

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

PARTY RE-ORGANISATION

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

A: FEDERAL CONFERENCE

I - DIRECT REPRESENTATION

1: Although personally favouring a Federal Conference comprising direct representation from Federal Electorates and Federal Unions, with the sparsity of information available on such basic matters as (i) local finances and membership, and (ii) actual membership and degree of authority of Federal Trade Unions, I could not objectively assess the practicability of the scheme.

2: Without the complete co-operation of State Branches in making private information available on individual membership and finances, and the assistance of trade union organisations, no one can state with accuracy if the scheme could work.

3: After very careful consideration, I believe it is necessary to invoke the full authority of the Federal Conference to obtain the requisite information and to permit a detailed study of all the implications of such a change.

4: Accordingly, I recommend:-

R:1 "That the Federal Conference instruct the National Organising and Planning Committee to report to the Federal Executive on the desirability and practicability of re-organising the future Federal Conferences on the basis of representation from (i) Federal Trade Unions; (ii) Federal Electorate Party organisations; (iii) State Executives; and (iv) Federal Parliamentarians."

II. PROPOSED CHANGES

A: STATE REPRESENTATION

5: As the Federal Conference is the supreme governing body of the Party, and its decisions are binding upon all sections, it should be as representative of the Party as possible. At present its composition is too small and restrictive to allow for all the Sections to be adequately represented.

6: Although based on the Senate system of representation, the Party did not follow the Chifley's government action in 1948 by increasing the size of the State delegations. I believe that to raise the size of delegations from six to ten would be to the advantage of both the States and the Party as a whole. The work of a Federal Conference will in the future become heavier. Policy committees functioning throughout the year will be submitting very detailed reports to Conference for consideration. The more representatives, therefore, the Conference of key people within the States, the sounder will be any ultimate finding.

7: The present number of six is too limited. All States would like to send more leading personnel to the Federal body but cannot do so because of the small number permitted. Most States now automatically include the State President and State Secretary on their delegations, which immediately reduces the number of other places to four. When one considers the wealth of talent that is available within the Party structure, four delegates from each State to the National Conference is far from adequate.

8: Although it is outside the jurisdiction of the Federal Executive to recommend who should be included on such delegations, I would hope that States in any increased delegation would make room for at least one Federal Parliamentarian, one State Parliamentarian and one representative of the Party Federal electorate councils.

I accordingly recommend:-

R:2 "That as from 1966 the size of State delegations be increased from six to ten."

#### B: PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION

9: The question of Parliamentary representation is one which has raised a great deal of controversy within the Party, not just recently, but throughout the years of the Party existence. In the years immediately following the formation of the Federal Party, Parliamentarians were well represented on the Conference and the Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party was invariably a delegate from his home State.

J. C. Watson attended the 1900, 1902, 1905, 1908 and 1912 Conferences, the first three being held during his time of Federal Leadership.

A. Fisher attended the 1905, 1908, 1912 and 1915 Conferences, all except the first when he was Federal Leader.

The 1918 Conference resolved to admit Mr. Frank G. Tudor, then Parliamentary Leader, with the right to participate in all discussions but not to vote (Official report, page 2).

A similar decision was taken at the 1919 Conference (Official Report, page 21).

Matthew Charlton (1922-8) did not attend any Conference, whereas J. H. Scullin (1928-35) attended all Federal Conferences held during his period of Leadership as a delegate from the Victorian Branch.

John Curtin (1935-45) was a delegate from the West Australian Branch to all Federal Conferences held during the term of his Leadership.

Therefore, of the 24 Conferences held between 1900 and 1943, the Federal Leader was in attendance either as a full delegate or by invitation of the Conference at 19 of them.

10: I hold the opinion very strongly that the Parliamentary Leaders should attend the Conference in their own right and not have to depend on an election in the State Conferences.

Once a Leader has been duly elected by the Caucus, for all sense and purposes he becomes the Leader of the Australian Labor Party.

11: As the Parliamentary Leaders serve the Party as a whole, they should not have to run the risk of possible defeat in State Elections for Annual Conference delegates.

If the Leaders are expected to represent the Party as a whole, then they should be afforded direct access to the Federal Conference in their own right.

Therefore, I recommend:-

R:3 "That the Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party; the Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party; the Leader of the Party in the Senate and the Deputy Leader of the Party in Senate shall be automatically delegates to the Federal Conference with full voting rights."

12: There is a great merit in the proposal that Members of the Parliamentary Labor Party should be given the right to attend Conference in an ex-officio capacity and be granted the right to speak but not to vote. However, this can only operate efficiently and without infringing upon the rights of other delegates if the Conference is a large one. When the Conference is comparatively small, the position could become completely unworkable. What is undoubtedly required and what would be of great value is the expert knowledge of the key people in the Caucus. The knowledge that these people possess would be of benefit to the ordinary delegates to Conference who have neither the time nor the facilities to equip themselves with a detailed knowledge of every subject with which they have to deal during a Federal Conference.

The Parliamentary Labor Party has now adopted the 'shadow cabinet' principle. A logical step is for the Federal Conference to have the benefit of the advice of 'shadow ministers' readily at hand.

I, therefore, recommend that:-

R:4 "Members of the 'shadow cabinet' of the Parliamentary Party be afforded ex-officio status at Federal Conference with the right to speak but not to vote."

#### C: STATE PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS

13: The relationship of the State Parliamentary Leaders to the Federal bodies has to be considered in a different light from that of the Federal Leader and his colleagues. Strictly speaking, the State Executives have primary jurisdiction over the respective State Parliamentary Parties, although in fact the Federal Conference could exercise immediate jurisdiction over them if it so desired. However, from all available records, it would seem that only once has the Federal Executive gone over the head of a State Executive and dealt directly with a State Parliamentary Party and that was as recent as 1963 in connection with New South Wales.

Up to that point, the Federal Executive had scrupulously followed the practice, even in its dealings with members of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, of usually working through the respective State Executives.

14: The position of the State Parliamentary Parties should not, however, be dismissed as having no relationship or bearing upon the functioning of the Federal bodies. On the contrary, they are a key unit within the Party structure and should be considered as such.

15: With the Commonwealth exercising greater powers than hitherto thought possible or necessary, and with the strong probability that this tendency will be accentuated rather than lessened, the need for the very closest possible co-operation between State and Federal bodies is imperative. This applies with special significance to the Labor Party, more than other Parties, although all suffer from this dichotomy of power.

The Labor Party must function on the basis of the closest possible co-operation between all of its sections and units, nor the domination of all by one.

16: State Leaders play a key role in the public arena of politics. Their presence at Federal Conferences, in their own right, would be of very great value in debates and in the harmonious functioning of the Party. The Federal Conference is the supreme policy making body of the Party, and its decisions are binding upon all units and sections. It is logical, therefore, that if the decisions of the Conference are to be carried out effectively, then the leading people in each State responsible for ultimately implementing those decisions should participate in the making of those decisions.

I, therefore, recommend that:-

R:5 "The Leader of each State Parliamentary Labor Party be automatically a full delegate to the Federal Conference."

*Wahl*

D: WOMENS REPRESENTATION

17: The importance of the womens vote in elections is now recognised as a decisive factor. In the section on Womens Organisation, I deal with the subject in more detail. Here to enhance the status of the Labor Womens Organising Committee I recommend:-

R: 6 "That <sup>a representative of the</sup> ~~the President and Secretary of the~~ Federal Labor Womens Organising Committee be ~~automatically full delegates to the~~ Federal Conference." *inserted to put their right to represent*

*Life 1/1/49*

E: ANNUAL CONFERENCES

18: When the Party was founded, the Federal Conference met every three years. Later this was changed to every two years. Now the time has arrived to provide for annual Conferences.

19: Any political party must keep abreast with changing times. Policy which is made today may well become outmoded tomorrow, either because of changing circumstances or through the legislative action of government. This applies particularly in the field of international affairs and defence. Events move so rapidly that it is practically impossible to lay down anything other than a broad set of principles. Too much detail, as is now found in the foreign affairs platform, makes the risk of dating greater. As a result, confusion can arise to the detriment of the Party.

20: The Federal Executive has no power to change policy. This is a sound principle and one which should be adhered to. But it inhibits the approach of the Party and its operation when circumstances that motivated a particular item policy change dramatically or disappear from the political scene.

21: If the Party is to keep abreast of events, then its highest policy making body must meet at least once a year. This does not necessarily mean that every item of policy will be gone over year after year. With policy committees now functioning between Conferences, the Party's policy is becoming much more orderly and sensible. What it would mean is that at every Conference more time could be spent on important matters which merit attention. At the moment, the Conference is faced with the task of catching up with two years work.

I, therefore, recommend:-

R:7 "That commencing with 1966, the Federal Conference shall meet annually."

F: DIRECT ACCESS OF FEDERAL ASSEMBLIES AND FEDERAL UNIONS

22: Under present procedure, Federal trade unions and Federal Party organisations have no direct access to either the Federal Conference or the Federal Executive, except in special circumstances. All material for either body must come through the respective State Branches and be endorsed by the State Conferences or State Executives.

A complaint made by all Federal Party organisations is that insufficient attention is paid to them in the States, the emphasis being laid upon State Parliamentary elections. This is wrong. Probably, the election of a Federal Labor government is more important than anything else. State Governments complain that their powers are being undermined by the Federal authority and that the taxing power leaves them at the mercy or otherwise of the Commonwealth Government. Thus it must be of primary concern to every section of the Party to work for the election of a Labor Government in the Federal sphere.

23: Federal electorate authorities are treated as Cinderellas at the moment. Their funds raising activities are given very little priority and one finds all too often that much more time is devoted to financing a local government by-election than to a Federal campaign. Some Party campaign committees covering local government have bulging bank balances while Federal Campaign Committees have hardly anything at all.

24: The status of the Federal Party organisations must be raised and one way to do this is to give them direct access by means of communication with the Federal Conference and Federal Executive. At least they will know that their views are being laid before the highest policy making bodies of the Party.

25: This procedure will not cut across the rights of the State Executive or State Conferences nor will it cause them any embarrassment. It could save the State Executives embarrassment or difficulties and assist them rather than hinder them. In any case, the final decision remains with the Federal Executive or Conference upon which the States are directly represented.

26: A similar facility should also be accorded to Federal trade unions. At the present time, Federal Unions can only have direct access when a matter of discipline is involved. This builds up in the minds of delegates to Federal Unions that the Federal Party Executive and/or Conference is a 'grudge' body. Under present procedure, a Federal Union wishing to place an item on the Agenda of the Federal Party Conference would have to arrange for one of its State Branches to submit it through the appropriate State Executive. If one State Party Executive refuses to endorse the proposition for transmission to the Party Executive or Conference at Federal level, this causes discontent within that Union. In any case, the procedure is unwieldy and unnecessary.

27: A limit should be put on the resolutions to be submitted by a Union of Federal Party organisation. If they are given free access without restriction, the Agenda would soon become cluttered up with motions that should not be

there, I have always felt that insufficient attention is given by local branches and Party units to the Agenda items they submit for State Conferences. Too often the merits of the case are not debated but the item is simply sent on to the next highest Party unit because there is no restriction on the number of items that may be submitted.

28: If Federal Unions and Federal Party organisations are to be given access than they must treat this privilege with great care and consideration.

29: Furthermore, the items to be submitted must be of a Federal character and strictly related to Federal policy. No one wants to see a Federal Conference Agenda cluttered up with the petty grievances of members affecting the location of a public convenience on the corner of a street!

I accordingly recommend:-

R:8 "That as from 1966 Federal Trade Union organisations and Federal Electorate Party organisations be permitted to submit no more than three items for inclusion on the Federal Conference Agenda, provided that these resolutions are confined to matters of Federal policy; and further that the organisations mentioned may have direct communication with the Federal Executive."

## B: FEDERAL EXECUTIVE

### (a) Composition

30. The Federal Executive was established by the 1918 Federal Conference and has remained at two delegates from each State for nearly fifty years. For reasons I have already advanced in recommending an increase in the size of Conference delegations, I believe an increase in the size of the Federal Executive is long overdue.

The work that the Federal Executive has to handle has grown. Delegates are being asked to spend more time on Federal matters than ever before. Since 1961, Standing Policy Committees have been established and are presided over by a Member of the Executive. The establishment of the Federal Secretariat has also added to the work of the Federal Executive.

Thus a greater amount of work is being undertaken by a group of men already carrying a heavy load in their respective States.

31: Meetings of the Federal Executive should also be held more often than at present. One of the weaknesses in our Federal Structure has been that meetings of the Executive had been sufficiently infrequent to make them a subject of notoriety when they do meet. If they met regularly and often they would become an accepted feature in political life. More frequent meetings would also mean less time away from home States and duties for the delegates attending.

32: The position of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party I have already covered, and there is no need for me to repeat the arguments for their inclusion on the Federal Executive here.

I accordingly recommend that:-

R:9 "(a) The Federal Executive shall consist of:-

- (i) Three delegates from each State Branch;
- (ii) The Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party;
- (iii) The Deputy Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party;
- (iv) The President, ex-officio, unless he is otherwise appointed a delegate.
- (v) The General Secretary with the full rights of a delegate except that of voting;

(b) The Federal Executive shall meet at least every two months."

(b) Party Officers

33: Insufficient attention has been given to the question of Party finances at the Federal level. I deal with this subject in much more detail under the appropriate heading.

At this point, I recommend that:-

R:10 "The Federal Executive shall elect each year a person to fill the office of Treasurer of the Party.

The position, will, of course, be honorary but it is a post of sufficient importance to be established forthwith."

(c) High Policy Committee

34: Under direction of the 1961 Federal Conference, the Federal Executive was empowered to establish Standing Policy Committees. This was a great advance in the Party's machinery for formulating policy.

35: There is, however, a serious weakness, namely, there is no Committee charged with the task of looking at the Platform and policy as a whole. In some instances, Sections of the Platform could not justify a separate committee to be set up just to consider it. Nor would it fit appropriately within the jurisdiction of any existing committee. Consequently some proposals remain on the Platform which should have been struck out long ago. Such a situation weakens the value of the Platform as a whole and tends to hold the Party up to ridicule and the allegation that it is rigid and inflexible.



36: There are also occasions when the Parliamentary Party or the Party organisation has to make some pronouncement on a subject which is not covered by the Party Platform. In the past, the issue has either been let slip until it is too late or someone makes a statement which does not meet with the approval of the rest of the Party and a public controversy breaks out.

37: The two situations I have outlined could be met by the establishment of a High Policy Committee comprising the Officers of the Federal Executive and the Officers of the Parliamentary Labor Party. Naturally, the committee could not make policy but it would be able to review the problem in the light of circumstances then prevailing. It would be of sufficiently authoritative a character to give sufficient weight to the guidance it offered.

I accordingly recommend:-

R:11 "That the Officers of the Party together with the Officers of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party shall constitute a High Policy Committee which shall keep under constant consideration the existing Platform and Policy of the Party and advise the Federal Executive, Federal Conference or ~~Appropriate Standing Committee~~ on any matter which in its opinion needs review by the Executive, ~~Conference or Standing Committee~~. The Committee shall meet as and when required to consider matters which may affect Party policy and are likely to become the subject of public debate and about which there is some doubt as to the Party's attitude. No decision of the Committee can be considered binding until it has been endorsed by the Executive or the Conference."

*REVIEW*  
*PLAT. POL. REV. 1950*

#### C: PARTY DISCIPLINE

38: Where self-discipline is exercised and there is a high degree of loyalty to the Party, the exercise of machinery discipline arises on very rare occasions.

39: Because of the Federal nature of the Party, very often a dispute which could be settled quickly and with a minimum of public controversy drags out over many months. Thus when it comes before the Federal Executive for determination, it is revived in the public mind, and the whole process of public dispute is gone through again. This time lag also acts unfairly against an accused person, who is sometimes left in doubt as to his position for many months. This is contrary to all forms of democratic justice - or it should be.

40: The only rule at present covering the powers of the Federal Executive and/or Federal Conference is 7(c)(vi) and

the present wording has itself caused confusion. By breaking the present rule into the three sections suggested below, there should be no doubt as to its meaning.

I recommend that Rule 7(c)(vi) be rephrased as follows:-

- R:12 (i) The Federal Executive shall hear appeals from any affiliated organisation or individual member on the decision of any State Conference or State Executive where leave to appeal is granted to the appellant(s) by the State Executive or State Conference concerned.
- (ii) The Federal Executive shall be competent to hear and decide appeals on the decision of any State Conference or State Executive on any matter affecting the Federal Labor Platform or Federal Policy or the attitude of any members of the A.L.P. thereto.
- (iii) The Federal Executive shall hear and decide any appeal from any candidate for Federal Elections whose approval or endorsement as a candidate has been withheld or unduly delayed for any cause which, in the opinion of the Federal Executive affects the Federal Labor Platform or Federal policy or the attitude of any member(s) of the Party thereto.

41: Many of the delays in disciplinary matters created in the past were due to the absence of a full-time Federal Secretary. Now that ~~both~~ <sup>both</sup> are in existence, there is no reason why what should have been done in the past is not now operated.

42: Where a State Branch has to act to implement the decisions of the Federal Executive and/or Federal Conference when an organisation or individual has breached a Federal rule, the Federal Secretary of the Party should be brought into immediate consultation. As the Chief Executive and Administrative Officer of the Federal bodies, he should be intimately concerned with the hearings and evidence from the very beginning to ensure that the decisions of the Federal Executive and Federal Conference are carried out and not themselves breached or abrogated.

I accordingly make the following recommendation:

- R:13 "That where the powers of the Federal Executive and/or Federal Conference are likely to be invoked in matters concerning Party discipline, the General Secretary of the Party shall immediately consult with the State Branch concerned and recommend a course of action to the Officers or Executive of the State Branch affected. He shall forthwith notify all members of the Federal Executive of his action and recommendation and seek a postal ballot on his decision. If the vote upholds his recommendation, it shall become operative as if it were a decision of the Federal Executive taken at a duly constituted meeting but an adverse vote shall stay the implementation of the recommendation until such time as the Federal Executive meets to review the matter. In

using any powers granted under this section, the Rules and Constitution of a State Branch, State Executive, Federal Executive and Federal Conference shall in no way be impinged.

In exercising his powers under this Rule, the General Secretary of the Party shall be empowered to take whatever action he deems necessary to protect the rights of the Federal Executive and Federal Conference.

D: THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENTARY LABOR PARTY

(a) Position in the Structure

43: The position of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party and its members is an invidious one. Although in theory the controlling body is the Federal Executive and Federal Conference, in practice the members of the F.P.L.P. serve two masters - the Federal bodies and the State bodies. Because the States control the selections final and effective influence resides with them. There is the safeguard that a member whose pre-selection or endorsement has been withheld or unduly delayed can appeal to the Federal Executive. But this does not surmount the problem of divided responsibility.

44: There is a growing tendency within the Party to view the Parliamentarian as something apart. Once he is elected to Parliament he becomes, in the eyes of some, something different from the ordinary rank-and-file member or the Party official. He is distrusted and viewed with suspicion. On the other hand, some Parliamentarians consider themselves superior beings with special rights and claim that they owe allegiance to the people who elected them and not the Party. Both extreme views are to be deplored.

45: Without the Parliamentarian, the Party would be ineffective and futile. Without the Party, the Parliamentarian would never be elected to Parliament. Co-operation is the essence in any democratic party, not coercion. The Parliamentary and extra Parliamentary wings of the Party need each other and there must be the highest degree of mutual respect and trust.

46: To clarify the position of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, I recommend that the various decisions of the Federal Conference be included in the Constitution of the Party in the following form:-

R:14 " (i) No State Executive may direct members of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party in regard to matters affecting the Federal Platform or policy or upon legislation before the Parliament or any matters the subject of consideration by the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party.

(ii) The power of direction, advice and/or guidance is reserved for the Federal Conference and, between Conferences, the Federal Executive.

(iii) No State Branch shall approach the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party except through the Federal Secretary who will report to the Federal Executive on any action taken."

(b) Powers of Discipline

47: It is only on rare occasions that a Member misbehaves and it is necessary to invoke the disciplinary powers of the Federal Executive and/or Conference. On such occasions, as these, however, the Party should not be tardy to protect its integrity nor slow in exercising its powers. It should not be forgotten that when a single Member acts irrationally or irresponsibly, the whole Party can be brought into disrepute. (The Party is currently paying for such an act which took place nearly seven years ago.)

48: Again self-discipline is the best form of discipline. But if the members will not or cannot behave in a responsible manner, than someone else must. As the body charged with administering the whole Party, the Federal Executive must be concerned with the feelings of the ordinary branch member without whom this Party could never survive. What the highest official or public representative of the Party does, affects the rank-and-file member. It can enthuse him; it can depress him; it can drive him out of the Party.

49: I think it is timely that the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party should again be reminded by the Federal Conference that they are expected to exercise a greater amount of self-discipline than they have done hitherto. They should also be reminded that if they will not control themselves, than the Federal Executive will invoke its authority to control them.

49: The 1955 Conference decision went along way to clarifying the position, but it had the weakness that a Member of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party who breached discipline was to be reported to the State Executive concerned and not the Federal Executive. This decision should be amended as follows:

R:15 "That where a Member of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party offends against the Party or acts in breach of a Caucus decision, he shall first be warned by the Caucus Executive and if the offense continues, he shall be reported forthwith to the Federal Secretary of the Party who shall (a) immediately advise the Members of the Federal Executive; (b) notify the State Executive concerned; (c) interview the Leader and member concerned."

(c) Condition of Candidature

50: I strongly believe that conditions for candidature in the Federal Parliament should be uniform, and no State should have the power to insert a rule or condition which does not operate elsewhere. The candidates are standing for the same position whether they live in Queensland or West Australia. The States have uniform conditions for the State candidatures and they do not differentiate between electorates within that State.

It seems to be quite illogical and to a degree unjust that certain conditions should be imposed in one State without due regard being given to the position in others.

51: At the present time, some States are operating an age limit; others are not. Unless there is uniformity, a candidate or member living in, say Albury, could find himself forced to retire at 65, provided the State decided to enact such a rule, while his colleague in Wodonga could go on to 95. If there is to be an age limit, it should be uniform and not discriminatory.

52: The same reasoning applies to a lesser extent to the levies paid by Federal Parliamentarians to their respective State Branches. Why should one member be compelled to pay a levy of x per cent, while another pays x- or x+ per cent and yet another pays none?

For these reasons, I recommend that a new Rule be added:-

R:16 "That the Federal Executive shall be entitled to review any decision of a State Conference and/or State Executive which affects the conditions of candidature for the Federal Parliament."

53: The Membership Qualifications for pre-selection, as laid down in State Rules, are: - South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania two years; West Australia, New South Wales; and Queensland three years.

There seems no logical reason why a member in Albury has to wait three years before being eligible for pre-selection while his colleague in Wodonga waits two years.

I accordingly recommend that:-

R:17 "State Branches be advised that the Membership requirement for Federal pre-selection shall be two years."

54: Methods of pre-selection vary greatly in each State, although only two adhere to the pre-selection ballot.

No attempt has been made to lay down uniform regulations for pre-selections. To disturb the position now with pre-selections about to commence for the next Federal Elections, would cause confusion. It is, however, time that the whole position was reviewed and I recommend that:-

R:17 <sup>That</sup> ~~"The Federal Conference be requested to instruct the N.O.P.C. to investigate the present methods of pre-selection with a view to preparing a uniform method."~~ <sup>to particularly</sup>

#### E: THE COMMONWEALTH TERRITORIES

55: Within the present structure, the Northern Territory is directly under the control of the Federal Executive while the A.C.T. is an integral part of the New South Wales Branch.

56: The Party advocates full autonomy for both Territories and I have never believed that it is a sound approach for the Party to advance a principle which it does not implement internally. Obviously there are considerable differences between the A.C.T. and the Northern Territory.

57: The A.C.T. does have an advantage in that it is part of a larger unit and has representation to the New South Wales State Conference, but in fact, this means very little when it comes to the internal problems of the territory. The New South Wales Government has no jurisdiction within the A.C.T. and any resolutions adopted by the New South Wales State Conference are pious expressions of sympathy or support. At the same time, the A.C.T. Branches do enjoy privileges denied the Northern Territory.

I recommend:-

R:18 " (i) That the Branches in the Northern Territory be permitted to form a Territory Executive which shall enjoy the status of a State Executive with respect to the internal administration and organisation of the Party in the Territory. Further the Federal Executive shall approve a set of rules for the Territory Executive which shall have the right to submit items to the Federal Conference and Executive, and which shall be entitled to appoint one delegate to Federal Conference.

(ii) That the Branches in the A.C.T. be removed from the jurisdiction of the New South Wales Branch and be formed into a Territory Executive with the status of a State Executive with respect to the internal administration and organisation of the Party in the Territory. Further that the Federal Executive shall approve a set of rules for the Territory Executive which shall have the right to submit items to the Federal Conference and Executive, and which shall be entitled to appoint one delegate to Federal Conference.

F: LABOR WOMENS ORGANISATION

58: The Federal Labor Womens Organisation is at present a rather insipid body. Its powers are limited and when it takes decisions, no one takes any notice of them.

59: Either the Party should have an effective womens organisation which is allowed to play a useful and influential rôle, or it should have none.

The Party dare not ignore the womens vote in future elections. Therefore, steps must be taken to improve the standing of the Labor Womens Organisation.

I, therefore, recommend that:

- R:19 " (i) The Labor Womens Organisation Executive be recognised as the Standing Policy Committee on ~~Womens Affairs~~.
- (ii) That the Secretary of the Labor Womens Organisation Executive be granted an Advisory Seat on the Federal Executive of the Party with the right to participate in discussions but not to vote.
- (iii) That the Labor Womens Organisation Executive shall be asked to nominate a woman to serve on each Policy Standing Committee."

#### G: YOUTH ORGANISATION

60: The problems in forming a Young Peoples Association at a Federal level are as difficult as they are at a State level. Young people cannot be considered a homogeneous group. Like any other section of the community, they act and think according to their circumstances or position.

61: The attitude that young people adopt towards the Party depends on the behaviour of the Party itself. If the Party is intolerable of their views and opinions, they will treat the Party with scorn and contempt.

62: But they cannot be ignored. By the time of the 1969 Election, 1,500,000 voters will be under 27. None of these people will be able to recall the Chifley Labor Government! The basic work in attracting young people must still be done in the States. Nevertheless, the Federal Bodies could be assisted by advice and I recommend:

R:20 "That a Youth Advisory Committee of six members under the age of 25 be established to advise the ~~Conference and Executive~~ on all matters affecting young people."

#### H: FINANCES

63: Finance is the most vital matter with which the Party must concern itself. Everyone recognises this fact. How to overcome is the problem. The following recommendations are designed to put the Party on a sound financial basis:-

- R:21 "(a) That the Federal Officers together with the Federal Leader and the Deputy Leader constitute a Finance Committee over which the Treasurer shall preside.
- (b) The Committee shall be charged with the task of raising ordinary and special funds for the development and expansion of the Party and for the conduct of elections.

- Approved*
- (c) An immediate appeal for £50,000 be launched to provide a base for the Party's operation.
  - (d) A bank order system be instituted through which members, friends and supporters can donate regularly to Party funds.
  - (e) A scheme be launched to obtain 2,000 members who will collect from 20 other people a minimum of 1/- per week thus raising £100,000 a year which will enable the Party at both State and Federal levels to function effectively."

I: MEMBERSHIP

64: The individual Party membership is appalling. Our membership in relation to our vote is less than one per cent! Some electorates have a pitiful handful of devoted stalwarts to keep the Party alive. As electorate vote grows, so our membership lessens. An increase in membership means increased revenue.

The following recommendations are made in this connection:

- R:22 "(a) That 1966 be declared Membership Year with a target 100,000 individual members (1/20th of the Party's popular support).
- (b) The N.O.P.C. to prepare a detailed programme to attract members including:-
- (i) special television and radio programmes;
  - (ii) the production of special pamphlets and other publications;
  - (iii) the organising of special rallies; meetings and conferences throughout the Commonwealth;
  - (iv) special articles by leading Party members for reproduction in Union Journals;
  - (v) the organisation of special functions designed to appeal to professional and other social groups."

J: LOCAL BRANCH ORGANISATION

65: One reason for poor individual membership is that the Party does little to encourage people to join. New methods are being employed in some States but they are the exception to the general rule.



66: Too many branches meet in ill-lit, shabby and depressing surroundings. Too much time is wasted on routine matters. Standing Orders are so restrictive and so slavishly followed that a strong heart is needed to remain. Too many chairmen and too many secretaries are ill-equipped to run meetings. This is not their fault but the fault of the Party in that it has never provided training for them.

The local branch is the Party's first line of defence and attack. The organisational and electoral success of the Party depends in the final analysis on the members of those branches. Related to this is the question of Party education.

I make the following recommendations:-

- R:23
- "(a) To encourage effective branch meetings. State Branches be requested to review their rules and Standing Orders to provide for streamlining of business.
  - (b) That to train Party members in the duties and functions of branch presidents, secretaries, treasurers, etc., and in election organisations, special day, weekend and week schools be organised.
  - (c) Such schools to be arranged on local, regional, State and Federal basis.
  - (d) Similar schools be arranged on the history, aims, ideals and policy of the Party.
  - (e) That at Federal level, Summer Schools of a weeks duration be arranged to embrace courses on organisation and policy.
  - (f) To assist Party members to attend such schools, State Branches and trade unions be urged to award scholarships.
  - (g) As a further aid to improving the efficiency and standard of the Party, a National Labor Correspondence College be established to conduct ~~partial~~ courses for Party members. *POSTAL*
  - (h) A regular publication be issued on organisational matters.
  - (i) Regular decision notes to be circulated to all units to stimulate discussion on the aims, objectives and policy of the Party.
  - (j) Local branches to be encouraged to organize their own evening schools on the above topics.
  - (k) Federal Party organisation to be encouraged to arrange schools on an electoral basis.

K: ELECTORAL ORGANISATION

66: The Party's electoral organisation needs complete renovation. To effect some improvement, the recommendations with respect to Party Branches will assist. The following recommendations take the process of improvement a stage further:-

- R:24
- (a) Candidates to be selected at least two years before an election.
  - (b) Candidates and key Party personnel to be trained at both State and Federal levels in the techniques of television, radio and public speaking.
  - (c) Publicity for an election to continue throughout the years between an election.
  - (d) Publicity be prepared to aim at special members of the Community.
  - (e) That a television and broadcasting <sup>studio</sup> station be established for training, filming and recording purposes.
  - (f) That regular radio programmes be prepared Federally for replay on Labor Stations in the respective States.
  - (g) That immediate concentration on marginal electorates be undertaken and for this purpose the Federal Secretariat to have direct contact with the Federal Party organisation in those electorates.
  - (h) To ensure that the maximum benefit is gained from the use of leading personnel, itineraries for the Parliamentary leaders shall be arranged by the Federal Secretary in consultation with the State Secretary concerned.
  - (i) That urgent consideration be given to the employment of field organisers in marginal electorates under the control of the Federal Executive and the N.C.P.C.
  - (j) That a handbook on the organisation and conduct of elections be prepared for use by all sections of the Party.
  - (k) That in conjunction with the State Branches, Senators be allocated to cover marginal electorates.
  - (l) That members in the House of Representatives in safe seats be allocated to a specific marginal electorate to service the local branches in the House and to 'shadow' the sitting member.

- (m) To ensure that all Members participate in the marginal electorates campaign and that no single member is penalised, a fund be established to meet the accommodation, travelling and other expenses of members and Senators affected by (k) and (l). The details of the fund to be mutually agreed between the N.C.P.C. and the Caucus Executive."

L: TRADE UNIONS

67: The position of the industrial trade unions has been changing dramatically in recent years. The advent of strong, militant 'white-collar' associations reflects the changing character of society. The A.C.T.U. and the A.W.U. have recognised the simple fact in their collaboration with A.C.S.P.A. and the High Council of the Public Service Associations. Regrettably, the Party has been slow to recognise the existence of such a powerful and influential force.

68: Concurrent with the growth of the 'white-collar' associations, there has been a falling off in the support of the Party from the industrial unions.

For too long the Party has assumed that it is receiving the support of the unionists, and, therefore, insufficient attention has been paid to what was really happening. Trade union journals are read by their members and too many of them continually carry implicit or open attacks on the 'right-wing' or 'left-wing' of the Party, depending on the political complexion of key people on the Union Executives. We should not, therefore, be surprised if at election time, the union member re-acts against the Party he is supposed to support.

69: The Party itself alienates many unionists by assuming that they think in the same way as they did twenty years ago. References to the 'workers', the 'working class' and the 'underprivileged' are just so much meaningless and sometimes offensive jargon in modern society. A glance at the Taxation Commission Reports shows that not all the cars, all the boats and all the holiday homes are owned by "the bosses". In any case, many of the underprivileged are not organised or eligible to be organised in Unions.

70: Thus the task that faces the Party is twofold; (a) to gain the support of the professional associations; and (b) to consolidate its support in the individual unions.

Therefore, the following recommendations are made:-

- R:25 (a) An approach to be made by the C.L.A.C. to the A.C.S.P.A. to join that body in a mutually agreed status.
- (b) State Branches be encouraged to seek the closest possible contact with professional associations.

- (c) That the Federal Executive establish a Consultative Committee consisting of members of professional and salaried associates.
- (d) A special campaign be commenced to inform all trade unionists of the advantages of affiliation with the Party.
- (e) Trade Unions be reminded that affiliation with the Party demands support for the policies of the Party and that advocacy of policies of other Parties will not be tolerated.

M: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

71: The recent decisions of the Executive to seek affiliation with the Socialist International and to co-operate in the formation of an Asian Regional Organisation have done much to end the Party's isolation in international affairs. More needs to be done and I recommend:-

- R:26
- (a) That with affiliation to the International, steps be taken to secure a seat on the Bureau.
  - (b) With the need for closer relationship with New Zealand, closer contact be established with the New Zealand Labour Party by the exchange of delegations to Party Conferences and the establishment of a Liaison Committee.
  - (c) That to gain a first hand knowledge of Asian affairs, arrangements be made for the exchange of delegations.
  - (d) That when leading members of the Party are touring overseas, they advise the Federal Secretary who will arrange contact with Labour Parties in the countries they are visiting.
  - (e) Upon the return of members from overseas, whenever possible, arrangements shall be made for him to address meetings of Party members.
  - (f) The Federal Executive to explore the possibility of inviting Asian socialists to Australia to be trained in Party and electoral organisation.
  - (g) That a system be devised in co-operation with Asian Parties whereby local branches could 'adopt' or link with a similar unit overseas and assist in the provision of necessary requisites, etc.
  - (h) That to set an example, the Federal Executive itself adopt an orphanage and that the International Refugee Organisation be requested to nominate such an orphanage.

- (1) That every assistance be given to the development of a Party in New Guinea."

N: FEDERAL SECRETARIAT

72: The expansion of the Federal Secretariat to provide for an Administrative Assistant, a Press and Publicity Officer and a Research Officer with appropriate clerical staff must be considered as the finances become available.

O: STANDARDISATION

73: To achieve a great degree of uniformity and assist in the removal of confusion, I recommend:-

R:27 "That State Branches be requested to revise their Rules to include the following:-

- (i) Standard Membership and Affiliation Fees;
- (ii) Membership Ticket expiry as at 31st December;
- (iii) Minimum age for admission to membership, 16 with full rights;
- (iv) Maximum age for youth organisations, 25."

P: SUPERANNUATION SCHEME

74: To provide Party officials and staff with the conditions enjoyed by many of the members they serve; I recommend:-

R:28 "That a National Superannuation Scheme be established to embrace all officers and staff willing to join.

CYRIL S. WYNDEHAM,  
General Secretary