and insurance.”

Mr Hooke said that belief in utopian socialism was not compatible with material facts. The conference had fallen into the pitfall into which many politicians had fallen.
Would Provoke Civil War

“The bringing about of socialism in three years is impracticable”, declared Mr SA Rosa (North Sydney). “If an attempt were made to carry out the plan it would raise such opposition that the country would be plunged into civil war, in which there is no reason to believe we would be victorious.

“The committee should carry out its valuable propaganda work for three years, and then the time might be ripe for a three-year plan. The people have no revolutionary spirit at present.”

Mr C Tannock said the plan was a deliberate attempt to “pull the wool over the eyes of the workers”. Neither by political action nor by the action of the ALP could socialism be introduced.

Continuing the debate after the luncheon adjournment, Mr Tannock said that the conference, by adopting the plan, had done nothing more than provide ammunition for the capitalist Press.

Supporting Mr Hooke’s amendment, Mr J Stewart (Electrical Trades) said that although they might not agree with the three-year plan, the discussion had awakened the movement to a realisation of the necessity for socialisation.

“Some of Comrade Rosa’s statements are nonsensical in the extreme”, said Mr Stewart. “He is out of step with the movement. The workers are waiting for a change.”

A voice: The majority?

Mr Stewart: I am not talking about the majority. We have talked enough about socialisation. Sufficient propaganda work has not yet been prepared. We are not quite ready. We should not reach a hurried decision.

A Revolutionary Speech

“If the time arrives tomorrow I am ready”, said Mr Porter, of Gordon. “I will give my blood for the cause. I want to know whether the Labour party is a camouflaged National Association or a socialistic Labour movement. I want to know whether you are sincere. Your slogan should be Sinn Fein.” (Applause.)

Mr W McNamara, secretary of the socialisation committee, speaking in opposition to Mr Hooke’s amendment, said that the amendment simply drew cotton wool over the eyes of the workers. He agreed with the suggestion that they should cooperate with the Red International.

“That is all right”, he added. “We can do that. By a people’s Government we mean a worker’s Government. We have been asked whether we are sincere. We are sincere. We do not say we will have socialisation in three years. We say the Government must be by regulation, not by Constitutional rights. We want a Labour Government courageous
enough to rule by regulation with the support of an educated and organised working class.”

Mr E Barker (Land Transport) said that they were endeavouring to make the socialisation plan applicable to the workers in this country. “Some of the delegates want to wait until the time is ripe”, he declared. “We have waited long enough. The very people who are declaring now that you cannot do anything by Parliamentary action are the very people who in the very near future will be seeking Parliamentary honours.” (Applause.)

Committee Brainless

“Anyone who says the Labour party is a revolutionary party is misleading the workers”, said Mr F Roels (Enginedrivers). “The committee talks about a three-year plan. I say the committee has neither the brains, understanding, nor will to plan a social revolution The moment a social revolution started what would happen?

A voice: The politicians would be shot. (Laughter.)

Mr Roels: I doubt whether you would be intelligent enough to shoot him before he shot you. (Uproar.)

Mr AJ Macpherson’s contribution to the debate was an allegation about “a little gang that was behind operating the scenes”. The chairman promptly called him to order, and he had to sit down amidst uproar.

A Militant Speech

A militant speech was delivered by Mr J Kilburn (Bricklayers). He disagreed with the policy of the Labour party in catering for the middle class vote. That was why they were frightened of the three-year plan. He wanted to mould the organisation in a way that would enable it to emancipate the workers.

“What is happening in Australia today?” he asked. “Unemployment cannot be solved under capitalism. There may be 500,000 unemployed before the winter is out. What are the unemployed going to do? They are going to break the system down. The time is ripe. The fruit is rotting on the ground. I am glad we have put the propaganda out. The politician swings behind the owning class every time. Our enemies are trying to fasten a business military dictatorship upon us. If we can establish a peaceful revolution so much the better. We do not want to shed any blood. I think the revolution will come in my time.”

Mr D Grant’s Views

“It does not matter whether we are sincere”, said Mr D Grant. “The question is, ‘Are we scientific?’ “ He quoted Karl Marx and the Communist
manifesto to prove that the tactics of the socialisation committee were wrong. “If Mr McNamara is right, then Karl Marx is wrong”, he added. “Mr Lang does not represent the people’s Government. He represents his Majesty’s Government. The only way to get a people’s Government is by mass insurrection. If the three-year plan is adopted the great mass of weak-kneed Labour men will swing behind Mr Theodore and the Federal executive. You will simply defeat Mr Lang, who is the greatest menace to capitalism under the present system.”

When the closure was applied Mr F Saidy protested against his exclusion from the debate claiming that he was one of the drafters of the three-year plan.

Mr J Hooke, in reply, described Mr McNamara as ‘the Jolly Optimist’. He criticised personally all who had supported the plan. It was like Mr Barker’s impudence, he said, to quote an authority like Engels to bolster up the plan.

Keen interest was taken in the vote, which, on a division, resulted in the adoption of Mr Hooke’s amendment by 65 votes to 35.

**Intensive Canvassing by Faction Agents.**

Canvassing of the most amazing character was carried out during the day. Those who were working for the rescission of the report made desperate efforts to attain their ends.

Every known method of persuasion was used. Delegates were told that if the three-year plan were adopted the Premier, Mr Lang, would be ‘doomed’ and that the Labour party would go out of office for a generation. One member of the conference alleged last night that an army of agents of the Lang-Garden faction interviewed every delegate, and implored them to record their votes against the plan. As the voting was open it was not difficult for the canvassers to convince delegates that an adverse vote would be to their disadvantage. An extraordinary feature was that many of the delegates who voted for the three-year plan the previous night were found the following day in the ranks of the opposition. Those engaged in the lobbying paid particular attention to delegates from the country, many of whom were accosted at every turn by canvassers from the different factions.

Although the final vote resulted in a decisive defeat for the advocates of the three-year plan, followers of the Garden-Lang group are afraid that the socialisation group will be able to secure increased support from the leagues, and will manage to have the three-year plan adopted by those bodies, although the conference has decided against it.

The supporters of the socialisation committee have made it clear that they intend to assail every Labour parliamentarian in his own electorate and compel him to declare his position with regard to socialisation. If he decides against them, every known means will be employed to bring
about his defeat in the selection ballot; if he agrees to advocate socialisation he will be given instructions to take the public platform and preach its unconditional acceptance by the Australian public. The offensive launched by the socialisation committee has caused consternation among the Labour parliamentarians. Believing that the socialisation committee is a growing force in the Labour party, and will eventually assume control, Labour members are anxious to please the disciples of socialisation. At the same time, they admit, if socialisation is made a fighting issue, the Labour party will be annihilated at the next elections.

An extraordinary feature of the debate was the statements by some delegates who voted for the rejection of the three-year plan that the socialisation of industry could only be brought about by revolution and not by constitutional methods. The aim of the socialisation committee as announced to the conference was to bring about socialisation by legislative act. Consequently some extreme ‘left wingers’ voted against the plan on the ground that it was not ‘Red’ enough.

**Anti Empire Report Adopted. ALP Decision.**

“Abolish Empire Day”.

Protests against the continued observance of Empire Day and the flag saluting ceremony in the schools were contained in the report of the Advisory Educational Committee of the ALP submitted by the hon. secretary, Mr RV Cranfield, to the Easter Labour Conference yesterday.

The Minister for Education, Mr Davies, was instructed to revise the school syllabus, eliminating “Imperialistic bias” and providing for instruction that would give “an adequate conception of the struggles of the working class in history”.

**The Report**

“While we fight in the political field our enemies laugh up their sleeve, for they realise that they have the education of our children stacked against us”, the report read. “The capitalistic dope called “history” that is pumped into your children is so biased against the working class that it is a reflection on the collective intelligence of the Labour movement, to have been in existence for 40 years, and to have made no effective protest or attempt to have it altered. The movement has interested itself in the building of many fine schools, but has never concerned itself about what is taught in them. Your reactionary politicians of today are a product of this class-biased miseducation. Many proposals for reform in conformity with the new educational planks were placed before the Minister by a deputation from the committee, but practically all were met with the cry of “no money”. We fully realise that the present time is one of financial
stringency, but we do think that an effort should be made to supply the right mental food for our children, which should take second place only to bodily sustenance. The attitude of the Minister towards other matters that did not incur expense gives us reason to doubt his sincerity. He promised the deputation definitely that he would abolish the flag saluting and loyalty pledge in the schools. But he merely issued a minute making it voluntary. Bear in mind this does not mean voluntary for the child. It is left to the discretion of the headmaster, who usually takes his lead from the Parents and Citizens’ Association in these matters. The deputation also asked for the abolition of Empire Day celebrations in the schools. The Minister stated that although he was wholly in sympathy, he thought it was too big an order off his own bat, but he would only be too pleased to carry it into effect if conference favoured it. Then what do we find, a very short time after the deputation, the new arrangements for school holidays place Empire Day in vacation. What an opportunity to let it die a natural death, as no one would be at school to celebrate it. But our Minister who professes to be in sympathy with the abolition, issued a minute in these words, “In future, as Empire Day falls in vacation, the celebrations in schools shall be permanently observed on the first Wednesday in May”. We appeal to you, not only as members of conference, but as the mothers and fathers of the children, to let the Minister know definitely whether you wish Empire Day to stay in vacation, or whether you wish their time to be wasted by setting apart another day for this flag-wagging, militaristic propaganda. While dealing with this matter, we wish to enter an emphatic protest against the action of the Chief Secretary in assisting this kind of propaganda by publicly making the statement “That the Boy Scout movement is not militaristic”.

Other Proposals

The committee has also referred to the Minister No.4 of the education planks, which provides for the amendment of the University Senate Act, and which if given effect to would give the Labour movement 12 out of a total of 24 senators.

“We also claim that persons holding positions such as professors of faculties should not be eligible for the Senate, thereby becoming their own boss”, the report continued. “Another suggestion is that exhibitions be limited to those whose parents do not earn more than £750 per annum. At present there is no limit, and a millionaire’s child can win an exhibition and have his expenses paid by the State. Contrast this with the Bursary Endowment Act for the High Schools. Here the child of the worker is not eligible for a bursary if his parent earns more than £60 per member of the family per year. This for a worker’s family of five places a limit of £300.”

The report was adopted.
“We want Empire Day and the flag saluting ceremony abolished immediately”, said Mr A Thompson (Milk and Ice Carters). “We do not want any quibbling by the Minister. It is amazing to find a Labour Chief Secretary going along to a Boy Scout demonstration.”

Mr J Stewart submitted the following motion: “That the Minister be directed to accept the details of the revised syllabus as submitted by the educational committee, and that no amendments which conflict with plank 8 be accepted from any other source”. Clause 8 provides for the amendment of the present school curriculum and system with regard to “the elimination of Imperialistic bias”, and the substitution of “instruction that will give an adequate conception of the struggles of the working class in history and its place in society today”.

Mrs Dunn (Glebe) said that the homework in High Schools for the girls was too severe. “The children’s nerves are quite broken down with the strain of homework”, said Mrs Dunn.

Another motion carried was that the present bursary allowance should be increased by at least £25 per annum for students residing in city and country centres, and that the present allowance for text books should be continued.

**ALP Conference. Unemployment. Committee Attacked. Far-reaching Demands.**

When the conference resumed its sitting yesterday morning, Mr Crook (Northern Miners) launched a bitter attack upon the committee set up by the conference to consider unemployment.

He said the committee, of which Alderman Garden was chairman, had met the Premier and various schemes had been discussed. It had then been agreed that Mr Lang should make a report to the conference.

“In my opinion, Mr Lang’s report was not a report of the proceedings, and now I find that certain members of the committee tried last night to have the conference ended without the committee meeting again. I do not believe that some members of the committee or its chairman is sincere and I intend to disassociate myself from it”, said Mr Crook. “It seems that the only business this conference deals with is the business of finding good jobs for certain individuals”.

Alderman Garden said he could not understand the attitude of Mr Crook. The Premier had pointed out that there was ample work for everyone, but there was no cash. If Mr Crook put up any scheme for the relief of unemployment it would be considered carefully.

Mr C Tannock (Ironworkers) said a permanent committee representing the unions should be set up and recognised by the Government.

“The members of the committee are entirely sincere”, declared Mr J Kilburn (Bricklayers). “The committee must not pass with the conference. I am not prepared to tell the unemployed to be patient. I would rather
tell them to be mighty impatient. I would steal before I would see my children starve.”

The chairman (Mr JJ Graves) said that he understood the committee would not disband with the conclusion of the conference.

The Demands

A series of far-reaching demands upon the Government with regard to the relief for unemployed were contained in a report from the unemployment committee to the evening session of the conference. One of these was that the Government should arrange full social insurance, work or full maintenance against unemployment.

A series of demands, to be made immediately, were:- That the Government grant open orders on all shops providing for an increase in the scale of relief rations to include groceries, meat, bread, fruit, vegetables, and clothing; that there be no eviction of the workless, and that shelter be provided for unemployed; that the Government provide light and fuel for unemployed, as well as free rail and tram passes for unemployed workers called up for employment, and for workers going to country jobs. That free milk be provided for children and special foods for women before and after childbirth.

Other immediate demands were that a hostel be established for homeless unemployed women; that there be no eviction or foreclosures on small farmers; that unemployed females receive ‘dole’ tickets, and to have the same privileges as men; that the Government consider immediately the granting of relief to unemployed members of a family living with their parents; that the products of farmers which are present going to waste be used for the sustenance of the unemployed, and that full payment be made for these by the Government.

It was also decided to demand that no person with £50 cash in the bank or less be debarred from obtaining the dole, and that no wage tax be collected on £3 or less per week; and that a free tram or railway ticket be given to unemployed for one trip weekly.

Alderman Garden, in presenting the report, said that the committee felt itself fully entitled to make any of the requests outlined.

“This report looks nice on paper, but paper will not feed the unemployed”, said Mr W Carlton (ARU). “Will the committee be held responsible for seeing that they are put into effect and not be allowed to let them drop and be a mere sop to raise false hopes?” he asked.

Alderman Garden said that it would be the duty of the committee to see that everything possible was done to obtain the demands.

“For five months the workers have received nothing but promises from the Labour Government”, declared Mr Kirkwood (Water and Sewerage Board Employees). “These demands will very likely prove nothing but demands. Mr Garden has taken a lot of deputations of
unemployed to the Government but has achieved nothing. We have had

to wait for three hours outside Mr Lang’s office while Mr Garden can

walk in at any time.”

Mr W Mills (Waterside Workers) moved that the demand that no

wage tax be collected on wages of less than £3 per week be amended to

provide that the exception be raised to £4/2/ per week. He said it was

unfair that intermittent and casual workers should have to pay wages
tax. Those people who earned more than £4/2/ per week should be

‘slugged’. The amendment was defeated.

The whole of the demands were approved.

Other Decisions

Other resolutions were: “That the Government should develop the shale
deposits of the State, and under no consideration hand them over to
private enterprise; that 10 per cent preference be given to all sea and land
transport vehicles (ship and motor cars) manufactured in Australia; that
10 per cent preference be given to Australian manufactured vehicles,
land and sea, driven by Australian manufactured fuels (coal, oil, petrol,
and electricity) and Australian manufactured lubricated oils; that the
system of State lotteries be given effect to immediately; that the Federal
Government be requested to amend the Act governing the activities of
the Australian Copyright and Performing Rights Association with a view
to lessening the charges made by that body; that the money collected
from the graduated land tax be used for purchase, development of pur-
chased estates to the extent of at least half the tax collected, the balance to
be used as a basis of a provident fund for advances to necessitous
farmers through the Rural Industries Board; that legislation be passed for
the licensing of butchers’ shops, extension of country killing at suitable
centres, the better inspection of meat for human consumption in country
districts, and for a full inquiry into our meat industry in order to increase
our export trade; further, that the Metropolitan Meat Board be em-
powered to take complete control of killing and distribution at the State
abattoirs, and thus eliminate the selling brokers and carcase butchers.”

Talk of “Touting”

When the result of the election of officers was announced the unsuccess-
ful candidate for the presidency, Mr F Saidy, made a bitter attack on
the officials of the conference. He alleged that ‘touts’ had been on the
door of the Trades Hall during the proceedings. When delegates from the
country arrived they were canvassed. “When the movement descends to
these tactics it is time there was a change”, said Mr Saidy. “When I was
vice president I was never consulted, no responsibility was imposed on
me. Consequently, I did not seek re-election to this position.”

At 10.30 pm the conference was adjourned sine die.