By April 1932 the Lang Government was in its last days, with the dismissal of the Premier by Governor Game only a few weeks later, on 13 May. In his speech to Conference Lang made it clear that his party and Government was in danger of defeat, but he appealed to the justice of his cause and proclaimed: “I am not only confident but I am certain that the Government cannot be interfered with constitutionally or in any other way”. Surely this was bluster designed to reassure the ‘rank and file’, because later events suggested that he could see no way out of the political crisis that did not involve his defeat.

The major issue at this Conference was the battle between the Inner Group and the so-called ‘militant minority’ about the attitude of the State Labor Party towards the various Communist front organisations such as the Unemployed Workers’ Movement. Many members of what was already being called the ‘socialisation faction’ argued strongly that Labor should ally itself with the grass roots organisations. The rhetoric of smashing capitalism and fighting the class war was very much in evidence in debate. Particularly emotive was the militants’ attack on Empire Day and the British contribution to the problem of unemployment.

All this may have an air of unreality to the modern reader, but in 1932 there were many people (on the right as well as the left) who believed that the economic and political system was on its last legs. At the end of 1931 nearly a third of NSW workers were unemployed, leaving many families destitute. Evictions made the situation worse, while tent cities and ‘happy valleys’ housed the homeless. There was certainly no consensus about how capitalism and democracy could be revived or maintained.

Although the Inner Group was able to win all important divisions, the militant minority had about a third of the delegates and caused considerable difficulty for the Lang group. At the end of the Conference they convened their own ‘Special Conference of Socialisation Militants’
to confront the Inner Group on its refusal to the Communists in presenting a united front to the economic crisis. This is reproduced at the end of the chapter. They claimed that they, not the Langites, were representing the rank and file of the Labor Party.

Executive Report of NSW ALP for 1931-32

[The State Executive did present an Annual Report and balance sheet to Conference, but it does not seem to have survived. It is missing from the collections of printed pamphlet versions collected by Mitchell Library and the National Library, and the only mention of its release is that from Labor Daily a couple of days before the beginning of conference. My suspicion is that delegates to Conference were given only a roneoed copy (if that), and that a pamphlet version was never produced. That would have been understandable because the early months of 1932 were taken up with inconclusive negotiations with the Federal ALP about restoring unity with the Lang party, and the Report would have been delayed until some result could have been reported. The brief mentions in the Labor Daily and the Canberra Times below give some of the flavour – even if few of the details – of the Annual Report. More details of Lang Government achievements over the previous year can be discovered in the Labor Daily Year Book, 1933, which can be found in the National Library and Fisher Library. If anyone knows of the whereabouts of a printed version of the Executive Report I would be delighted to discover it.]

Report in Labor Daily, 23 March 1932, p. 8

Along the Road of Progress. ALP’s Successful Year.
Annual Report.

In his annual report on the activities of the State ALP for the past 12 months, the president, Mr J Keller, gives a comprehensive review of the activities of the Party during a period crowned with success.

Not only has the Party in New South Wales been victorious in all its fights with the enemy, but it has continued to lead the masses along the road of progress.
“Much of the movement’s success during the past year”, Mr Keller states, “was due to the splendid and courageous stand of our leader, Mr JT Lang. He has carried out the dictates of the movement and placed its platform on the Statute Book of the country, while at the same time he has played a lone hand against the rest of the Premiers of the Commonwealth in preventing a reduction in the basic wage.

“We cannot over-estimate”, the report adds, “the tremendous advantage to the movement in having such a paper as the Labor Daily in supporting our policy and activity during the term under review.

“The Labor Daily has proved its influence, and is deserving, at all times, of the wholehearted cooperation and assistance of the members of the movement.”

In referring to the State Parliamentary activities, Mr Keller points out that what the New South Wales Labor Government has done for the farmers should bring a blush of shame to the so-called Country Party.

Balance of Power

“That Party”, he explained, “held the balance of power in the last Parliament, and was in a position to dictate any legislation and administration it desired in the interest of the primary producer. Instead, it sacrificed the primary producers for the emoluments of office, and became the joint in the tail of the Nationalist Party.

“Even before the elections, when the farmers in all parts of the State were being threatened with dispossession of their properties and appealed for the protection of a moratorium, this so-called Country Party joined with the Nationalists in turning a deaf ear to their entreaties.

“It was not until a Labor Government came into power that this very necessary protection was afforded.”

Mr Keller also emphasises that the Government has rendered further assistance to the farmers by the introduction of the Flour Tax, which has already provided much relief. The refusal of the Legislative Council to pass the original Interest Reduction Bill prevented the man on the land receiving additional relief which the Government desired to give.

The total value of relief afforded to farmers by the present Government by way of remissions, advances and loans exceeds £3,500,000.

Due to the facts that the Party was mulcted in heavy election expenses, and that unemployment prevented many of its supporters giving the assistance they had in previous years, the financial position is not so good as on other occasions. A deficit of £410 is disclosed in the balance sheet.
In its annual report, the Executive stated: “The Labour movement has been, and is going through very troublesome and distressing times. One of the most serious events in the term under review was the attempt to split our party by the Theodore-Bailey faction. This, we are pleased to say, was successfully combated, although it necessitated campaigning in other States in addition to our own. The Theodore-Bailey party is now almost non-existent.”

“The AWU was readmitted to the movement practically on its own terms, but it found that owing to the operation of the new rules, the rank and file control of the movement was of such a character that the coterie of officials dominating the AWU were not able to control the movement as they had done in 1927. This was not satisfactory to them, and they, therefore, planned to set up a separate organisation.”

“The base betrayal of the Labour movement by the ‘T-B Party’, continued the report, “brought about the most crushing defeat Labour has yet experienced in the Federal Parliament. Despite the efforts of the T-B Party, the Australian Labour Party, State of New South Wales, remained intact as had been shown by the fact that none of our branches had gone out of existence.”

The report pointed out that much of the movement’s success during the past year had been due to the splendid and courageous stand of Mr Lang, who played a lone hand against the rest of the Premiers of the Commonwealth in preventing a reduction of the basic wage.

The report blamed the ‘T-B’ supporters of New South Wales for the December Federal elections, and absolved the Beasley faction from responsibility.

“The Federal Government”, the report stated, “had been defeated in the House previously, but had not resigned, and there was a reason unknown to the public that caused the resignation over the motion moved by Mr Beasley.”

**ALP Conference**

“It has been ascertained since, that in the Caucus room the whole question was discussed and the T-B supporters of New South Wales expressed a keen desire for a general election. They informed members from the other States that they had the supporters of the New South Wales Premier in such a position that they would be annihilated at the polls. The decision was arrived at at a meeting of the New South Wales members held in the Prime Minister’s room at the Commonwealth Bank, Sydney, at which Mr Theodore attended, prior to the discussion of the motion in the House of Representatives at Canberra.”

“Therefore”, continued the report, “it is now to be clearly understood that the T-B party planned for the election hoping to obtain certain
results to the disadvantage of the New South Wales Labour Party, but events had shown the very opposite result.”

The report reviewed the legislation of the Lang Government and said that the past year had been one of real achievement for the common good. The Lang Government, it stated, had saved the workers, farmers, and small business people from annihilation. It went on to attack the Bavin-Bayer controlled Legislative Council for holding up the Government legislation.

The report said that in the Federal sphere, Labour’s enemies were hitting at the people of New South Wales in the hope of destroying the Government which would not join them in maintaining the supremacy of the moneyed interests.

ξ

**Annual Conference of NSW ALP, 1932**

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, 26, 28, 29, 30, 1932)*

**Day 1, Friday, 25 March 1932**

**ALP Conference. Unemployment Proposals. Capital Levy or Steeply-Graded Income Tax.**

The Easter conference of the Australian Labour party began yesterday at the Trades Hall. Speeches were delivered advocating the abolition of the capitalist system.

The unemployment committee’s proposals included a capital levy, or, as an alternative, a steeply-graded income tax.

**Fiery Speeches**

The conference adopted the report of the committee, which set out that unemployment could not be solved under the present system of society.

Voting throughout the day indicated that the Garden-Graves group was in complete charge of the proceedings.

Mr W Carlton (ARU), submitting the report of the unemployment committee said that the problem could not be solved until socialisation had been achieved. Such calls had been made upon the proceeds from the unemployment tax that there was scarcely enough to provide food. The recommendations of the committee were: (1) Capital levy and/or
steeply graduated super tax on income. (2) A betterment tax on the unimproved capital value of properties in areas adjacent to proposed public works. (3) Advertising and hoarding tax similar to those obtaining on the Continent. (4) Tax on petrol utilities. (5) A vigorous policy of loan flotation by local government bodies and Crown cooperatives at an interest rate conforming to the policy of the Government. (6) All classes of insurance be controlled as a State monopoly, such as the proposed system of workers’ compensation.

“There is nothing revolutionary in the proposals”, said Mr Carlton. He then enumerated a number of public works which the Government should be asked to proceed with immediately, including the completion of the gardens section, the Quay station, the Eastern Suburbs railway, and permanent structures, such as new municipal markets, incinerators, roads, and swimming pools.

Another proposal submitted by Mr Carlton was the establishment of an unemployed insurance fund. He also suggested an inquiry into the administration of the Anti-Eviction Act.

“The credit created by the banks has caused our troubles today”, said Mr AC Paddison “Set up a body to consult with the Premier regarding our fight against the banks”.

Mr SA Rosa suggested the introduction of a ‘Right to Work Bill’. There should be a law compelling every local governing body to provide work for its unemployed, he said. Mr Rosa also recommended to the Government the introduction of a system of State currency.

“There is no hope under the present system”, declared Mr Nicholson (Northern Miners).

“Socialism will alone solve our troubles. We should insist upon no evictions”. He moved that the unemployed should be allowed to purchase any commodity, and that in extreme cases rent allowances be made to the unemployed.

“You must smash the capitalist system”, said Mr Lawrence (St George Council). “You must seize the political power of the country. A spirit of reaction permeates this atmosphere”.

In a violent speech, Mr JS Garden declared that the committee’s recommendations were identical with the suggestions of the militant minority movement. “The Communists shout ‘overthrow the system and Jack Lang!’”, Mr Garden said, amidst uproar. “The New Guard shout, ‘overthrow the system and Jack Lang!’ So here we have the rights and the lefts joining hands and doing the work of capitalism in this country.”

**A Militant Speech**

In a speech which won for him loud applause from the public gallery, Mr J Holt (ARU) said that the unemployed would soon have to take the position into their own hands. “It is a disgrace to the Labour Government
that the unemployed should be starving”, he declared. “Mr Garden declared that the suggestions in the report were identical with those of the militant minority movement. Why is the militant minority movement outside the Labour party now? The ALP will soon have to recognise that it will make no headway without the militant minority movement.”

Supporting the report of the committee, Mr Maloney (Boot Trades) said he agreed that the present system should be overthrown and when an attempt was made he would participate in it. “At the same time, I am not prepared to have my head smashed for nothing”, he added “This is no time to organise for the overthrow of the system. Winter is coming on. There is not likely to be a revolution before winter, so let us find work for the unemployed.”

Cheers and Hoots
Cheers and hoots greeted Mr Baddeley as he moved to the front of the platform, “to clear up a few points”. “I am not shirking the question”, said Mr Baddeley. “I will take any medicine coming to me. This Government has done everything possible to help the people of the State. We have been confronted with great difficulties. I think I can say, however, that within the next six or 12 months we will be in a better position. If we cannot find work for our unemployed we will take other means of providing relief for them.”

It was subsequently agreed to embody in the report suggestions contained in Mr Nicholson’s amendment. The report was then carried.

Volunteer Wharf Labourers
Mr Kidd, of Newcastle, submitted a motion calling upon the Government to introduce legislation to exclude volunteer wharf labourers from the waterfront at Newcastle. Mr Kidd complained that many deputations to the Government had been unable to get any satisfaction. About 250 union wharf labourers had been sacrificed as a result. He alleged that the police had prevented the union from getting on to the wharves. “The waterside workers have found that the police batons, under a Labour Government, are just as hard as they are under a Nationalist Government”, said Mr Kidd.

Proceeding, he said that the Minister for Labour, Mr Baddeley, had informed them that it would be necessary to resume the land adjoining the wharves to meet the wishes of the waterside workers. “I believe that the Government should do this to give these men justice”, Mr Kidd concluded.

Mr Graves (secretary): What do you suggest?
Mr Kidd: Remove the police for a start. (Cheers)
A delegate from the Waterside Workers’ Union, seconding the motion, said that immediate action was necessary. It was up to the Government to do something, as the union had supported it in preference to the Scullin Government which had given the waterside workers some measure of support.

Mr Baddeley said that there were many difficulties in the way. Inquiries had shown that the matter was really a Federal one. “I am just as anxious as you are to remove the blacklegs from the waterfront or any other front”, he said.

The motion was carried.

At this stage a disturbance occurred in the public gallery, resulting in the forcible ejection from the hall of an interjector.

Submitting a report on the balance-sheet, the secretary (Mr J Graves, MLC) denied a report that he had been “joyriding in ALP limousines”. He stated that he had purchased a car on time-payment and had placed it at the disposal of the ALP.

**New Guard**

The chairman, in his presidential address, said that “the true Labour movement” was never more consolidated. He attributed this to the formation of the New Guard. As an Industrialist of 30 years' standing, he knew the one desire of the Labour people was to live in peace and harmony - to elect Governments constitutionally, and to govern constitutionally. “If any mushroom organisation”, said Mr Keller, “be it the New Guard or any other guard, be it Messrs Bruce, Lyons, Latham, or Campbell, go outside the ambit of the law, then so far as we are concerned the gloves are off and they can have it out where and how they like.”

Referring to the De Groot incident at the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Mr Keller said that it was the act of a fanatic. “Only a man with a kindergarten mind would attempt such a thing”, he said. “If the position was reversed and a Nationalist Premier, in opening the bridge was interrupted by some foreign member of the working class he would be deported.

**Tram Stoppage**

Mr T Sheehan (Land Transport group) suggested a searching inquiry into the recent power-house failures in Sydney. “We are convinced there has been sabotage at the power-house, and that the New Guard is behind it”, he said. “We believe the whole scheme is to make the tramway service look ridiculous, particularly because there are so many visitors in the city. We say that the Minister for Transport should have an immediate investigation to see how many members of the New Guard are working at the power house.”
Disciplining Labour Members

An animated discussion took place on a recommendation from the country conference, asking the Government to introduce legislation to give effect to the plank of the Labour party’s platform, providing for the initiative referendum and recall. The recommendation was designed “to protect the Labour movement from a recurrence of the recent base betrayal by Federal politicians and to secure adherence to the pledges of the movement.”

Alternative suggestions made during the debate were that Labour candidates should place their undated resignations in the hands of the central executive, and that any Labour member breaking his pledge should be compelled to go back to the Labour movement for re-endorsement. The conference eventually decided to reject the proposals.

At the instance of Mr J Stewart, the conference decided to ask the Federal Government to restore the old-age pensions to the former rate of £1 a week.

Miscellaneous Motions

Other motions carried included:

That the Government put into operation the party’s plank for the abolition of capital punishment;
That general hospitals be nationalised;
That the Mass Picketing Act be repealed;
That the Local Government Act be amended to provide for the elimination of property votes in municipal and shire elections, and provide for compulsory voting, which shall be on the preferential system as used in the ALP;
That section 8 (1) of the Moratorium Act be rescinded or amended so as to prevent the more rapacious and exacting class of mortgagees who anticipated the Act and took possession before its enactment, from selling the property of the mortgagor at less than its fair value, as this clause in its present form permits them to do;
That the Aborigines Protection Act be amended to liberalise its administrative conditions;
That the Minister for Labour and Industry (Mr Baddeley) be requested to instruct all storekeepers to display prominently the prices of all scheduled and alternate articles in connection with food relief;
That the Forty-Four Hours Act be amended to apply to all industries on a weekly basis.
ALP Conference. Empire Day to be Abolished. Flag Saluting Condemned. Socialisation to be Election issue. Only Labour Men For Public Positions.

Demands for the immediate abolition of the Empire Day celebrations in the schools of the flag-saluting ceremony and a bitter condemnation of recent Government appointments were features of the proceedings at the Easter Labour conference during the week-end.

The conference upheld the ruling of the president, after a bitter debate, that ALP members were prohibited from joining ‘auxiliary bodies’ such as the militant minority movement, on the ground that they were Communist bodies. Many delegates frankly admitted that they would not observe the decision.

A committee was appointed to re-draft the Federal constitution of the ALP, which, it is believed in some quarters, is intended as a move to jettison the unification plank of the Labour party’s platform in favour of straight-out secession.

The conference accepted a proposal from the socialisation committee that socialisation should be the issue at the next State elections, and conceded the socialisation committee the right to cooperate with the Government and the ALP executive in framing the policy at the next elections.

**Government Appointments Condemned**

A discussion arose on a motion from the metropolitan conference: “That in all appointments made by a Labour Government, either through the Public Service Board, the Executive Council, or by Ministerial authority, the persons appointed be selected through the union having jurisdiction over the position to be filled, such persons to be well-known workers in the Labour movement.”

Mr J Garvan (Clerks), moving the motion, stated that there was a classic example in the case of the director of the State Lottery (Mr Whiddon), who was 75 years of age. Mr Whiddon had passed the stage at which a man completed his active life. He was not a unionist, and many good men in the Labour movement had been passed over.

Mr Walsh (Bondi) said that only one member of the Labour movement had been appointed to the Transport Board. He considered that all members of the board should be Labour men. Mr Scott, president of the Meat Board, had never been a good Labour man.

“I have no time for Mr Whiddon”, said Mr JS Garden. “He will not be there long”.

A voice: Jock has spoken. (Laughter.)
“Mr Whiddon is no good to the Labour movement of this country”, said Mr Garden. “So far as the Premier is concerned, he is all right. As far as some of the other Ministers are concerned, they are no good. Some of them are not doing their jobs.”

Mr McKillop (Tramways) said that a lot was going on ‘under the lap’. He referred to the appointment of an Inspector of the toll collectors on the Sydney Harbour Bridge, who, he said, was a loyalist in the 1917 strike.

“Mr AD Kay has been white-anting and undermining the meat industry”, said Mr Smith (Meat Employees). “He opposed a selected Labour candidate some years ago. The Government has put men on the Milk Board who do not know milk from electricity. It has put men on the Gas Commission who do not know gas from the Sydney Harbour Bridge. It has appointed a Minister for Agriculture who does not know a pumpkin from a watermelon. I am not in the Labour movement for limelight. All I want is an honest KO.”

The motion was carried.

Quoting from Anatole France in support of his arguments, Mr Whit-taker, of the Tramway union, moved for the repeal of the Consorting Act. He declared that unemployment was responsible for much of the present crime.

“Until this great curse of unemployment has been disposed of, no law made by man will stop crime”, he said. “The majority of people affected by the Act have been forced by circumstances into those districts over which the police keep close surveillance”.

The conference agreed to the motion also.

**Revision of Wage Tax**

Mr Holt (ARU) moved that the ½ in the £ tax should be lifted, to allow the basic wage to be exempt from tax, and that a steeply graduated tax should be placed on all wages above the basic wage.

Mr Lawrence (Canterbury), supporting the motion, said: “When a Labour Government is in power and attacks the wages of the working class it is time it got out and allowed the Nationalists to do their own dirty work”.

Mr Holt, replying to criticism of the motion, said that it should be passed to enable the movement to tell ‘the capitalistic Judges’ In the Arbitration Court that in New South Wales at any rate the basic wage was sacrosanct.

The motion was carried.

Another motion that all rural awards should be introduced by the Government was carried.
The suspension of standing orders was allowed so that Mr Nicholson (Northern Miners) could submit a motion requesting the Government to introduce a six-hour day in the mining industry.

“We must press for shorter hours”, said Mr Nicholson. “We must cut down productive capacity”. The motion was carried.

A Disorderly Scene

During a discussion on a motion from the Waverley League that the adult age should be reduced from 21 to 18 years of age, a disorderly scene took place.

A member of the audience in the public gallery persistently interrupted the speakers, and was eventually ejected by the doorkeeper. When order was restored, the conference rejected the motion by 50 votes to 41.

At this stage the conference adjourned so that delegates could attend the unveiling of the tablet erected in memory of Mrs Bertha McNamara.

University Labour Group

When the conference resumed, Mr NL Nelson made application on behalf of the University Labour group for recognition by the State Labour party. A committee, appointed by the conference recommended that a charter should be given, to allow two representatives to attend the conference, with full voting powers. It was specified, however, that each member must sign the pledge to work for the State ALP candidates, and join an ALP branch within three months. The committee suggested that the members of the group should not be allowed to participate in selection ballots. The recommendations of the committee were adopted.

Appeals Dismissed

Appeals by RG Wilson, of Randwick, and P Morris, of Surry Hills, for readmission into the Labour party were dismissed. The two members were expelled for opposing endorsed Labour candidates.

New Guard

A motion by Mr AW Thompson (Milk and Ice Carters) to arrest the leaders of the New Guard and to disband the organisation evoked a bitter debate at the conference.

Mr Thompson declared that the Chief Secretary should have arrested Mr Eric Campbell, whom he described as a tax-dodger. Mr Nurmoyle (a country delegate) stated that if the Government gave Mr Campbell enough rope he would hang himself. Mr Kelly (Land Transport) caused a
stir by alleging that the tramway system was being run by the New Guard. “Five employees on the Strathfield railway station are members of the New Guard”, he said. “The Endowment Department is honeycombed by members of the New Guard. The Government should organise a certain number to fight these curs and dingoes”. (Cheers.)

An amendment was moved by Mr JS Garden: “That whatever action is taken by the Federal Government or the New Guard, this conference pledges itself to take every method to protect the working class”. “Next week there may be clashes in the country”, said Mr Garden. “All the money may be taken from this State”.

Mr Bell (Lithgow) alleged that certain warders and police were in the New Guard. He could not understand why the ALP had disowned the United Front Against Fascism. “We will meet force with force if necessary”, said Mr Bell. The amendment was carried and the motion lost.

**Empire Day**

A bitter denunciation of the action of the Minister for Education (Mr Davies) in permitting patriotic speeches at Empire Day celebrations was contained in the report of the advisory educational committee submitted by Mr RV Cranfield. A resolution was carried demanding the abolition of Empire Day celebrations in schools and the flag saluting ceremony.

Violent speeches against the Empire were delivered by delegates in supporting the report, and slighting references were made to Queen Victoria. “We realise that the education of our children is controlled and designed by the capitalist State with the object of perpetuating the pernicious system with its individualism, selfishness, and class snobbery”, the committee’s report read. “An amended University Senate Act has been under consideration for twelve months, and is still in that stage, a special sub-committee drew up a number of proposals. Briefly they are that the University Senate should comprise twelve persons appointed by the Government of the day, and twelve appointed by the University. Professors not to be eligible for the Senate, but to have audience, professors being elected to Parliament to resign their chair. Exhibitions to be limited to children of parents whose income does not exceed £750 per annum.” Referring to Empire Day, the report added: It is hard to understand how the singing of Rule, Britannia and Kipling’s Recessional, with its reference to foreigners as “lesser breeds without the law”, is compatible with the Minister’s instructions that the day should be devoted to peace propaganda. Whatever were the Minister’s intentions, Imperialistic bureaucracy saw to it in the main that the old jingoistic procedure was adhered to. The committee has evidence of junior teachers being victimised and insulted by jingoistic headmasters because they exercised their right not to salute the flag. The *Herald* devoted a column of a leading article and descended to personal abuse, such terms
as “Moscow-controlled puppets” being used. But this Press refused to allow us one inch of space to reply, so much for the persistent clamour for impartial treatment of the subject. “Junior teachers have been humiliated by jingoistic headmasters”, said Mr Cranfield. “The conference should consider ways and means of compelling the Minister to observe the wishes of the conference. Unless we can enforce our decisions rank and file control is a fraud and a sham. We have been subjected to a tirade of abuse in the Press. Thanks to our efforts, the brass caps and military officers were absent from the Empire Day celebrations in the schools. The clergymen present, however, were more militaristic than the military in their jingoistic utterances. The jingoists took no more notice of the Minister’s instructions than the Minister has taken notice of the instructions of the conference.”

Mr AW Thompson (Milk and Ice Carters) commented on the absence of the Minister for Education (Mr Davies). “It was his duty to be here”, said Mr Thompson. “Physical incapacity could be his only excuse. Under this glorious Empire thousands of our girls are on the streets, and thousands of our manhood are starving. Empire Day celebrates the memory of our great Queen Victoria. It should be remembered that for every hour she sat on her throne thousands of tons of opium were poured into China, demoralising the people of another nation. Under this so-called glorious Empire the working class has been overwhelmed with debt. During the war capitalists made thousands of pounds in the manufacture of ammunition to shoot down members of the working class. The Empire Day celebrations should have no significance to the Labour party. They should be abolished. It is up to the Minister to do it. If he will not, then for God’s sake let us appoint somebody with courage to do it.”

(Cheers.)

Mr Thompson then submitted the following addendum: “That in the opinion of the conference, the action of the Minister for Education in continuing the celebrations of Empire Day in the schools under the guise of a day of peace and goodwill has resulted in the flouting of the will of the Australian Labour party, and conference demands that Empire Day celebrations in the schools be abolished in any form whatsoever, also that the flag saluting ceremony be abolished.”

“The freedom of the individual under the Empire is the freedom to starve”, said Mr Lawrence (St George), seconding the addendum. “The Empire is just the same, perhaps a little worse, than any other Empire in the world today. The working class has never got any benefits out of the Empire. Our only privileges are to sleep in the Domain or live at Happy Valley, or the Lidcombe unemployed camp. De Valera is the one man who has refused to take the Oath of Allegiance. (Applause.) He has the courage of his convictions. Property in Ireland has been stolen from the Irish people.”

348
Uproar followed a question by a delegate to the chairman inviting him to explain why the party had declared bogus the League Against Imperialism and at the same time accepted an anti-imperialistic addendum. “Where do we get off”, he added.

“I will probably lose my head, but I am prepared to lose it”, said Mr Gould (Glebe), in suggesting the immediate restoration to the people of New South Wales of the benefits of the Hereford House examinations. He also recommended that the graduates of Hereford House should be given preference of employment.

Mr Smith (Meat Workers) caused much merriment by suggesting that the schools should be abolished, and the educational committee sent to a kindergarten. “Instead of educating our children we should feed them”, he said. “The child of the worker is born to be killed either in warfare or in industry”.

Mr Cranfield, in accepting the addendum and the suggestions of Mr Gould, said that 18 months ago the Minister for Education promised alterations to the curriculum, and had done nothing.

A delegate: He could not run a pie stall. The report of the committee was adopted.

The conference also decided that the boarding-out system for State children should be abolished, and the scattered homes system be brought into operation. It further agreed on the abolition of the vocational guidance bureaux on the ground that it was not functioning in the interests of the workers of the State.

**Federal Platform**

The conference granted the suspension of standing orders yesterday afternoon to Mr AC Paddison (Haberfield), to move “that it be an instruction from this conference to the ALP executive to appoint a committee to formulate a federal platform”. Mr Paddison said that the State was involved in a constitutional crisis, the outcome of which could not be foreseen. The other States were looking for a lead. “The present Federal platform is a thing of shreds and patches”, said Mr Paddison. “It was formulated by position-conscious politicians. Mr Bruce has deliberately attempted to foist a policy of unification on Australia, with the object of smashing the present standards of living. The people of Australia are not prepared to accept the milk and water policy of the Scullin-Theodore party.” The old arbitration policy of the Federal Labour party is something we should be ashamed of. Although New South Wales provides 42 per cent of the revenue, the Commonwealth had spent ten million pounds on Canberra, and eight million pounds on the Commonwealth Line. If we revised our Constitution, I think we will be the Federal ALP in twelve months.”
In seconding the motion, Mr Thompson (Milk and Ice Carters), said that an attempt was being made to set up New South Wales as the Cinderella of the Commonwealth. The motion was carried.

**Communist Bodies**

The atmosphere was electrical when majority and minority reports were presented from the special committee appointed by the metropolitan conference to report on the ruling of the president, Mr P Keller, that auxiliary bodies such as the militant minority movement, the unemployed workers’ movement, the League Against Imperialism, the Friends of the Soviet Union, the Workers’ International Relief, and the International Class War Prisoners’ Association were Communist organisations, and that no member of the Labour party should be allowed to join the bodies.

It was realised that the real question under discussion was whether Communists would be allowed openly to become members of the ALP.

Throughout the debate the Premier, Mr Lang, quietly sat at the rear of the platform, but did not express an opinion.

In submitting the majority report, Mr JS Stewart said that the majority of the members of the committee favoured upholding the president’s ruling. The committee believed, however, that some of the bodies came within the ambit of the constitution of the ALP, and members of the ALP should be allowed to continue their membership of them. If it was intended that the ALP should continue to function as a virile organisation the activities of the militant section should be utilised. The committee considered that the ALP should take immediate steps to cover the operations of the auxiliary bodies.

“Mr Keller’s ruling merely funks the issue”, said Mr Campbell (Glebe) in the course of a long report on behalf of the minority section of the committee. “The Communist party has made it clear that if the president’s ruling is upheld it will do more than anything else to further their activities. The miners, totalling 13,000 on the northern fields, have already decided to defy the ruling and to remain members of the Red International, the International Class War Prisoners’ Aid, and other bodies. What is to become of the ALP if the ruling is upheld? Is there anything wrong with the auxiliary bodies? Is there anything the ALP could set up in their place?

A voice: No.

“Senator Rae”, continued Mr Campbell, “is a permanent member of the League Against Imperialism. If you give a wrong decision you will take the first step towards the elimination of the ALP. (Cheers.) Among the foundation members of the International Class War Prisoners’ Association were Messrs Beasley and James, MsP, and Heffron, MLA. I believe that they are still members. Has any of these organisations acted
disparagingly towards the ALP? Individual members may have expressed opinions antagonistic to the ALP, but members of Labour leagues have also been similarly outspoken towards the auxiliary bodies. Many of the auxiliary bodies were formed in this very building. It is only because of the ineptitude of the ALP that they have drifted apart. At the last Easter conference you pledged yourself to set up the Labour Army. Members know too well that in 24 hours the Labour Army had resolved itself into a button-selling campaign. Some of its organisers have done well out of it. No record was taken of those prepared to subscribe to the Labour Army. When the United Front Against Fascism was formed the ALP and Labour Council cooperated. Three of the five members of its central committee were members of the ALP. The only outsiders were Professor Anderson and Mr Sharkey, of the Communist party. We were in a position to control that committee. I know nothing about any action by the ALP against the Sane Democracy League, the Constitutional Club, and the Millions Club. The attitude of the ALP has been ridiculous and hypocritical in the extreme.”

Mr Campbell challenged the right of Mr JS Stewart to deliver the majority report in view of the fact that he was chairman of the committee.

Mr Keller ruled in Mr Stewart’s favour.

Mr Holt (ARU) said that his organisation was affiliated with the Red International and the militant minority movement. “I recognise that I must be loyal to my industrial organisation”, he said. “If I supported the ALP in condemning the auxiliary bodies I would be disloyal to my union. The time has arrived from [to form?] a revolutionary policy.”

Opposing the majority report, Mr Kidd (Newcastle) said that there was no evidence before the conference to show that the auxiliary bodies were part of the Communist party. The Unemployed Workers’ Movement was formed because the Labour party was too apathetic towards the unemployed. (Applause.) The Unemployed Workers’ Movement might eventually swallow the Labour party. They had to watch the developments in Russia. The International Class War Prisoners’ Association did excellent work for the miners at Rothbury. The Labour party did nothing. If the party banned the League against Imperialism they endorsed the policy of Imperialism. They were either with Imperialism or against it. If they banned the United Front against Fascism they endorsed the policy of the New Guard. The Labour party formed the Labour Army. All that happened was that the colonel was emancipated, and the army became a rabble. If the president’s ruling is upheld the ARU delegates and the miners should leave the conference.

At this stage Mr Lang entered the hall, and was given a rousing reception by the crowded gathering. “Since the Lyons Government took office the Unemployed Workers’ Movement has gone out of business”, said Mr Byrne (Auburn), in
supporting the majority report. “I am giving you hard facts. If these organisations are bona fide why do they change their name every fortnight, like our political enemies?”

“I was a member of the workers’ defence corps in the miners’ strike”, said Mr Nicholson (Northern Miners). “The auxiliary bodies have done good work. Our duty is to welcome them. The ALP is trying to smash these organisations.”

There was a stir at this stage when, in reply to a question, the chairman (Mr P Keller) said “I ruled these organisations are political and that they are anti-Lang”.

“I will not agree to any executive issuing a manifesto that is going to split the unemployed”, said Mr Crook (Miners)

“I am a member of the ALP, but I am also a member of the Workers’ International Relief and the Unemployed Workers’ Movement. Where do I get off? I cannot get out of the ALP, because my union is affiliated, and I have to accept majority rule. The UWM is the spearhead of the workers. The thing is ridiculous. If the auxiliary bodies are under the control of the Communist party it is because the Communist party is more virile than the Labour party. Senator Rae was the first president of the ICWPA. Other names associated with it were those of Mr R James, MP, and Mr JS Garden. If it was OK for them to join then why is it not OK now? If these bodies are excluded the ALP will be taking a reactionary step that will only kill the Labour party.”

Mr Pomfret (Orange) submitted the following amendment to the motion for the adoption of the majority report: This conference resolves that every member of the ALP has under the constitution freedom of the right to support Soviet Russia, the Revolutionary Industrial Labour Union, or any movement in any country having for its purpose the abolition of war or capitalism. Moreover, we support the ICWPA, or any combined move against Fascism, and instruct the executive to see that organised facilities are provided from time to time to cover these necessary functions.

The president ruled the amendment out of order, under rule 2 of the ALP, debarring members of the Communist party from being members of the ALP.

Supporting the majority report, Mr Conway (Amalgamated Engineering Union) declared that the leaders of the auxiliary bodies had described the ALP as a Fascist organisation, and Cabinet Ministers as Fascist Ministers. Even the socialisation committee was regarded as a Fascist organisation.

Replying to criticism of the majority report Mr JS Stewart said that the adoption of the report would mean the setting up of machinery to cover the work done by the auxiliary bodies.
The motion for the adoption of the majority report was carried on a show of hands by 76 votes to 42. Amidst much excitement a division then took place, with the result that the motion was carried by 73 to 42.

The crowded gallery roared at the delegates as they crossed the room for the division and the air was filled with threatening shouts. News of the result of the count was received with roars of applause and a counter chorus of hoots from the gallery.

**Mr Lang. Speech at Conference**

The Premier (Mr Lang), who was given a thunderous round of applause and cheers, accused the Prime Minister (Mr Lyons) of attempting to make Australia the cheapest country in the world.

Mr Lang declared that the Government of the Labour movement had “to fight more tenaciously and against greater odds than ever we have faced in our history”.

“Before many months have passed we will know whether the Labour movement in New South Wales has won out or been smashed, as it has been in every other part of the world”, he said.

“In the fight ahead of us, your Government has no misgivings, your executive is confident, your rank and file is enthusiastic and determined, and we will win because our cause is just and our determination to fight on unlimited. Anyone who has read the statements of Federal Ministers and Sydney newspapers must realise what we have to face within the next few months. We have the statement of the Prime Minister that his Government proposes to do unpopular things but in doing that he hopes to achieve the objective of making Australia the cheapest country in the world. He visualises the cost of production of our primary industries being brought so low that we can under-sell any other country, and he foresees the manufacturers' costs brought so low that a tariff would be unnecessary, as we would be under-selling the world. What I want the attention of the Labour movement and the workers generally concentrated upon is what will be the position of the workers in a country that has become the cheapest country in the world? If you do not know, you will realise after the Premiers’ Conference is held in Melbourne next month, because at that conference the Commonwealth and a majority of the States will agree to the abolition of awards and the regulation of industrial conditions. To become the cheapest country in the world, your wages must be made lower than those of the manufacturing countries of Central Europe. To become the producer of the cheapest primary products your conditions must be less costly than the Argentine, and if the gipsy labourer of the Argentine and the gipsy farmer of the Argentine live in a mud hut, then the Australians must have something less than a mud hut. If the working week of the Continental factory worker is 56 hours, and his wages less than £2 a week, then the conditions of the
Australian worker, if Australia is to be a cheap country, must be less than that. Is there any man or woman who wants to see Australia reduced to that level, because that is what is ahead of you? It is not an idle forecast of an over-zealous Labour advocate, it is the considered statement of the Prime Minister in announcing the objective of his Government. The only way to avoid these conditions is the preservation of the New South Wales Government and the Labour movement of this State. Every other Government has gone down before the challenge of the financial interests – this State alone has put up the fight. They cannot drive the other States back any further until the conditions in New South Wales have been depressed. When at this conference to be held in Melbourne, New South Wales gives a decisive ‘no’ to the infamous proposals which will be made there, the other States may or may not support us. But if your Government were not in that conference to give a definite lead against the destruction of the workers’ conditions, the remainder of the Governments would go over like a row of ninepins. That is where your real fight is. It will be in the months following that conference.

This legislation which the Federal Government recently passed to take the States’ revenue is serious – it has its embarrassments – but the fight which we must make against that is a mere bagatelle compared with what we must do to resist the frontal attack upon the living conditions of the Australian people that is to be made next month. Every avenue of publicity will be used. The fallacious argument that it would be better to pay two men £2 each instead of one £4, will appear and reappear in all kind of guises. You may try to point out that America which has the lowest cost of production has a terrific army of unemployed, you may show that Central Europe, which has long hours and low wages, has relatively greater deficits and more unemployed than Australia, but you will get no publicity for those arguments. Every employer today has engaged as much labour as he can usefully employ. If you reduce the market of the things he manufactures by reducing the purchasing power of the workers you get far more men unemployed with wages at £2 a week than were unemployed when wages were £4 a week. Industry can employ no more men because there is no one to buy the additional production. The necessary extra employment must come from Governments, and it must come, in the first place, from those central Governments which have control of the nation’s credit. Every country in the world is discussing this problem. It was recently before the Senate in America. In that debate Senator Borah, one of the best known American statesmen made use of this phrase – “Tell me what authority there is for taking £100,000,000 from the Treasury to resuscitate frozen financial institutions, and I shall tell you what authority there is to take money from the Treasury to rescue suffering and dying children”.

“Almost simultaneously with that, we have Lord Beaverbrook discussing the position in the Sunday Express. He said: ‘A policy of wage
cutting is the very negation of statesmanship – we cannot starve our way to prosperity’, and Australia can no more starve her way to prosperity than England can. We, the Labour movement of New South Wales, which is the workers’ movement of Australia, must meet this challenge to our standard of living with a demand that the Commonwealth Government which controls the credit resources of the nation must make them available to the nation. If you go down in this fight, it will be many, many, years before you will rise again. Up to this stage, the Labour movement in this State has fought wonderfully. The workers of Australia owe it much more than they realise, and in the fight ahead you must all be prepared to make available for the common good all your resources and energy to avert the disaster which threatens the workers of Australia.”

“Nobody can accuse me of ever having been asleep at my post”, said Mr Lang, in conclusion, amidst tumultuous applause.

“I have worked night and day on your behalf, and I still will.” (Renewed applause) “It is a hard fight for us, but I can assure you we have made it a hard fight for our enemies”. (Applause )

Mr Beasley, leader of the Lang group in the Federal Parliament, said that the last session had been spent in designing legislation to sabotage and destroy the New South Wales Government. Preparations for the coming Premiers’ Conference were in the hands of certain professors of economy, who had prepared the case for the Arbitration Court two years ago, when the 10 per cent reduction took place. If the Premier was not prepared to unmask the secret proceedings at the Premiers’ Conference, the rank and file would never know what went on behind the scenes. “We will bring the Commonwealth Government to its knees before many months have passed”, said Mr Beasley, amidst applause.

A motion pledging the “financial, moral, political, and industrial support” of the party to Mr Lang and Mr Beasley was moved by the vice-president, Mr Matthews.

Mr JS Garden, seconding the motion, said that Mr Lang had done more to fight the international financiers from within the party than any leader of any other organisation. Capitalism had reached its last stage, he said. Mr Lang was the greatest Premier any country had ever produced.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

“I am not only confident but I am certain that the Government cannot be interfered with constitutionally or in any other way”, said Mr. Lang, in reply. “No man has had such loyal support in the Cabinet and the party as I have had. There is a large sum of money lying in the banks to purchase members of the State Labour party. I have told these people that there is not one member for sale.” (Applause.) “I am confident the Government will go on and many of the difficulties designed to overthrow us will disappear”. (Cheers.)

The conference adjourned until 10.30 am today.
Labour conference. Message to Mr de Valera. Reid Seat Dispute Leads to Disorderly Scenes.

The Labour Conference yesterday carried a resolution expressing full sympathy with the Irish people, and declaring that it will oppose any attempt at armed intervention in Ireland. It was decided to cable the resolution to Mr de Valera and Mr Ramsay MacDonald.

One speaker said: “The fight of the Irish people is our fight”. Another drew an analogy between Mr de Valera and Mr Lang “in challenging financial interests”.

There were many disorderly scenes during the conference.

The chairman at one stage threatened to disband the conference. Bedlam prevailed when an unsuccessful attempt was made to carry a vote of no-confidence in the president (Mr P Keller).

The socialisation group bitterly assailed many of the decisions of the conference, and attempted, by numerous recommittal motions, to have them rescinded. On each occasion they were defeated on a block vote of the Garden-Graves group.

Yesterday’s early session came to an abrupt conclusion shortly after noon, when the chairman (Mr Keller) unexpectedly adjourned the gathering until 7.30 p.m.

Roars of protest came from all parts of the hall as Mr Keller, in a few seconds, accepted, put, and declared carried an adjournment motion. Uproarious scenes followed his action, and cries of “bushrangers”, “Ned Kelly”, and “we don’t want to go to the races” were heard in the din as he left the chair.

The mover of the motion explained that the adjournment would give country delegates an opportunity for an afternoon’s respite, but Mr Nurmoyle (Tamworth) heatedly retorted that they were sent to do serious business, and were prepared to carry on.

Mr Tully’s Speech

The Minister for Lands (Mr Tully) declared that the Government had decided to attack the big estates first. Some of the holdings would provide up to 30 living areas.

“We will attack the tall poppies first”, said Mr Tully. “All the large estates, with the exception of the Western Division, have come under the operations of the Taxation of Large Estates Bill. Although the measure was carried by the Legislative Assembly it was relegated to a select committee by the Legislative Council. The Government is determined to deal with the really large estates before it makes any effort to subdivide estates which are not greatly in excess of the minimum living area.”


Mr de Valera Praised

The suspension of standing orders was granted to Mr CA Morgan to move the following motion: “That this conference of delegates representing the Labour movement of NSW is in full sympathy with the Irish people in their fight for self-determination, and recognise their right to work out their own destiny, and this movement deprecates any move to frustrate their wishes, and will oppose any attempt at armed intervention in Ireland”.

“Before long we may have to decide whether we are to take up arms”, said Mr Morgan. “The fight of the Irish people is our fight. We may have to fight on similar issues. If the Upper House is abolished we may have to contend with armed intervention.”

Seconding the motion, Mr Gould (Glebe) said that Mr de Valera, like Mr Lang, had thrown down the gauntlet to the financial institutions. “Both said: ‘If you want fight you can have it’,“ Mr Gould stated. “Like Mr Lang, Mr de Valera has been big enough to accept the challenge of the financial interests. They are both guiding lights to the rest of the world.”

Mr A Thompson (Milk and Ice Carters) sought to move an addendum pledging the conference to resist any attempt to mobilise an armed force in NSW to fight the Irish. The conference refused to accept the addendum.

The motion was carried, and it was decided to convey the decision by cable to Mr de Valera and the British Prime Minister (Mr Ramsay MacDonald).

Communist Bodies

The vexed question of the right of ALP members to retain their membership in Communist auxiliary bodies banned by the ALP executive again arose during the session. Mr Nicholson (Miners) asked the chairman to rule whether the delegates from organisations affiliated with the auxiliary bodies could remain at the conference because of the decision of the previous evening excluding members of these bodies from the ALP.

Mr Keller replied that it was a matter for adjustment between the affiliated bodies and the ALP. It would be necessary for leagues and unions now affiliated with auxiliary bodies to review their position. Meanwhile, there was nothing to prevent delegates from the unions remaining at the conference. It was a matter for individual action.

Reid Dispute

There was an echo of the Reid selection ballot dispute, which resulted in the endorsement of Mr J Gander by the ALP executive instead of by the
local leagues when a former vice-president, Mr F Saidy, appealed for the right to take his position on the executive. Mr Saidy was prevented by the ALP executive from holding an official position in the ALP for having disobeyed the instructions of the executive. Mr JS Garden said the appeals committee had decided to uphold the decision of the executive. He wished to make it clear that Mr Saidy had not been expelled from the party and was still entitled to retain his membership.

Mr Garden then moved the adoption of the appeals committee’s report.

It was during a heated argument on the subject that the president (Mr P Keller) dramatically closed the conference, accepting, amidst up-roarious scenes, a motion from the body of the hall for the adjournment. One delegate tried to take a point of order but Mr Keller had left the chair. Many delegates remained behind to voice their disapproval of the procedure adopted by the chairman, and it was some time before the hall was cleared.

**Disorderly Scenes**

When the conference was resumed, further consideration was given to the appeal of Mr Saidy. Circulars were distributed among the delegates by supporters of Mr Saidy refuting allegations that he had disobeyed instructions, and that he was not residentially qualified to be a member of the Bankstown branch, which meant loss of continuity. The circular was signed by Mr Saidy, and concluded as follows: “Mr Garden himself received his continuity for a definite offence, and also the right to nominate for municipal honours, months after the closure of nominations. It was an act of mercy on the part of the conference, and I find no fault with it, being always prepared to give mercy and justice. In this instance I am not asking for mercy, I merely ask for justice, having committed no offence either against the party or its principles and platform. I have always held sacred the basic principles of the movement. My activities are known far and wide in the movement, and I defy anyone to say that they have not been always clean and above board.”

“We have heard a lot about rank and file control”, said Mr Kidd (Newcastle), opposing the adoption of the appeals committee’s report. “It appears to me that the rank is controlling, and the file is outside. I will never be a party to an oligarchy controlling the movement. There has been too much aroma around selection ballots.” (Uproar.)

A voice: What are you squealing about?

Mr Kidd: I am squealing about Mr Saidy being “railroaded”.

Continuing, Mr Kidd said that he did not believe in giving the executive power to crucify any member.
There were disorderly scenes when a demand was made that Mr Saidy should be heard. Amid uproar, a division took place on a motion to hear Mr Saidy, resulting in the rejection of the motion by 50 to 44.

During the din the chairman reproved Mr Kidd for attempting to conduct the count.

“Sit down, Mr Kidd”, said Mr Keller. “There are tellers there. They can count.”

Mr JS Garden, replying to criticism of the motion for the adoption of the committee’s report, said that according to Mr Kidd the executive had no power to suspend. “If Mr Kidd is correct”, Mr Garden added, “all members in the Upper House who blacklegged on the State Labour party should still be in the leagues”.

Disorder followed this remark, during which Mr Kidd said: “Mr Garden is evading the point. He well knows that any member who crosses the floor of the House is automatically expelled.”

The motion for the adoption of the report was carried on a division by 53 votes to 45.

There was another disorderly scene when Mr Nurmoyle sought the suspension of Standing Orders to move a motion that the chairman no longer retained the confidence of this conference, and that his office should be declared vacant. The conference refused to grant the suspension.

An unsuccessful attempt was also made to recommit the motion carried the previous night, upholding the ruling of the chairman with regard to auxiliary bodies. At this stage the uproar reached such dimensions that the chairman warned delegates that if the business was further interfered with he would be compelled to adjourn the conference.

*Delegate Warned*

Mr Nurmoyle again rose, and, walking towards the platform, insisted that the conference should hear a motion he wished to move.

Mr Keller: Resume your seat. You have been given more consideration than any other delegate. If I have to speak to you again you will have to leave the hall.

Mr Nurmoyle: Under the present bush ranging conditions I would not mind if I did.

A delegate: We should really call him “Mr Turmoil”.(Laughter)

Bells clanged incessantly as the uproar was renewed. Members of the gallery joined in the disturbance, resulting in several ejections.

*Transport Proposals*

Mr W Carlton submitted the following recommendations on behalf of the transport committee: “That all owners of mechanically propelled vehicles
be compelled to take out a third-party risk insurance, and that the State Government must undertake all insurance through the State Insurance Office, and that the verdict of the successful party in any action for damages be a first charge on the insurance fund, and that these provisions be made retrospective to cover any cases in point.”

“That the Transport Board be urged to develop the tramway system to the greatest possible point, and where feeder buses are installed, they be owned by the Government.”

“That the whole of the loss incurred in connection with non-paying lines be made a charge on consolidated revenue, instead of railway revenue.”

The recommendations were adopted, and the conference adjourned until 7 pm today.

---

**Day 5, Tuesday, 29 March 1932**

**Meat Industry. Socialised Scheme.**

A scheme which, if carried out by the Government, would amount to the socialisation of the meat industry was adopted by the Easter Labour Conference last night. The proposals seek to give the Meat Board full control over all operations at Homebush Abattoirs, and to establish centralised abattoirs throughout the State.

The socialisation faction, with the assistance of country delegates, defeated the followers of the ruling faction on a motion to organise country unions throughout the State in conjunction with the ALP.

When the conference resumed, Mr W Carlton (ARU), continued his report on transport. He recommended the establishment of a committee to consider all complaints in regard to transport matters. The conference agreed to accept the recommendation. The members of the committee are Messrs Wyatt (Railways), McKillop (Tramway), and Sheehan (Locomotive Department).

The suspension of standing orders was granted to Mr J Pettingall (South Coast), to move the following motion: “That the Minister for Health be instructed to meet a deputation, representative of the industrially controlled hospitals on the South Coast to provide necessary attention in the way of medicine, and if necessary outside nursing attention in the homes of the unemployed.”

Seconding the motion, Mr Hickman (South Coast), said that the position of the unemployed on the South Coast was desperate.

Mr S Kidd (Newcastle) suggested that the proposal should apply to all unemployed throughout the State.
The motion was carried, with addendums, providing for a 25 per cent increase in the dietary scale for dole recipients, and that a demand be made on behalf of the unemployed of the State.

**Meat Industry**

Denying that the proposals would mean the socialisation of the meat industry, Mr F Pomfrett (Meat Employees) moved the following motion:

“In the interests of public health and uniform efficiency in the meat trade, the Meat Board Act be amended so as to provide (a) for control, inspection, manufacture of by-products, etc., by the Meat Board to be extended beyond the County of Cumberland to the whole of the State; (b) the control of all operations at Homebush Bay and the enlargements of the area to be supplied by Homebush Bay; (c) the establishment, either directly by the board, or in conjunction with local authorities, of centralised abattoirs throughout the State.

“With a view to full advantage being taken by growers of organised protection against intermediaries and so that systematic regulation may be arranged for the protection of the local and expert market, the Meat Board, in conjunction with the Minister for Health, shall arrange conferences with growers in given areas leading to a representative conference of the State so as to arrange: (a) a system of standard grading with a determined price for each grade; (b) a system of supply direct from producers to Homebush Abattoirs or other centralised abattoirs; (c) arrangements for adequate representations by producers so as to ensure full value; (d) a method of coordinating all requirements under uniform control, such as all country aspects and for the purpose of stimulating the export trade.”

“You can call it socialisation if you like, but the scheme should be given effect to”, said Mr A Luchetti (Lithgow), seconding the motion.

Mr Smith (Meat Employees) said that the chairman of the Meat Board (Mr Scott) and Mr AD Kay had ‘sold’ them out. If their report to lease the abattoirs had been accepted, it would have been the end of the meat industry. “They sent a man to London at £2500 a year to do nothing”, said Mr Smith. “The money should have been spent on the unemployed at the abattoirs”.

The motion was adopted, and Messrs Pomfrett, Luchetti and Pettingell were elected members of a committee to submit the proposals to the Cabinet and the Meat Board.

**Country Organisation**

“Organising unions in the country is unknown”, said Mr F Pomfrett (Meat Employees), in moving a motion that combined political and industrial councils should be set up in each State electorate, with one official credentialled in each electorate to represent all unions.
There were several exciting and disorderly scenes when a vote was taken on the motion. In reply to insistent demands a division was taken, resulting in an equal vote, 42 all. When Mr Keller declared the motion lost a chorus of disapproval came from the body of the hall.

Mr W McNamara jumped from his chair and complained that his vote had not been counted.

A noisy scene ensued, reaching a climax when allegations were made that two delegates had entered the hall after the division had been taken. When the doorkeeper admitted that this was so, the chairman then declared that the motion had been carried.

**Socialisation Committee**

The election of the new socialisation committee resulted in a victory for the Garden-Graves group. Members of the committee are Messrs J Kilburn, W McNamara, JS Garden, E Barker, M Hughes, D Grant, JS Stewart, WC Burnett, and A Thompson.

**Conference Concludes**

At a quarter to 11 a motion for the adjournment of the conference *sine die* was carried. Demands were made that the general secretary, Mr J Graves, MLC, should give an account of the work done by members of tile Government for socialisation. “The politicians have again got away with it”, said a delegate as the conference disbanded without the matter being discussed.

Circulars were distributed at the conclusion of the conference announcing that “a special conference of the ALP” would take place on April 16, to discuss the action of the ALP conference in banning the Communist auxiliary bodies.
Special Conference of Socialisation
Militants, 16 April 1932

(The Sydney Morning Herald, 17 April 1932)


Despite a warning issued by the State ALP executive to its members, about 60 delegates were present at the special Labour Conference convened for Saturday by two members of the socialisation movement, Messrs T Payne and A Lewis.

It is expected that the conference will result in many expulsions from the Labour party by the ALP executive.

The conference was under the complete control of the militant sections of the Labour movement.

"The need for this rank and file conference", said Mr Payne, "arises out of the deliberations of the recent annual conference of the party, at which the ALP oligarchy, led by Messrs Garden and Graves, and speaking through its mouthpiece, Mr P Keller, definitely declared war on the rank and file members who dared to take a stand for real working class solidarity. The Easter conference, it was claimed, was more representative than previous conferences. It was more representative of the Garden-Graves coterie. It is doubtful if there was ever a conference more efficiently organised by any controlling faction on any previous occasion in the history of the ALP."

"The conference general, Mr JS Garden, is secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, affiliated with an organisation banned by the conference. The master of ceremonies at the conference, Mr Keller, whose ruling was upheld, was himself, a little over 12 months ago, a member of an organisation (the Militant Minority Movement) which he bans today. Almost as soon as the conference has given its decision, this same Mr Keller equivocates, and says that the position of unions affiliated with the banned organisations is one for negotiation. A few days after the close of the conference Mr Keller rules that these unions are not affected by the decisions of the conference – that it applies to individual members of the ALP only.

"Members, then, are asked to respect a conference not representative of the rank and file, controlled by a man who is an officer of a body affiliated with a banned organisation, to respect a decision which is not respected by the very man who laid the basis for such decision.

"What is this decision? Simply that ALP members shall not be members of certain working class organisations. Not that the workers shall not be members of the New Guard, Royal Empire Society, or the Women’s Guild of Empire, but that members shall not belong to the Friends of the Soviet Union, League Against Imperialism, United Front
Against Fascism, International Class War, Prisoners’ Aid, Workers’ International Relief, Workers’ Defence Corps, Unemployed Workers’ Movement, and the Minority Movement.

Mr Payne then moved the following motion: “This conference of rank and file members of the ALP repudiates the motion passed at the recent annual conference of the party, banning certain working class organisations, and pledges itself to organise and fight for the freedom of all members of the ALP to belong to any working class organ of struggle. Recognising the necessity of such organisations in the struggle against capitalism, we members of the ALP declare that we will retain our membership in these organisations, and guarantee to recruit and do all in our power to mould them into mass organs of struggle. Finally, this conference calls for the formation of a united front of all workers, in order to defend their conditions against the threatened further attacks from the Premiers’ Conference now in session.”

Seconding the adoption of the report, Mr Ambrose (Randwick) alleged that the tellers at the recent Easter Conference were the nominees of the Garden-Graves coterie.

“The coterie ran tickets for all positions, and every ticket won”, said Mr Ambrose.

“The unemployed have received no reforms from the Labour party”, said Mr Monday, of Randwick. “We are going to suffer the batons of the police before very long. The present ALP executive does not understand the psychology of the workers. It stands for spoils for a few on the inside, and the boot for the majority on the outside.”

“We have to thank the Sydney Morning Herald for its fairness in publishing an interview with Mr WN Pharazyn, an accountant and company manager, the other day”, said Mr Watkins (Darlinghurst ALP). “The interview refuted many of the lying allegations concerning conditions in Russia”.

“We must fight against our enemies in the Labour movement”, said Mrs Russell, an ALP member of the Paddington Relief Association. “We must get rid of Messrs Garden and Graves”.

**Socialist Outlook**

“The auxiliary bodies have been expelled because their strength is feared by the ALP leaders”, said Mr R Murray, of the Balmain ALP. “They are afraid that they will lose their positions. Today the slaves have an idea that capitalism can continue. We must create a socialistic outlook among the workers.”

Mr Russell (Drummoyne Socialisation Unit) submitted the following addendum to Mr Payne’s motion: That this conference calls upon the executive and the rank and file of the socialisation movement to organise and fight the decision banning auxiliary bodies.
That the controlling group of the ALP was a band of self-seekers, anxious to emancipate themselves, was the opinion expressed by Mr Forrester, of the Hornsby ALP.

Mr McKenzie representing the Unemployed Workers’ Movement, stated that the movement was non-political, regardless of what had been said to the contrary. Messrs Garden and Graves were only opposed to the movement because they knew that it, being non-political, would oppose any Government, whether Labour or Nationalist, if it passed anti-working class legislation.

The motion submitted by Mr Payne was carried unanimously.

Another motion was moved by Mr A Hyams, of the Matraville ALP, expressing hostility to any attempt to declare illegal working class organisations. “We are of the opinion”, the motion continued, “that the banning of such organisations by the ALP will assist any move to destroy the legal status of these bodies. We, therefore appoint a committee of 20 to work in conjunction with representatives of the banned organisations to carry on a campaign of enlightenment as to the role of each of the banned organisations.” The motion was carried without discussion.

The conference adopted a recommendation for consideration by the committee, that a unity conference should be convened, with the object of readmitting members of the auxiliary bodies to the ALP.

It was also decided to forward to the ALP office a list of members of the ALP who declined to dissociate themselves from the auxiliary bodies.

“The AWU went to the right and killed itself”, said Mr Doyle (Boilermakers), in moving that the resolution should be forwarded to the ALP executive. “The Garden-Graves group is doing the same. We will make a challenge to the capitalistic class on May Day.”

Professing to have inside information on the Auckland riots, Mr Jenkins (Paddington ALP) said that the people would have control of Parliament House in a week. “The same thing will happen here”, said Mr Jenkins. “We will have to fight for the rights of our wives and families to live”.

A resolution was carried congratulating the Auckland rioters.

“Let us march on Parliament and pull it down”, said Mr M Paul, a member of the Postal Linesmen’s Union, in moving a motion for the release of class war prisoners. “I have left the Labour movement in disgust. The party is controlled by dirty opportunists, who pull wool over the eyes of the workers.” The motion was carried.

Another resolution adopted urged the immediate lifting of the ban on working class literature.

“My next move is to join the revolutionary party – the Communistic party”, said Mr T Payne.

The conference concluded with the singing of the “Red Flag”.

365