

THIRD

Commonwealth

1905



Political Labour

Conference . . .

HELD AT TRADES HALL,  
MELBOURNE. . . .

Official Report.

Opened Saturday, 8th July.

"Worker" Typ., Brisbane.

## Preface. 2

THE Second Australian Political Labour Conference held at Sydney in December, 1902, deputed the duty of summoning its successor to the Political Labour Council of Victoria. It was originally intended to hold the third Conference in January, 1904, but as time went on it became evident that a much later date would be more suitable. Eventually, after all the State central organisations had been consulted, July, 1905, was chosen. Henceforth these Conferences are likely to be held triennially. The next will sit at Brisbane in 1908. Their purpose is to give effect to an excellent principle of organisation peculiar to the Australian Labour Party, by which the People are invited to mould the policy of their Parliamentary representatives. No effort was spared to make the Conference representative of every corner in the Commonwealth and of every Democratic interest. The Labour organisations have for years unceasingly endeavoured to enrol every Democrat under the banner of Labour. At public meetings and by private solicitation every citizen has been urged to join the Party and thereby have a voice in selecting its officers and determining its policy.

The Central Political Executive in each State, except Westralia, which has not yet a central body, was asked to send six delegates representative of its State, which was done. Four organisations acting independently in Westralia, as might have been expected, engendered a greater number than the State's quota. Hence arose the only unpleasant incident of the Conference. Each State chose its delegates in its own way, but each in some manner satisfactory to the members of the organisations.

Each central organisation was also invited to submit proposals for the agenda paper. From Victoria, New South Wales, Westralia and Tasmania, the branches sent items, some of which are now embodied

in the Party policy. Queensland sent three, two of which were adopted. South Australia, the Labour Party there being too busy with the State general elections, sent no matter for the business paper. Altogether 43 notices were received and disposed of. It will thus be seen that the organisations had opportunities of submitting amendments of policy and of voting, directly or indirectly, in the election of delegates. Any Democrat who failed to avail himself of these opportunities and was consequently unrepresented is himself alone responsible. Here such delinquents may be reminded that the ranks are still open everywhere. Every branch or union is eager for recruits.

However, the Conference was unquestionably a representative one. Seamen and waterside workers all around the coast; the roving homeless shearers and shed labourers, drovers and stockmen, the lone boundary-riders, the sturdy tanksinkers and the persevering teamsters of the pastoral areas; the lengthsmen on the railways, the porters, guards, engine drivers and firemen; the telegraph and post office employees, the civil servants and the downtrodden clerks; the axemen and sawmillers; the coalminers of New South Wales; the silver miners of Tasmania and Broken Hill; the goldminers of Victoria, Westralia and Queensland; the factory hands in every city; the sugar growers of the North Coast; the small farmers "by oppression's rutilian glutony driven" from the arable lands; the business men struggling in the grip of the usurer; farm labourers and other large classes of workers too weak to organise; the old and the infirm; all Australian women and children. All these were represented. In short, every interest in Australia was represented except the interest of the parasitic classes.

The delegates comprised 16 members of the Federal Legislature, 11 members of the State Parliaments, and nine non-parliamentarians. By some a strengthening of the last section at the expense of the first might have been desired. But as most of the legislators have held high positions in the organisations and are still as strongly as ever imbued with the Labour spirit, there was no trace of cleavage.

The delegates worked hard and persistently. All 36 delegates were present nearly the whole of the 11 sittings. The roll shows 377 attendances out of a possible 396.

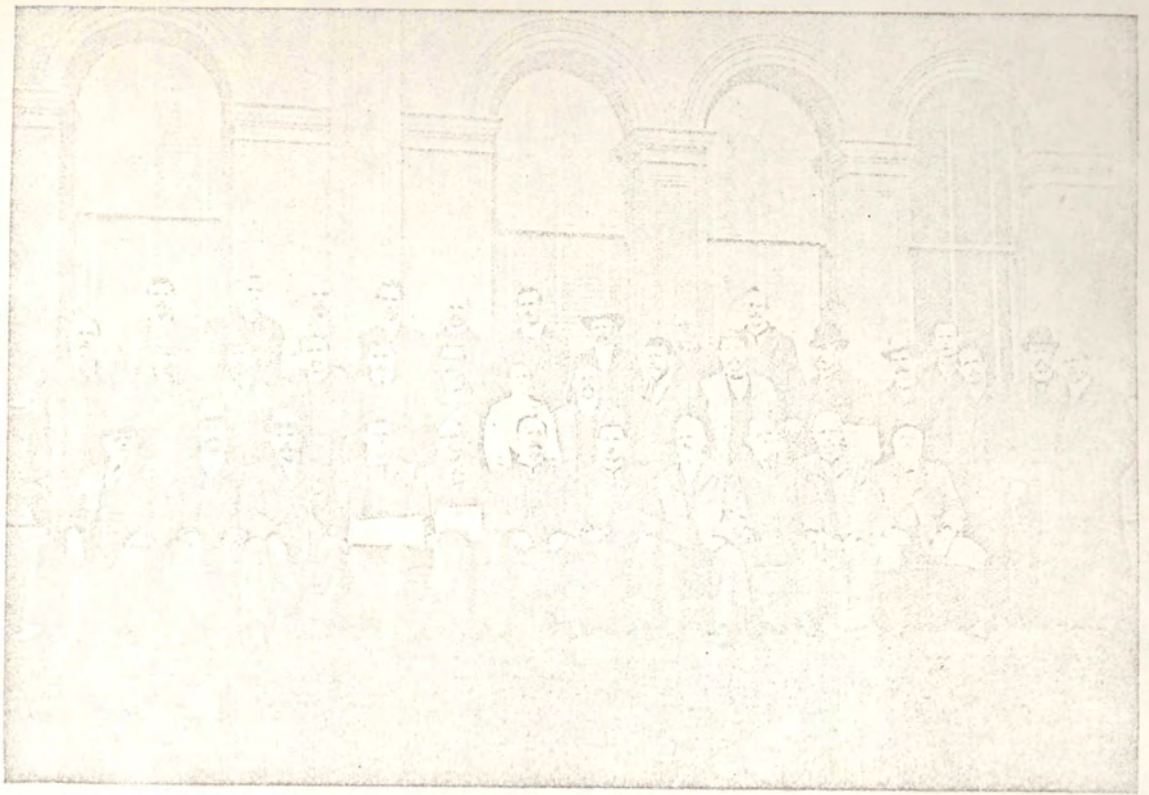
The work done covers a wide field, and although various views were enunciated with spirit, the result arrived at leaves no room for heartburning. The platform adopted will be advocated unreservedly by every true Labourite throughout Australia. Besides amending the platform, important details of organisation were adjusted. A limitation of alliances, satisfactory to all parties, was laid down. A further development of the interstate organisation, including provision for an Australian Political Executive and a constitution for Australian Conferences, is foreshadowed in a series of resolutions; while further afield, organised relationship with foreign Labour bodies is contemplated.

The public and press throughout the Commonwealth awaited the decisions of the Conference with deep concern. No Labour gathering in this country ever evoked more widespread interest. This was not altogether because of the importance, great as it was, of the interests immediately pending, but because of what the Conference suggested; and because it evidenced the solidarity of Australian Labour, and extinguished the last possibility of seriously dividing the Party.

P. HEAGNEY,  
Hon. Secretary.

Trades Hall, Melbourne,  
July 28, 1905.





COMMONWEALTH POLITICAL LABOUR CONFERENCE, 1905.

---

### Key to Frontispiece.


---

**BACK ROW:** Senator Henderson, A. Fisher, M.P., E. Riley, Senator Pearce, Rev. A. Culliford, C. Fraser, M.P., J. J. Clark, Senator Guthrie, J. M. Fowler, M.P., D. McDonnell, M.L.A., H. Beard, M.L.A.

**SECOND ROW:** Jas. Guy, Senator De Largie, C. McDonald, M.P., Senator O'Keefe, H. Scott-Bennett, M.L.A., W. Elison, M.L.A., Miss Lilian Locke, A. Hinchcliffe, M.L.C., P. Heagney (Secretary), King O'Malley, M.P., T. H. Smeaton, M.L.A., W. H. Carpenter, M.P., M. Hannah, M.L.A., J. Thomas, M.P.

**FRONT ROW:** Senator McGregor, J. Grant, Senator Tutley, H. Lamond, Geo. Kerr, M.L.A., G. M. Prendergast, M.L.A. (Chairman), J. C. Watson, M.P., T. Price, M.L.A., W. G. Spence, M.P., M. Reid, A. A. Kirkpatrick, M.L.C.

---



# REPORT Commonwealth Political Labour Conference.

## OFFICIAL REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS.

The third Australian Political Labour Conference met at the Trades Hall, Melbourne, on Saturday, 8th July, 1905. All the States of the Commonwealth were fully represented.

Mr. P. Heagney, secretary of the Political Labour Council of Victoria, called the Conference to order, and, in the absence of the president of the P.L.C. of Victoria, Mr. G. M. Prendergast, M.L.A., leader of the Victorian Labour party, was elected chairman.

Credentials were presented for the following delegates:—

### NEW SOUTH WALES—

John Grant,  
H. Lamond,  
D. Macdonell, M.L.A.,  
E. Riley,  
W. G. Spence, M.H.R.,  
J. C. Watson, M.H.R.

### QUEENSLAND—

A. Fisher, M.H.R.,  
A. Hinchliffe, M.L.C.,  
Geo. Kerr, M.L.A.,  
C. McDonald, M.H.R.,  
M. Reid,  
Senator Turley.

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA—

J. J. Clark,  
Senator Guthrie,  
A. A. Kirkpatrick, M.L.C.,  
Senator McGregor,  
T. Price, M.L.A.,  
T. H. Smeaton, M.L.A.

### TASMANIA—

Rev. A. E. Culliford,  
Jas. Guy,  
Miss Lillian Locke,  
Senator O'Keefe,  
King O'Malley, M.H.R.,  
Josiah Thomas, M.H.R.

VICTORIA—  
H. Beard, M.L.A.,  
H. Scott Bennett, M.L.A.,  
J. W. Billson, M.L.A.,  
M. Hannah, M.L.A.,  
P. Heagney,  
G. M. Prendergast, M.L.A.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA—  
W. H. Carpenter, M.H.R.,  
Senator De Largie,  
C. Frazer, M.H.R.,  
J. M. Fowler, M.H.R.,  
Senator Henderson,  
Senator Pearce.

Mr. W. G. Spence, M.H.R., was appointed vice-president, Mr. P. Heagney secretary, and Mr. J. W. Billson minute secretary.

Senator Higgs and Mr. Tom Mann were accorded seats beside the President, on the unanimous vote of the Conference.

Mr. Lamond moved: that the duration of speeches be ten minutes as recommended by the Standing Orders Committee. Mr. Grant seconded. Lost.

A credential was presented from the Metropolitan Labour Party, Perth, in favour of Mr. Hugh Mahon, M.H.R., and was referred to the Credentials Committee. The Committee reported that Conference having already accepted credentials for six delegates they were unable to recommend the adoption of another credential. Mr. Mahon said he had handed his credential to Senator Guthrie for presentation at the opening of the Conference. Senator Guthrie said he had been unable to attend the opening of Conference, and did not arrive until after the West Australian credentials had been accepted. The report of the Committee was adopted.

LABOUR'S OBJECTIVE.

It was unanimously decided that an objective should be adopted. The following objectives were proposed :

NEW SOUTH WALES AND TASMANIA.

(a) The cultivation of an Australian sentiment based upon the maintenance of racial purity and the development in Australia of an enlightened and self-reliant community. (b) The securing of the full results of their industry to all producers by the collective ownership of monopolies and the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the State and Municipality.

QUEENSLAND.

That the objective of the Federal Labour Party should be declared, and in these terms: The securing of the results of their industry to all producers by the collective ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, to be attained through the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the State and local governing bodies.

VICTORIA.

The gradual nationalisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange.

MELBOURNE P.L.C.

Conference affirms that Capitalism is the enemy and destroyer of essential private property. Its development is through the legalised confiscation of all that the labourer produces above his subsistence wage. The private ownership of the means of employment grounds society in economic slavery, which renders intellectual and political tyranny inevitable. Therefore, Conference affirms that it is the object of the Australian Labour organisations to obtain control of all the means of production, distribution, and exchange, i.e., the means of employment—wealth production—to be owned and controlled by the people in the interest of, and for the use of, the whole of the people, in contradistinction to profit for a class.

Mr. J. C. Watson, M.H.R., moved, on behalf of the N.S.W. Executive, Political Labour League :

"That the objective read as follows: (a) The cultivation of an Australian sentiment based upon the maintenance of racial purity and the development in Australia of an enlightened and self-reliant community; (b) the securing of the full results of their industry to all producers by the collective ownership of monopolies and the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the State and municipality. Apart from loyalty to his own State, he preferred the objective

outlined by the New South Wales League, and carried by their Conference in January last. As to the wisdom of having an objective, he thought there was just as great a reason for the Federal Party—or rather the Labour party in the Federal sphere—to adopt an objective as there was for those bodies whose sole concern was State matters. It was a wise thing to direct the attention of the people to what they were really aiming at as a party. The great thing was to let the people know the good they were working for. The manner in which the Constitution circumvented the Federal party in politics was an additional reason why they should have an objective on the programme. The matters coming in to the arena of Federal politics must be fewer in number necessarily, and would not appeal in the same direct way as proposals in the various States. With regard to the first clause (a) in the motion, dealing with the cultivation of an Australian sentiment, etc., he thought in fostering a very good one. In fostering an Australian sentiment, he did not mean that it should be one overbearing or arrogant, but that it should be cultivated in a true spirit of national pride. It was a good thing to inculcate a healthy sentiment of that kind in the people, for then anything that would be derogatory to them in the eyes of the other nations would not happen. Dealing with clause (b) he said, such a proposal had the effect of impressing itself on the minds of the people. All could be done under this objective of the N.S.W. League that they could expect for some time to come.

Whilst it might be a little ahead of what was possible to-day, it was not quite out of reach. It was sufficient that they were going for the collective ownership of monopolies, and understood their powers in that direction. Having done that he believed that they would have done all that was possible.

Mr. King O'Malley seconded. Mr. A. A. Kirkpatrick, M.L.C., favoured an objective. First of all, because they had it in some of the States, and if it were dropped

by the Conference then Mr. George Reid and his friends would be asking the reason why. The objective should be a moderate one, so as to be practicable. As the present Conference was only a consultative body, anything they might do would not be binding on the various States.

Mr. Watson : There has been no delegation of authority, so far. A member : But there ought to be !

Mr. Kirkpatrick maintained that what the Conference did was not binding, and for that reason they should come to a conclusion that would be acceptable to all the States. He would favour the proposal by Mr. Watson, because in his opinion South Australia would approve of the New South Wales objective, but he did not think his State would go any further. The party talked of Socialism, and their opponents were continually asking them "What are you driving at?" With an objective they could answer right away.

Mr. Mat Reid, on behalf of the Central Political Executive of Queensland, supported the Queensland objective. That objective was definite, distinct, and clear. The New South Wales objective shirked the question : he would admit, however, that it "played to the gallery." There was nothing to lose in making the objective clear and distinct. He was a social democrat, and as such considered State Socialism one of the greatest of curses. They had nothing to lose by adopting either the Queensland or Victorian objectives. They should come straight out—their opponents did—and the public would always admire a party that went to them with a clear cut issue. The people asked what Socialism was, and they should know. Let them put their objective right on the top of the platform, and let the objective be that of Queensland.

Mr. J. Thomas, M.H.R., would support the N.S.W. objective in deference to the feelings of other States ; but so far as his personal feelings were concerned he preferred that of either Queensland or Victoria. Perhaps the necessity might arise to make a kind of compromise between the extreme

tendencies of Melbourne and the stagnation of South Australia. He would vote for the New South Wales objective on that ground.

Mr. Carpenter, M.H.R., said it was evident that there was more than one brand of Socialism in the Conference, and the various objectives possibly represented those different brands. He had learnt his Socialism from the Fabian writers, and had never got beyond them. The Queensland objective was inconsistent. They suggested the nationalisation of every industry in one plank, and then later on asked the Conference to bolster up the sugar industry as a private concern.

Mr. C. McDonald, M.H.R. : We are prepared to take that over, but they won't give it to us. The time for adjournment having arrived, Mr. Carpenter moved the adjournment of the debate. Conference adjourned till Monday at 10.30 a.m.

SECOND DAY.

Mr. Carpenter continued his speech. He would like to see a uniform objective throughout Australia, both State and Federal. The cry of "Socialism in our Time" had given rise to a lot of misconception.

Mr. C. McDonald, M.H.R., said the Socialist aims put forth by the A.L.P. in 1890 were the first Labour pronouncement that stirred Australia. When the Maritime Strike occurred the papers teemed with abuse, and dwelt upon the suggested "reconstruction of society." The Queensland objective was one which came straight out, and should be adopted.

Senator O'Keefe intended to support the New South Wales objective. The Victorian one, whilst good, savoured too much of being up in the clouds. What they should do was to come to practicalities, and that was represented in the N.S.W. proposal.

Senator Finlay said that Mr. Carpenter had spoken of the New South Wales objective as being one with which they could go on to any platform. He regarded it as a hybrid objective put out to the people for the purpose of catching votes. Surely they were not to stop at monopolies. They

had as much right to step in where there was competition as where there was monopoly. Therefore, they should adopt the objective which was furthest ahead.

Senator De Largie said he could not see any use in adopting an objective that could not be attained. The nationalisation of all industries was so far off as to be impracticable. It was better to have an objective that would appeal to many as against one that would appeal to only a few, and the New South Wales objective was one that appealed once to the "man in the street."

Mr. E. Hiley explained that the New South Wales objective met all circumstances, and was not adopted with any view of catching votes, but for the purpose of clearly defining their position. Senator Pearce suggested that if his Queensland friends wished to be ahead they should withdraw their own objective and accept that of Melbourne. It was wider in scope, for it not only asked them to adopt State Socialism, but international Socialism. Surely that was the ideal for the Queenslanders. They had something in the N.S.W. objective that they could deal with now, and for that reason he would vote for it.

Mr. M. Hannah, M.L.A., heartily supported the Queensland objective. They should not trim their sails to every passing breeze. If they were ever called upon to nail their colours to the mast it was on the present occasion. They should have an objective which would show the people that they were trying to emancipate the masses from the conditions under which they were labouring. If the Labour party was definite enough, and courageous enough, to come out with a strong objective, he believed that the people of Australia would be behind them.

Mr. A. Hinchcliffe, M.L.C., said that the Labour party in Queensland—which had to carry the Socialist aims of 1890—had fought their political battles on the most narrow and restricted franchise, and yet, to-day, in spite of that, they stood with the largest number of members in any State Parliament. The N.S.W. objective was, in his opinion, nothing more

or less than what they already had on their Federal platform, and some distinction should be made between platform and objective. He hoped the Queensland objective would be carried.

Mr. Fowler, M.H.R., was a believer in the Labour movement because he was a Socialist, and when he saw the Labour movement in Australia becoming Socialist he was gratified. At first sight the Queensland objective seemed to him to be framed in a comprehensive way, but on closer inspection it appeared crude. It spoke of the "collective ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange." That would nationalise everything—the housewife's knitting needle and every laying hen. It would prevent his growing vegetables in his back garden, or going on a fishing excursion for a holiday. An objective should indicate the goal aimed at, and with the Queensland objective too many exceptions would have to be made. He was a Social Democrat, and not a State Socialist, for with State Socialism they would have but "renegacy, red tape, and 'Government stroke'—three things which he believed would ruin everything. He thought the New South Wales objective could be adopted practically without amendment, and after that they could go as far as they liked.

Mr. J. Grant was in favour of the N.S.W. objective. That aimed at something of a practical character. They were asked by Queensland to adopt something that they would never see accomplished. The N.S.W. one was the most practical of all, and quite as effective as those submitted by the other States.

Miss Locke, as a Tasmanian delegate, said she was supposed to support the New South Wales objective because the Tasmanian one was the same. She found, however, that she could not support that objective, for if she did so she would be untrue to her Socialist propaganda work in the country. She was sorry to oblige in the Conference a spirit something akin to expediency and opportunism, and that was to be deprecated. The N.S.W. objective

would, no doubt, suit Mr. Bent of Victoria or the President of the United States. If the Labour party were going for an ideal let them "hitch their wagon to a star," and have something like a goal to strive for. Under the circumstances she would withdraw when the division was being taken.

Mr. D. Macdonell, M.L.A., was against an objective. If the Conference brought forward a practical programme, that would be more effective than an objective. It would be unwise to adopt either the Queensland or Victorian objectives—and especially the Victorian, which would make them responsible for the ideas of Communist Socialists.

Mr. Smeaton, M.L.A., said they must adopt a practical objective, and the N.S.W. one went as far as they dare go. He was prepared to adopt that with some slight attention to make it acceptable to South Australians. The highest definition of Socialism was "Christianity applied." Mention had been made of vote-catching, but they in South Australia had never taken a vote that was not honestly won.

Mr. Scott Bennett moved the adjournment of the debate. Conference adjourned for lunch.

On resuming, Mr. Scott Bennett, M.L.A., said he supported the Queensland proposal because it was more concise, more to the point, and more honest than the New South Wales objective. By adopting the New South Wales proposal they would put themselves in a false position. To say that they were Socialists by adopting a resolution that even Mr. Deakin himself would subscribe to would be foolish indeed. They were endeavouring to socialise the means of production, distribution, and exchange as soon as possible. He objected to the cultivation of an Australian sentiment as stated in the N.S.W. resolution. They had enough of that in the Labour movement at the present time. What they wanted was the cultivation of an international sentiment—to say that we were part and parcel of the world-wide Socialist movement. Had the Labour movement

started on a Socialist basis instead of on the old Liberal lines they would to-day be nearer Socialism than they were. If less time had been spent in fiscal wrangling and on other questions it would have been better for the workers.

Senator McGregor said they should give a clear expression to the public of their aims and objects. The objective recommended by New South Wales he favoured, because it was the plainest, clearest, and simplest of the lot. He wanted to see a healthy Australian sentiment, with Australians recognising their nationality in common with the other people of the world.

Mr. Billson, M.L.A., said they should adopt either the Queensland or Victorian objectives. When leaders spoke of Socialism not being possible within their time, what an inspiring spectacle they must present to their followers! The New South Wales objective was misleading.

Senator Henderson supported the New South Wales objective because he believed that the ideal at which the whole of the Conference seemed to be aiming was contained in that proposition.

Mr. Watson, in reply, said they as a Party had much more to do for the people than the mere looking out for a seventh heaven for them. They as managers of the Labour movement had to direct their forces in such a way as to obtain every possible, reasonable, and immediate result. The whole history of the Labour movement in Australia had been not the attitude of "crying for the moon," but to accept what was practical and immediate. He considered that the success of the Labour party had been brought about not through following out theoretic ideas, but because they recognised that this or that measure advocated by them was something immediately tangible. They were not framing an objective for all time. If the New South Wales statement worked out correctly, then when the time arrived the Queensland or Victorian objectives could be urged. There appeared to be an impression in the minds of some delegates that the N.S.

W. objective did not go beyond the nationalisation of monopolies, but did it not go for the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the State and municipalities? All that was possible in his lifetime, or two or three lifetimes, was embodied in the N.S.W. resolution. The nationalisation of monopolies would give the full reward to all those who laboured. The objective was not an essay on the subject of Socialism, nor could it give all the benefits desirable under it, but it was a concise, short statement made so that he who ran could read.

The various proposals were then voted upon, and eventually the New South Wales objective was adopted by 23 votes to 11, on the following division:

For, 23.—Carpenter (W.A.), Culliford (T.), Clark (S.A.), De Lairesie (W.A.), Frazer (W.A.), Guthrie (S.A.), Grant (N.S.W.), Guy (Tas.), Henderson (W.A.), Kirkpatrick (S.A.), Lamond (N.S.W.), Macdonell (N.S.W.), McGregor (S.A.), O'Keefe (T.), O'Malley (T.), Pearce (W.A.), Price (S.A.), Miley (N.S.W.), Spence (N.S.W.), Smeaton (S.A.), Thomas (T.), Watson (N.S.W.), Fowler (W.A.).

Against, 11.—Beard (V.), Billson (V.), Fisher (Q.), Hinchliffe (Q.), Heagney (V.), Hannah (V.), Kerr (Q.), McDonald (Q.), Reid (Q.), Scott Bennett (V.), Turley (Q.).

#### THE FISCAL ISSUE.

Senator O'Keefe moved—

That, Protection be made a fighting plank in the Federal Platform.

He did so for the reason that he thought the time had arisen when they ought to take some definite stand on this question. He held strong opinions on the matter, but readily recognised the difficulties which confronted them. Some held different views to himself in fiscal matters, and much had been accomplished in Labour circles by sinking the fiscal issue. The Labour party stood as the third party. How long were they to so continue? He supposed that every delegate hoped that as soon as possible the Labour party would be the dominant power in

State as well as Federal politics. If the Labour party came to power they must have a financial policy, and he could not see how they could have a financial policy without having a definite fiscal belief. He was a believer in direct taxation, but knew that there was a large amount of money that could be got through the Customs House. It seemed to him that the two cries of a White Australia and a sinking of the fiscal issue were inconsistent on the part of Labourites.

Rev. A. E. Culliford seconded the motion.

Mr. Billson, M.L.A., moved as an amendment—

That in the Federal pledge the following words be inserted: "All candidates to be pledged to the new Protection securing protection to the manufacturer through the Customs House and for the workmen through Industrial Arbitration Acts."

He said they had fought for years to obtain local markets through the medium of the Customs House. The employers used to come along saying that they wished to be protected against the sweating goods of foreign countries. They looked up the returns and found thousands of pounds worth of goods that were being imported that they were desirous of making in their own State. On several occasions they got the duties increased in the tariff, and the employer having obtained the protection he sought crushed his workmen as badly as he could. Such a state of things had proved to him and others that they only had a bastard kind of protection—the employer had been protected but not the worker.

Mr. Beard seconded.

Mr. O'Malley, M.H.R., trusted that the Conference would no more interfere with this fiscalism than they would think of touching a carbon-poisoned buzzard. This Protection was the child, the infant of the "Age"—the bitterest enemy that Labour had in Australia. Fiscalism was not Labour's funeral. It was their mission to spread the gospel of Labour, to give hope to the people, and to let all side-issues go as side-track institutions that were not germane to their great cause.

He was a Protectionist—of course, he was—dipped in the dew and died in the wool of protection. He trusted that his brothers would wipe this thing out name and tail and root and branch.

Miss Locke said this fiscal issue was as likely to split the party as the sectarian troubles had menaced matters in the past. She thought it inadvisable to put the resolution either in the platform or the pledge.

Senator De Largie indicated that he would like to move an amendment something on the following lines:

That in the opinion of this Conference, when the Tariff Commission report is laid before Parliament, a referendum should be taken on the tariff question, and that members of the Federal Labour party pledge themselves to give legislative effect to the majority as shown by the referendum.

He did not see any other way out of the difficulty than the one he had enunciated.

Mr. Scott Bennett, M.L.A., wished to explain that whilst he had to vote with Victoria in this matter he was a fiscal atheist. The condition of the workers had not improved under Protection in Victoria, nor had it advanced in countries where they had Free-trade.

Senator Pearce considered that Senator O'Keefe was not quite correct in defining the position of the Labour party. He had said that the Labour party had no financial policy. The Labour party had the most definite financial programme in Australia. Had they not direct taxation? The working people of Australia had a good deal to thank the Federal Labour party for in assisting to remove the duties from tea and kerosene. Thousands of pounds which would have gone in duty had thus been saved. What they appeared to be discussing now was not a fiscal policy but a tariff policy. What advantage would there be to the Labour party in taking this fiscal question up? Whilst it might be popular in Victoria, it would undoubtedly lead to serious dissensions in other States. They had sailed

along triumphantly so far—why now import this fiscalism into the party?

Mr. Grant thought that the best way out of the difficulty was the proposal outlined by Senator De Largie.

Protection in Victoria had failed to relieve the unemployed question. Protectionists apparently wished to get revenue at the Customs House to protect the large landowners from taxation.

Mr. Beard said that the fiscal question was one that would have to be fought, and in his opinion shortly. If they had a Federal Government in power, they would have to declare one way or the other. The objective declared we should be "a self-reliant community," and so we ought to be, and Protection would make them so.

Senator O'Keefe, by permission of the Conference, withdrew his motion, and Mr. Billson's amendment then became the motion before the chair.

Senator De Largie, at Mr. Watson's suggestion, then announced that he would submit his referendum proposal as a separate motion later on.

Mr. A. Fisher, M.H.R., regarded the question as one of the utmost importance, and one far wider in its scope than any objective. He considered, however, that neither by Free-trade nor Protection could they attain the great objective towards which they were all earnestly working. To him one of the finest phases of the earnestness of purpose of the Labour movement was to find strong Protectionists and staunch Free-traders working side by side on the same platform. The Labour party had come into power having in view the righting of social problems as quite distinct from the fiscal issue. He agreed with Senator Pearce when he said the Labour party had a financial policy—that of direct taxation.

Mr. Watson, M.H.R., said he was one who regarded Protection as an expedient rather than a principle. At the same time, he was extremely sorry that a number of good men could not see eye to eye with him in this matter. It had been brought home to him



very strongly during the last year or so that there was a great necessity for them to take some step in this regard. They had a great need to do something in view of the developments known as the North-collonally known as the Far East—for Australia. It was a population for Australia. It was a greater menace to have so much unpeopled territory when there were nations now slowly unfolding themselves as great powers, and who would exercise in the Pacific an almost dominating influence on the destinies of Australia. They urgently required population. For the next 20 years, no doubt, China and Japan would be taken up with their immediate difficulties with Russian reprisals and revenge. But in any case Australia could not be prepared too early. If they had a compact population they could afford to laugh at any effort at dislodgment. There were two methods which should appeal to them—first, the opening up of the lands which had been locked up from settlement, which should be made available to the people, as should also be the standards; secondly, from the standpoint of defence they required to diversify the industries of Australia to the fullest possible degree even if it should result in a loss in the national book-keeping. He did say that in his view it was much to be regretted that there was such a great difference amongst men who were at one with each other with regard to good wages, fair hours, and all the conditions that civilisation made towards the betterment of the classes, and yet it seemed paradoxical that they allowed cheap labour goods to come in from outside. Undoubtedly there was a marked difference of opinion amongst the Party regarding Free-trade and Protection, but when the Labour party became the Commonwealth or second party in the Commonwealth, then he thought they must come forward with some declaration of policy on the question. In view of the strong opinions held by some, he was not in accord with the resolution put forward, but he favoured a referen-

dum of the people, with the questions of Free-trade and Protection framed in a tangible and definite form.

Mr. Hannah, M.L.A., favoured the resolution. He wished to express his admiration for the Free-trade Labour members, for he believed them to be just as sincere as the Protectionists in the Labour cause. With regard to fiscalism, however, the Conference could not escape the practical issue before them, and they should pronounce definitely one way or the other. In any case the time would come when the Party would have to pronounce itself on the question definitely. It was a position that could not long be shirked.

Mr. Spence, M.H.R., said that under the Federal Constitution they had no power to deal with industrial legislation. They certainly might put a high duty on and help the manufacturer, but the Labour party, he was sure, did not wish to help the manufacturer if the workman was not to share. He would have no objection to putting on a duty that would help any industry that had been built up. But why not let the Government carry on the manufactures of the country? He was with those who Socialism take the direct road to do it, when they got the power to do it. They had had no fiscal difficulties in prosecuting their campaign in N.S.W. It would be better to leave the question adjoined at 5.30.

The Conference adjourned at 5.30. On resuming, Mr. J. Thomas, M.H.R., said that members from the other States as the State looked to ultra Protection, and pledged to ultra Victorian representatives asking them to pledge themselves to the new Protection seemed to show that the old Protection had not brought about the results which those in times past thought it would. Mr. Spence had been pointed out by Mr. Spence that under the Constitution the Federal Parliament could not bring in any legislation which would affect the worker by wages boards or arbitration. Surely they would not want to give protection to the employer and not

to the worker? How could they deal with the new Protection when the Constitution improved wages and conditions before they were given the tariff. Their first consideration should be that of the wage all employers should be treated alike. It had been stated that for the manufacturer to give fair wages he should have fair protection. In Broken Hill they had 40 per cent. of the people of New South Wales and a large amount to the people of South Australia. Protection would not make the living of the miners any better. He would be sorry, indeed, if the Labour Party became a fiscal one, and objected to fiscalism because he always associated it with capitalism and wagedom.

Mr. P. Heagney said he was a Protectionist of the prohibition order. He would prohibit that importation of everything in Australia; anything that could not be manufactured in Australia he would admit free. He was opposed to revenue tariffism altogether. The minority should make way for the majority in the matter of fiscal faith.

Mr. J. P. Clark said he was possibly the only representative of South Australia who had Free-trade leanings. He was in favour of the suggestion outlined by Senator De Largie, and he would urge the Conference to support the idea.

Mr. Carpenter, M.H.R., said he was a Protectionist, and as such was glad to see the Protectionist revival which had happened. But what were they going to gain by making Protection a plank of their platform? They had been urged by various journals to settle the fiscal issue, but they were not going to be coerced into the question. No doubt, in both Houses of the Federal Parliament, there was a Protectionist majority; but would it profit the Labour party to declare for Protection if it split them into two parties? He admitted the Freetraders for their loyalty to the Party in view of the Protectionist aspect that Labour was assuming. He, as a Lab-

our man, put Labour first, and Protection second, and he thought that every member of the Party whatever his fiscal faith should always put Labour first.

Mr. Riley said in carrying the N.S.W. objective they had affirmed the desirability of making Australia self-reliant. They should natural corollary, they should make all their own goods. The only logical outcome to that was to put duties on that would keep goods out. Then, there being no Customs revenue, they could go for direct taxation, and that was the policy of the Labour party.

Mr. Fowler, M.H.R., said that by developing the great natural resources of a country come in turning industries would come in their proper order. If they were going for prohibition it meant that they were placing in the hands of the manufacturers a power to determine prices. To be logical, they must not only protect the employee, but the consumer as well. They must determine the prices. If it was necessary to protect the manufacturer at the Customs, the employer by wages boards, and the consumer by determining prices, then by determining common sense would it not be better for us to "go the whole hog" and run the industries for ourselves? If we nationalised the industries, would it not be much better? If Protection would only give them Socialism, he would vote Protection every time.

Mr. Lamond stated that what they had to decide was whether it was wise to make a fiscal pronouncement or not. The relative merits of Protection or Free-trade were beside the matter. If they were to adopt the proposal suggested it would mean that they would have to replace some 16 Labour men who had been returned as Freetraders and who could not contest the election without having to say to their constituents that they had "gilted" them on the last occasion. If he were a Protectionist he would adopt the attitude of Mr. Carpenter, and say, "Protection is going on all right, let it continue to go on." He was not

### THE SUGAR BONUS.

A long discussion occurred upon a series of resolutions relating to white-grown sugar. Eventually, the following motion was carried:

That the Interstate Conference recommends that a bonus to the white sugar industry be extended for a further period, and that any provision for the reduction or termination of the bonus be on a sliding scale.

### DURATION OF SPEECHES.

In view of the crowded nature of the business paper, it was decided that future speeches be limited to three minutes.

### NAVIGATION LAWS.

That a clause be inserted in the Navigation Bill to compel shipowners to insure the lives of their vessels' crews.

He trusted that the Conference would show as much consideration for the shipowner as for property. Seconded by Mr. Price and carried.

### ARBITRATION, Etc.

Mr. Grant moved—

That Plank No. 2 of the Fighting Platform should read: "Amendment of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act."

Senator Guthrie seconded. Mr. Macdonell said he would like to see the Conciliation and Arbitration Act amended on the lines originally introduced by Mr. C. C. Kingston.

### TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILWAY.

Mr. O'Malley moved— That in the interests of developing Central Australia we should support the construction of the transcontinental railway. After some discussion the motion was withdrawn.

### SELECTION OF LABOUR GOVERNMENTS.

Mr. Fraser moved—

That this Conference recommends, in the event of the Labour Party obtaining the Ministerial benches, the Labour Ministry should be selected by the Party in caucus.

The motion was carried, with the substitution of the word "recommended" in place of "selected," as suggested by Miss Locke. The Conference adjourned.

### QUESTION OF ALLIANCES.

Mr. P. Heagney moved the following addition to the Federal Pledge:

After the words "caucus meeting" add the words "and not to form any alliance, coalition, or combination without such alliance, coalition, or combination having first obtained the sanction of the combined Labour organisations, to be determined by a special Interstate conference."

He said that an alliance such as had taken place between the Labour Party and Mr. Isaacs was subversive of the best interests of the movement. They should come to some common course of action. Mr. Watson had carried out his work with great skill under difficult circumstances, but the alliance was unwise when it attempted to obtain immunity from attack for those in the alliance who were not Labour members.

Mr. Billson, M.L.A., seconded pro forma.

Mr. Fowler, M.H.R., had from the first raised opposition to the alliance.

Mr. Watson, M.H.R., said that the view he took was that the organisations outside laid down the policy upon which the Party was to work and decided what the platform should be. They arranged the pledge for each candidate to take before he submitted himself for election. But once the man was in Parliament they had to trust to his judgment to carry out their work. The alliance at any rate prevented a fusion of the two other parties, who could thus have presented a solid phalanx to Labour. The question of an alliance would only be determined by the immediate circumstances of the case. The alliance which they had made had more than justified itself.

Mr. Fraser said that although they had come out of the initial alliance without disaster, still the proposition before them was in the right direction.

Mr. Billson, M.L.A., said the great enemy to the cause was the man who was "as good as a Labour man" and in the alliance there had been individuals of that stamp. They might not always

have a leader like Mr. Watson, and it behooved them to be very careful regarding alliances.

Senator Turley said that alliances, so far as he knew of them, had done no good for the Labour party. The men who came in with the Labour party generally did so to "get in out of the wet." He agreed that the alliance which Mr. Watson had entered into had not affected the platform at all, although it affected outside organisations. If alliances were entered into he thought that they should not extend beyond the life of the Parliament in which they were formed.

Senator Pearce considered the alliance which the Labour party had made was a mistake, and they had got out of it very fortunately. There were cases where alliances were advantageous, as in the Queensland case, but he considered that that alliance had now outlived its usefulness. He would indicate an amendment, that in the event of any alliance the party should have no authority to grant immunity to alliance candidates from opposition at elections.

Mr. O'Malley, M.H.R., decried the alliance. They should put themselves in Mr. Watson's place and ask what they would have done. He would ask them to wait a little. They should not want the whole earth at once.

Mr. Macdonell, M.L.A., said the position that had confronted the Federal party had been a difficult one, and he considered that they had done the best under the circumstances. The Labour party had in State politics made alliances, and it might pay them to do so again. But he failed to see how they would be able to get alliances merely for the life of a Parliament, and that when the Parliament expired they would be dying at the throats of their allies.

Mr. Grant wished to raise a strong protest against alliances, more especially when outside organisations were bound by the Party inside against opposing alliance candidates.

Mr. Clark hoped the proposal would be withdrawn. They ought to trust their representatives in

prepared to give up seats that had been won by Fretrade Labour men, and similarly would not give up seats won by Labour Protectionists. He would say in Fretrade electorates. "Here is a Labour member who is a Fretrade, vote for him," and in Protectionist electorates, "Here is a Protectionist Labour member, vote for him" also. As a pure matter of tactical management of the political Labour machine, they should refrain from taking fiscal sides at the present time.

Mr. Billson, M.L.A., having replied, the motion was put by the president and declared lost by 22 votes to 10.

The Conference at 10.30 p.m. adjourned till 10.30 a.m. on the following day.

### THIRD DAY.

The Conference resumed at 10.30 a.m. on Tuesday.

### A FISCAL REFERENDUM.

Senator De Larygie moved—

That in the opinion of this Conference, after the report of the Tariff Commission is completed, a referendum on the fiscal question should be taken of the electors of the Commonwealth, and members of the Federal Labour party should give legislative effect to the majority vote of the referendum.

The referendum could be taken at the next Federal election, and it would be the best way out of the difficulty.

Pearece seconded the resolution. The proposal did not bind the Conference as to details. He trusted that this referendum would commence a series of references to the people on great issues. The referendum would be the best means of settling the vexed question of fiscalism in the Labour Party.

Senator Turley moved as an amendment—

That the question be first referred to the various Labour organisations before being submitted to the people.

The amendment lapsed for want of a seconder, and the resolution was agreed to.

the Houses. He hoped the time was, however, not far distant when the Party would have sufficient following to command a majority and not require alliances.

Senator O'Keefe asked what danger had there been in the Federal party entering into the much-discussed alliance. The alliance had not trenched on a plank of the Party. The Party were always in a majority of 2 to 1 in the alliance. The position they were faced with was that a certain man had come into power with the avowed object of crushing the Labour party. Was the Isaacs alliance not justified in the circumstances?

Mr. Riley was against all alliances. No alliance should be countenanced which did not meet with the views of the various organisations.

Mr. Carpenter, M.H.R., hoped the resolution would be wiped off the paper, and that they would trust to their members in the Parliament.

Mr. Fisher, M.H.R., was against alliances, generally speaking, but the only fault he had to find with the Isaacs alliance was that it endeavoured to carry them beyond the then Parliament. He trusted that the amendment which had been indicated by Senator Turley would be carried.

Mr. Hinchecliffe, M.L.C., said the question of alliances had been a vexed one in all the States, but if ever an alliance was justified it was so in the case of Queensland, and even there it was likely to prove a very costly undertaking. No alliance should be binding on the outside organisations. He would like to see Senator Turley's suggestion accepted.

Mr. Lamond said that if there was one principle upon which the Labour party must stand firm it was the unity of all sections of their organisation in fighting non-Labour men at elections. He hoped that the partial success of the alliances spoken of would not be taken as a reason for going in for further alliances. He thought the Labour party ought not to join any alliance or coalition

without having first obtained the sanction of the State executives.

Mr. Spence, M.H.R., said they should not tie themselves up too tightly. It seemed to be admitted that alliances were desirable at times. The position with regard to the late alliance was, roughly, whether it was better to swallow Humie Cook or George Reid. He thought the principle as enunciated by Mr. Watson was sound. Organisations formed the policy, selected candidates, and did other work; but once their men were in the House they must trust them to carry out the platform.

Senator Henderson intended voting against the resolution and amendment. He had supported Mr. Watson all through the alliance and did not regret one step he had taken in the matter. There had been a clean, honourable compact carried out by honourable men.

Senator De Largie said that the only opposition given to the alliance was in a thin small voice that was hardly recognisable, notwithstanding the loud noise made that night. The alliance had been entered into with an idea of being able to do something for the people outside.

Mr. Kerr, M.L.A., said the idea of the inside party having to refer to an outside organisation was absurd. In connection with their alliance in Queensland, they had made it clear to their allies that they could not bind the outside organisations. Their party did not take the responsibility of binding the outside organisations not to oppose their allies.

Mr. Reid moved as an amendment—  
That the Federal Labour party should not enter into any alliance that would extend beyond the then existing Parliament.

This amendment was eventually carried as the substantive motion, with the addition of the words by Senator Pearce—"nor grant nor promise immunity from opposition at election time."

The Conference adjourned at 10.15 p.m. till 10.30 a.m. next day.

#### FOURTH DAY.

The Conference resumed at 10.30 a.m. on Wednesday.

#### REPRESENTATION AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

Mr. Reid moved the adoption of the following resolution—

That the Australian Labour movement be brought into organised relationship with the international movement, and with that object in view steps be taken to secure Australia's direct representation at the next international conference.

It was highly desirable that Australia should get into line with the international movement, and it would have a good effect all round.

Mr. Hinchecliffe seconded the resolution pro forma.

Mr. Heagney moved as an amendment—

That, having regard to the necessity for a proper understanding between the representative institutions of the workers in Australia and in Britain, this Conference expresses the opinion that it is desirable to open up systematic communication with the Labour representation committees of the United Kingdom and other countries, and respectfully requests the Central Executive to deal with the matter.

Mr. Spence seconded the amendment.

After discussion the resolution was carried.

#### DIRECT TAXATION FOR OLD AGE PENSIONS.

Mr. Fowler, M.H.R., moved—

That any moneys raised for an old age pension fund should be raised by the taxation of land values.

After a brief discussion it was found that a majority was averse to old age pensions being made a special charge upon any particular revenue, and the previous question was put and carried.

#### UNIMPROVED LAND VALUES TAX.

Senator Pearce moved—

That an unimproved land values tax without exemption be a plank in the Fighting Platform.

He believed that feeling was growing in this direction even with the farmers. This question was at

the root of the social system. They should not merely be satisfied with Factory Acts and Arbitration Acts, but should do something that would find work for the unemployed. A great demand for labour would be created by the unlocking of lands which would follow.

Mr. Prazer seconded the resolution.

Mr. Grant was strongly in favour of the proposal, and believed in the system as above all others for raising revenue.

Mr. O'Malley, M.H.R., would favour the resolution in the words "without exemption" were knocked out. They did not want to touch the little bantams—it was the big gilded roosters of the bribe-pool order they wished to get at.

Mr. Watson said that the members of the Conference in the rush of enthusiasm were prepared to pile handicaps on the party. At the present time they had a big fight to carry on in the cry of Socialism v. anti-Socialism, and that would require all their energies. They had their Socialist objective to aim for, and whilst he was glad to be one to bear the burden of the fight he trusted that the burden would not be too heavily increased at this juncture by such proposals.

Senator O'Keefe said that none of the States seemed to make a proper effort to break up the big estates, and he supported the proposal.

Mr. Carpenter seconded the amendment as moved by Mr. O'Malley, that the words "without exemption" be omitted.

After further discussion, Mr. Lamond moved a further amendment that they agree to "a progressive land values tax."

Mr. Lamond's suggestion was adopted.

#### FEDERATING THE RAILWAYS.

The question of federating the railways was discussed, but the consensus of opinion was that the matter just for the present be left with the States.

### VARIOUS RESOLUTIONS.

The following resolutions were referred to the State Conferences:

The consideration of the advisability of bringing about reform in the Administration of Food laws.

That a Commonwealth Fighting Fund be established for the assistance of Senate candidates.

On the motion of Mr. Heagney, seconded by Mr. Riley, Conference agreed to—

The abolition of the maximum age limit of applicants for Government employment where ability to do the work in question is shown by the applicant.

On the motion of Miss Locke, seconded by the Rev. Mr. Culliford, the principle "of civil equality of women and men" was affirmed.

The Conference adjourned for luncheon.

### THE BRADDON BLOT.

Mr. Watson moved—

That Conference is opposed to the re-enactment of the Braddon clause of the Federal Constitution.

The clause, in so far as it bound down the people of the future, was undemocratic. He contended that it was opposed to every standpoint of a free Democracy, and it should not be re-enacted.

Seconded by Mr. Smeaton, and carried.

### PREPREFERENTIAL TRADE.

Mr. Heagney moved, Mr. Riley seconded, the following resolution—

That the Chamberlain scheme of preferential trade will be of no benefit to the working classes of Australia; that it tends to further increase racial and national animosities; and that it is antagonistic to the economic development of Australia.

The moving of the previous question disposed of the resolution.

### FUTURE CONFERENCES.

The following motions were agreed to:

Moved by Mr. Hinchcliffe, seconded by Mr. Riley—

That business sheets for future Interstate Conventions be in the hands of the secretaries of the State Central Executives at least three months prior to the holding of the Convention.

Moved by Mr. Macdonell, seconded by Mr. Lamond—

That all resolutions affecting the platform, and constitution carried by a two-thirds majority of delegates credentialled to the future Australian Political Labour Conferences should be binding on the organisations.

Moved by Mr. Watson, and seconded by Mr. Billson—

That subjects other than those embraced in the business sheet may be discussed at future Conferences, but decisions thereon shall not be binding unless carried by a two-thirds majority and subsequently approved by the various organisations.

Moved by Mr. Lamond, seconded by Mr. Hinchcliffe—

That representatives at future Australian Political Labour Conferences shall forward with the credentials of their delegates the sum of £2 to meet the expenses of Conferences and of an Australian Political Executive.

Moved by Mr. McDonald, seconded by Senator Turley—

That the Central Political Executive of Queensland be charged with the duty of convening the next Political Interstate Conference to be held in Brisbane in 1908.

### OTHER RESOLUTIONS

CARRIED.

Moved by Senator De Largie, seconded by Mr. Smeaton—

That this Interstate Conference requests the Federal Labour members to urge the Federal Government to nationalise the Iron Industry instead of granting bonuses, as we consider the nationalising of such an industry would be in the best interests of the community.

Moved by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Fisher—

That after "nationalisation of monopolies" the following words be added to the platform: "Amendment of constitution to provide same where necessary."

### DRAFTING COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

REPORT.

The drafting committee—Messrs. Lamond (chairman), Pearce, Watson, Pendergast, Heagney, Price, Guy, Hinchcliffe and Fisher—reported that the platforms be as follows:—

#### OBJECTIVE.

(a) The cultivation of an Australian sentiment based upon the maintenance of racial purity and the development in Australia of an enlightened and self-reliant community.

(b) The securing of the full results of their industry to all producers by the collective ownership of monopolies and the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the State and municipalities.

#### FIGHTING PLATFORM.

1. Maintenance of a White Australia.
2. Nationalisation of Monopolies.
3. Old Age Pensions.
4. Tariff Referendum.
5. Progressive Tax on Land Values.
6. Restriction of Public Borrowing.
7. Navigation Laws.
8. Citizen Defence Force.
9. Arbitration Act Amendment.

#### General Platform.

1. Maintenance of a White Australia.
2. Nationalisation of Monopolies—if necessary, amendment of Constitution to provide for same.
3. Old Age Pensions.
4. Referendum of Electors on Tariff question, after the report of the Tariff Commission is completed. Entry to give legislative effect to decision of referendum vote.
5. Progressive Tax on Land Values.
6. Restriction of Public Borrowing.
7. Navigation Laws—Compulsory Insurance of crews by shipowners against accident or death.
8. Citizen Defence Force and Australian-owned Navy.
9. Amendment of Commonwealth Arbitration Act to provide for Preference to Unions and exclusion of the legal profession.
10. Commonwealth Bank of Deposit and Issue, and Life and Fire Insurance Departments, the management of each to be free from political influence.
11. Industrial Legislation, amendment of Constitution to provide for same.
12. Civil equality of men and women.

Moved by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Miss Locke—

That the importation of opium except for medicinal purposes be prohibited into the Commonwealth.

Moved by Mr. Macdonell, seconded by Rev. Mr. Culliford—

That this Conference repudiates with indignation the charges levelled against the Australian Labour Movement of endeavouring to weaken the sanctity of the marriage tie and to sap the foundations of religious belief; and we furthermore declare our firm conviction that the success of our efforts to improve the material condition of the community would result in the elevation and not the degradation of marriage, and would enable the sublime teachings of the Founder of Christianity to be brought home as a living reality to vast numbers to whom, in the misery and privation in which society as now constituted has engulfed them, they remain but a mere abstraction.

Moved by Mr. Hannah, seconded by Senator O'Keefe—

That this Conference urges through their respective organisations the support of Australian productions by our own workmen, and that our various Governments be urged to give preference to the products of the Commonwealth.

Moved by Mr. Hinchcliffe, seconded by Mr. Macdonell—

That an official report of the proceedings of the Conference be prepared, and 1000 copies supplied for distribution in equal quantities to each State at a cost not to exceed £2 per State.

Moved by Miss Locke, seconded by Mr. Reid—

That this Conference deplores the fact that although the principle of equal franchise for men and women has been adopted throughout the Commonwealth, both for the Federal Parliament and also five of the State Legislatures, yet in the State of Victoria women are still denied political justice.

Moved by Mr. Billson—

That this Conference places on record its high appreciation of the manner in which the Federal Labour Ministry conducted the affairs of the Commonwealth, both legislative and administrative, during its term of office.

The committee recommended that the duty of remitting the resolutions relating to the constitution of the next Conference be left with the Central Political Executive of Queensland, with power to act; that the preparation and issue of the official report of the Conference be entrusted to the secretary of the Central Political Executive of the Queensland Labour party. Mr. A. Hinchliffe. It was further recommended that the convening executive body be empowered to prepare and submit a draft scheme for the creation of an Australian Political Labour Executive, and embody the same in the agenda paper for the next Conference; and that the thanks of the Conference be given to the Trades Hall Council for the free use of the Council chamber, and to the various entertainers, and to the officers of the Conference.

After discussion the platforns and report as presented were adopted. Mr. Watson moved a vote of thanks to the president, vice-president, secretary, and minute secretary of the Conference, and Messrs. Prendergast, Spence, Heagney, and Billson having responded, the gathering terminated with cheers and the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."

During an interval in the proceedings, the members of the Conference presented Miss Locke, as the only lady delegate present, with a framed photographic group of the members. Mr. Prendergast (president) made the presentation, and Miss Locke suitably replied. The delegates assembled also took the opportunity of presenting Mr. Prendergast with a handsomely enlarged photographic group of the Conference. Mr. Watson, in asking Mr. Prendergast to accept the picture, spoke of the admirable qualities which Mr. Prendergast had displayed in the chair, and it was due to his tact and excellently applied judgment that the work of the Conference had been marked by so much celerity. On occasions he had been discreetly indulgent, and it was to this and other tactful qualities that

the harmony of the proceedings had not been disturbed.

Mr. Prendergast said he was conscious of the honour accorded him when asked to preside over a Conference of such great importance. The position he had held was perhaps one not without difficulties, for whilst he did not wish to see rules of debate transgressed, he had to see that those who desired to speak should have a full voice in the deliberations. He trusted that the work of the Conference would meet with the full endorsement of the people of Australia—of that he had little doubt—and the great movement in which they were engaged would greatly benefit by the deliberations which had now concluded. He wished to acknowledge the assistance he had received from the vice-president (Mr. Spence), the secretary (Mr. Heagney), and the minute secretary (Mr. Billson). He thanked them one and all for their splendid gift.

#### ENTERTAINMENT OF DELEGATES.

Delegates to the Conference were most cordially received and royally entertained. A public welcome was given at Fitzgerald's Circus on Sunday, and thousands listened to speeches by representatives of the States. Resolutions endorsing the Labour platform were carried with enthusiasm.

The delegates were entertained at dinner by the Federal Labour party, the State Labour party, the Political Labour Council of Victoria, and by Mr. Wolfe, honorary solicitor to the Trades Hall Council. The last-named gentleman holds an Australian record; for twenty years he has done the legal work of the Trades Council free of charge.

Delegates also visited the Railway workshops at Newport (where State Socialism makes three railway engines for the cost of two engines made by private enterprise) and the Denton Hat Works, where Australian wool and Australian rabbit skins are made into Australian hats for sensible Australian people. Verily, "they do things better in Melbourne."

## FEDERAL LABOUR PARTY.

Fighting Platform and General Platform as adopted at Conference, July, 1905.

### Objective.

(a) The cultivation of an Australian sentiment, based upon the maintenance of racial purity, and the development in Australia of an enlightened and self-reliant community;

(b) The securing of the full results of their industry to all producers by the collective ownership of monopolies, and the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the State and Municipality.

### Fighting Platform.

- 1.—Maintenance of a White Australia.
- 2.—Nationalisation of Monopolies.
- 3.—Old Age Pensions.
- 4.—Tariff Referendum.
- 5.—Progressive Tax on Unimproved Land Values
- 6.—Restriction of Public Borrowing.
- 7.—Navigation Laws.
- 8.—Citizen Defence Force.
- 9.—Arbitration Act Amendment.

### General Platform.

- 1.—Maintenance of a White Australia.
- 2.—Nationalisation of Monopolies—if necessary, amendment of Constitution to provide for same.
- 3.—Old Age Pensions.
- 4.—Referendum of Commonwealth electors on the Tariff question when the report of the Tariff Commission has been completed; the Party to give legislative effect to the decision of the referendum vote.
- 5.—Progressive Tax on Unimproved Land Values.
- 6.—Restriction of Public Borrowing.
- 7.—Navigation Laws to provide—(a) for the protection of Australian shipping against unfair competition; (b) registration of all vessels engaged in the coastal trade; (c) the efficient manning of vessels; (d) the proper supply of life saving and other equipment; (e) the regulation of hours and conditions of work; (f) proper accommodation for passengers and seamen; (g) proper loading gear and inspection of same; (h) compulsory insurance of crews by shipowners against accident or death.
- 8.—Citizen Defence Force and Australian-owned Navy.
- 9.—Amendment of Commonwealth Arbitration Act to provide for Preference to Unionists and excision of the legal profession.
- 10.—Commonwealth Bank of Deposit and Issue, and Life and Fire Insurance Department, the management of each to be free from political influence.
- 11.—Uniform Industrial Legislation; amendment of Constitution to provide for same.
- 12.—Civil Equality of Men and Women.

### Pledge.

I hereby pledge myself not to oppose the candidate selected by the recognised political Labour organisation, and, if elected, to do my utmost to carry out the principles embodied in the Federal Labour Platform and on all questions affecting the Platform to vote as a majority of the Parliamentary Party may decide at a duly constituted caucus/meeting.

Candidate's signature .....

Date .....

## Resolutions of Conference.

1. "That in the opinion of this Conference neither Federal nor State Parliamentary Labour parties should in future enter into any alliances that extend beyond the life of the then existing Parliament, nor grant nor promise immunity from opposition at election time."
2. "That this Conference recommends that in the event of the Labour party obtaining the Ministerial benches, the Labour Ministry shall be recommended by the party in caucus."
3. "That this Conference is opposed to the re-enactment of the Braddon clause of the Federal Constitution."
4. "That this Australian Labour Conference requests the Federal Government members to urge the Federal Government to nationalise the iron industry instead of granting bonuses, as we consider the nationalising of such an industry would be in the best interests of the Commonwealth."
5. "That the importation of opium into the Commonwealth, except for medicinal purposes, be prohibited."
6. "That this Australian Conference recommend that a bonus to the sugar industry be extended for a further period, any reduction or termination of the bonus to be on a sliding scale."
7. "That this Conference favours the abolition of the maximum age limit to applicants for Government employment, where ability to do the work in question is shown by the applicant."
8. "That this Conference places on record its high appreciation of the manner in which the Federal Labour Ministry conducted the affairs of the Commonwealth, both legislative and administrative during its term of office."
9. "That the business sheets of all future interstate conventions be in the hands of the secretaries of the State Central Executives three months before the date of Conference."
10. "That all resolutions affecting the pledges, platforms, or constitutions carried by a two-thirds majority of delegates credentialled to future Australian Political Labour Conferences shall be binding."
11. "That subjects other than those embraced in the business-sheet may be discussed, but decisions thereon shall not be binding unless carried by a two-thirds majority and subsequently approved by the various State organisations."
12. "That each State represented at future Political Labour Conferences shall forward with the credentials of its delegates a sum of £5 to meet the expenses of Conferences and of an Australian Political Labour Executive."
13. "That future Australian Conferences consist of six (6) delegates from each State."
14. "That the Central Political Executive of Queensland be charged with the duty of convening the next Australian Political Conference, to be held in Brisbane in 1908."
15. "That the duty of remitting the resolutions relating to the constitution of the next Conference be left with the Central Political Executive of Queensland with power to act."
16. "That the convening executive body be empowered to prepare and submit a draft scheme for the creation of an Australian Political Labour Executive, and embody the same in the agenda paper for the next Conference."

17. "That the Australian movement be brought into organised relationship with the international movement, and that, with that object in view, steps be taken to secure Australia's direct representation at the next International Conference."
18. "That an official report of the proceedings of this Conference be prepared, and 1000 copies supplied for distribution in equal quantities to each State at a cost not to exceed £2 per State."
19. "That this Conference repudiates with indignation the charges levelled against the Australian Labour movement of endeavouring to weaken the sanctity of the marriage tie and to sap the foundations of religious belief; and we furthermore declare our firm conviction that the success of our efforts to improve the material condition of the community would result in the elevation and not the degradation of marriage, and would enable
20. "That this Conference urge, through their organisations, the support of Australian productions by our own workmen, and that our various Governments and municipalities be urged to give preference to the products of the Commonwealth."
21. "That this Conference deplores the fact that, although the principle of equal franchise for men and women has been adopted throughout the Commonwealth for the Federal Parliament and five of the State legislatures, yet in the State of Victoria women are still denied political justice."

