

Australian Labour Federation Election Platform, 1891

The Special General Council of the Australian Labour Federation having regard for the approaching elections, and the necessity for putting forward distinct legislative steps towards the political aims of the Federation, suggests to the various districts and unions the following measures to be advocated by all Labour Party candidates, as to be brought forward and the feeling of the Assembly tested thereon in the next Parliament, all Labour Party candidates to pledge themselves not only to vote for these measures, but to insist to the utmost of their power upon a fair hearing being accorded to the immediate claims of Labour.

Electoral Reform—

UNIVERSAL AND EQUAL ADULT WHITE SUFFRAGE—The right to Vote.
ABOLITION OF THE NOMINEE CHAMBER.

National Work—

STATE WATER CONSERVATION AND IRRIGATION. STATE-AIDED VILLAGE SETTLEMENT.
STATE BANK.

Educational—

COMPULSORY EDUCATION, absolutely free in State Schools.
FREE LENDING LIBRARIES, compulsory in all municipalities.

Regulation of Industry—

STATUTORY EIGHT-HOUR DAY.
SHOPS AND FACTORIES ACT, with elected inspectors.
MINES ACT, giving complete protection to miners.
MACHINERY ACT, providing for inspection of land boilers and machinery.

Labour Rights—

STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR, to which men can apply for work at a minimum wage AS A RIGHT.
WAGES ACT, giving complete lien for wages over work performed, and full security for wages against all forfeiture, whether by agreement or by court order.
STATE PENSION of all persons over 60, who have been in Queensland for 10 years, and of all orphans under school age—NOT AS A CHARITY, BUT AS A RIGHT.
AMENDMENT OF TRADE UNION ACT, declared by (Chief Justice Lilley to be ‘a sham and a delusion.’

Repeals—

ABOLITION OF STATE-AIDED IMMIGRATION.
ABOLITION OF ALL CONSPIRACY LAWS, including Masters and Servants Act.
ABOLITION OF NOMINEE JUSTICES—all magistrates to be elected. ABOLITION OF C.D.* ACT.

The General Council urges all districts and unions to immediately consider these measures, and to notify the General Secretary if any measure of pressing importance has been omitted. Districts are requested to notify the General Executive of their decision by May 1, as the probability of a General Election necessitates immediate action. The putting forward measures of local interest is left entirely in the hands of the various District Councils.

The Worker, 7 March 1891

Appendix to Murphy and Hughes (eds.), *Prelude to Power*, pp267-91. Reprinted in Reprinted in David Lovell, *Marxism and Australian Socialism before the Bolshevik Revolution*, p271