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A.L.P. BROADCAST BY THE HON. THE PREMIER, MR. D.A. DUNSTAN, Q.C., M.P.
5-K.A., FRIDAY, 4TH AUGUST, 1967.

GOOD EVENING :

Today the Labor Party's 27th biennial conference ended in Adelaide. If one reads the Press, the impression that one gains is that the major issue facing this particular conference was the question of some reorganisation of the Labor Party's Federal structure. It is a little strange that so much concentration is put upon this by the Press. The Federal structures of other political parties are not nearly as democratic as the existing Labor Party Federal structure, yet nothing is said about the way in which a Leader of a Party - in the cases of other Parties - may simply hand down his own decisions dictating to the rank and file of the Party as to what policy will be in the future, whereas the Labor Party's structure is always based upon consultation and giving the effective voice of the rank and file. But, to read the Press one would think that the major thing was this reorganisation of the Federal structure of the Labor Party and that Mr. Whitlam had been demanding a major reorganisation at this conference. He was supposed to have done this on the basis of some proposals put to the Labor Party some time ago by its Federal Secretary, Mr. Cyril Wyndham. Now, what indeed were the Wyndham proposals for the Labor Party? These involved some changes in the personnel of the Federal Executive and Federal Conference in the Labor Party as interim measures, and, in the long run, an inquiry to establish membership, costs, finance, and the like, to see whether there should not be, instead of a Federal structure, people representing each particular State organisation at a Federal conference, a structure in which there should be direct representation from Federal Unions and Federal electorate committees, without having to go through the local State branch organization. But this was merely an inquiry - a long-term thing to establish the basis upon which decisions could be made. Mr. Whitlam certainly had wanted to see some kind of inquiry of this kind so that in the long term some decisions on these matters could be made on the basis of adequate information.

When this conference came along, to read the Press one would think that Mr. Whitlam had been demanding of the Labor Party that at this conference there be a complete change in the structure to a 200 member Federal conference directly representing rank and file organisations. That is completely untrue. At no time did either Mr. Wyndham or Mr. Whitlam demand this of the Labor Party. Mr. Whitlam came to the conference asking for some changes in Federal structure. The Federal conference resolved for greater changes in Federal structure than Mr. Whitlam had asked for. Indeed what has happened is that the Parliamentary leaders of the Labor Party have become more involved - more responsible - at the decision-making level of conferences of the Labor Party than ever in its history, and more than Mr. Whitlam had asked. The newspapers have written this up as a defeat for Mr. Whitlam. NOW JUST WHAT KIND OF GAME ARE THEY PLAYING? As far as a long-term enquiry is concerned, Mr. Whitlam is now a full voting member of both Federal Conference and Federal Executive, both of which bodies have the power to initiate the necessary enquiries, so that at no stage can it be said that this is a compromise, a defeat for Mr. Whitlam. Indeed, there was nobody in the Labor Party out to defeat Mr. Whitlam in any of his proposals. In fact the Labor Party has made a major change in its structure for the interim period and there is no question of rejection of one part of the Party or another.

The Labor Party has once more affirmed to the people of Australia that it is a Party which constantly looks at its own organisation as well as others to see to it that the average man and woman in our community - the people who are the rank and file - those who make up the greatest political movement in this country - have an effective voice in the policies which the Party shall put forward to the people.

GOOD NIGHT.