The New South Wales Teachers’ Federation, c.1957-1975

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John M. O'Brien
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ABBREVIATIONS

A.C.S.P.A. Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations.
A.C.S.S.O. Australian Council of State Schools Organisations.
A.C.T.U. Australian Council of Trade Unions.
A.I.C.D. Association for International Cooperation and Disarmament.
A.N.Z.A.A.S. Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science.
A.L.P. Australian Labor Party.
A.T.F. Australian Teachers' Federation.
C.P.A. Communist Party of Australia.
C.P.D. Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates.
D.L.P. Democratic Labor Party.
D.T. Daily Telegraph.
N.S.W.P.D. New South Wales Parliamentary Debates.
N.S.W.T.F. New South Wales Teachers' Federation.
S.M.H. Sydney Morning Herald.
S.T.A. Secondary Teachers' Association.
ABSTRACT
This work analyses the history of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation from 1957 to 1975. The Federation is one of the largest unions in New South Wales and as an affiliate of the Australian Teachers' Federation, is part of one of the largest industrial organisations of employees in Australia. The period under review was a time of significant economic, political and social change, both in Australia and internationally. This thesis examines the Federation's response to those changes and its attempts to influence the direction of those changes. It seeks to identify the changes within the union and the degree of continuity in the union's experience during the whole of the period under discussion. Previous work on the Federation has not dealt with this particular period of its history in any comprehensive way.

The thesis is informed by, and in part endeavours to make a contribution to, the debates about the role teachers and their organisations play in a capitalist society. It examines the activity of the Federation as an organisation of employees of the State. It discusses the constraints operating upon teachers as State employees. It traces the sometimes contradictory influence of the ideology of professionalism, in its various forms, upon the attitudes and behaviour of teacher unionists. It considers the difficulties which can arise from teachers' contradictory position as both wage earners and professionals. The thesis endeavours to make some contribution to the task of identifying the class position, class location and the degree of class consciousness of teachers as unionists.
The primary material on which this thesis is based is taken, for the most part, from the extensive archives and publications of the Federation itself. The author has had unrestricted access to this material. It has been supplemented by material of an official nature such as government education reports and by contemporary newspapers that have devoted a considerable amount of space to the activities of teachers' unions and to education generally. Interviews with persons involved in the union during the period under review, brought differing perspectives to the information and differing insights from those gleaned from the written sources. For the most part, however, the argument of the thesis is derived from the written sources.

The work examines the policies, and particularly the methods, adopted by the Federation in the period under review. It traces the process of transformation from a concept of 'united action' which did not include resort to strike action, and which was largely determined by the central decision-making bodies of the union, to action initiated by local units and vanguard elements of the union and which often involved strike action. The movement towards the use of strike action as an industrial tactic is examined, together with the implications of the use of that tactic for the internal operations and politics of the union. It also considers the consequences of the use of strike action for the union's relationship with various authorities of the State. Indeed the 1968 strike, the first in Federation history, is the pivotal point both of the narrative and the argument of the thesis.
Much of the thesis is developed chronologically. There are, however, important exceptions to this approach. Two chapters discuss the Federation's federal funding campaigns. Another two chapters deal with the background to the period under discussion and the wider social, political and economic context in which the Federation operated. There is also a chapter which discusses changes in the structure and operation of the union in the 1960s.

Chapter one deals with the context in which the union operated in the 1940s and early 1950s, as well as giving some background to the internal structure and politics of the organisation in this period. The second chapter examines the Federation's federal funding campaign, particularly the attempt to build a broadly-based united front by the mobilisation of arguments about the role of education in economic, scientific and technological development.

Chapter three discusses the Federation's campaign for the reform of secondary education. The next chapter analyses the role that the union's Education Commission policy played in providing a central focus for the activities of the Federation in the first half of the 1960s.

Chapter five analyses the various constituent elements within the union and the changes that took place within the organisation during the 1960s. The objective of this chapter is to explain what constituted, both 'unity' and acceptable 'action' within the traditional Federation concept of 'united action'.
This is followed by a chapter which sets out the broader economic, social and political framework in which the union operated in the late 1960s and in the first half of the 1970s. Chapter seven is the second chapter on the federal funding issue, covering the period 1967 to 1975.

Chapter eight examines the changes within the teaching service and within the union itself which contributed to the resort to strike action in 1968. The next two chapters deal with the consequences of that action for the union's relationship with the State authorities. They also examine the related struggle within the union between those who desired to maintain the maximum degree of central control and those elements that demanded greater autonomy from the centre in the ordering of the campaign priorities of the union.

The last chapter covers the period of the new leadership which emerged victorious from the internecine warfare of the late 1960s and early 1970s. It analyses whether this period constituted a 'new era' in Federation history fundamentally different from the period preceding it.

The work concludes that important changes took place within the union which, in turn, had a significant effect on the union's relationships with the State. It also suggests, however, that these changes had not, in any fundamental way, swept away the constraints placed upon teachers as employees of the State. It also concludes that the ideology of professionalism, although
weakened and redefined in the interests of the union rather than the employer, still prevented teachers from identifying themselves as an integral part of the working class in its continuing struggle with Capital and the State. In the period 1957 to 1975 there had been much change, but nevertheless significant continuity, in the history of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation.
CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1938 - 1957
Structure of the N.S.W.T.F.

The New South Wales Teachers Federation, in 1983, was an organisation of 71,392 members covering teachers from the pre-school, school to the tertiary sectors. (1) It is the largest industrial union in N.S.W. and is in turn the largest constituent union of the Australian Teachers Federation, an organisation of 153,950 members. (2) Formed in 1918, it has always claimed to be an organisation concerned with the working conditions of its members and committed to the advancement of education generally. It has always presented itself as both an 'industrial' and a 'professional' organisation. Its foundation constitution declared that its first objective was 'to promote the cause of education in New South Wales'. (3) This constitution made no explicit reference to 'industrial' matters, but the Federation from the first, claimed the right 'to speak authoritatively for teachers whenever the necessity arises'. (4) The 1984 edition of its constitution says that the Federation will both 'watch over and protect the industrial interests of its members' and 'promote the cause of pre-school, infants, primary, secondary and tertiary education'. (5)

(2) A.C.T.U., Report on Group Structure, A.T.F. Committee papers, October 1984, N.S.W.T.F.
(3) N.S.W. Public School Teachers' Federation, Constitution (1919), p.1.
(4) ibid.
The supreme governing body of the union is an Annual Conference. Delegates to this conference are elected by local and statewide associations, as are members of the State Council. This body is elected every two years by rank and file ballot. During the late 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, it usually met monthly. Before 1968 it had met twice a month on Saturday mornings. Until then, most teachers representing country associations were resident in Sydney. After 1967, however, the Council was fully representative of all members. The Executive of the union is elected annually by Council.

Throughout its history, the basic decision-making unit of the Federation had been the Association. These fall into three categories: local, sectional and statewide. Generally speaking, all country members are members of their local district association. Until 1963, however, most members in Sydney and Newcastle were automatically allocated to a sectional association based on the teaching area in which they taught. After 1963, members were allocated to a local association if one existed. As more schools opened up in the outer areas of Sydney, local associations were established. By 1974 the whole of the metropolitan area was served by local associations, and sectional associations suffered a severe decline in numbers. College and University members, teachers in Technical Colleges and certain other categories of members (6) are allocated to statewide

(6) Adult migrant and child welfare teachers and teachers, in administrative and consultant positions within the Department of Education, have their own Associations.
associations. After 1976, however, there were only local and statewide associations, sectional associations having been abolished by the union.\(^7\)

The paid officers of the union consist of the three Presidential Officers and other administrative officers. Until 1952, all officers were elected by the Council. Since that time, however, the President, Deputy-President and Senior Vice-President have been elected by popular ballot by the membership every two years. Together with the General Secretary, the three Presidential officers are the senior officers of the union. The most senior of administrative officers is the General Secretary, who is elected by Council every three years. Other administrative officers include organisers, welfare, industrial and research officers, a women's co-ordinator and officers with essentially administrative functions. During the period 1957-1975, the number of administrative officers grew from nine to twenty-five. By 1984, there were 39 administrative officers.\(^8\)

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\(^7\) These structural changes are discussed in chapters five and eleven.

\(^8\) This outline is based on information contained in N.S.W.T.F., Annual Reports, various; Federation Facts (1945); Handbook of the N.S.W. Public School Teachers Federation, (n.d. but 1946); Young Teachers' Handbook 1963-1964 (1963) and Federation Representatives' Manual (1979).
Debates about Teachers

The N.S.W.T.F. has attracted considerable scholarly interest. Bruce Mitchell has written of the Federation in the context of various public school teachers' organisations in N.S.W. (9) Andrew Spaull discussed, in particular, the various reasons for the Federation remaining a single organisation throughout its history whereas three public school teachers' organisations emerged in Victoria. (10) There have also been a number of theses and articles on various aspects of Federation


Mitchell and Spaull, in particular, have dealt with the question of the problems associated with the maintenance of unity in an organisation whose members are sometimes torn between their 'professional' duties as educators and their 'industrial' duties as unionists.

These conflicts between professional duty and industrial solidarity are not unique to teachers. They are often experienced by other non-manual workers. Just as it was unusual for teachers

to act like manual workers, so too was it unusual for public servants, nurses, insurance workers and bank officers. Indeed, the sense of difference from the rest of the working class is symbolised by the separate existence of the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations from the A.C.T.U. until 1979. The post-war period was characterised by an enormous growth in the non-manual sector of the labour force and a significant level of unionisation of those workers, was well as a greater propensity for such workers to adopt industrial methods, once largely the preserve of manual workers like seamen, wharf labourers, miners, building and metal workers.(12) To some extent, the growing militancy of teachers needs to be seen within the context of similar tendencies among other traditionally docile workers.

The contradictory position of teachers as professionals and as workers has occasioned considerable debate among sociologists about teachers' class location, class position and

their role in the reproduction of class relations in a capitalist society. Reproduction theorists such as Althusser, Bowles and Gintis, Bourdieu, Harris and Grace have argued that education systems in capitalist societies, and the teachers within those systems, contribute to the reproduction of capitalist class relations. (13) Others, such as Connell, Hall, Hirst, Johnson and Thompson have questioned reproduction theory and have emphasised the role of class consciousness and class struggle in

capitalist societies. Other writers, such as Finn, Grant and Johnson have discussed the contradictory position of teachers as wage earners and their ideological and political situation as professionals, a concept constructed in a way designed to emphasise teachers' differences from the working class.

Other writers, in the 'structuralist' tradition, such as Carchedi and Poulantzas, have located teachers in the middle sectors of the class structure.

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This study of the N.S.W. Teachers Federation is not primarily designed to make a contribution to these theoretical, but sometimes ahistorical, debates. The issues raised in the thesis are influenced by these debates, although not confined by them. Nevertheless, the thesis is based on the assumption that an understanding of an institution such as a teachers' union, requires that it be situated within the social, economic and political context in which it operated in order to examine how the organisation responded to, and attempted to influence, that environment.

Post-War Reconstruction

The prime purpose of post-war reconstruction in Europe by the Western allies, was to re-build a war-ravaged continent in order to act as an economic and political counterbalance against the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies. Reconstruction was a central part of the emergence of the Cold War in global politics. As a western capitalist country, Australia could not but be influenced by these developments.

Australian post-war reconstruction sentiment however, centred on the desire to maintain full employment. The traditional concern with welfare within the Australian Labor Party

fitted well with the liberal capitalist conceptions of Keynesian economics, concepts which influenced the economists who were the principal advisers of the post-war Federal Labor Government.\(^{(18)}\)

These officials, largely working within the Department of Post-War Reconstruction, argued that there was a direct relationship between full employment and social security. H.C. Coombs, Director of Post-war Reconstruction, in particular, argued that there was a direct and necessary link between the Labor Government's economic and social objectives.\(^{(19)}\) The achievement of these objectives would be greatly facilitated if the Commonwealth assumed a more interventionist role in the economic life of the nation. Coombs, in particular, argued that the impact of the depression had been such that public opinion would demand such intervention.\(^{(20)}\)


\(^{(19)}\) Speech by H.C. Coombs, 'Planning for Peace', (1944), cited in Howard, op.cit., p.150.

\(^{(20)}\) Director-General, Post-War Reconstruction, 'Planning for Peace', Ministerial submissions - Post War Reconstruction, G.H.C. 48-15 in ibid, p.146.
The capacity of the federal government to play such a role had been enhanced considerably by its assumption of income taxing powers from the states in 1942.\(^{(21)}\) The attempts to assume greater economic and social powers met with mixed success in subsequent years with the defeat of the 1944 referendum and the success of the more limited 1946 referendum which permitted the Commonwealth to provide a wide range of social services including giving financial assistance to students.\(^{(22)}\)

Colonial and state governments played a significant role in their local economies in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Colonial governments took an active part in capital formation \(^{(23)}\) and the creation of infrastructure which were designed to facilitate more rapid accumulation by private interests. The activities of the wartime and post-war government were substantially located within this Australian tradition of the State playing an active role in private capital accumulation, rather than being a part of a systematic socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange. The difference

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between colonial 'socialism' and Federal Labor 'socialism' was one of degree rather than one of substance. At best, it was capitalism with a human face, but capitalism nevertheless.

The fiscal pre-eminence of the federal government ensured that its financial allocation to the states would continue to have a profound effect on the level of expenditure on education and other services by the states. By 1949, the Commonwealth had taken some limited, but significant, initiatives in education, although the financial provisions for schools remained a responsibility of the states. These initiatives were sufficient to arouse the interest of the educational community, including the Federation, in the Commonwealth assuming a more direct role in the provision of schooling.

In 1938, the Federation, primarily through the efforts of Sam Lewis, organised a Conference for a Progressive and Democratic Australia. Federation attempted to link the rhetoric of educational progressivism, which had received much publicity at the 1937 New Education Fellowship Conference, with democratic sentiment. The conference carried resolutions which asserted that individual, child-centred education could only be achieved if both the Commonwealth as well as the states were

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involved in the funding of schools. This conference became the model for similar conferences organised by the Federation and its allies in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s.\(^{(26)}\)

The sentiments of the 1938 conference became the basis of the first statement on education adopted by the 1943 congress of the A.C.T.U., on the initiative of Federation.\(^{(27)}\) This was a first important step in Federation's subsequent endeavours to mobilise the trade union movement in the campaign for increased funds for education.

The post-war reconstruction sentiment was linked with the concept of a 'new deal' in education, in the Federation's New Deal for Education campaign in the late 1940s. A 'New Deal for Education' conference was held in Canberra in April 1948. Unlike the 1938 conference, which was a mass gathering, the 1948 conference was a small assembly of delegates from a variety of educational and community organisations. The conference demanded that the Commonwealth 'make adequate grants to the States for


\(^{(27)}\) Programme of a Million People, 1944, A.C.T.U. Education Policy, N.S.W.T.F. Teaflet, N.S.W.T.F. archives. Federation affiliated with the N.S.W. Trades and Labor Council and the A.C.T.U. in 1943, the first teachers' union and one of the first 'white collar' unions to do so. Education, 29 January 1943, p.59.
education' and 'launch a loan of 100 million pounds' for education expenditure throughout Australia, particularly for physical facilities.\(^{(28)}\) For Federation and its allies, education reform was not only a matter of achieving the desirable pedagogical practices advocated by the progressive education movement, but also of providing the physical facilities and a well trained and paid teaching force, necessary for the realisation of these objectives. The philosophical was firmly linked with the physical.

A delegation from the conference saw J.J. Dedman, Minister for Post-War Reconstruction, and argued that education had an important role to play in the post-war world. Dedman said that education was primarily a matter for the states. He suggested, however, that pressure should be applied to the State Premiers to seek a loan for capital works for educational purposes through the Loans Council.\(^{(29)}\) He indicated, however, that the Government and Prime Minister Chifley in particular, had no desire to become involved directly in the provision of education in the states.\(^{(30)}\)

After this rebuff Federation was convinced that a community based campaign was necessary to convince the federal government that it had an important role to play in the provision of schooling. Out of this evolved the Parent-Teacher Programme

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\(^{(28)}\) W. Dobell, (Honorary Secretary, Federal New Deal for Education Committee), Report on New Deal for Education Conference, Canberra, 27-28th April, 1948, p.2. Dobell was an Executive member of the N.S.W.T.F. and Secretary of the A.T.F. Federation was represented by Don Taylor.

\(^{(29)}\) ibid., p.3.

\(^{(30)}\) Interview with Don Taylor, 14 March 1983.
for a 'new deal for a new generation'. Federation President, Sam Lewis, and C.L. Cother, President of the Federation of Parents' and Citizens' Associations, urged local committees of parents and teachers to organise meetings, to hold deputations and send letters and telegrams to politicians and to analyse the educational needs of particular areas and evolve plans for educational provision in these areas.({31}) This 'united front' of parents and teachers became the model for many subsequent campaigns.({32})

Many activities took place in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Federation gave priority to extracting maximum expenditure from the N.S.W. Labor government. It was also occupied with ever deepening internal divisions within its own ranks.({33}) The federal funding campaign was not the central concern of the Federation in these years.

The victory of H.F. Heath over S.P. Lewis in 1952, and the domination of the Federation Executive by Heath's supporters in the subsequent years, led to some questioning of the appropriateness of public campaigning and community based alliances. Heath, a headmaster who supported the Country Party,

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preferred top level negotiation to mass-based campaigning.\(^{(34)}\)

Nevertheless, his reluctance did not prevail over the commitment to united front campaigning by less conservative elements in the union. Indeed, Ivor Lancaster, a Lewis supporter, and Ross Thomas, a Heath supporter, worked amicably together in the various funding campaigns of the mid-1950s.\(^{(35)}\)

On 27 May 1953, Federation held a public meeting on funding in the Sydney Town Hall. Speakers included Dr. K.S. Cunningham, the Director of A.C.E.R., and R.R. Broadby, the Secretary of the A.C.T.U. They spoke under a banner proclaiming that the 'Welfare of Australian Children Demands: Commonwealth Aid for Education'. Cunningham said that the Commonwealth had both the 'power and a moral obligation' to assist in the provision of education. Broadby said, Commonwealth assistance was in the 'interests of a progressive, enlightened democracy'.\(^{(36)}\)

This successful meeting was followed by a statewide conference in May 1954. Local councils, trade unions, the N.S.W. and provincial Labor Councils, local parents' organisations, church groups, progress associations, the N.S.W. Council of Churches, the Country Women's Association and the University of Sydney sent delegates to the conference.

\(^{(34)}\) Education, 4 February 1953. ('President Writes' column). Here Heath set out his model of teacher unionism.

\(^{(35)}\) Interview with Ivor Lancaster, 6 May 1983.

\(^{(36)}\) Education, 10 June, 1953, pp.1-2.
Opening the conference, Heath said that a 'full, free, effective and efficient public school system' was one of the 'great passions' of democratic governments. Increased education expenditure, furthermore, was vital for the proper application of scientific developments to primary and secondary industries. These two themes were pursued by Federation in its funding campaigns in ensuing years.

The principal speaker, Dr. R.B. Madgwick, of the University of New England, argued that the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition had not referred to education in their policy speeches for 1954, because the Australian people were indifferent to the notion that education was a national responsibility. Only a broadly based movement, which pressed for Commonwealth involvement in education, would ensure that federal political parties would take the issue seriously.

Despite the presence of 1700 delegates, the conference gained little publicity in Sydney except for brief mentions on the A.B.C. news. In the country, however, a number of local councils endorsed the conference's resolutions calling for federal...

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(37) 'Advance of Education Conference held at the Assembly Hall, Margaret Street, Sydney, on 27 May, 1954', Transcript, p.3, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

(38) ibid.

(39) ibid., p.7 Deputy President Don Taylor supported these sentiments, ibid., p.39. Other speakers included Dr. Frank Lions of the University of Sydney, Rev. Dr. Cumming Thom of the Council of Churches and J. Shortell, President of the Labor Council.

(40) Transcripts of broadcasts, State and National news, Advance of Education files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
funding of education\(^{(41)}\). Despite the limited impact of the conference, it was clear that there was a potential for Federation to build a broad movement based on the notions of education for democracy and for scientific and technological advancement.

The conference decided to establish a continuing organisation which would co-ordinate this activity in the form of the Advance of Education Council. Its composition reflected a wide cross-section of organisations represented at the conference. The two parents' organisations, however, feared that they would become involved in industrial matters and were wary of appearing to campaign against the Federal Liberal Government.\(^{(42)}\)

The Parents' and Citizens' Federation did not join the Council at all; the Federation of Infants' and Nursery Schools' Clubs subsequently withdrew from it. The organisational leadership was, therefore, carried by the Teachers' Federation with Ivor Lancaster as Secretary. The Council gained most of its support from teachers, from school and district parents' groups and from trade unions.\(^{(43)}\) Thus Federation had established a 'united front' in order to advance the key objectives of the union.

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\(^{(41)}\) Richmond River Express, 7 June 1954, Kempsey Argus, 9 June 1954. Reports of the conference were carried in Southern Cross, 12 May 1954, Queanbeyan Age, 14 May 1954, Gosford Times, 14 May 1954 and Penrith Times, 3 June 1954.

\(^{(42)}\) Interview with Ivor Lancaster, 5 May, 1983. See also Advance of Education Council, Minutes, 25 June 1955, E210/8, Archives of Business and Labour, Australian National University.

\(^{(43)}\) ibid., 25 May 1954, (inaugural meeting), 24 October 1955 (report of local conference), 29 October 1956 (membership of deputation to R.J. Heffron).
Such activity is not the usual modus operandi of a workers' industrial organisation. Rather it was a politically sophisticated attempt to intervene in and shape the course of popular, democratic politics. In 1938 Federation had mobilised the rhetoric of educational progressivism and linked it with the need for greater physical provision for education. After the war it tapped the post-war reconstruction sentiment in the New Deal for Education campaign. Common to both campaigns had been a notion of education for democracy. By the mid-1950s this was being linked with education for scientific and technological development. By emphasising the latter, the potential was created for an alliance with the scientific and technological community and with sections of industry and commerce.

A broad 'united front' served the industrial, professional and educational interests of Federation. A funding campaign verified Federation's claim to be an organisation, not just interested in the working conditions of its members, but also committed to the advancement of education itself. There was really no other choice for Federation. It could not exercise the traditional weapon of workers' organisations, the strike. So political pressure, based on a broad united front, was really the only viable option for Federation. Its own membership could be united behind the objective of federal funding. The objective itself attracted wide support beyond the Federation membership. This was to be the basis of Federation activity as it approached the great demographic crises of the 1960s. While Federation set about cementing its alliances, significant changes were taking place within capitalism itself, particularly in relation to the role that education was believed to play in economic development.
The Cold War and Human Capital Theory

The notion of education expenditure as an investment in human capital was not a new concept. Adam Smith argued that the acquisition of useful abilities through education or apprenticeship was 'capital fixed and realised' in the person of the worker. The 'talents' of the worker not only made 'his fortune' but also increased the wealth of society in general. Thus improved skills in a worker was like the use of a machine which 'facilitates or abridges labour' and although there was an initial cost, the expense was repaid 'with a profit'.(44) Alfred Marshall, writing in the late nineteenth century, extended this notion by arguing that it was in the direct interest of the State for it to invest in the education of its citizens.(45) There was considerable interest in human capital theory in the Soviet Union during the 1920s. S.G. Strumilin investigated the effectiveness of basic literacy programs for industrial workers in contributing to increased productivity.(46)

It was, however, the ideas of J.M. Keynes which had the greatest impact on western economists after the Second World War. There was a general consensus that the dual objectives of economic growth and full employment were necessary to avoid a post-war slump, and in the longer term, to avoid the recurrence of the political and economic crises of the 1930s. It was recognised that the State would need to play a more directly interventionist role in economic life and that social mechanisms had to be developed by the State to alleviate the distress of the casualties of capitalist economic development. These social provisions were to ensure against any mobilisation against the system itself. (47)

Keynes' ideas had a profound effect on many of the economists advising the Federal Labor Government in the 1940s (48). Their ideas on full employment, social services and demand management were generally acceptable to that Government. The views of some of these advisers on education were, however, less acceptable. Both R.C. Mills and H.C. Coombs attempted to persuade Treasurer Chifley of the desirability of the federal government playing a greater role in education. While Chifley conceded that the war time government had funded kindergartens,


(48) Coombs, op.cit., pp.3-56.
technical education and universities, he feared upheaval over private schools in the Labor Party if the government took any direct responsibility for the funding of schools.\(^{49}\) Nevertheless, a Committee on education was established and chaired by E.R. Walker, Deputy Director of Post-War Reconstruction. Out of this enquiry came the decisions to establish a Commonwealth Office of Education, a permanent Universities Commission, to provide of capital funds to technical colleges and universities and to establish the Australian National University.\(^{50}\) While none of these initiatives included any Commonwealth assistance to schools, they encouraged the movement for the federal funding of schools.

Just as sustained economic growth was seen as the principal means of ensuring full employment in Australia, so too did the maintenance of economic growth become the central concern of capitalist countries after the war. The Marshall Plan was designed to re-establish the Western European economies as a counter-balance to the Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. The reconstruction of (West) Germany and Japan was a central element of American post-war policy. The maintenance of

\(^{49}\) ibid., p.194.

economic growth in the United States and in the American spheres of influence, was seen as indispensable if the capitalist world was to resist the challenge of the Soviet Union, China and the nationalist and revolutionary movements of the 'Third World'.

This strategy received a shuddering setback with the launching of the first Sputnik by the Soviet Union in 1957. It was a dramatic symbol of Soviet advances in science and technology, at least in the area of space technology. This apparent superiority, it was argued in the West, was a direct result of Soviet investment in all levels of education. It is therefore not surprising that Western economists began to look afresh at the relationship between economic growth, scientific development and education expenditure. Moreover, there was a greater sense of urgency in the growing demands for greater educational expenditure. In countries with federal systems of government, there was a growing demand for central government to assume greater responsibility for educational provision.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s there was a revival of interest in human capital theory, especially among American economists. The best known was T.M. Schultz. He suggested that the growth of human capital could be the most distinctive feature of economic growth. Human capital indeed had been growing at a


higher rate that other forms of capital. Not only were there perceptible economic benefits to individuals from investment in education, but there was also an associated benefit to society.\(^{(53)}\) These arguments were taken and developed by E.F. Dennison \(^{(54)}\) and G.S. Becker.\(^{(55)}\)

Dennison linked his economic analysis to the changing international balance of power. He argued that the Soviet Union and 'most other advanced countries' were growing more rapidly than the United States. There was concern that it would not maintain its leading 'world position' if that trend continued.\(^{(56)}\) Becker argued that even a small additional investment in higher education would produce the scientific personnel to maintain America's economic and military superiority.\(^{(57)}\)

In 1958 the Eisenhower administration sponsored the National Defence Education Act.\(^{(58)}\) In 1961 the Kennedy


\(^{(56)}\) Dennison, op.cit., p.48.

\(^{(57)}\) Becker, 'Underinvestment ...', p.354.

\(^{(58)}\) Don Smart, Federal Aid to Australian Schools, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, p.37.
administration allocated two billion dollars to education.\(^{(59)}\) This latter initiative brought the federal government into direct provision of schools. The conviction that there was a close link between investment in education, economic growth and national defence was enshrined in these initiatives.

These ideas were taken up by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (O.E.C.D.). In October 1961, it sponsored a conference on 'Economic Growth and Investment in Education'.\(^{(60)}\) Opening the conference, American Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, argued that education should be thought of as 'investment' with a 'high rate of return'.\(^{(61)}\) The head of the American delegation, Philip H. Coombs, said that such an attitude would assist education in the quest of funds from government.\(^{(62)}\)

These ideas\(^{(63)}\) were given popular currency in the United States in various publications such as Schultz's The Economic Value of Education\(^{(64)}\) and Charles Benson's Education.

\(^{(59)}\) Education, 1 March 1961, p.5. (Kennedy's message to Congress).


\(^{(61)}\) ibid., p.18.

\(^{(62)}\) ibid., pp.57-58.


is Good Business. In Great Britain, John Vaizey wrote the influential *Economics of Education.* In Australia writers such as E.L. Wheelwright and P.H. Karmel applied the human capital thesis to local conditions.

Cold war developments and the human capital 'revolution' fitted very well with Australian economists' concern to reconcile full employment with price stability. In 1959, H.C. Coombs, then Governor of the Reserve Bank, argued that these objectives were compatible if economic growth was maintained. He argued that growth would be considerably enhanced if Australia expended greater resources on education, research and development.

This is not to suggest that economic arguments were the only ones used by politicians, educators, lobby groups and teacher unions. They were generally coupled with more traditional liberal humanist notions about education and the concept of education for


democracy. Nevertheless, the economic arguments added legitimacy to the non-economic arguments in the competitive economic environment of the great post-war boom.

The ability of any educational pressure group to exploit this growing support for educational expenditure depended, in part, on the internal cohesion of the organisation. An organisation rent by internal discord is in a much weaker position to mobilise its own membership or to organise a community alliance in support of greater provision for education, than an organisation with a high degree of internal cohesion. It is, therefore, appropriate to comment further on the structure and internal affairs of the N.S.W.T.F. in relation to capacity to its exploit 'ruling ideas' on emerging social processes for its own industrial, professional and educational ends.

**Internal Cohesion of the Federation**

In a strict legal sense, the Federation has never been a confederation of independent or quasi-autonomous units. All units of the union, school and college union meetings, local sectional or state-wide associations and individual members, have always been, and continue to be, subject to the decision-making bodies of the Federation, the Executive, Council and Annual Conference. In reality, however, the union has always been a federation of diverse, often contending interests. It is an organisation which contains classroom teachers and teachers exercising supervisory or executive authority over them. Teachers in promotions positions have the responsibility for ensuring that the policies of the employer, the State, are carried out by the bulk of the teaching
force, the classroom teachers. The structure of the teaching force, with its heirarchical pattern of organisation of 'bosses' and 'workers' as reflected in the union, has a great potential for conflict. Until 1976, the union made provision for separate representation for teachers in promotions positions(69) and for certain categories of classroom teachers(70) within the decision-making bodies of the union. Until the late 1960s, some sectional associations covering classroom teachers were divided along gender lines.(71) While this curious mixture of local and sectional associations was defended in terms of its role in preserving unity within a union with diverse interests, it also contained the seeds of division. Whether the tendency towards the maintenance of unity or the tendency towards division on an issue was predominant, depended upon the circumstances of that particular incident in Federation history.

The structural divisions, however, were overlaid and often offset by ideological, factional and political divisions. During the 1930s a group of young teachers concentrated in the Men and Women Assistants Associations formed a 'ginger group' outside the union called the Educational Workers' League.(72) By the

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(69) For instance, the Principals' Association, the Infants Mistresses' and Principals' Association.

(70) For instance, the Art Teachers' Association and the Manual Arts Teachers' Association.

(71) For instance, Women Teachers' Association and Men Teachers' Association. These amalgamated in 1969 to form the Metropolitan (Sydney) Teachers' Association.

1940s, its leading personalities and some of its policies had gained pre-eminence within the union. In 1946, its best known member, Sam Lewis, became President. He led a group of Communist Party members and non-Communist allies who held many influential positions within the Federation. In the late 1940s, this group was challenged by an alliance consisting of members associated with Catholic Action and with traditionally more conservative elements such as the Headmasters' Association. By the early 1950s, Federation forums were rent by acrimonious debates between these two groups. Federation internal politics, while always lively, was more polarised in this period than ever before (or perhaps since) in Federation history.

While the divisions were apparent over a great range of issues, the most dramatic illustration of the differences was revealed in the dispute over whether the presidential officers would be elected by the whole membership or continue to be elected by Council at the beginning of each year. The proposal for election by popular ballot was defeated by 283 to 253 at the 1945 Annual Conference. Similar motions were defeated at the 1946, 1947 and 1948 Conferences. At the 1950 Conference, it was defeated on the casting vote of the President, Lewis. After a year of furious organisation and amidst growing Cold War inspired

(73) A detailed discussion of this period is outside the scope of this thesis. The above brief account is based on interviews with participants (including Don Taylor, Ivor Lancaster, James Hagan, Alan Cross, Des Brady) and the work of Cooney, op.cit., pp.52-68; Mitchell op.cit., pp.383-408; Pretty, op.cit., pp.54-87; Roberts, op.cit., pp.30-61 and Spaull, op.cit.
concern about Communist influence within unions, the motion was carried comfortably at the 1951 conference.\(^\text{(74)}\) In the subsequent popular election in April, 1952, Lewis was defeated by Harry F. Heath of the Headmasters' Association. Although Heath himself was appointed to the Public Service Board in 1955, and replaced with moderate A.L.P. member Don Taylor, the forces of the Right held sway in the union from 1952 to 1956. The power of this group was, perhaps, no more dramatically illustrated than when four well-established administrative officers of the union were defeated in the 1956 triennial elections. The officers, Research Officer Elizabeth Mattick and Organisers, Hugh Henry, Hilda Barclay and Sam Thompson, were closely associated with the Left grouping within the union in the late 1940s and early 1950s.\(^\text{(75)}\)

The Right had gone too far. Taylor saw his opportunity to realign the forces within the union. In 1957, Taylor and General Secretary, Harry Norington proposed a ticket for the union Executive which reflected the various ideological tendencies within the union.\(^\text{(76)}\) The ticket was successful in the election. The notion of a 'balanced' executive remained the practice until Taylor retired at the end of 1963. While this did not end the differences within the union, their containment in

\(^\text{(74)}\) Kennett, \textit{op.cit}, p.148.

\(^\text{(75)}\) Kennett, \textit{ibid.}, pp.150-151 and \textit{Education}, 25 April 1956, p.2. Interviews with Don Taylor, 14 March 1983, and Des Brady, 22 May 1984. Brady himself was elected as an organiser and remained a Federation Officer until 1971. The other three elected, Sidney Schultz, Audrey McDonald and Don Allen, were defeated at the 1959 elections.

this manner provided an opportunity for a *modus vivendi* to be worked out among the factions about tactics to be employed in the major campaigns to be conducted by the union. This was necessary to the fruitful functioning of the concept of 'united action'. The experience of the 1950s, however, elevated the concept of 'united action' to a status which was not challenged again until the late 1960s, but then from the Left rather than from Right.

The accommodation of 1957 had implications for the campaigns which the Federation was to conduct in the following years. The campaigns for increased funding of education, for the reform of secondary education and for the establishment of the Education Commission were widely supported within the union and enhanced, rather than undermined, united action.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s there was an effective, but sometimes tenuous, alliance between the Centre forces, led by Taylor, and the Left forces, led by Lewis. The Right, however, were not excluded from influence altogether. This realignment of forces, initiated by Taylor and Norington, however, prepared the ground for the return of Sam Lewis as Deputy President and Elizabeth Mattick, as Senior Vice President in 1959.(77) The Left did not challenge Taylor's presidency in this period.

(77) President:  
E.W. Glover 2887  
D.A. Taylor 8794  
W.J. Whalan 423

Deputy President:  
M.B. Ball 4007  
S.P. Lewis 5079  
J. Winston 3016

After distribution of preferences
M.B. Ball 5591  
S.P. Lewis 6511

Senior Vice-President:  
D.M. Osborne 4489  
E.M. Mattick 7608
Federation Relationships with Governments

The Centre-Left leadership had to contend with well entrenched federal and state governments. The Liberal Country Party Coalition, under Prime Minister R.G. Menzies, replaced the Federal Labor government in 1949. Menzies' government presided over the unprecedented prosperity of the great post-war boom. For the most part, Menzies dominated national politics until his retirement in 1966.\(^{(78)}\) He faced a Federal Parliamentary Labor Party severely weakened by the 'split' in its ranks in 1955 resulting in the formation of the Democratic Labor Party.\(^{(79)}\) Nevertheless, the Labor Party only failed by one seat to wrest the Menzies government from office in 1961 following the economic recession of 1960-1961.\(^{(80)}\) In N.S.W., however, the Labor Party, elected first in 1941, remained in office, largely untroubled until 1965.\(^{(81)}\)


\(^{(80)}\) Hazlehurst, op.cit., p.372; Overacker, op.cit., 226-227; Tivey, op.cit., pp.82-84; West, op.cit., pp.226-227.

There was no disagreement within Federation that the solution to the state's difficulties in adequately funding education was to be found in persuading the federal government to accept direct financial responsibility for schools. Concentration on the federal government suited the Federation leadership in its relationship with the N.S.W. Labor government. Taylor, a longtime A.L.P. member, was a great admirer of R.J. Heffron, Minister for Education since 1944. Lewis, although not an A.L.P. member, was close to Heffron. Ern Wetherell succeeded Heffron as Minister in 1959, when the latter became Premier. Heffron and Wetherell were two of a small number of non-Catholics in a government dominated by Catholics who, for the most part, had no great commitment to public schools. For the leadership to attack the state government too ferociously would have undermined its relationship with the government and perhaps jeopardised the efforts of Heffron and Wetherell on behalf of public education.

The concentration on the federal government moreover, suited the wider political objectives of the Communist Party fraction within the Federation. During the 1950s the Communist Party urged electors to put 'Menzies last' when voting. The campaign directed at Menzies and the Liberal Country Party coalition on education matters was part of that strategy.

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(82) Taylor, although clearly of the view that Heffron was the best Education Minister in the State's history, claims that Lewis was personally much closer to Heffron than he was. Interview with Don Taylor, 14 March, 1983.

(83) Interview with Alan Cross, 25 January 1984.
This is not to suggest that the Federation never attacked the N.S.W. government nor that Federation escaped criticism from Heffron, Wetherell and other Ministers. Both Health Minister Sheahan, and Conservation Minister Enticknap, questioned the priority given to education by the government. Wetherell, himself, said that the demands of education had to be set against health, conservation and transport.\(^{(84)}\) Nor is it to suggest that the decision to concentrate on the federal government was simply a result of close personal association of the leadership with the state government or of the Communist party's opposition to the federal government.

Federation quite correctly calculated that the federal government's monopoly of income-taxing powers placed it in a far better position to fund schools than the states. The possibility of achieving improvements in salaries and working conditions was dependent on increased federal funding.

In N.S.W. the Federation had to contend with powerful authorities besides the state government. The most powerful of these bodies was the Public Service Board. It directly employed most state public servants, including teachers, and was responsible for the determination of the conditions of employment, the appointment, discipline and renumeration of its employees. It, however, delegated many of its management functions to the

\(^{(84)}\) Interviews with H.S. Wyndham, 14 September 1982 and Don Taylor, 14 March 1983 (re: Sheahan); S.M.H., 5 August 1961 (re: Enticknap).
Director-General of Education and the Department of Education. The Board's powers as a wage fixing authority, however, were modified by the conciliation and arbitration powers of the N.S.W. Industrial Commission. This latter body could determine the salaries, but not the conditions of employment, of public servants. Federation, however, conducted salaries negotiations with the Board directly and was loath to seek recourse to the Industrial Commission. Much of the industrial conflict involving Federation from 1945 and 1970 tended to be with the Board rather than the Department or the Commission.

Nevertheless, the state government had real influence over the working conditions of teachers and the learning conditions of students. In the latter 1950s and early 1960s, the Federation not only intensified its federal funding efforts, but also campaigned for the implementation of the Wyndham report on secondary education and for the establishment of an Education Commission. These two matters were within the exclusive province of the state government. But all of them had one important characteristic in common. They all attracted wide support within the union. They had a great potential for successful 'united action' by union members. The funding and secondary education


campaigns, moreover, were widely supported beyond the union membership. For an organisation that was most unlikely to take direct industrial action, they were issues that were ideal for the 'united action' of the membership. It was, therefore, appropriate that much of Federation campaigning during this period should be pointed in this direction. By the mid 1960s, however, the limitations of this method of campaigning became increasingly apparent to both the Federation leadership and its membership. These matters are the subject of the next three chapters of this thesis.
CHAPTER TWO

THE N.S.W.T.F. AND THE FEDERAL FUNDING MOVEMENT

1957 - 1966
In an organisation riven by internal discord, there was an urgent need to pursue issues which would enhance, rather than undermine, unity within the union. Even during the worst period of internal conflict within the Federation during the mid-1950s, there was little disagreement that more funding for education was an urgent necessity and that such funding would not be sufficient unless the federal government played a significant role in the financing of schools and colleges.

The 1956 Annual Conference of the Federation directed the Executive to organise a major state wide Education Conference in 1957. The 1957 Executive contained a balance of Left, Centre and Right wing elements after Taylor and Norington moved to dampen down the internecine strife within the union after the defeat of the administrative officers in 1955. The renewal of the funding campaign was designed, in part, to reinforce the cohesive forces within the union. Ivor Lancaster was given the task of organising the conference.

By May 1957, Federation had assembled a formidable list of sponsors and supporters for the conference. These included the Country Women's Association, the Civilian Maimed and Limbless Association, the State Sports Federation, the Arts Council and the Council for Christian Education, together with a number of unions. Numerous local Councils were contacted and some called public meetings to elect delegates for the conference. In

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(2) ibid., 22 May 1957, p.1.
Casino, for instance, 500 people attended a meeting called by the Council.\(^{(3)}\) Parents' organisations all over the state elected delegates. Federation officers spoke about the conference on Sydney radio stations in the weeks before the conference. Don Taylor and Lancaster spoke at meetings throughout the country areas. Both were able to secure publicity in the press and on radio in those areas.\(^{(4)}\) The Federation journal *Education* itself carried articles on the coming education crisis.\(^{(5)}\)

The organisation of the conference was given considerable impetus by the decision of the N.S.W. government to institute 'economies'. These included the dismissal of 400 casual needlework teachers and of tradesmen involved in school building. A widely supported public meeting was held on 13 March. Resolutions carried at the meeting not only called on the state government to withdraw the economies but also called on the federal government to co-operate with the state authorities to ensure that adequate finance was made available to meet the 'urgent ... needs' of education and other essential services.\(^{(6)}\)

The conference itself was held at Sydney Town Hall on 1 June and was opened by the Lord Mayor of Sydney, H.F. Jensen. Some 3500 delegates attended representing 1500 organisations.\(^{(7)}\) As well as the Presidents of the two parents' organisations and

\(^{(3)}\) *ibid.*


\(^{(5)}\) *Education*, 10 April 1957, p.4, 20 May 1957, pp.4 and 6.

\(^{(6)}\) *Annual Report 1957*, p.11.

\(^{(7)}\) *Education*, 3 July 1957, p.5.
the Teachers' Federation, the conference was addressed by Education Minister Heffron and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney, S.H. Roberts. Representatives of local Councils, unions and even the President of the Inspectors' Institute reiterated the view that only federal funding would meet the educational crisis.\(^{8}\) Resolutions were carried on accommodation deficiencies, teacher shortages and staffing needs and finance for education.\(^{9}\) Lancaster outlined how the decisions would be implemented and how the impetus of the conference would be sustained. Lancaster's role was acknowledged by his seconder, A.W. Stephenson of the Council of Churches. The conference itself greeted Lancaster with 'warm and sustained applause', which \textit{Education} noted was 'a thoroughly deserved tribute ... to his great services to education in organising one of the largest public conferences on education in the English-speaking world'.\(^{10}\)

The rhetoric of the conference was still largely cast within the framework of the New Deal for Education conferences of 1947-48 and the conferences in 1953 and 1954. The assertion of the right of all children to a significant level of education was to the forefront. Although reference was made to the role of education in national development, the emphasis of the conference resolutions was not on the role education might play in economic, scientific and technological development.

\(^{8}\) \textit{ibid.}, 12 June 1957, pp.1-3.\.

\(^{9}\) \textit{ibid.}, pp.3 and 5.\.

\(^{10}\) \textit{ibid.}, p.2.
The organisation of ongoing activity following the conference was carried, for the most part, by the newly-cemented parent-teacher alliance. Its first task was to continue the activity generated by the decision to collect a national petition on federal funding of education. In January 1957, the Australian Teachers' Federation, on the initiative of the Victorian Teachers' Union, had decided to organise such a petition. Some 130,000 signatures were collected and the Federation and the parent-teacher alliance played a significant role in the activity.\(^{(11)}\)

The parent-teacher education alliance was institutionalised into the Parent Teacher Education Council which was formally constituted in February 1958. The parents' organisations had insisted on the dissolution of the Advance of Education Council.\(^{(12)}\) By early 1958, one of the fundamental weaknesses of the federal funding movement had been overcome.

The alliance, however, was not open-ended. Some consideration of the charter of the Council reveals the strengths and weaknesses of the alliance. Its objects included:

(a) action to arouse the public conscience of the needs of public education throughout N.S.W.

(b) co-operation with similar organisations in other States in dealing with the matter of a Commonwealth-wide basis.


\(^{(12)}\) See I.G. Lancaster (Secretary, Advance of Education Council) to E.M. Byron (General Secretary of P. & C. Federation), 26 March 1957. Advance of Education Conference, 1957, Correspondence, E210 N.S.W.T.F. records, Archives of Business and Labour, Australian National University. Interview with Ivor Lancaster, 13 May 1983.
(c) making representations jointly in the name of the sponsoring and supporting organisations to all appropriate authorities.

However, matters of a sectarian, party political or industrial character were deemed to be outside the limits of the organisation. Furthermore the alliance was not to impair the powers of any Federation to conduct its own affairs or determine its own policy. It was also agreed that no organisation could circularise a constituent organisation of the other. (13)

These conditions limited the capacity of the Federation to mobilise local parents' organisations. This problem, however, was offset by the decision to establish local branches of the Council and by the fact that local parents' organisations were affiliates rather than branches of the central organisations and thus not formally constrained by central decisions. Moreover, Lancaster's pivotal role (14) as secretary of the Council gave him great influence over its affairs. In 1957 two significant Reports were released which were to have a profound effect upon the politics of education funding.


(14) N.S.W. P.T.E.C. Minutes, 1958-1964. N.S.W.T.F. archives. The influence of Lancaster and of Federation are revealed in these minutes.
1957: The Wyndham and Murray Reports

(1) **The Wyndham Report**

The first major Report on education to be completed after the war was that of the Committee of Enquiry into Secondary Education in N.S.W., chaired by Director-General H.S. Wyndham. The Report provided the growing education funding movement with additional legitimacy for its activities at the state and federal level.

The Report made reference to the 'needs of the community', although it did not specify them in any detail. The emerging needs of post-war Australia required a more highly-skilled workforce. A reformed secondary education system was a central part of satisfying that demand. The focus of the Report, however, was on the rights and needs of adolescents rather than the 'needs of the community'. Nevertheless, the Report's recommendations fitted very well with the emerging needs of post-war Australia.

The Report did not make detailed recommendations as to financial provision beyond stating that its proposals were 'costly'. It warned it would be 'costly' in the long-term, to provide secondary education for the post-war generation within 'a structure whose basic design' had 'not been altered' for a generation.


(16) H.S. Wyndham in an interview with the author on 14 September 1982, denied that the committee saw its role primarily in economic terms.

The Wyndham committee reported before the impact of Sputnik and before the ideas of the human capital theorists had become popular catchcries. The Report's economic frame of reference was implicit only. Another national education report completed in 1957 was far more explicit about economic, scientific and technological matters.

(II) The Murray Report

Throughout the 1950s there had been evidence of a growing concern with the inadequacy of scientific and technological education in Australia. In 1956, the Academy of Science had drawn attention to the serious shortage of scientific personnel. In the same year, the Annual Conference of the Science Teachers' Association featured a session on 'The Role of the Science Teacher in Expanding Scientific and Technical Manpower'.(18) The Leader of the Opposition, H.V. Evatt, moreover, warned the Parliament that Australia's considerable educational deficiencies were at their worst in the fields of technology, science and scientific invention.(19)

Prime Minister Menzies showed some sensitivity to these stirrings when, in late 1956, he invited Sir Keith Murray, Chairman of the University Grants Committee of Great Britain, to chair an enquiry into 'The Role of the University in the Australian Community' and 'The Financial Needs of Universities and Appropriate Means for Providing for Those Needs'.(20) Community

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(18) Don Smart, Federal Aid to Australian Schools, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, 1978, pp.36-38.
(19) C.P.D., House of Representatives, 21 June 1956, p.3557.
needs had not been an implicit concern for the Wyndham Committee; the Murray Report, however, fashioned its recommendations firmly within that framework.

The post-war community calls for more and more graduates of an increasing variety of kinds. Industry and commerce call for more graduates, government and administration call for more graduates, and all the services of the welfare state call for more graduates. (21)

The Report made a resounding call for measures to be taken to reverse the wastage of talent:

... every boy or girl with the necessary brain-power must ... in the national interest be encouraged to come forward for a university education. (22)

Wyndham's modest concerns for the 'needs of the community' became Murray's more dramatic 'national interest'. Russia, the United States and the United Kingdom were intensifying their efforts in the production of graduates. Australia should not be left behind. (23)

The Report sketched the post-war growth of the Australian economy and its immediate prospects for continuing growth. 'On all sides one hears of plans for widespread new capital investment in every form of enterprise and all industries are preparing for expansion', Murray noted. Australian industries, however, laboured under inherent disadvantages in the international market: 'a small home market, the absence of cheap supplies of labour, and the long distance ... which Australian goods must travel', to

(21) ibid., p.7.
(22) ibid., p.8.
(23) ibid.
overcome these disadvantages. To ensure the best return on its capital investments, Australia must have 'more than its share of expertise and know-how in all its enterprises'.\(^{(24)}\) It was, therefore, necessary for Australia to rely even more heavily that many other countries 'on the product of the universities for both manpower and reasearch'.\(^{(25)}\) It was a classic statement of the human capital thesis.

The Report devoted a chapter to scientific and technical education. It linked its recommendations to some general comments about the economic necessity of producing graduates for both the public and private sectors. To meet this requirement, the Report made detailed recommendations for the immediate provision of universities,\(^{(26)}\) and urged the establishment of a permanent University Grants Committee.\(^{(27)}\)

The Report also referred to the relationship between secondary and tertiary education. It recognised that secondary schools had 'other tasks to perform besides preparing prospective university students'.\(^{(28)}\) Nevertheless, it noted that the main criticisms made by universities of schools was that they failed to provide students with a broad and general education and that students entering universities lacked maturity. The remedy, it argued, was not, however, raising matriculation standards. Rather there was a necessity for a longer period of secondary schooling.

\(^{(24)}\) ibid., p.13.
\(^{(25)}\) ibid., pp.68-80.
\(^{(27)}\) ibid., pp.97-107.
\(^{(28)}\) ibid., p.40.
and a greater commitment to general education. Specialisation in a narrow range of subjects should be avoided.\(^\text{(29)}\) These comments accorded with the general tenor of the Wyndham Report. They gave powerful ammunition to those, including the Federation, who pressed for the implementation of the Wyndham Report.\(^\text{(30)}\)

The Wyndham Report implicitly, and the Murray Report explicitly, expressed concern about the wastage of talent. The former had spoken of the 'needs of the community', the latter had emphasised the urgent necessity of providing increased opportunities for greater numbers of girls and boys to go to university as being vital to the future of the nation. The Murray Report had, in particular, emphasised the greater necessity for a highly trained workforce in a small and potentially vulnerable capitalist economy. The university was to become more than a liberal institution producing graduates in the humanities, the sciences and the 'learned' professions. Its graduates were now presented as vital to the survival of Australian capitalism.

The publication of the Murray Report was a great boost for the federal funding movement. Education carried a detailed summary of the Report and lengthy excerpts from the Parliamentary debate on the matter.\(^\text{(31)}\) Prominence was given to the views of Labor parliamentarians who argued that financial provision for universities could not be made in isolation 'from the needs of the

\(^\text{(29)}\) ibid., p.31.


\(^\text{(31)}\) Education, 5 February 1958, p.3.
schools'. In the same issue, Federation ran its most recent survey on science facilities in schools. The report instanced the case of Westmead Central School whose science laboratories could hold 24 only students each. Yet the science class sizes in first year were 49, 48, 43, 36 and 37 and in third year 48, 43 and 48. The Federation began to link the lack of provision for science teaching in schools, the needs of the community and the urgent need for federal funding of schools.

The growing concern about Australia's economic, scientific and technological backwardness established the potential for an extension of the community alliance developed by Federation. The union could now seek to add the science and technology community and sections of Capital itself to the alliance.

Federation took the matter up at the A.T.F. Conference in January 1958. It proposed that a National Education Conference be held in Canberra. Moving the resolution, Don Taylor invoked the chairman of Atomic Energy Commission, Professor Philip Baxter, in support of his case. Baxter had noted the paucity of women scientists. Taylor noted that many girls' secondary schools often 'had no laboratories...and no other facilities'. Indeed, fewer women had graduated in science in New South Wales in 1955 than in 1945.

Seconding the motion, Elizabeth Mattick referred to the questioning of the educational systems in the West, which

(35) ibid., pp.9-10.
followed the Soviet Union's launching of Sputnik. It was her belief that the federal government's decision to implement the Murray Report had been 'influenced by the launching of Sputnik' and by the growing agitation led by the various teachers' unions.\(^{(36)}\) The Federation was given the task of organising the conference. Ivor Lancaster was released from his normal duties and proceeded to arrange a small delegates' conference rather than a mass conference such as had been organised in Sydney in 1957.\(^{(37)}\)

As a lead-up to the conference, the Australian Teachers' Federation presented a petition to Parliament containing 130,000 signatures supporting federal funding for schools and technical colleges. A.T.F. had approached Menzies to present the petition, but he declined. It was presented instead by Dr. Evatt and other Labor members.\(^{(38)}\) In the wake of the presentation of the petition, the Parliamentary Labor Party initiated an Education debate. The motion was moved by ex-school teacher, Gordon Bryant, who, with his fellow Labor speakers, argued for direct federal expenditure on schools. Menzies argued that such provision was the constitutional responsibility of the states and that the federal government made its financial contribution through general purpose grants. The states could then decide on their own expenditure priorities.\(^{(39)}\) Menzies did not seek to discredit

\(^{(36)}\) ibid., p.10.

\(^{(37)}\) Interview with Ivor Lancaster, 12 May 1983.

\(^{(38)}\) Evatt presented the first of a series of petitions, C.P.D., House of Representatives, 23 April 1958, p.1125. Others were presented by Barnard, Bryant, Webb, Whitlam, Johnson, Clarey, Galvin, Makin, Kearney and Coutts.

\(^{(39)}\) ibid., 6 May 1957, pp.1454-6.
the federal funding movement, but one of his backbenchers, F.A. Bland, asserted that the petitioners had been 'deliberately misled' by the propaganda of the teachers' unions.(40)

National Education Conference
May 1958

These parliamentary events made a suitable prelude to the National Education Conference held in Canberra on 21 and 22 May, 1958. It was a gathering of about 100 delegates representing a wide range of organisations including the Australia and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, the C.S.I.R.O., and the Federation of the Scientific and Technical Workers as well as trade union, primary producers' and employers' organisations.(41) Teachers' organisation delegates were in a decided minority at the conference. The A.T.F. and its affiliates could validly claim that the federal funding movement was not simply a teachers' working conditions campaign.

The keynote address was given by Professor Morven Brown of the University of Technology (N.S.W.) which was entitled: 'The Importance of Education in the Social and Economic Development of Australia'. Albert Monk of the A.C.T.U. spoke of the importance of technical education in social and economic development.(42) The rhetoric of education for a technological society pervaded the conference. The link established by the Murray Committee between

(40) ibid., p.1465.
(42) ibid. See also Education, 11 June 1958, p.1.
scientific, technological and economic development, and educational requirements had now become a part of the popular rhetoric.

Menzies and Deputy Prime Minister John McEwen, agreed to meet a delegation from the conference which included Don Taylor. Menzies did not deny that the Commonwealth had the power to make specific grants to the states for educational purposes. 'But we don't have power under the Constitution of the Commonwealth to run the educational system' he added, 'and quite frankly I am glad we haven't'. Moreover, he suggested the states were not very keen on tied grants and had never requested such for educational purposes other than universities. He believed that the states, indeed regarded Section 96 grants as a threat to their independence in determining their own financial priorities.(43)

Despite Menzies' reservations, the demand for direct federal involvement in the finance of schooling was growing. The inability of the states to meet the demographic challenge of the secondary school population increase of 45 per cent from 1955 to 1960(44) provided the principal pressure on the federal government. The federal funding movement, aided by arguments

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(43) Section 96 grants were 'tied' grants to the states for purposes specified by the Commonwealth. See ibid., p.2; N.S.W.T.F. Annual Report 1958, p.4. See also Statement by Mr R.G. Menzies, Prime Minister to Deputation from the Education Conference held in Canberra on 20 and 21 May, 1958. Copy, Finance for Education files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

provided by Sputnik and the Murray Report, was able to add to this pressure. Nevertheless, Menzies rejected the proposal by Albert Hawke, Premier of Western Australia, at the 1959 Premiers' Conference, that the Commonwealth become more directly involved in the provision of schooling.\(^{(45)}\)

**Campaigning at the 'Grass Roots' Level:**

The Parent Teacher Education Council Movement

In the light of Menzies' attitude, it became imperative to intensify pressure at local levels. National and state 'top level' conferences were insufficient to change Menzies' mind. For the Federation, the prime method of achieving this objective was through the Parent Teacher Education Council and its local branches. In this way, Federation cemented the community alliance which had been constructed for the 1957 and 1958 conferences.

The Parent Teacher Education Council's operations covered three broad areas:

(i) activities directed at the federal government

(ii) raising issues with the N.S.W. government as they arose.

(iii) establishing local branches.\(^{(46)}\)

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\(^{(46)}\) Charter of the N.S.W. Parent Teacher Education Council, P.T.E.C. files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
Local councils were active in lobbying politicians, organising public meetings, electing delegates to conferences and local publicity activities. (47)

The Illawarra Parent Teacher Education Council, for instance, lobbied local politicians about the need for a Teachers' College in Wollongong. (48) It also organised a meeting in September 1961, which called for the implementation of the Wyndham Report and for the teaching of community languages in local schools. (49) These issues corresponded closely with those pursued by the Illawarra Teachers' Association. (50) Indeed, the activities of the Councils were important agencies in adding legitimacy to the activities of local Teachers' Federation organisations.

(47) St. George, Hawkesbury and Ryde-Hornsby areas, N.S.W.P.T.E.C. Minutes, 14 July 1960; Blacktown, Minutes, 4 June 1962; Minutes, 3 August 1962; Bellingen, Minutes, 4 June 1962; Canterbury-Bankstown, Manly-Warringah areas, Minutes, 2 July 1959; Northern Districts (Sydney) Minutes, 26 March 1959, N.S.W.T.F. archives. For Illawarra, see Illawarra P.T.E.C. Minutes, 8 June 1959, Illawarra Teachers' Association files, University of Wollongong archives.


(50) The Secretary of the Illawarra P.T.E.C. was David Beswick, who was also an Executive member of the Illawarra Teachers' Association.
The Sutherland Shire P.T.E.C. conducted local class size surveys, arranged public lectures after the 1960 National Education Conference, pressed for the construction of three new high schools and the establishing of special classes for deaf children in the shire.\(^{(51)}\) The St. George P.T.E.C. claimed a circulation of 4000 for its newsletter. It was particularly active in pressing municipal authorities to provide adequate library facilities.\(^{(52)}\) Although the activities of the Councils were, in the first instance, directed at local or state authorities, a constant theme of their publicity was that educational and cultural progress could not be achieved without significant federal financial assistance.

At the state level, the Parent Teacher Education Council carried out a variety of activities. In 1958, it organised a State Education Conference to follow up the decisions of the National Education Conference. The conference called on the N.S.W. government to maximise education expenditure in the 1958-59 Budget and Loan programme and to implement the Wyndham Report in order 'to meet the needs of the modern world'.\(^{(53)}\) It also called on the federal government to provide 'a substantial emergency grant for education under Section 96 of the Constitution' and to establish a committee, on the same pattern


\(^{(52)}\) Co-operation, Newsletter, St. George P.T.E.C. in Illawarra P.T.E.C. files, University of Wollongong archives. Most of the records of other local P.T.E. Councils have not survived.

as the Murray Committee, to enquire into 'the needs of primary, secondary and technical education on a nationwide basis'. (54) These became the central demands of the federal funding alliance in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The policies, for the most part, were similar to those of the Federation and the two parents' organisations. All three bodies, particularly the Teachers' Federation, promoted these policies outside the P.T.E.C. framework. (55) The Council, however, served differing, but complementary purposes for the three organisations. It gave parents' organisations access to the superior financial and organisational resources of the N.S.W.T.F. For the Federation, there was additional legitimacy for its policies.

For the most part, the three organisations worked in harmony. Nevertheless, there is some evidence of tension between Federation's position, as part of the wider union movement, and its association with the parents' organisations, whose leaderships tended to be of middle-class, professional orientation, rather than associated with trade unions. The Federation of Infant and Nursery Schools Clubs proposed that the growing delay in the construction of schools could be alleviated if work was not always carried out 'at award wages and under trade union conditions'. (56)

(54) ibid.

(55) Something of the 'flavour' of the parents' organisation can be captured in Sidney Liebert, Our Years with Parents and Citizens, Randwick, 1982. Liebert was President of the Federation of Parents' and Citizens' Associations from 1949 to 1973.

(56) N.S.W.P.T.E.C. Minutes, 24 September 1959, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
The adoption of such a proposal would have meant a deterioration in the wages and working conditions of building workers. That could not be supported by the Teachers' Federation. After the Federation expressed its objection to the proposal no further action was taken by the Council.\(^{(57)}\) The Parents' and Citizens' Federation also objected to the Teachers' Federation's occasional attempts to contact school parents' groups without going through the state level apparatus.\(^{(58)}\)

Some of the Teachers' Federation's campaigns caused embarrassment to the parents' organisations. The 1962 Annual Conference of N.S.W.T.F. called for the abolition of Education Week. During 1963, Federation declared that its members should not be compelled to attend celebrations associated with the Royal Tour. The two parents' organisations expressed the strongest opposition to these decisions. Education Week was, in their view, the only real 'opportunity for parents to become associated with schools'. It was thus 'fundamental to the very existence of the Parent and Citizen concept'. The Royal Tour decision was, moreover, an act of 'disloyalty' to the Minister for Education, who had authorised children's attendance at the celebrations. Concern was also expressed about discussion within the union about the use of strikes as a protest against increased class sizes. Children, they said, should not be 'used for the advancement of industrial ends'.\(^{(59)}\)

\(^{(57)}\) ibid.

\(^{(58)}\) Liebert, \textit{op. cit.}, p.81.

While these matters did not become a matter for public disputation, they were indicative of the limits of co-operation between the three organisations. When the activities were the usual lobbying and publicity ones undertaken by most interest groups, they were acceptable. But when one of the organisations was perceived to be taking an independent, aggressive 'industrial' stance within the ambit of the interests of the three organisations, that was another matter. The St. George branch of the P.T.E.C. wrote to the central body deploiring introduction of 'Teachers' Federation Domestic Policy into Parent Teacher Education Council discussions ...'.\(^{(60)}\) It took the view that the principal purpose of the Council was based on agreement to campaign jointly for Commonwealth Finance for Education and therefore other matters were 'irrelevant' to that purpose.\(^{(61)}\)

A similar view was taken by the Federation of Infants and Nursery Schools Clubs when it decided to withdraw from the Council in early 1964.\(^{(62)}\)

While it lasted, the Council was a remarkable boon for the Federation. Campaigning for funding for education had a solid community base. Nevertheless, the Council could not withstand the growing hostility between the Federation and the state government. Finally, Menzies' decision to provide financial

\(^{(60)}\) ibid.

\(^{(61)}\) ibid., 7 May 1963. Whilst strictly speaking, the St. George Council's perception was incorrect, it nevertheless represented the view that the essential purpose of the Parent Teacher organisation was to campaign for federal funding.

\(^{(62)}\) B. Hindmarsh (Secretary, Federation of Infants' and Nursery Schools Clubs), n.d. (but 1964), N.S.W.P.T.E.C. files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
assistance for the construction of science blocks to all schools in 1963, was seen as a breakthrough for which the Council had campaigned. Once achieved, the Federation of Infants and Nursery School Clubs took the opportunity to withdraw from the Council and thus distance itself from the Teachers' Federation's more assertive campaign at the state level.

The National Education Conference
Sydney 1960

Campaigning throughout 1958, including a Federation-led intervention into the 1958 federal election,\(^{(63)}\) did not, however, move Menzies from his position. On the initiative of the N.S.W.T.F. then, the A.T.F. decided to hold another National Education Conference. Sydney was chosen as a venue and the Federation had the task of organising it.\(^{(64)}\) It set about applying nationally the state model of a mass conference instead of the small gathering of delegates which had been the case in the 1958 Canberra conference.

The publicity for the conference was given a considerable boost by the decision of the United States government to double expenditure on education to meet the demand for schools and teachers. The decision followed the 1958 National Education Defense Act which had been passed after the Sputnik 'scare'. Education was also seen as playing a central role in the United States' overtaking the Soviet Union's apparent technological leadership.\(^{(65)}\)

\(^{(63)}\) N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1959, p.6.

\(^{(64)}\) Education, 10 February 1960, p.2.

\(^{(65)}\) Smart, op.cit., pp.47-48.
The American decisions provided greater opportunity for the federal funding lobby in Australia to argue that the national government should regard education as a national responsibility. This point was hammered in pre-conference publicity. At a more concrete level, this general point was given impetus when it became known that 900 qualified applicants for teachers' scholarships had been rejected because of a lack of finance. Such a wastage of talent, it was suggested, would not occur if the Commonwealth provided sufficient funds for such purposes.

The conference was originally planned for 1500 delegates. The growing interest in education within the community, together with the organising capacities of the Federation and its allies, meant that 3000 delegates attended the conference at Leichhardt Stadium. The originally planned venue, the Assembly Hall in Sydney, proved to be too small for the purpose.

As well as Lancaster, in his familiar role as organising secretary, a number of Federation members and representatives of the parents' organisation were active in planning the conference. The joint secretaries of the conference were Mrs L.J. Brown, Secretary of A.C.S.S.O., and Bill Dobell, Secretary of A.T.F.

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(68) N.S.W.P.T.E.C. Minutes, 12 May 1960.

The organisers were able to secure wide pre-conference publicity on radio and television. The Sydney Morning Herald was, however, rather equivocal about the conference. It argued that the federal government had already rejected large scale assistance to education and therefore a public conference was hardly likely to change its mind. It advised that delegates would have a little more credibility if they also demanded an increase in taxation to meet the costs of the school system. The conference itself was not widely reported in the press, but was well-covered on radio and television bulletins. On the day after the conference, the A.B.C. featured the gathering on one of its leading current affairs programmes.

The conference sponsors included the now familiar range of community organisations, trade unions and parents' groups as well as A.N.Z.A.A.S., The Employers' Federation and primary producers' organisations. By 1960, the federal funding alliance was extremely broad, with the science and technology community and sections of Capital itself added to the community organisations led by the teachers' unions in general, and by the N.S.W.T.F., in particular.
The rhetoric of education as investment in national progress was prominent at the conference. R.J. Heffron, Premier of N.S.W., opened the conference, speaking to the theme: 'Educate or Perish'. 'Elementary education,' he said, 'only seeks to abolish illiteracy.' It was not 'strong enough to meet the social pressures' of modern society. Knowledge must no longer be confined to the immediate environment; a person needed 'a sound understanding of the world and what goes on in it'. The changing national economy also demanded

further changes in the education of children ...
Since the type of education appropriate to today's living - and its costly education - is necessary for the survival of the nation as a whole, we must have money to finance it.(74)

He said that 57 per cent of taxation reimbursements received by N.S.W. was spent on education, thus placing a great strain on the state budget. If education, he concluded, was to be a truly national responsibility, then the Commonwealth had to play some more direct role in its provision.

The keynote speaker, Dr. R.B. Madgwick identified two central educational problems:

1. The problem of education in science, applied science and technology, and

2. The problems of human values, human judgments and human relations which scientific and technological discoveries have posed.

He suggested that Australians could not ignore the fact that our development - perhaps our survival as a nation - depends on having available the trained scientists and

(74) Education, 1 June 1960, p.5. See also Report of the National Conference held at Leichhardt Stadium, Sydney, Saturday, 21st May, 1960, N.S.W.T.F. p.4.
technologists to continue fundamental research, and, on the industrial side, to harness and direct the power and to streamline the processes that have been released and developed.\(^{(75)}\)

This could only be achieved if all sectors of the education system—primary, secondary and tertiary—were adequately funded.

Almost all speakers during the conference emphasised the instrumental benefits of education expenditure. The traditional liberal-humanist conception of education for democratic citizenship was rather swamped by the conception of education for national survival in a scientific and technological society.\(^{(76)}\)

The instrumental emphasis was reflected in the introduction to the resolution carried by the conference:

In view of the facts—

- That 30% of the Australian population is under 15 years of age;

- That increased live births and the Federal Government's mass migration policy had resulted in an unprecedented increase in school population;

- That the expansion and development of Australia urgently calls for the provision of adequate facilities at all levels;

- That steeply rising costs are reducing the purchasing power of the States' education vote, thereby emphasising the inability of the States to provide proper educational services.\(^{(77)}\)

\(^{(75)}\) ibid., p.6.


\(^{(77)}\) ibid.
The conference then called for an emergency federal grant to education and a national enquiry into the needs of primary, secondary and tertiary education.\(^{(78)}\)

By 1960, all the central claims of the federal funding movement had been brought together. The teachers' unions had warned for years about the impact of demographic change on education. The difficulties of the states in making adequate provision for education had become increasingly clear. The findings of the Murray Committee had stimulated the demand for a national enquiry into all aspects of education. But by 1960 - when it had become clear that the post-war boom was being sustained and had not been followed by a slump - all these arguments could be given final legitimacy by linking them with the claim that education was the key to national survival in a changing scientific and educational world. The teachers' unions, with the N.S.W.T.F. in the leadership, had hitched their collective wagon to the needs of capitalism at the height of the great post-war boom. But even with such an alliance before it, the Commonwealth did not succumb easily to its arguments. Much work still needed to be done.

The 1960 conference decided to launch another national petition campaign. This occupied the federal funding alliance for much of 1961. The N.S.W. P.T.E.C. launched the campaign at a public meeting, chaired by Lord Mayor of Sydney, H.F. Jensen. A number of A.L.P. parliamentarians attended the meeting. State

\(^{(78)}\) ibid.
Opposition Leader, R.W. Askin, subsequently signed the petition. On Wednesday, 17 May 1961, W.J. Aston, Liberal member for Phillip (N.S.W.), presented the petition with 240,836 signatures in 30 portfolios. Aston's head, it was reported, could be barely seen above his desk in the House. Four attendants were needed to carry the petition out of the chamber.

A few days before the presentation of the petition, Menzies met a deputation from the 1960 conference, consisting of S.F. Liebert of A.C.S.S.O., Don Taylor in his capacity as President of A.T.F. and John Wood, chairman of the conference. On this occasion, he did not reject the proposal for an emergency grant outright. He said that Parliament had been 'staggered' by the cost of the Murray Committee's recommendations. He also said that the tax reimbursement formula had been adjusted in the states' favour, without specifying, however, that the additional funds ought to be spent on education. Subsequently, however, he informed the constituent organisations of the conference that their request had been declined.

While Menzies remained unmoved, the conference and the activities of the federal funding alliance had assisted in making education an important political issue. In 1960, the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party had established an Education

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(80) D.T., 17 May 1961.
(81) Report on the Deputation to the Prime Minister, 10th May, 1961, p.5. Finance for Education files N.S.W.T.F. archives see also Liebert, op,cit., pp.75-78.
sub-committee to investigate the needs of education in each state. The N.S.W. P.T.E.C. met the committee and presented the results of the Teachers' Federation survey on school conditions. (83)

Since 1958, the Labor Party had used the debate on the Estimates of the Prime Minister's department to call for an emergency grant to education and a national enquiry into educational needs. During the 1961 debate, frequent reference had also been made to the importance of the National Education Conference. For the most part, however, government speakers echoed Menzies' reservations about the Commonwealth's power in the educational field beyond making specific purpose grants under Section 96. (84)

It was the state Premiers, through the Australian Education Council, who gave the federal funding movement its most significant boost in 1960 and 1961. In the latter part of 1959 and during 1960, state Education Departments had been compiling a report on educational conditions in the various states. (85) Soon after the National Education Conference, it became known that the report had been completed. Lancaster wrote to Heffron on behalf of the Parent Teacher Education Council and the Federation

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(83) N.S.W.T.F. Annual Report, 1960, p.4. Committee members Lance Barnard, Gordon Bryant and Len Reynolds were former teachers. Reynolds was a member of the N.S.W.T.F., and retained close links with the union.


itself, requesting a deputation to discuss the report.\(^{(86)}\)

Heffron declined to see the deputation until the report had been discussed by the Premiers. Nevertheless, the report was 'leaked' to the press. It received coverage on 4 and 5 August, 1960. The Sydney _Sun_ featured a report on the first page with the headline: 'Schools Startling Secret Report'.\(^{(87)}\) The Federation and the P.T.E.C. continued to urge Heffron to release the report.\(^{(88)}\)

On 23 February 1961, Heffron wrote to the Federation and indicated that he had held discussions with the other Premiers and they had forwarded the document to the Prime Minister with the object of having it placed on the agenda for the 1961 Premiers' Conference.\(^{(89)}\) On 7 April, Heffron and Director-General, Harold Wyndham, met a deputation from the P.T.E.C. They requested the Parent-Teacher movement to do all it could to influence the Premiers in each state to impress the Prime Minister of the importance of the matters contained in the report.\(^{(90)}\)

The Premiers' Conference was held on 13, 14 and 15 June 1961. Heffron presented the report entitled _Some Aspects of Australian Education_ to Menzies and urged him to establish an enquiry and, in the interim, provide emergency assistance to the states for education. He was supported by all Premiers.\(^{(91)}\)

\(^{(86)}\) ibid.

\(^{(87)}\) _Sun_, 4 August 1961.


\(^{(89)}\) ibid.

\(^{(90)}\) ibid.

\(^{(91)}\) ibid.
The Parent Teacher Education Council published the document and 40,000 copies were distributed through local parents' organisations, churches, unions, and other community organisations. During Education Week in 1961, Federation was able to arrange a number of radio and television interviews on the matter. It was also able to use its union affiliations to further the campaign. The A.C.T.U. Congress in September 1961, supported the concepts of an enquiry and an emergency grant. Menzies subsequently met an A.C.T.U. deputation on the matter.

During the 1958 federal election, Federation wrote to party leaders reminding them that their parties were 'going to the people in a period of remarkable developments in scientific and technological knowledge'. By 1961, Federation had worked assiduously at cementing the alliance between the federal funding movement and the science and technology establishment.

The New Deal for Science Conference 1961

The growing concern about scientific and technological education enabled Federation to press its demand on the N.S.W. government to implement the Wyndham Report and to relate the science and technology debate to the federal funding campaign.


(93) ibid., e.g. Channel 7, 'Talking Point', A.B.C. television, 'Open Hearing' (shown nationally).


Addressing the 1960 Federation Annual Conference, Don Taylor attempted to refute the claims of politicians who boasted about the great expansion of financial provision for education, by referring to the considerable increase in the school population since the war. The provision made, he argued, was quite insufficient to provide personnel for the 'many developmental projects related to Australia's technical, scientific and rural growth'.

The international expansion of knowledge made it necessary that the Wyndham Report be implemented.

He linked the necessity for the implementation of the Wyndham Report to the Murray Report and the federal funding campaign.

Unless secondary schools have adequate and qualified staff, accommodation and facilities, their task of educating all adolescents is an impossible one. Commonwealth assistance for university education could be to a larger degree unavailing unless something is done to relieve the plight of secondary education.

Here the Federation President was bringing together two of the fundamental arguments pursued by the Federation in the 1950s. There was the conviction that there needed to be a thorough-going recasting of secondary education. Only such a recast system could produce sufficient students for the tertiary sector to respond fully to the industrial and developmental needs of the nation. All this was expensive, and beyond the capacities of the states. Only federal funding could make this a reality.

(96) Education, 1 February 1961, p.3.
(97) ibid.
A regular feature of the Federation's campaign effort had been annual surveys of conditions in schools. The survey conducted by Research Officer, Gloria Phelan, in first term 1961, paid particular attention to science staff and facilities in secondary schools. It revealed that only 340 of 895 science teachers in the state had science degrees. Only 559 out of 1,150 mathematics teachers had completed university courses in mathematics.\(^{(98)}\) This survey was published in booklet form.\(^{(99)}\) Some 7,000 copies were distributed throughout the state, utilising the network established at the 1960 Educational Conference. The booklet was featured in the \textit{Sun} newspaper and received considerable publicity in the country areas.\(^{(100)}\)

It was an appropriate time to emphasise the lack of facilities for the teaching of science in schools. On the initiative of the Secondary Teachers' Association, Federation decided to hold 'A New Deal for Science' Conference in November 1961.\(^{(1)}\) Some discussion of the preparations for the conference is revealing about the way Federation was able to recruit some unlikely personalities to the federal funding alliance.


\(^{(100)}\) N.S.W.T.F., \textit{Annual Report 1961}, p.10.

\(^{(1)}\) The driving force of the conference committee was science teacher, Jack Mackay. Lancaster and Gloria Phelan were also members of the Committee.
Initial contacts were made with a number of academic luminaries asking them to act as sponsors of the conference. Sir Mark Oliphant, the Director of the Research School of Physical Sciences at the Australian National University was approached and he agreed to open the conference. Professor D.P. Mellor, Head of the School of Chemistry and Professor J.B. Thornton, Head of the School of Philosophy at the University of New South Wales were also recruited as sponsors. With these three names on the circular, the committee set about contacting the wider academic community seeking support for the conference.\(^{(2)}\) Eventually, the list included a who's who of Australian academia: Sir Charles Bickerton-Blackburn, S.H. Roberts, Manning Clark, F.J. Fenner, Bart J. Bok, Harry Messel, E.W. Titterton and S.T. Butler - to name but a few. As well as academics, the network developed through the P.T.E.C. and the National Education Conference was utilised, and the now familiar range of organisations - parents' bodies, trade unions, teachers' colleges and the National Farmers' Union, nominated sponsors. Approaches were also made for financial supporters. Donors included such giants of capital as I.C.I., Unilever, A.G.L., Union Carbide, B.H.P. and G.M.H.\(^{(3)}\)

While securing such prestigious sponsorship, the conference committee set about organising the union membership. A special survey on science accommodation, class sizes and equipment

\(^{(2)}\) Circular, 7 September 1961, New Deal for Science Conference files, N.S.W.T.F. archives. Until the mid-1960s many academics at the University of N.S.W. were members of the Federation.

was sent to schools. The schools received a number of circulars giving advice about the conference\(^{(4)}\) and how members could use the difficulties in their schools to gain local publicity.

Statements by conference sponsors were also circulated to members and community organisations. J.D. Smyth, Dean of the Faculty of Science at A.N.U., warned of the consequences of inadequate provision for science education:

> Australia can only become a backwater in this modern world, soon to be outstripped by countries, which, at this very moment, are pouring resources into scientific education, knowing that such an investment will assure their future development and, perhaps survival.\(^{(5)}\)

The committee also endeavoured to ensure the conference was not just a gathering of teachers and academics. Members were urged to approach local councils, service clubs, progress associations, women's organisations and sporting bodies to elect delegates to the conference. The efforts of the committee were justified when more than 1000 delegates attended the conference on Saturday, 25 November 1961.\(^{(6)}\)

In opening the conference, Sir Mark Oliphant emphasised the absolute centrality of science to modern life. If Australia was to hold its own in the world it was necessary that there be


\(^{(5)}\) Supporting statements, New Deal for Science Conference files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

\(^{(6)}\) Wyndham granted leave to country teachers on Friday afternoon, 24 November, in order to attend the conference. N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1961, p.11.
the fullest application of science on the sheep or cattle station, the farm, or in the mine and related activities, and demands that research and development be the backbone of manufacturing industries.

Australia's future progress was only possible, therefore,

if science in the schools is well taught by highly qualified teachers, who have laboratories and equipment required for the task.(7)

J. Essington Lewis of the B.H.P., asserted that the 'continuing supply of adequately trained and ... educated men and women ... is the only thing which will keep industry in this country in healthy and prosperous position'.(8) C.R. Tasker of the National Farmers' Union, spoke of the key role of science in rural industries. Thus, in the light of the pressing need for rural products the teaching of science in the schools was obviously of great importance.(9)

After the inspirational addresses, the conference proceeded to endorse a series of resolutions on the recruitment and training of science teachers, science teaching conditions, the new junior syllabus for 'Wyndham' science and inevitably, federal aid to schools.

Amid all this rhetoric about the importance of science to national progress and the need for governments to invest far more heavily in scientific education, Don Taylor warned against the view that only science needed increased funding. If people were to exercise their democratic rights in a proper way, both science and the humanities needed additional funds.(10)

(7) Education, 7 March 1962 (supplement) p.i.
(8) ibid., p.ii.
(9) ibid., p.iii.
(10) ibid., p.iv.
In many ways, this summed up a significant dilemma for the Federation in seeking greater funding for education generally, and federal funding in particular. By organising a science conference and inviting scientific and industrial leaders to emphasise the importance of science to material progress, Federation was firmly and publicly associating itself with essentially economic arguments which themselves were often cast in terms of the capitalist world's ability to compete scientifically with the Soviet Union, or, at least, in terms of Australia, to survive economically within the capitalist world itself. In doing this, the importance of humanities and social sciences seemed to recede and so too did the liberal-humanist and democratic origins of the Federation's commitment to the advance of public education. In using a combination of traditional pressure group and united front tactics in order to maximise its political effectiveness, the Federation associated itself with forces that had little commitment to the humanities and social sciences and perhaps even less commitment to the notion of general education as an important element in democratic participation in the life of society. Such were the contradictions in which Federation found itself when it endeavoured to influence a society that was more likely to be impressed by scientific and economic arguments than humanistic ones.

There was an additional and ultimately very significant unforeseen danger in the united front tactic. The rhetoric of the National Education conferences and the Science Conference was about education generally and not public education specifically.
The arguments used at these conferences were also applicable to non-government schools, particularly those conducted by the Catholic Church in 'poorer' areas. If federal funding was required for the development of schools in order to enhance national progress, it could be argued that non-government schools needed to be funded as well as government schools. Indeed, Brenden Kelly of the Bathurst Trades and Labor Council made the point at the 1960 National Education Conference that government schools which were clearly in need of federal assistance would be in an even more parlous state if there were no private schools. While he received little support for that argument at the conference, it was a claim that was to be made more frequently in the following years. Some of the allies of the public school parents' and teachers' organisations did not share these groups' singular adherence to federal funding of government schools. The arguments which attracted the employers, primary industry organisations and the scientific and academic community to the federal funding alliance were also propositions which could be mobilised in support of funding non-government schools. In 1961, the Federation and its allies did not consider State Aid of central significance in the federal funding campaign. It was not long, however, before it would be a complicating factor for the alliance.

(11) Report of the National Education Conference...1960, p.13. Ivor Lancaster said that an approach had been received from a Catholic parents' organisation seeking to participate in the 1957 State Education Conference. The approach had been rebuffed. Interview with Ivor Lancaster, 13 May 1983.
The first opportunity for the enlarged federal funding alliance to intervene in the electoral process was in the 1961 federal election. The demands of the alliance were reflected in Labor's promise to establish a national enquiry. In addition, the new Labor leader, A.A. Calwell, offered special grants to the states for physical education, teacher training and the provision of science equipment. Secondary scholarships were to be offered to children to encourage a full course of secondary education. These initiatives were to be co-ordinated by the establishment of a Ministry of Education and Science. Its principal task would be 'to modernise Australia's education system'.(12) Menzies, on behalf of the Coalition, gave no specific undertaking; he simply promised that adequate general purpose grants would be provided to the states from which 'other forms of education (than universities) could be financed'.(13)

Although Labor had been advocating a national enquiry since 1958, Calwell's education programme was more comprehensive and closer to the policies of Federation and the federal funding alliance. Federation Executive and Council passed unanimous resolutions congratulating Calwell for his pledges.(14) Whilst Federation did not call for a vote to Labor, it gave considerable publicity to the congratulatory resolution. It decided to take

(13) ibid.
action to secure pledges from all candidates to do all in their power to secure a national enquiry.

Federation officers and Executive members visited more than 70 country associations during the election campaign. In most places, public meetings were held where delegates of local organisations attended. In Sydney, 10 local meeting were held followed by deputations to candidates. In addition, four radio broadcasts were prepared and these received considerable coverage on country radio stations. In the process of securing pledges from candidates, Federation could not avoid indicating that Labor policy was closer to its own than the Coalition policy.

The Federation was, however, a little more circumspect when involved in joint electoral activities with the two parents' organisations under the aegis of the P.T.E.C. While publicity was given to the need for a national enquiry, the N.S.W. P.T.E.C. declared that 'the needs of education were above party policies'. The principal activity of the Council was to seek the signatures of local identities on a statement supporting its policies and to present it to local candidates.

It is difficult to assess the impact of the Federation and the Parent Teacher Education Council on the election. The main issue at the election was the economic situation. During 1960-61, there had been a credit 'squeeze' and unemployment had

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(16) ibid.
risen to the highest level of two per cent since World War II.\(^{(17)}\) Indeed, the advertisement taken out by the P.T.E.C. seemed to tacitly accept this when they declared that education was also 'a vital election issue'.\(^{(18)}\) Even if education was not the foremost issue in the election, the action of the Labor Party in adopting much of the policy of the national education movement had made the funding question a political issue.

The Menzies Government survived the election with a one-seat majority. Menzies himself continued a rearguard action against the federal funding of schools. When the Premiers once again raised the matter in February 1962, Menzies reacted sharply. He was not prepared to establish yet another committee which would 'open another field of financial responsibility' for the federal government. The Commonwealth would not 'sign a blank cheque' for the Premiers.\(^{(19)}\)

Menzies' reaction on this occasion was sharp enough for Heffron to resist Federation's urgings that the Premiers discuss the question in their conference in June 1962.\(^{(20)}\) In October, Menzies presented a 'White Paper' to the House of Representatives entitled: \underline{The Commonwealth and Education}, which set out the government's position.\(^{(21)}\) This document met with a hostile


\(^{(18)}\) N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1962, p.5.

\(^{(19)}\) ibid.

\(^{(20)}\) ibid.

\(^{(21)}\) C.P.D. House of Representatives, 6 November 1972, p.2049.
reaction from the Labor Party, the federal funding movement and the Federation. Subsequently, the Australian Teachers' Federation Conference in the following January, resolved to make 1963 a year of nation-wide activity on the funding question. The centre-piece of this campaign was to be another National Education Conference to be sponsored by the Victorian Teachers' Union.

Four thousand delegates from the familiar range of organisations met in Melbourne on 25 May 1963. The conference theme was 'Education for National Survival'. Unlike the 1960 conference, when politicians only attended as observers, William McMahon represented the federal government and Gough Whitlam represented the Labor Party. McMahon defended the government's record, but also hinted at the possibility of a shift in attitude by the government. Education and housing, he said were 'now moving to the forefront' of the government's priorities. Whitlam emphasised Labor's concern to expand teacher training and technical education. The conference carried the usual resolutions calling for a national enquiry and emergency grants to the states for educational purposes.

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(22) ibid., 6 December, 1962, pp.3114-7, 3121-4, 2127-34.
(25) ibid., Lancaster was loaned to the V.T.U. to assist in the organisation of the conference. Interview with Ivor Lancaster, 13 May 1983.
In 1962, however, a new and dynamic factor was introduced into the politics of education - State Aid. The consequences of the action of the Catholic parents in Goulburn in closing their church schools and seeking to enrol their children in local government schools, made State Aid, once again, an urgent issue. It was to prove a significant problem for the Federation and the federal funding movement in the following years.

The Spectre of State Aid

In 1949 a suburban newspaper, the Randwick-Coogee Weekly, together with the Catholic Weekly contended that the Federation's New Deal for Education was designed to deal a 'death blow' to denominational schools. (29) The Randwick-Coogee Weekly said that Communism could be resisted if church schools were given government financial assistance. (30) In 1950, the N.S.W. branch of the A.L.P. narrowly supported the expenditure of public funds on non-government schools. (31) Federation condemned this proposal (32) and proceeded to develop a detailed policy on the matter. Federation Council carried a lengthy resolution on 5 August 1950. (33)

(31) M.C. Hogan, The Catholic Campaign for State Aid, Catholic Theological Faculty, Manly, 1978, p.11. The resolution was carried by 165 to 154.
(33) Education, 14 August 1950, p.91.
Federation's objections to State Aid were based on three convictions, expressed in the 1950 resolution.

(a) Only the public system could provide schooling for all without sectarian or class distinction with the clear implication that private schools could not.

(b) Diversions of funds to non-government schools would harm government schools.

(c) Only Federal funding of public schools would provide funds sufficient to ensure an acceptable standard of education for all children.

Federal funding of education was seen as the key to providing adequate education for all children. To give assistance to non-government schools was to undermine the achievement of that central objective.

State Aid was not, however, a significant issue until 1956, when Acting Prime Minister, Sir Arthur Fadden, indicated to Canberra Church leaders that the federal government was prepared to reimburse the interest on loans taken out to extend or build secondary schools in the Australian Capital Territory. Catholic Archbishop, Eris O'Brien accepted the offer, Protestant Church leaders rejected it. Federation protested to Fadden and Evatt.(35)

Federation Council reminded Fadden that 'his first responsibility' was to the public school system. It directed Fadden's attention to Heffron's statement that only 23 of the necessary 172 school buildings would be constructed in 1956-57

(34) S.M.H., 10 July 1956.

because of insufficient funds from federal sources. (36) Here the emphasis was instrumental not ideological. There was no direct affirmation that State Aid was opposed to the 'development of a free, compulsory system of education for all, without sectarian or class distinction'. Rather, the emphasis was concrete and practical. How could the federal government justify assistance to church schools in the A.C.T., when it did not meet the urgent needs of public schools in the states? Such an emphasis was likely to have more political impact than a mere reiteration of principle. Don Taylor, in particular, was convinced that the matter had to be opposed on grounds of 'efficiency and economy'; the religious aspects of the question were to be avoided. (37)

In a union often riven by internal discord, such an approach is hardly surprising. The Right wing within the union was an alliance between Catholic Action elements and conservative, Protestant forces. While they could agree to oppose the Left, they would not agree on the State Aid question. The Protestant-Mason elements would not have tolerated a reversal of Federation policy. On the other hand, if the Left had pushed too hard on the ideological aspects of the question, it would have been left open to accusations of sectarianism. Taylor's compromise satisfied the Left and the non-Catholic sections of the Right and the Centre. Nevertheless, having established that Federation would oppose State Aid, primarily on the ground of

(37) Interview with Don Taylor, 14 March 1983.
economy and efficiency, it would be difficult to return to a more assertive statement of principle when the Left was in a stronger position in the union and when State Aid became a divisive issue once again in the early 1960s. The Federation's response to the Goulburn affair in 1962 is worth considering in this context.

1962: The Goulburn Affair and its Aftermath

The arguments enunciated by the federal funding alliance in the late 1950s and 1960s had one fatal flaw. They could also apply to non-government schools. If federal support for schools was vital for national economic, scientific and technological progress, then there was no real instrumental argument of that nature which could counter the claim that non-government schools should share the funding from federal sources. The argument then had to be one of efficiency or priority. The first responsibility of government was to the public sector. Until that was provided for, non-government schools should receive nothing. The problem with this argument was that it was not one of principle. It set aside the arguments about democratic citizenship and opposition to class and sectarian division which had underlined Federation's original policy formulation. Whilst State Aid was not a major issue, these difficulties did not matter very much. But when State Aid did become an issue, the contradiction had to be resolved.

The action of the Catholic community of Goulburn in closing their schools in July 1962, bordered on the sensational. Catholic parents were 'going on strike', something that teachers' union could not, for the most part, contemplate. The action attracted widespread publicity, stimulated the growth of an
aggressive Catholic organisation pressing for State Aid and began a process of extracting concessions from governments.\(^{38}\) The Goulburn strike was largely conceived and executed by lay people. On the surface, the tactics they used seemed brash, aggressive and uncompromising. The upshot was that the temperature of the old debate increased dramatically.\(^{39}\) It presented both Federation and the several governments with a new and difficult challenge. For the Federation, it introduced a complicating and potentially destructive factor into its strategy of building community alliances in support of federal funding for schools.

The reaction of Education tended to emphasise the effect on the Catholic children who had enrolled in public schools in Goulburn. By the time Catholic children adjusted to public schools, it suggested, Church schools would have reopened and thus the children would need to readjust to the environment of the church school. It would be 'a wasted year' for the children. Moreover, their presence in public schools would place a great burden on the facilities of public schools with classes of up to 49 pupils. This point tended to accept the argument often used by supporters of State Aid that it would relieve governments of the burden of accepting the ultimate financial responsibility for educating all children. It tended to confirm the rather sensationalised reporting of the incident particularly by the


\(^{39}\) On the Goulburn affair see M.C. Hogan, op.cit., pp.29-91.
Daily Telegraph which headlined one report: 'No School for 1200 Children' and another: 'Move to Absorb R.C. Pupils in State Schools'.

This seemed to be somewhat at odds with the report given by the Federation officers who went to Goulburn to assess the situation. General Secretary Matt Kennett, told Federation Council on 21 July, that the enrolment of Catholic children had been achieved without excitement or turmoil. The Principals of the primary schools had reported that enrolment had been completed by 10.15 am. He reported that the teachers met and indicated that they were willing to accept class loads of up to 45 pupils to meet the present emergency. They desired, however, that all available relief and casual teachers be employed to cover the situation. Kennett said that 75 per cent of the excitement and turmoil occurred in the columns of the daily newspapers, and not in Goulburn at all.

There was another problem in Goulburn which did not receive any public discussion. Key operatives of the Goulburn Teachers' Association had links with the pro-state aid lobby. There was pressure on the local Federation members to take a 'soft' line on the issue. To actively oppose Federation policy,

(40) D.T., 11 and 14 July 1962.

(41) Matt Kennett, report to Council, 12 July 1962, Minutes, p.127. The other officer who visited Goulburn was Bill Leslie.

(42) Interview with Bill Leslie, 1 July 1983. This was confirmed by Frank Barnes who taught at one of the Goulburn Catholic schools at the time. He later became a government school teacher.
however, would have been difficult. So the emphasis of the resolutions of the Goulburn teachers was on the impact on government schools.

The Department of Education, however, insisted that all classes should be filled to the maximum of 49 students, which was unacceptable to Federation.(43) Speaking at July Council, Lewis made the point that the state government had a responsibility to provide for displaced pupils, but not by 'disturbing the welfare of the children in public schools'. He cautioned against either the Federation or the state government being stampeded by an action which was basically a political one. He then reiterated the Federation's opposition to State Aid and its adherence to a free, compulsory system of education for all without sectarian or class distinction.

The article in Education, Kennett's report and Lewis' speech reveal the ambivalence of the Federation leadership over the matter. If the Federation had too enthusiastically welcomed the non-government school pupils, in accordance with its belief that all children should attend the common school system, then it was condoning the undermining of its members' working conditions and the learning conditions of children already enrolled in public schools. The dilemma was reflected in Education's editorial on the incident which argued that classes of 49 were unacceptable on the one hand, and gently chided the Roman Catholic community for believing that the products of government schools were 'less

(43) Press release issued by Federation, Council Minutes, 12 July 1962, pp.128-129.
worthy citizens' than those who attended private schools. State Aid could not, it concluded, be justified on either 'educational, economic or religious grounds'.

Don Taylor, perhaps felt on safer ground when he argued against state aid on grounds of economy and efficiency in his 'President Writes' column in a subsequent issue of Education. He detailed the failure of dual control of education in N.S.W. before 1880. The Goulburn incident had given rise 'to the extraordinary claim...that State Aid should not only be given to Catholic schools, but should be extended to schools conducted by all religious denominations.' The logical end to such a claim was that governments would become responsible for financing a multiplicity of schools controlled by denominational authorities. There would be 'needless duplication' of facilities and exacerbation of the growing shortage of teachers for public schools.

The Goulburn incident excited some correspondence in the union journal. John Davies demanded to know what Federation was proposing to do to protect public school teachers in Goulburn. He warned that Catholic parents in Albury were threatening similar action. Francis J. Meaney said that Goulburn action had been a strike for 'justice' and the Goulburn parents were merely asking 'that their children be treated as equal'. Helen Palmer argued for government schools as the physical embodiment of

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(45) ibid., 8 August 1962, p.2.
(46) ibid., p.7.
(47) ibid., 5 September 1962, p.5.
the fundamental liberal, democratic principle of the separation of Church and State. She vigorously refuted the claim that the public schools were 'godless institutions', by reminding readers that the 1880 Public Instruction Act provided an opportunity for all denominations to provide religious instruction in government schools.\(^{(48)}\)

No sooner had the controversy died down than the Archbishop of Sydney, Norman Cardinal Gilroy sent a well-publicised letter to Premier Heffron calling on the N.S.W. government to provide financial assistance to the Catholic system. His requests included: a thirty pound annual scholarship for secondary students; teachers' scholarships for trainees for private schools; capital assistance or interest subsidies for non-government schools; subsidies of lay teachers' salaries and assistance for science equipment.\(^{(49)}\)

Despite some contradictions in its reaction to the Goulburn incident, the Federation had treated the matter fairly calmly. The action of a few Catholic parents in Goulburn was one thing; a letter from Cardinal Gilroy, a prelate who usually eschewed publicity, was another and more dangerous occurrence.\(^{(50)}\)


\(^{(49)}\) The letter is reproduced in full in Hogan, op.cit., pp.271-275.

Don Taylor moved a strongly-worded resolution at Federation Council on 15 September 1962. Many of the phrases of the 1950 'hard line' resolution, were resurrected. The public school system was 'free and democratic and devoid of sectarian or class distinction'. These principles could be maintained, it continued, because all religious groups were eligible for election to Parliament and the Minister of Education was answerable to Parliament. Moreover, the compilation of 'syllabuses and the determination of the standards [were] matters for boards and committees on which schools, public, denominational and private have representatives'. Gilroy's recent proposals could, furthermore, destroy the public school system, foster class and sectarian distinctions and result in the uneconomic use of funds, accommodation and teachers available for education. The resolution called upon the federal government to meet its educational responsibilities to the states and requested the Premier to receive a deputation on the issue. Finally, consultations were to be held with the two parents' organisations in order 'to advance the public school system and oppose government aid to non-State schools.\(^{(51)}\)

In reporting Taylor's speech to Council, Education reveals that he concentrated more on the practical implications of State Aid and less on the principles underlying the Federation's position. He warned against the multiplication of schools with its attendant 'needless duplication of educational services'. Such a proposition could 'only impose an intolerable burden on the State'. He referred to the growing teacher shortage. 'How much

worse will this situation be if schools are duplicated in order to satisfy the whims of every minority group in the community?" (52)

The Council resolution returned to the tough wording of the 1950 statement. In it the enunciation of principles was paramount. (53) Such sentiments, if not the vigour of the language were, moreover, endorsed by the official statement of the two parents' organisations on the issue. (54) In publicising the resolution, however, there was a tendency to emphasise the practical consequences of State Aid, rather than the underlying principles.

The resolution was not accepted without controversy in Federation circles. J.R. Byrnes demanded to know 'on what authority does Council presume to speak on such a controversial matter?' Federation should work to improve teachers' working conditions, not undermine them by forcing children in non-government schools into public schools. (55) R.E. Connelly argued that the dual system 'must be maintained ... to prevent' a collapse of standards in public schools. (56) R.J. Martin, however, said the Federation's attitude should have the support of all 'loyal members'. (57)

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(52) Ibid.

(53) Similar sentiments were expressed in a joint statement by the Presidents of the three Federations, Education, 31 October 1962, p.6.


(55) F.R. Byrnes to M. Kennett, 10 September 1962, Government Assistance to Non-Government Schools files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

(56) Education, 31 October 1962, p.5.

(57) Ibid.
These letters were indicative of significant divisions within the union. The federal funding campaign had been a great unifying force. Individual members, school staffs and Federation Associations had been active in Parent Teacher Education Councils, had joined electoral committees, had organised deputations to politicians, had organised delegations to national education and school science conferences. The complication of State Aid threatened to fracture that unity. It is hardly surprising, then, that the union leadership tried to diffuse the challenge by tending to point out the practical consequences of State Aid, rather than taking the issue head-on by relying exclusively on an enunciation of the principles underlying opposition to State Aid.

'The Historic Breakthrough'

During 1963, both the N.S.W. and Commonwealth governments as well as the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, took initiatives which indicated their sensitivity to the demands of the State Aid lobby. The N.S.W. Government decided to make available allowances to parents whose children were obliged to leave home to obtain adequate secondary education. While no formal distinction was drawn between students in government schools and those attending non-government schools, the fact was that the bulk of the 400,000 pounds allocated would go overwhelmingly to parents of non-government school students.\(^{(58)}\)

\(^{(58)}\) See report of Gloria Phelan (Research Officer) to Federation Council, Education, 16 October 1963, p.1.
this as a breakthrough for the State Aid lobby in N.S.W. It did not, however, argue for the withdrawal of the scheme, but rather supported the proposal of Liberal M.L.A., Ben Doig, that secondary allowances should be given to all secondary students. (59)

This constituted an interesting tactical shift of ground for the Federation. By not insisting that assistance should go only to parents of children in government schools, in effect, it conceded a measure of assistance to parents of children at non-government schools.

The success of the 1963 National Education Conference indicated that the Commonwealth could not continue to resist the demands of the federal funding lobby. Moreover, it was also being harried by the State Aid lobby. Menzies was also impressed by the quieter lobbying of the Industrial Fund for the Advancement of Scientific Education in Schools. This organisation had been formed in 1959, by a group of businessmen. Its main activity had been to supply funds for provision of science education in non-government (usually non-Catholic) schools. (60) These three sources of pressure were instrumental in Menzies' producing his proposal for Commonwealth provision of science blocks in government and non-government schools.

This proposal gave something to all three lobby groups. It brought the Commonwealth into the provision of schools, a central demand of the federal funding lobby. It provided


assistance for non-government schools as well as government schools. It was specifically directed towards science education. It was, moreover, a particularly effective political stroke. Menzies' government had survived since 1961 with a majority of one seat. The science block proposal reinforced the inclination of the Democratic Labor Party to continue to direct its preferences to the Coalition parties.

The Labor Party, however, had announced its election policy before Menzies. It promised a national enquiry, a secondary scholarship scheme and an emergency grant to the states for education. Although Calwell had made similar promises in 1961, Federation characterised the emergency grant proposal as a 'breakthrough of the utmost importance'. Such a commitment, it suggested, could be used to secure other political parties to give similar undertakings. (61)

Calwell's proposals did not include any direct assistance to non-government schools. Menzies, however, not only countered with a scholarship proposal but also with a promise to provide $5 million per annum for the building and equipment facilities for science teaching in schools. These funds would be available to all secondary schools, government or independent, without discrimination. (62) While Federation policy was equivocal about assistance given directly to students attending non-government schools, Menzies' proposals for direct federal grants to non-government schools was clearly opposed to its policy. On the


other hand, Menzies' proposal also promised a reversal of his government's opposition to providing funds for specific educational purposes.

Federation did not directly call for a vote for the Labor Party. Such an action would have been controversial within the broader Federation membership. It would have, furthermore, undermined its joint campaigning efforts with the parents' organisations within the P.T.E.C. The Federation adopted an official 'Vote 1 Education' position. In its election publicity, however, it declared that the federal government had 'shelved its responsibilities in public education'. It pointed out that Menzies had failed to implement the consistent demand for a national enquiry. Such an action could not but 'hold back the development of Australian education...at a time when there is a major mounting crisis in our education system'. Indeed, all Menzies had promised was 'sectional subsidisation to limited fields of education'. It urged electors, therefore, to support the candidate 'whose party is pledged to a national enquiry and emergency grants to states for education'.

This was a significant shift from 1961, when Federation and its allies had merely sought pledges from candidates that they would work for those ends. Federation had all but called for a vote for the Labor Party. Perhaps no other decision was logically possible.

(63) N.S.W.T.F., election leaflet, (1963) Election files, N.S.W.T.F. archives. 80,000 copies were distributed, particularly in marginal seats. See also N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1964, p.4 and A.T.F., Annual Report 1964, p.17.
Since 1961, Labor policy had resembled closely that of the federal funding movement, whereas the Coalition's policy was still a long way from it and in one major respect was directly opposed to the Federation's stance on State Aid.

Menzies' science block proposals did, however, present Federation with a dilemma. While the proposal was opposed to Federation policy, it also represented an historic retreat from Menzies' oft-stated disinclination to make grants to the states for schools funding under Section 96 of the Constitution. If the Section 96 precedent was established, it would increase the possibility of strengthening the federal funding movement in its resolve to promote Commonwealth involvement in a whole range of educational matters. Although it was not made public at the time, Menzies assured the Federation during the course of the campaign that he would be prepared to discuss the Premiers' document Some Needs of Australian Education at a Loan Council meeting to be held soon after the government was returned.\(^{(64)}\)

The government was returned with a majority of 15 seats. Thus, Federation had to accommodate a significantly changed political climate. The first opportunity for the Federation to respond to this situation was at the Annual Conference held in December 1963. Taylor told the conference that the federal funding principle, so long fought for by the Federation and its allies, had been 'firmly established'.\(^{(65)}\) The conference,

\(^{(64)}\) N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1964, p.4.

\(^{(65)}\) Education, 12 February 1964, p.12.
however, reiterated its traditional demand for a national enquiry and an emergency grant.\(^{(66)}\) It also, significantly, passed a resolution opposing State Aid using very similar wording to the hardline resolution of 1950.\(^{(67)}\)

Federation Council took up the matter again when Menzies made a statement to the new Parliament on his proposals for science blocks and assistance to technical education of 5 March 1964. Council welcomed 'the recognition by the federal government that it has some responsibility for the education of the Australian child'. It declared, however, that $5 million was 'inadequate' and it represented a 'patchwork approach' to the problem which would 'serve little purpose'. Only a full enquiry into primary, secondary and technical education would properly determine the 'priorities of need'. Moreover, the dispersion of money to

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\text{both State and non-State schools could lead to inefficient and inequitable expenditure of Government funds, while Government schools are centrally organised, non-State schools are divided into a large number of different systems, some catering for a small number of pupils.}\(^{(68)}\)
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Council subsequently condemned the scholarship scheme for the last two years of secondary school. It would benefit a few students and would discriminate against students 'from government schools and non-wealthy homes'.\(^{(69)}\)

\(^{(66)}\) ibid.

\(^{(67)}\) Resolution in Government Assistance for Non-Government School files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

\(^{(68)}\) N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1964, p.25.

\(^{(69)}\) ibid.
Thus Federation faced a new political problem. How was it to continue the federal funding campaign and yet maintain its opposition to State Aid? While Federation continued to express its opposition to State Aid as a matter of principle, the focus of its attack was on a more instrumental level. State Aid tended to be opposed more on the grounds of economy and efficiency rather than simply on principle. Such an emphasis was, however, more likely to have political impact, given the federal funding movement's reliance more on arguments about national growth and development and less on arguments related to democratic citizenship. Nevertheless, invoking instrumental arguments enabled Federation to continue the federal funding campaign and still adhere to an anti-State Aid position. But even this approach did not take place without some controversy within the union.

Debate Within the Union

The matter was raised by Bill Gollan at the 1964 Annual Conference. He began his speech rather defensively. The State Aid question was not a political matter, despite the exploitation of the issue by politicians. Nor was it a sectarian question. Indeed, there had been some criticism within the Catholic Church itself about the wisdom of maintaining a separate school system.(70) Rather, it was an educational question. He then

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went on the attack and said the secondary scholarship proposal favoured rich parents and therefore was a piece of 'vicious class legislation'.

Brian Smith, who had been involved in Goulburn fracas, moved the conference proceed to the next item of business. He warned an outright condemnation of the federal government would 'divide' the Federation. He argued that perhaps 30 or 40 per cent of the membership supported the dual system of education. The intent of those who oppose State Aid and who happen to have the weight of numbers at conference 'on this fundamental and political issue', would only harm the unity of Federation. Having raised the temperature of the debate, his procedural motion was defeated.

Sam Lewis replied to the debate. While he canvassed the instrumental arguments, his speech was, for the most part, a ringing reaffirmation of first principles:

We are saying that we will not divide people up, but that the people who go to the public schools shall continue to come together irrespective of their religion or politics. After all, this is contained in the Public Instruction Act that education shall be given to all children without sectarian or class distinction. If people want class education, if people want their children treated separately, as somebody separate from other types of children, let them pay for it. If they want sectarian education - let them pay for it.\(^\text{(73)}\)

The motion condemning the federal government's state aid policy was carried, but the debate had revealed that there was considerable potential for acrimony within the union on the issue.

\(^{(71)}\) Annual Conference, 1964, Transcript, p.22.

\(^{(72)}\) ibid., p.27.

\(^{(73)}\) ibid.
The difficulties for the union were apparent during the 1965 N.S.W. State election. The Federation campaigned on both State Aid and the Education Commission with the greater emphasis on the latter issue.\(^{(74)}\) The Liberal-Country Party Coalition offered a Commission; the Labor Party did not. The prominence given by Federation to this issue seemed to indicate a preference for the election of the Coalition over the Labor Party. Yet when the Coalition was elected and allocated $100,000 as interest payment subsidies for non-government schools, Federation was bound to condemn the initiative as 'the thin edge of the wedge in opening the way for large-scale grants to private schools'.\(^{(75)}\) Such a statement lacked some credibility when it was believed that Federation's campaign in support of the Education Commission had been instrumental in electing the Coalition government.

There were three possible courses to follow. First Federation could accept the inevitability of State Aid. In N.S.W. both major political groups were committed to it. In the federal sphere, the Menzies Government was giving limited assistance for science facilities. There would be, moreover, increasing pressure on the Labor Party for changing its policy of one of assistance to students in non-government schools to one of aid for the schools themselves. In such a situation, Federation and its allies could concentrate on ensuring government schools gained a 'fair share of the educational cake'. The second possibility was to continue to oppose State Aid almost exclusively on grounds of fundamental

\(^{(74)}\) This is discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

\(^{(75)}\) Education, 6 October 1965, p.137.
principle. The problem with that approach was that the arguments the Federation and its allies used to support greater allocations of funds to schools had been concerned with economic, scientific and technological progress. Federation opted for a third approach. It continued to oppose State Aid in principle, but increasingly used instrumental arguments to persuade the federal government to accept responsibility for government schools. It also accused governments of turning State Aid into a political auction. In such an atmosphere, it argued, government schools missed out.

The latter approach had the attraction of permitting the Federation to maintain its traditional opposition to State Aid but yet present it in such a way as to maximise its political effect and give the organisation some protection from the charge of sectarianism. But even such an approach was likely to be the subject of controversy among the membership. The matter was again raised at the 1965 Annual Conference. On this occasion, the mover of the motion was Executive member John Frederick. While making passing reference to the familiar arguments against State Aid, Frederick produced two more arguments that were to be used frequently by Federation leaders in the ensuing years. He claimed that State Aid had become a vote-catching exercise; a political auction. The government parties at both federal and state level, had taken State Aid initiatives. This increased pressure on opposition parties to make counter offers. He then referred to assistance being given to wealthy private schools. He instanced two Church schools in Canberra being given grants to construct
four additional science laboratories each, while a local government high school had to make do with two existing science laboratories.\(^{76}\)

His secondier, Helen Palmer, referred to the Catholic critics of the Catholic education system.\(^{77}\) She then argued that children in Catholic schools were being denied the right to experience their schooling 'in a class with a dozen nationalities and a dozen religions'.

Speaking against the motion, Frank Meaney argued that the Catholic critics of the Catholic school system were outmatched by vigorous defenders of the system.\(^{78}\) He then argued that the level of assistance to private schools was far less than the cost that would need to be borne by governments if it became necessary to accommodate most children in government schools. State Aid, he concluded, was good economics, to oppose it was bad economics.\(^{79}\)

In reply, John Frederick argued that the Commonwealth was able to evade its responsibilities to public schools by allocating

\(^{76}\) Annual Conference, 1965, Transcript, p.106, N.S.W.T.F. Archives.

\(^{77}\) Brian Crittenden had answered in the negative the question, 'Even if the Catholic Community could maintain a complete system, should it?' Hogan op.cit., p.222. See also Crittenden's 'Acceptance of State Schools', Catholic Worker, October, 1965, p.4-6

\(^{78}\) Annual Conference 1965, Transcript, p.108.

\(^{79}\) ibid., pp.108-109. Meaney was the leader of the pro-State Aid group within the Federation. He was however, unable to mould his supporters into a cohesive, politically effective group.
a small part of its budget to State Aid. He warned that public schools would further deteriorate if Federation did not give a lead in opposing the federal government's political cynicism.

Most of the anti-State Aid speakers at the 1964 and 1965 conferences concentrated on the financial and political consequences of State Aid. Only Lewis went on the offensive and took a strong line on fundamental principles. That is not to say that Gollan, Frederick or Palmer would have disagreed with Lewis, rather they chose, for tactical reasons, to emphasise the practical considerations. These arguments were to be heard more frequently in the following years than those expressed by Sam Lewis.

This ambivalence in attitudes expressed by members of Federation was also apparent among the union's closest allies, the parents' organisations. In February 1965, the Australian Council of State Schools Organisations released a booklet entitled: State Aid for Non-State Schools is Dangerous. In the press release accompanying the booklet, the Council made a central point that State Aid would 'tend to weaken the state schools and tend to create or perpetuate stratified divisions in a culture ... along economic, social class, religious or racial lines'.\(^{(80)}\) This was the principal argument of the document itself which during 1965 was given wide distribution through the various state parent organisations and the teachers' unions. Just over a year later, however, the Presidents of the state parents' organisations and

the Federation, took out a joint advertisement on the State Aid issue. 'Our children must not be sacrificed to political expediency', they declared:

The provision of public funds to private schools as a political expedient is against the interests of the community. Such provision diverts urgently needed funds from Government schools to non-government schools. (81)

One of the signatories of the advertisement was Sam Lewis. He had not minced words in Federation circles on the issue. In the wider sphere, however, he had to adopt a position that would minimise the immediate political impact rather than arouse the hostility which may flow from an articulation of fundamental principle.

But even a carefully worded and politically astute advertisement could provoke controversy. The actual arguments articulated were given less credence than the fact it was an expression of opposition to State Aid as such. It provoked, indeed, a lively correspondence in the Daily Telegraph. The advertisement was attacked as 'emotionally-worded' by W. Feneley of the pro State Aid organisation, the Association for Educational Freedom. (82) Feneley's views were attacked by E.K. Wargent of the Secular Education Society. (83) Among the letters there was also a contribution from Paul R. Whalen who had been a delegate at the 1965 Annual Conference. Despite the vigour of Federation's public statements on State Aid, he said, there was sensitivity

(81) D.T., 4 March 1966.
(82) ibid., 4 March 1966. On the Association for Education Freedom, see Hogan, op.cit.,, pp.92-114.
(83) D.T., 11 March 1966. The Secular Education Society was an off-shoot of the N.S.W. Humanist Society.
within the union about the issue. He claimed that the conference
debate had been gagged in order to avoid the division being
revealed publicly.\(^{(84)}\)

Whether or not the leadership had actually sought to gag
the debate, is difficult to determine. What is clear, however, is
that Federation talked less and less about the class and sectarian
aspects of the question and more and more about the financial
implications of State Aid for private schools. By taking this
line, the union could maximise unity on the issue. Moreover, it
could disarm potential opposition to the policy within the union.
It was difficult to argue against the claim that the growing
amount of State Aid emanating from federal sources, enabled the
Commonwealth Government to avoid a substantial commitment to the
funding of public schools. A simple statement of opposition to
State Aid on the grounds that it entrenched social and religious
division, may have provoked a mobilisation of sections of
membership against the policy. The instrumental argument was a
useful tactic to be used against both the state and federal
governments, but it was not, at the level of fundamental
principle, a 'crunch' issue for the Federation.\(^{(85)}\) In the
meantime, the findings of two government enquiries strengthened
the instrumental arguments used by Federation and its allies.

\(^{(84)}\) ibid.

\(^{(85)}\) Interview with Barry Manefield, 29 March 1983. Manefield
was a member of the Federation Executive during the 1960s.
The Vernon and Martin Reports

The Vernon Report was concerned with economic rather than educational matters. Government expenditure on education could, however, contribute to economic growth. 'Expansion of education, the encouragement of research and the improvement in training facilities would 'improve the quality of the workforce and accelerate technological progress, thus raising the rate of economic growth'.'(86)

During the Vernon Enquiry, the Committee for Economic Development commissioned Professor Russel Mathews to investigate the role of public investment into economic growth.. He agreed with the Vernon Enquiry that the public and private sectors should be seen as partners, not competitors, in the achievement of balanced economic development.(87) In a chapter entitled, 'Human Development and the Provision of Social Capital' he reviewed the application of human capital theory to Australian conditions.(88) Educational expenditure, particularly on schools, had barely kept pace with increases in enrolment.(89) The Premiers' statements on educational needs in 1961 and 1963, he said, had been hardly extravagant given the healthy state of the economy.(90) He concluded by saying that some governments

(86) Report of the Committee of Economic Enquiry..., p.37
(87) His work was published as Public Investment in Australia, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1967, p.34. See also Report of the Committee of Economic Enquiry ..., p.2.
(89) ibid., p.376.
(90) ibid., p.377.
seemed more sensitive to pressures from private schools than to needs of the government schools.\(^{(91)}\)

Another economist, P.H. Karmel, was even more explicit in his application of the human capital thesis to Australian conditions. Education contributed to economic growth by raising 'production per worker' and through the acceleration of 'the flow of ideas ... from ... minor brainwaves to scientific discoveries, from managerial tricks to philosophies of social organisation'.\(^{(92)}\) Karmel's views on the economic aspects of education expenditure were often quoted by the various education pressure groups in subsequent years.

The Report of the Martin enquiry into tertiary education in Australia drew heavily on the work of the human capital theorists. It argued that additional education expenditure would enhance economic growth in four ways:

(i) a more skilled and efficient workforce should be produced.

(ii) existing knowledge may be applied more 'more rapidly' to the 'modernization of capital equipment, and the introduction of new products and of new methods of producing old products.

(iii) 'new knowledge' may be acquired'.

(iv) 'improved methods of management ... may become available'.\(^{(93)}\)

\(^{(91)}\) ibid., p.380.


The Report argued that a modern industrialised economy needed a highly trained workforce which only the tertiary sector could produce. It also advocated that education in science and technology should be balanced by education in the humanities and social sciences.\(^{(94)}\) It made a series of recommendations for the tertiary education sector including the establishment of a tertiary college system alongside the universities. It also recommended that the Commonwealth accept responsibility for the financial provision of teacher training.\(^{(95)}\)

While the focus of the Report was on tertiary education, it argued 'that a balanced programme of educational development' was necessary. Attention, therefore, should be paid to the foundations of tertiary education, namely schools.\(^{(96)}\) If investment in human capital was to produce the economic benefits claimed for it, the investment should be broadly based rather than confined to the tertiary area.

The Commonwealth accepted most of the recommendations of the Report. It, however, rejected the recommendation that the federal government should accept responsibility for the financial provision of teacher training in single purpose teachers' colleges. Even the formula adopted for the funding of multi-purpose post-secondary institutions meant that the states would need to spend $34 million in 1967-69 in order to attract a Commonwealth grant of $24 million. Federation expressed fears that the states might direct funds away from primary and secondary

\(^{(94)}\) ibid., pp.9-10
\(^{(95)}\) ibid.
\(^{(96)}\) ibid., p.4.
education in order to provide the necessary finance for the tertiary sector, which would, in turn, attract Commonwealth grants.\(^{(97)}\) Nevertheless, the Martin Report had asserted the interdependence of the various sectors of education. This gave the Federation and its allies yet another propaganda weapon.

This issue was taken up at the national Education Conference held in Canberra in June 1965. The keynote speaker, W.F. Connell, Professor of Education at the University of Sydney, identified the inadequate provision for teacher training as one of the major weaknesses of the Australian education system.\(^{(98)}\) Connell did not invoke the human capital rhetoric to support his claim, but his statement also presented the federal funding movement with a weapon to attack the federal government.

Sam Lewis made the Martin Report the centrepiece of his report to the 1965 Annual Conference. 'This authoritative national committee, 'he said, 'affirms that education is essential to national survival and economic progress and that all steps of education are interdependent.' The rejection of the recommendation for funding of single purpose teachers' colleges was, therefore, a severe blow to 'economic growth and national survival'. This blow, was hardly 'softened when, at the same time, the...Prime Minister diverts public funds to advance the private sector' of education.\(^{(99)}\)

\(^{(97)}\) N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1965, pp.8, 9.
Here Lewis was bringing together the themes of education as investment and of State Aid. While such a nexus was a useful, as an immediate political tactic, the association of the two themes were ultimately incompatible. Arguments about the role of education in national survival could also be applied to non-government schools. While it could be argued that it was more 'efficient' and 'economic' to fund centralised government systems of education rather than a multiplicity of private school systems, it was not an argument against state aid, per se. It was an argument about practicality rather than principle. If methods could be evolved to meet, in a systematic way, some of the needs of public education and yet render assistance to private schools in such a way as to remove the element of political auction from such an allocation, then many of the practical arguments against State Aid would lose force.

During 1966, the arguments used by Federation and allies were widely canvassed in the broader community. The Federation carried out its familiar publicity activities in Canberra to coincide with the Premiers' Conference on 16 and 17 June. In August, a motorcade of 40 cars and 2 buses conveyed 250 teachers to Canberra where deputations were held with the government and opposition education committees. Trainee teachers gained particular publicity by walking the last 100 miles to Canberra, their arrival coinciding with that of the motorcade. (100) Newspapers began to indicate considerable interest in the federal funding question. The Sydney Morning Herald publicised Australian

Education Council's 1963 statement of *Some Needs of Australian Education* which had argued that unless the federal government reduced significant additional assistance to the states the workforce would not be adequately qualified to meet the increasing demands of modern times. The *Australian* reported that an opinion poll had found that education was 'the burning political issue of the time'. It warned that education would be a major issue at the next election. The *Age* argued that uniform income taxation gave the Commonwealth control of the nation's purse. National development in all areas, including education, therefore, was largely determined by the funds returned to the states by the Commonwealth. In Federal Parliament, Liberal backbenchers such as William Aston and Malcolm Mackay, gave a measure of support for the Labor Party demand that the Commonwealth take an overall, rather than a piecemeal, approach to education.

**1966 Federal Election**

The principal issue in the 1966 election, however, was not education. It was, rather, the questions of conscription and Australia's participation in the war in Vietnam. The Federation and its allies, however, conducted their usual activities during

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(1) S.M.H., 14 June 1966.
(2) *Australian*, 29 April 1966.
(3) *ibid.*, 17 May 1966.
(4) *Age*, 7 July 1966
(5) C.P.D., House of Representatives, 12 October 1966, pp 1622-1625 (Aston) and 1638-1640 (MacKay)
the course of the campaign. The three Federations advertised extensively in national, suburban and country newspapers. The advertisements featured a rather plaintive little boy and informed electors that 'Your Child's Education is a Vital Issue in this Election'.

Electors were seeking pledges from candidates for a national enquiry and emergency grants. There was, however, a significant difference in emphasis from previous electoral advertisements. The emergency grants were to be for 'Public Education Services' and 'Teacher Training'. The first change reflected the three Federations' desire to continue the federal funding campaign and yet maintain an opposition to State Aid. The specific reference to teacher training was evidence that the rejection of the Martin Committee's recommendation on that matter had become an important part of the federal funding debate.

Calwell, once again, offered a national enquiry, emergency grants and (unspecified) assistance for teacher training. Holt, on behalf of the Liberal Party, argued that the role of the Commonwealth in education was significant, but limited. He, nevertheless, responded to the agitation which had followed Menzies' rejection of the Martin Report's recommendations on teacher training, when he promised $8 million a year for three years 'for the construction and equipment of new colleges for teacher training throughout Australia'. This money would not

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require matching grants from the states.\(^{(8)}\) But this recognition of teacher training by both major political parties was offset by Calwell's promise to 'supplement teachers' salaries in non-state primary and secondary schools',\(^{(9)}\) and Holt's promise to double the amount to be made available to non-government schools for the construction of science laboratories.\(^{(10)}\) Whichever party was returned, initiatives in State Aid were in the pipeline, however much the Federation and its allies might deplore the continuation of the State Aid auction.

The 1966 election policies of the two major political groups on education symbolised both the success and failure of the federal funding movement. The Federation revived the movement with its state conference in June 1957. It had been instrumental in the organisation of the National Education Conferences in Canberra in 1958 and in Sydney in 1960. The 1963 conference in Melbourne had been based on the N.S.W.T.F. developed united front and community alliance concept. Over the years, the alliance had been broadened to include not only teachers' unions, parents' organisations and community and church groups, but also the leaders of industry and commerce and of the academic and scientific community. The rhetoric of the federal funding movement had evolved from education for democratic citizenship to education for national survival. These latter arguments could, however, be applied to all sections of the education sector. If

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\(^{(10)}\) Speech given by the Prime Minister, op.cit.
national progress was dependent upon the federal government's accepting national responsibility for teacher training and a whole range of other matters, then there was no logical reason why the Commonwealth should not subsidise the training or remuneration of teachers in non-government schools or assist that sector in other financial ways.

That is not to say that the State Aid issue had been rendered null and void as a political issue. While ever assistance to non-government schools was piecemeal, while ever it could be asserted that the diversion of funds to the private education sector was making it more difficult to meet the growing crisis in the government education sector, State Aid would remain a lively political issue. The problem for Federation and some of its allies was to find a way to work for greater allocation of finance from state and federal sources and yet maintain opposition to State Aid. The problem for politicians was to gain maximum political benefit from the allocation of State Aid without being harried by the supporters of public education. How these problems were tackled is the subject of Chapter Seven of this thesis.

Having said that, however, it is clear that the federal funding movement led by the Federation was a classic and, in many ways, successful exercise in 'united front' politics. Not only did Federation seek and organise a great range of allies but was very skilful in mobilising the prevailing rhetoric of the times to give ideological impetus to that great facility for organisation. At the state level, however, its objectives were broader than merely pressing government to devote more of its resources to education. Those broader objectives are the subject of the next two chapters.
CHAPTER THREE

'SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ALL'
Federal funding of schools and colleges was seen as the principal answer to the question of how to provide access to education for all children and young people. Federal funds, however, did not provide an answer to the question of what kind of education would be provided if adequate finance was available. This chapter examines how the Federation endeavoured to answer that latter question. It also examines how the union endeavoured to project itself as an industrial, professional and educational organisation not only committed to the improvement of working conditions, but also to the advance of education generally.

Federation's attitudes to education were influenced by the ideas of the educational progressivists. The 1937 New Education Fellowship Conference played an important role in popularising the notion that education should be centred on the individual needs and interests of the diversity of youngsters. These ideas were taken up by Federation at the 1938 Conference for a Progressive, Democratic Australia.

Federation Senior Vice-President, Lucy Woodcock, was a leading speaker at the 1938 Conference. She argued that curriculum should be organised with the child as the focus of attention rather than the subject... (it) should aim at providing continuous growth in child development.


(2) Sam Lewis had taken his long-service leave to organise the conference. Bruce Mitchell, Teachers, Education and Politics, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, 1975, p.139.

It was not, however, simply a matter of respecting the individuality of each child. The development of the human mind was, she said, a social as well as an individual process.\(^{(4)}\)

Therefore the curriculum should be planned on broad lines ... social studies, conditions of the world, general science, creative projects, music, art, literature, the living environments...\(^{(5)}\)

The curriculum should, therefore, provide for each child both as an individual and social being.

To do this properly, however, required considerable resources. Another speaker at the conference C.E. (Clarrie) Martin said that there was little point to curriculum reform if it was provided in 'crowded and ill-ventilated rooms, cold and barrack-like schools'.\(^{(6)}\)

This conference established the practice of Federation of linking educational reform with the provision of appropriate resources. The industrial and educational, the ideological and material dimensions were inextricably linked in the policies and campaigns of the union.

The post-war reconstruction atmosphere gave impetus to these ideas. It was a time of hope and optimism. With the defeat of fascism a better world could be reconstructed from the devastation of war. This atmosphere was symbolised in an educational context, by the 1944 British Education Act and, in

\(^{(4)}\) ibid.
\(^{(5)}\) ibid.
\(^{(6)}\) ibid.
Australia, by the educational work of the Department of Post-War Reconstruction. In that context the 1944 Annual Conference of the Federation held a debate on curriculum reform.

Speakers in the debate argued that the time was ripe for curriculum reform. A dynamic and reconstructed post-war world would require it. The progressivist emphasis on individuality was linked with the collectivist sentiments of post-war reconstruction thinking. D. Aitkin of the Men Teachers' Association moved a proposition which embodied these sentiments:

The needs of pupils and the community are inter-dependent, therefore all school curricula should be based on the needs of the child and developing in an expanded democracy.

The essentials of such a curriculum therefore include

(i) Vocational and social training.
(ii) Student activity, including workshop practice, dramatic methods.
(iii) Understanding of the world.
(iv) Development of essential skills.
(v) Literary and artistic talents and appreciation.
(vi) Special provision for retarded and bright children.

These were to be 'areas of learning' rather than 'subjects'. A rigid syllabus, therefore, was to be avoided. The emphasis was to be on flexibility in the choice of content. Only this would


(8) Education, 30 January 1945, p.3.
ensure freedom for the teacher and the reception of the child of the type of education which best suits his personal needs and enables him to take his right place in the community. (9)

Assessment of this curriculum, therefore, should be based 'on the individual needs of pupils' and not on the requirements of universities.

Malcolm Mackinnon (10) successfully moved that Federation adopt a policy of abolition of the prevailing system of syllabuses and examinations. The secondary course should be divided into two sections, the first four years for pupils to age sixteen and a second section of two years. In the latter section, provision should be made for those proceeding to tertiary study. (11)

This resolution and the debate upon it has been quoted at some length in order to illustrate how the concepts of individual needs and the needs of a changing post-war democratic community were to be balanced within a reconstructed secondary curriculum. This resolution became the basis of discussions within the Secondary Teachers' Association and the Federation itself in the late 1940s. (12) It formed the basis of representations made by

(9) ibid.
(10) Federation President, 1937-1939.
(11) ibid.
(12) Draft Proposals for the formulation of the Education Policy of the N.S.W. Teachers' Federation, Secondary Education files, N.S.W.T.F. archives. See also Annual Report 1946, pp.40-42.
In 1944, the N.S.W. Cabinet adopted the proposal of Education Minister, Clive Evatt, that the Intermediate Certificate should become a completely internal examination. In 1946, the Secondary Schools Board made a series of proposals for secondary curriculum reform to the state government. The Board set out four principles on which secondary education should be provided. It

(a)... should be adapted to the needs and capacities of adolescents.
(b)... should be related closely to the interests and experiences of life.
(c)... should be all round, at the same time providing adequate opportunities for the pursuit of individual interests.
(d)... should not be regarded merely as a preparation for tertiary education; it should stimulate in all pupils a desire to go on to further learning.

Based on these principles, the Board recommended the institution of a six-year secondary course with a core curriculum plus optional subjects in the first four years and external examinations at the end of the fourth and sixth years. The government took no action on these recommendations.

(15) ibid., pp.29-30. See also N.S.W.T.F., Submission to the Survey of Secondary Education, 1955, pp.3-4.
The 1946 Board proposals and Federation secondary policy bore considerable resemblance. Both emphasised the individual needs of pupils. They implied that secondary curriculum should not be dominated by university requirements. The Board's proposals, however, placed less stress on the need for the development of secondary education in the context of a post-war democratic community.

They also shared an unstated assumption that there were measurable levels of ability among the pupil population. The progressive education movement's emphasis on meeting the needs of individual children developed in a parallel fashion to the application of the 'science' of Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.) testing to determine the differing levels of ability in children. These parallel tendencies converged in the decision to abolish the Primary Final Examination for secondary school selection but to replace it with selection procedures largely based on I.Q. testing.\(^{(17)}\) The Australian Council for Educational Research became an enthusiastic purveyor of the notion that individual differences were measurable.\(^{(18)}\) The A.C.E.R. view on I.Q. had become sufficiently the educational orthodoxy by the late 1940s for educational reformers to argue that time was propitious for a move towards a comprehensive secondary school system which would meet the needs of all adolescents.

\(^{(17)}\) ibid., pp.22-23. For a critique of this approach, see W.E. Gollan, *Education in Crisis*, Current Book Distributors, Sydney, 1959, pp.18-23.

The notion that measurement procedures, themselves, may be permeated by factors of class, gender, race and geographical location, had not gained currency in the 1940s. Nor had the notion that these procedures may tend to favour the middle-class, Anglo-Saxon, achievement-oriented children, had not emerged as a critique of I.Q. testing. Hence the notion current within the Federation that individual needs of children should be met within the context of a democratic society was never satisfactorily distinguished from the practices utilised to determine levels of ability. Not until the work of socialist educators, such as Brian Simon began to have some impact in Australia in the 1950s, did a more thorough-going critique begin to emerge. (19) The liberal-progressive impetus to break down a centralised, monocultural, imperial curriculum in order to meet the diversity of needs and interests of children was not distinguished from the tendency of normative testing practices to divide, select and classify children. In such an atmosphere, it is not surprising that the tendency to emphasise individual differences emerged more strongly as an educational orthodoxy than did the notion that this emphasis on the individual needed to be worked out with the context of a reconstructed democratic commonality.

However, the articulation of the notion of education for democracy did not recede from Federation attention. It tended, rather, to be linked with the resources question within the New Deal for Education campaign of the late 1940s.

(19) See Gollan, op.cit., and Brian Simon, op.cit. Leading Communist educators such as Lewis and Gollan were influenced by Simon's writings. Interview with Bill Leslie, 1 July 1983.
At the high point of the Left hegemony within the union in the late 1940s one commentator, Robin Gollan, saw the New Deal campaign as an integral part of the struggle for peace and justice. It was a contribution to the 'peace of the present' and the 'future'. It was 'part of the movement...which is founded on the belief that the material and spiritual welfare of the people was the ultimate good'. It was not only a 'campaign for a New Deal for Education' but also contributed 'to conditions where the school becomes a force for democracy and peace'. Moreover, a campaign which embraces 'people from all walks of life' was 'itself an immediate contribution to the maintenance of peace'.(20) The official Federation float in the 1947 May Day procession echoed these sentiments with its proclamation of 'Education for One World' but it cautioned 'Without Peace No New Deal for Education'.(21)

This internationalist, democratic sentiment, however, was not so appropriate when building a wider community alliance for educational reform. The national New Deal for Education Conference held in Canberra in 1948, identified the essential features of a reconstructed education system as ample playing areas, building and facilities suitable for complete education at all stages and fully qualified highly-trained, well-paid teachers, with improved facilities for country children to receive equal opportunity for advanced education.(22)

(21) ibid.
These liberal references to 'equal opportunity' and 'advanced education' were coupled with the need for appropriate human and physical resources for education. This is not to say that the Left within the Federation had foresaken the notions of education for democracy and international and social accord. In the growing Cold War environment liberal formulations, linked with material considerations, formed a sounder political basis for the development of a community education movement. The language of individual rights was safer than the language of social transformation.

In 1953, the Department of Education announced that it proposed to reintroduce an external examination for the Intermediate Certificate. The Secondary Teachers' Association condemned the proposal as educationally 'retrograde'. Federation Executive called a meeting of metropolitan secondary teachers. It called for full enquiry into secondary education. It should consider:

1. Curricula, including core curriculum ...
2. The value of internal examinations ...
3. The selection and placement of pupils in secondary schools...
4. Accommodation facilities and equipment
5. Staffing; size of classes...
6. The recruitment and training of teachers.
7. Inspections, assessment and promotions.(23)

The focus of the enquiry was to be on curriculum reform and material provision. The matter was pressed with the government\textsuperscript{(24)} and gave additional impetus to similar urgings by Director-General of Education, H.S. Wyndham.\textsuperscript{(25)}

Wyndham's educational formation took place in the 1930s when educational progressivism ran in tandem with the development of I.Q. testing as means of measuring individual differences. His work on ability grouping (streaming) was realised within the framework of endeavouring to cater for the range of interests, needs and abilities within a common secondary school system.\textsuperscript{(26)} These trends were taken up with enthusiasm by the A.C.E.R. and within the research department of the N.S.W. Department of Education, of which Wyndham was a leading member. Wyndham, however, pressed for an enquiry which would enhance educational reform without considering the material resources required to achieve that reform. This was reflected in the terms of reference of the committee established to survey secondary education. It was

1. To survey and to report on the provision of full-time day education for adolescents in New South Wales.

\textsuperscript{(24)} H.S. Norington to R.J. Heffron, 29 May, 13 July 1953, and R.J. Heffron to H.S. Norington, 4 May, 29 May 1953, Secondary Education files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

\textsuperscript{(25)} Interview with H.S. Wyndham, 14 September 1982.

2. In particular, to examine the objectives, organization and content of the courses for adolescent pupils in the public schools of the State, regard being had to the requirements of a good general education and to the desirability of providing a variety of curriculum adequate to meet the varying aptitudes and abilities of the pupils concerned. (27)

Wyndham, recommended that Federation President, Harry Heath be a member of the committee. (28)

Despite Heath's presence, Federation was not happy with the composition of the committee and asked Education Minister, Heffron to add some members nominated by Federation who had 'more direct experience in secondary education'. Heffron declined to do so. (29) Heath's presence, however, at least acted as some guarantee that the views of Federation would not be ignored by the committee.

Federation Council had adopted a comprehensive policy on the secondary education in 1946. Curriculum was defined as 'all activities of children which take place under the direction of the school, whether these activities are inside the school or out of it' and reiterated its view that curriculum reform could not be


(28) Not, it seems, because he was President of the Federation, but because he 'was a 'good, practical ... experienced headmaster'. Interview with H.S. Wyndham, 14 September, 1982.

(29) H.S. Norington to J.F. McGrath (Acting Minister for Education), 7 June 1954; McGrath to Norington, 6 July 1954; Norington to McGrath, 2 August 1954; McGrath to Norington, 6 August 1954; Norington to Heffron, 22 September 1954 and Heffron to Norington, 11 October 1954, Secondary Education files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
realised without modern buildings, 'ample playing areas and an ample supply of modern equipment'. (30) The formal curriculum should make provision for

(1) Health education;
(2) Sound instruction in the tools of learning;
(3) Social sciences, ethical education, training in social living for worthy home and community membership, training in civic responsibility;
(4) Introduction to the natural sciences;
(5) Training for culture;
(6) Training in the worthy use of leisure, in self-education and self-direction. (31)

Secondary education should include four years of 'general secondary' and two years of 'higher secondary education'. The first four years should be centred on a 'core curriculum' which should consist of English, Social Science, General Science, Mathematics, Physical Education, Music, Art and Handwork. This should be supplemented by a 'wide variety of optional courses of study ranging from the Pure Mathematics and the Foreign Languages, which will appeal to the bookish student to the practical activities better suited to the boy and girl of less academic interests'. Higher secondary education should consist of the compulsory subjects 'English and Social Science and three or four other optional subjects'. (32)

(31) ibid.
(32) ibid., p.121.
It recommended that any examinations held during the first four years should be 'internal', but accepted the inevitability of external examinations for higher secondary education' so long as there is competition for a restricted number of places and prizes in tertiary institutions'.

Educational reform was firmly linked with the need for physical provision. Its rationalisation was that of catering for individual needs and interests rather than notions about education for democratic citizenship. While this emphasis on the rights of the individual child was an appropriate response to the dominance of competitive centralised and stratified curriculum characteristic of the secondary school system, it also drew a distinction between manual and mental labour. Pure mathematics and languages were for the 'bookish' academic student; practical activities were for those who had 'less academic interests'. The core curriculum was to provide access for all adolescents to a variety of learning experiences, optional study to be chosen within the framework of a mental/manual distinction and legitimised by assumptions about innate capacities, immutable needs and interests and aptitudes determined by the application of that distinction.

This resolution was carried in 1953 when the Left was on the defensive within the union. The Council was firmly controlled by forces hostile to those who had formulated the more collectivist notions of the New Deal for Education in the late 1940s. Indeed, the very notions articulated by this conservative

\[(33) \text{ibid.}\]
Federation Council were controversial. The immediate priority was to gain acceptance of notions such as comprehensive education within articulating too forcibly the collectivist assumptions of the Left within the union.

In March 1954, the Secondary Teachers Association held a symposium on reform of secondary education. One speaker, George Parkes, the Principal of the selective North Sydney Boys' High School, used essentially liberal arguments to justify a comprehensive, rather than a selective, curriculum for all secondary schools. Bill Gollan, Principal of Parramatta Junior High School, however, invoked the experience of socialist countries to demonstrate that a high proportion of students were 'educable to matriculation standards'. (34) Gollan was a leading and well known member of the C.P.A., and somewhat of a party intellectual. (35) His views probably represented the view of active party members within the Federation.

There was considerable discussion within the union throughout 1954 and 1955. Many associations and individuals made submissions to the Wyndham enquiry. While many of the submissions tended to be concerned primarily with problems of particular

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teaching specialities, they usually supported Federation's policy of a core curriculum and a comprehensive secondary school system.\textsuperscript{(36)}

Federation's final submission to the Wyndham enquiry endeavoured to place notions about individual rights of children within the context of a democratic society. The prime aim of secondary education was

to provide for the fundamental needs and interests of the child living and developing in an expanding democracy and to develop to the fullest the personality of the child.\textsuperscript{(37)}

Provision should be made for the needs and interests of all adolescents in relation to the democratic society in which they lived.\textsuperscript{(38)} 'Full and harmonious development of the individual' was not possible without 'reference to the community'.\textsuperscript{(39)}

\textsuperscript{(36)} Associations included: Cookery Teachers, Correspondence School, Deputy Headmasters and Deputy Masters, Deputy Headmistresses and Deputy Mistresses, Girls Mistresses, Headmasters, Home Economics, Manual Arts, Men Teachers, Needlework, Physical Education, Research and Guidance Officers, Secondary, Supervisors, Technical and Home Science, Women Assistants. See also H.S. Norington to L.S. Thompson (Secretary, Secondary Survey Committee), 8 June 1954; Secondary Education files, N.S.W.T.F., archives. Evidence of individuals and associations is included in Committee appointed to Survey Secondary Education, Transcript of Proceedings, copy, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

\textsuperscript{(37)} N.S.W.T.F., Submission to Enquiry on Secondary Education. 1955, p 5. Also published in \textit{Education}, 21 September 1955 (Supplement).

\textsuperscript{(38)} ibid., p.4.

\textsuperscript{(39)} ibid.
The submission criticised the degree of specialisation characteristic of the existing secondary system. The curriculum was 'remote from the real life concerns of youth'. It provided 'little preparation and less practice in democratic citizenship'.(40) This, in part, explained the fact that nearly fifty percent did not complete the second year of secondary school.(41) A comprehensive school system with a general education provided through the combination of a core curriculum plus options, was the solution to this problem.(42)

The country high school system should be used as the model for all other secondary schools. Country high schools were the focus of community pride and activity. This was not always the case in the stratified system of home science and technical schools in the metropolitan areas. Moreover, country high schools being co-educational, were much more integrated 'social units' than the single sex schools in the cities. Nor were there the 'heartburnings' of the selection process when children moved from primary to secondary schools in the country. This again contrasted with the distress caused by the selection processes in the stratified system in the cities.(43)

(40) ibid., p.5. These quotations were taken from a speech to the 1945 Annual Conference of the S.T.A., by C.R. McRae, Professor of Education at the University of Sydney. McRae was a member of the Wyndham committee.

(41) ibid.

(42) ibid., to be followed by two years of 'higher' education.

(43) ibid., p.11.
The submission then launched a sustained attack upon the 11.6+ selection test for allocation to secondary schools. Variations of eight percentage points could occur between successive I.Q. tests. Moreover, such tests were undoubtedly influenced by home environment. While the concept of I.Q. testing was not rejected per se, serious doubt was raised about its usefulness as a predictor of scholastic achievement. Selection of course specialities should be delayed as long as possible. The problems associated with I.Q. testing, therefore

must be regarded as arguments for all children following a common course of studies in secondary school with a number of electives, and where selection is necessary a postponement of the age at which this takes place. (44)

The comprehensive and general nature of the school curriculum should be, moreover, reflected in the courses undertaken by trainee teachers. All prospective teachers should study English, Education, Educational Psychology, Social Studies, Art, Music, Physical Education, Hygiene, Physical and Biological Sciences. Academic pursuits should be integrated with extensive teaching practice over a four-year period leading to a degree conferred by the Department of Education. A reconstructed secondary education system demanded teachers with a 'balanced cultural and professional background'. (45)

(44) ibid., p.13.
(45) ibid., p.16. What was not stated but implied was that such a teaching training background would enhance the 'professional' status of teachers generally.
Having set the general education framework in the first twenty-two pages, the succeeding twenty-five pages of the submission dealt with the personnel and physical deficiencies of secondary schools. This was based on a detailed survey which Federation organiser Hugh Henry, had conducted, on such matters as class loads, accommodation standards, teacher expertise and shortages, lack of equipment and the 'extraneous' duties of teachers.\(^{(46)}\) To bring these deficiencies to public notice, it was therefore necessary to free teachers from the restraints on public comment imposed by Public Service Board regulations.\(^{(47)}\)

The submission concluded with a call for more finance for education, particularly from federal sources. It deprecated the fact that the terms of reference did not make any provision for any consideration of resource deficiencies of the schools and, therefore, precluded the inclusion of any submission to the Commonwealth Government for assistance in alleviating these problems and, therefore promoting the reconstruction of secondary education. To that extent, then, the report of the committee could not avoid being 'seriously inadequate'.\(^{(48)}\)

The Federation submission brought together a number of ideological, educational and industrial themes in Federation thinking since the late 1930s. The notion of individual rights was asserted within a social context of democratic collectivity.

\(^{(46)}\) ibid. See also H.M. Henry to Federation Representatives of Secondary Schools, 6 June 1955, Secondary Education files, N.S.W.T.F. archives. Henry and Research Officer, Elizabeth Mattick, drafted the submission as a whole.

\(^{(47)}\) ibid., p.45.

\(^{(48)}\) ibid.
Reform of secondary education was seen as a part of wider movement for education 'advance'. This was linked with the necessity for proper provision of personnel and physical resources. The provision of personnel was reinforced by the demand for four years of 'professional' teacher education, together with the assertion of the right these 'professionals' to bring deficiencies of a system to public notice. The invocation of all these strands in Federation thinking were designed to enhance the maximum commitment of the membership to the reform of secondary education.

Even a generous interpretation of the terms of reference of the committee could not have permitted explicit discussion of the resources question. Ultimately resource considerations could not be isolated from more explicitly educational questions. Nevertheless, the final report of the committee was submitted to the government in September 1957, and it received Federation endorsement.\(^{(49)}\)

The Report endorsed the notions of comprehensive education, core curriculum plus elective courses and external examinations at the school certificate and higher school certificate levels.\(^{(50)}\) While these recommendations were similar to major points of Federation policy, they differed in two significant areas. First, the Report's recommendations concentrated on the notion of individual rights of children. While the Report endorsed the concept of secondary education for

\(^{(49)}\) Education, 4 December 1957, p.7.
all adolescents,\(^{(51)}\) it defined such education as the 'proper provision for all types and levels of ability and for a wide variety of interest and need to be found in any entire school generation'.\(^{(52)}\) Secondary education must provided for the 'talented', the 'average' and the 'poorly endowed' student,\(^{(53)}\) as if these were fixed and immutable characteristics of children. This was to be realised in a common school system through 'ability grouping' or 'streaming',\(^{(54)}\) after a common year of study in the first year of the secondary school.\(^{(55)}\)

Apart from some unspecific references to the 'needs of the community', no attempt was made to balance the diversity of needs, interests and abilities of individuals against the role of secondary education in the fostering of democratic citizenship, which was the emphasis of the Federation submission.

Nevertheless, the recommendations themselves were close enough to those of the Federation to prevent too much fuss being made about the reasons adopted for coming to a similar set of conclusions. The problem for the Federation was to ensure that the Report was implemented and that the resources required for its implementation be provided by government. This was very much the theme of the 1958 Annual Conference resolution on the question.

\(^{(51)}\) ibid., pp.79-80.
\(^{(52)}\) ibid., p.63.
\(^{(53)}\) ibid.
\(^{(54)}\) ibid., pp.88-89.
\(^{(55)}\) ibid., pp.71-72, 75-78.
This resolution also placed considerable emphasis on another aspect of teacher 'professionalism'. Teachers should be seconded to the Department of Education to prepare draft syllabuses and submit them for discussion by teachers generally. The discussions should moreover, take place in school time so that teachers could 'familiarise themselves with the new approach' to secondary education. Federation, as the 'professional' organisation of teachers should, moreover, be involved in the organisation of these discussions. Teachers, therefore, should be active participants in educational change not the passive instruments of it. For the same 'professional' reasons, Conference expressed its opposition to the suggestion that people with only four years of secondary education should be recruited to alleviate the growing teacher shortage.\(^{(56)}\) Such a dilution project could not but undermine the quest of teachers for improved professional status.

The first priority of the Federation was to persuade the government to implement the Report. Education Minister Heffron welcomed Federation's support for the proposals but warned that implementation would 'be looked at in relation' to the government's 'inevitable commitments' arising from the 'great increase in the secondary school population' in the coming years.\(^{(57)}\) These problems were serious enough without

\(^{(56)}\) Education, 10 September 1958, p.12. See also H.S. Norington to R.J. Heffron, 2 September 1958, Secondary Education files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

implementing a report designed to increase retention rates in schools.

It was becoming increasingly clear that the implementation of the Report was likely to exacerbate the already difficult demographic situation. The children born in 1948 - the first year of the great post-war birth boom - would enter high schools in 1960. Even if they entered the stratified system of secondary schools, there would be considerable difficulties in accommodation, class sizes and the availability of teachers. If, however, the Report was implemented then the already apparent tendency for children to stay at school longer would be intensified by a government policy which sought to maximise the numbers of children receiving at least four years of secondary education. Federation could have simply sought to press for additional resources to meet the demographic crisis without attempting to actively work for increased retention rates in schools. To do so would have undermined the Federation's central claim to be an organisation interested in the 'advance of education' as well as directed towards improving the working conditions of its members. Indeed, its educational orientation ran counter to what could be held as its traditional industrial function. The implementation of the Report could not but lead to, at least, a temporary deterioration of working conditions, unless it was accompanied by a significant increase in financial provision from state and federal sources. Indeed, Federation's commitment to secondary education reform gave its campaigns for greater financial provision both additional impetus and legitimacy.
Sections of the secondary membership, however, did not share Federation's enthusiasm for the Wyndham Report. The staff of Fort Street Boys' High School, for instance, called for the maintenance of selective schools within a generally comprehensive system.\(^{58}\) Defenders of the Report emphasised that its implementation would ensure that secondary education would not be confined to a privileged 'social or intellectual minority'. It would be the right of all adolescents.\(^{59}\)

Federation mobilised its own campaigning methods together with those of the Parent Teacher Education Council to press for implementation of the Report. The post-Sputnik concern about the inadequacy of secondary education assisted this process. Wyndham himself instructed his departmental officers to promote the Report in their dealings with teachers and the community generally.\(^{60}\) Federation's public campaigning and the department's less overt activities helped to keep the Report prominent from 1957 to 1961.

In June 1959, the Annual Conference of the N.S.W. Branch of the A.L.P. gave general support to the Report. A committee was established to look at the financial implications of implementation.

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\(^{58}\) *Education*, 10 September 1958, p.12 (letter).


\(^{60}\) Interview with H.S. Wyndham, 14 September 1982. Wyndham was the subject of some criticism within the A.L.P. for these activities. Don Taylor, however, claimed that Wyndham did little to promote the Report. Interview with Don Taylor, 14 March 1983. He perhaps underestimated Wyndham's capacity for semi-covert political activity.
There was much discussion within the party during 1959 and 1960. There was particular concern that if the Report was implemented young people seeking apprenticeships at age fifteen would be disadvantaged relative to those doing so at age sixteen. Education Minister, Ern Wetherell decided to bring the matter to a head at the 1961 conference. The Party's education committee recommended implementation of the Report to the conference.

Wetherell succeeded Heffron as Minister for Education 1959; Heffron himself became Premier after J.J. Cahill's death. A largely self-educated miner and former editor of the Barrier Daily Truth, Wetherell was sympathetic to reform of secondary education. Don Taylor, informally and Federation formally, approached Wetherell to implement the report.

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(61) H.S. Norington to W.R. Colbourne (General Secretary N.S.W. Branch, A.L.P.), 21 September 1959, and W.R. Colbourne to H.S. Norington, 21 September 1959, Secondary Education files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.


(63) D.T., 10 May 1961.


(66) Interview with Don Taylor, 14 March 1983.

Wyndham himself urged the Minister to act.\(^{(68)}\) During the late 1960 and 1961, Wetherell set about convincing the power brokers within the party that implementation should proceed. He brought together various caucus and party education committee members with Wyndham and himself to thrash out the issues.\(^{(69)}\) Federation activated its network among teachers who were A.L.P. members as well as making formal approaches to the party.\(^{(70)}\) It also ran a series of newspaper advertisements calling for implementation of the Report.\(^{(71)}\)

The A.L.P. Education Committee recommended that 'the adoption of a scheme involving a School Certificate ... and a Leaving Certificate would be a decided advance in 'all spheres of education'. It expressed concern, however, that employers would favour girls or boys with four years of secondary education over those leaving at the minimum age. It, therefore, recommended:

1. Continuation of school leaving age at fifteen years.

\(^{(68)}\) Interview with H.S. Wyndham, 14 September 1982.

\(^{(69)}\) ibid.


\(^{(71)}\) Cessnock Eagle, 28 March 1961; Coonamble Times, 29 March 1961; Grafton Examiner, 1 April 1961; Barrier Daily Truth, 4 April 1961; Nowra Leader, 6 April 1961, and Moree Champion, 16 April 1961. See also statement by General Secretary, Matt Kennett, S.M.H., 11 May 1961.
(3) A 'Lower School Leaving Certificate' at the end of fourth year.

(4) A 'Higher School Leaving Certificate' at the end of sixth year.

(5) Adoption of a core curriculum in the first year.

(6) External examinations in fourth and sixth years. (72)

Before the conference, Federation organised a sustained lobbying of delegates who were teachers and of key figures in the Party. (73) The efforts of Wetherell and Federation were vindicated when the conference adopted the report overwhelmingly. (74)

Wetherell, however, still faced opposition within the Parliamentary Party. Some members of the Caucus Education Committee wanted the retention of the Intermediate Certificate. (75) Two members, R.F.X. Connor and R.J. Kelly, even wanted a return to an external examination at the end of third year. (76) Minister for Transport Enticknap, said he would...

(72) Australian Labor Party (N.S.W. Branch), Official Report... of the 1961 Conference..., p.33. These points are paraphrased.


(74) S.M.H., 13 June 1961.

(75) D.T., 10 May 1961.

(76) S.M.H., 23 August 1961.
not support implementation until he was convinced that country children would benefit. (77) C.J. Earl resigned from the Caucus Education Committee. He regarded Wetherell's action in taking the matter to the Party Conference as being tantamount to presenting the Caucus Education Committee with a fait accompli. (78) Heffron, Attorney General Frank Downing and Labor and Industry Minister J.J. Moloney were attacked in Caucus for supporting Wetherell's tactics in forcing implementation through conference. (79)

While controversy continued within the A.L.P., the Report was subject to attack from sections of academia. The opponent who attracted most attention was J.M. Blatt, Professor of Applied Mathematics at the University of New South Wales. In a series of letters and public statements he called for the implementation of the Report only if significant modifications were made to the proposals. (80) He was principally concerned about the fate of 'able academic' students. He warned that the scheme could be 'an outrageous waste of money' even if its objectives were achieved. He doubted this could be done while there was such a 'desperate teacher shortage particularly among academically-qualified


(78) S.M.H., 3 August 1961.

(79) ibid. See also speech to Legislative Assembly by R.W. Askin, Leader of the Opposition, N.S.W.P.D. Legislative Assembly, 17 August, 1961, pp.87-88.

teachers'. (81) In a speech to the Selective High School Parents and Ex-Students Association, he called for the establishment of a series of selective high schools throughout the state so that all 'bright' children would have access 'to high standard academic education'. (82) He claimed that teachers in selective schools were being dispersed to area comprehensive schools. This view was supported by Housing Minister, Abram Landa who called for the retention of selective schools, staffed by the best available teachers; 'the best teachers for the best pupils'. (83)

As the parliamentary debate on the implementation approached, a group of leading academics led by Blatt called for the establishment of one selective high school for every seven comprehensive schools, the establishment of a separate honours level school certificate and strong representation from the universities on the proposed study boards and syllabus committees. (84) Implementation of the scheme in its proposed form they said would 'deprive the ablest children of their democratic right to be educated at the highest level of which they are capable'. (85)

Research Officer, Gloria Phelan, had already begun to counter these arguments by insisting that secondary education had to cater for the 'needs, capacities and interests of all children'
whether they were 'gifted', 'average' or 'dull', not only 'intellectually but physically, socially and culturally'.(86)

She denied, however, that able children would be disadvantaged in such a system. Teachers could organise class groups 'on the basis of ability', thus there could be 'a large degree of variation between classes' in content and method presentation.(87) She, nevertheless, called on teachers to oppose the views of Blatt and his supporters. They struck at the fundamental democratic impetus of the Wyndham scheme, 'equal opportunity for all'. Their proposals merely reverted to the outmoded notion of 'aristocracy of intellect'.(88)

Don Taylor joined the controversy. He said that the proposals of a 'small group of university professors' ignored 'the facts that many children do not live up to the promise of the early years and do not develop into brilliant students'. The professors' proposal for honours courses would lead to a concentration on the interests of a few children at the expense of a 'satisfactory comprehensive education' for all. Indeed, he argued the Wyndham proposals would both benefit the 'individual child' and benefit the nation as a result of the 'great expansion of trained personnel' which would follow the implementation of the scheme.(89)

(87) ibid.
(89) D.T., 9 September 1961.
The theme of national interest was invoked by five Sydney schoolteachers who sent an open letter to all members of Parliament commenting on Blatt's proposals. They argued that the Wyndham changes offered an opportunity to lift secondary education to a 'level appropriate to modern society'. It was not appropriate to pick out a few able children and 'devote to them alone the fullest attention, regardless of the potential ability of the rest'. Indeed, the Murray Report has argued that national development demanded the production of 'a very large number of very highly-educated men and women'.

These three contributions invoked much of the language Federation had used to advance access to secondary education since 1938. But all of them, to a greater or lesser extent, fell back upon the language of individual rights and differences to defend the scheme against its emasculation by Blatt and his supporters. From Phelan and Taylor, in particular, there is explicit reference to differing and recognisable abilities of children which would be catered for within the comprehensive school, but through the mechanism of ability grouping. The mobilisation in support of the 'bright' and selective schools had to be countered by assuring the opponents and the doubters that the 'able' would also prosper in the streamed world of the common school.

The democratic strand in Federation thinking about secondary education had been subsumed by notions about individuality. It was no longer expressed as education for democracy or education for democratic citizenship. Rather it was expressed as secondary education as a democratic right for all adolescents, not just for a social or intellectual elite. Such a populist notion, coupled with the liberal notion of equality of opportunity, was calculated to attract support within the Labor Party and within a community which was coming to expect higher levels of education for its children. Whereas such notions appealed to a wider constituency, the mechanism of streaming was invoked as a counter to the claim that the democratic rights of 'able children' would be diluted in the common school system. The Federation submission to the Wyndham enquiry made no reference to ability grouping, yet Federation leaders embraced it when the whole Wyndham edifice seemed in jeopardy. This is not to suggest that these people endorsed notions of unrestrained individual competitiveness implicit in the streaming mechanism. The central task for Federation in 1961 was to have the Wyndham Report implemented. Certain arguments had to be mobilised to achieve that end, whatever the private reservations there might be about them.

The legislation presented to Parliament by Wetherell on 9 November 1961, endeavoured to meet criticisms both inside and outside the Labor Party. The Intermediate Certificate was
retained, as were the existing selective high schools.\(^{(91)}\) Wetherell gave an assurance that the pattern of organisation in the comprehensive secondary schools would make 'specific provision for the selection of pupils of ability...'.\(^{(92)}\) 'The cost to the State,' he said, 'would be more than offset by the returns the State will receive from the higher education that is demanded by society, commerce, industry and all other productive forces in our community.'\(^{(93)}\)

Such assurances were not sufficient for Federation. During 1961, its educational and ideological commitment to the implementation of the scheme had taken precedence over its industrial function as a defender and enhancer of the working conditions of its members. After the legislation had safely passed through Parliament, it was hardly surprising that Federation became preoccupied with achieving the resources necessary to make the decision a reality at the school level. If the Federation leadership needed any reminding, the following incident reveals that reminders could be made in a rather sharp fashion by active members.

During the course of the debate about the implementation of the Wyndham scheme, Vice-President, Elizabeth Mattick travelled to Armidale to take part in a symposium on the question at the


\[^{(92)}\] ibid., p.2389.

\[^{(93)}\] ibid., p.2393.
University of New England. She spoke at some length about the educational justifications for implementing the Report, and then, during question-time, had a rather sharp exchange with an unnamed English teacher. He asked Mattick whether one of the consequences of implementation would be that more two-year trained teachers would need to be employed in secondary schools? She said that the Department of Education would probably adopt that course of action without the Federation necessarily approving of it. It was the Federation's policy that all teachers be four-year trained.

To that reply came the following response:

Yet, at the same time, you are supporting the policy which is going to throw more children upon us to look after, when you, as a Federationist must know full well that we're going to be short of teachers, graduate teachers, and we must remain short for years to come. Therefore, although you don't in theory believe we can do the job properly, you're going to ask us to do it.

She agreed that a large number of two-year trained teachers was undesirable, but questioned whether the situation was 'going to be any worse' with the introduction of the Wyndham scheme, 'than it is at the present time'. That comment provoked the following exchange:

Teacher: Yes, and with more children to try and cope with - it must become worse.

(95) ibid., p.106.
(96) ibid., p.107.
Mattick: Therefore we should try to get more teachers trained.

Teacher: And in the meantime hold off taking these extra children.

Mattick: Can we afford to wait? (97)

The teacher then argued that the Federation should insist that the implementation of the scheme should be delayed until there were sufficient teachers. He then suggested that if the scheme was to go ahead, its impact could be somewhat lessened by lowering the school leaving age to 14 years. The exchange between Mattick and the teacher concluded with her comment that such a proposal would be a 'retrograde step'. (98)

The exchange is significant in any consideration of the dilemma faced by Federation in 1961. Both Mattick and the teacher believed that the teacher shortage would worsen as a result of increased retention rates following the implementation of the Wyndham scheme. The solution for the teacher was simply an industrial one; oppose implementation until teachers were available and classes could be kept at reasonable size. Or alternatively, lower the school leaving age. Mattick could not deny the consequences for teachers' working conditions. She argued, rather, that it was educationally proper to proceed while maintaining pressure on the authorities for greater finance for education. Moreover, to delay implementation would not necessarily hold down student members in a society demanding even higher levels of education for their children.

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(97) ibid.
(98) ibid.
Federation did not seek to delay implementation, although it made strong representations about the process. 1962 saw the first year of the scheme. Federation had proved its mettle as an organisation committed to educational change. It now had to concentrate on giving material reality to that commitment. The federal funding campaign was directed towards the provision of additional funds to the states. At the state level, however, the question of how could those funds be best spent remained unanswered. How were teachers, as 'professionals', through their 'professional' organisation, to influence the process of decision-making at the school level? It was not long before that most venerable of Federation policies, the replacement of the Public Service Board by an Education Commission, was to re-emerge as the principal item on the Federation's strategy for change. That process is that the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

A MATTER OF CONTROL

THE EDUCATION COMMISSION QUESTION
The level of funding for education determined, for the most part, the educational priorities of the state government and its agencies, the Department of Education and the Public Service Board. The success of Federation and its allies in obtaining increased funding for education could, therefore, have an indirect but important influence over the priorities of the government and its agencies. The Public Service Board was, however, the employer of teachers and largely determined the detailed direction of the education policy of the state. Since 1919, the Federation had sought to exercise a direct influence over the direction of education policy. For most of that period Federation had campaigned to remove education in general, and the teaching force in particular, from the control of the Public Service Board. In its place Federation continually urged the establishment of an Education Commission consisting of two representatives of teachers, two nominees of the state government and a chairman acceptable to both parties. (1)

In this context Federation often invoked the rhetoric of 'professionalism' to justify its participation in such a body. Education, it was argued, was a complex and specialised activity. It was best controlled by 'experts'. In the educational sphere teachers were the 'experts'; they were the 'professional'...
educators. They should therefore, as professionals, participate directly in the control of education. The members of the Public Service Board were generally not experts in education. No more than one of its three or four members had a background in education. The Board's responsibilities were moreover, much wider than education. It was therefore both, preferable as a matter of principle, as well as matter of efficient practice, to ensure that education was controlled by an expert body which had, as a part of its membership, professional educators.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s there was a significant expansion of education in N.S.W. This expansion had profound implications for the working conditions of teachers and the learning conditions of students. Teachers, as workers, were concerned with the industrial implications of the post-war expansion of education. As professional educators, they were also concerned that the best possible educational conditions were achieved for their clients, the students. This concern with both the industrial and professional aspects of the post war expansion of education fitted very well with the Federation's historic commitment to the establishment of an Education Commission. This chapter therefore, discusses the revival of the Commission policy in the late 1950s and early 1960s and its role in Federation campaigns for the improvement of the working conditions of teachers and the learning conditions of students.

The principal topic discussed at the 1960 Annual Conference was that of 'Working Conditions.' The mover of the motion, Allen Culgin, of the Men Teachers' Association, argued that many workers would not tolerate workplaces that lacked artificial lighting, reasonable ventilation and adequate heating.
Yet so many teachers, he said, worked in classrooms that lacked these basic facilities. His seconder, Ken Johnson of the same association, argued that the poor working conditions of teachers also had a deleterious effect on the learning conditions of young people.

Speaking in the same debate, George Parker of the Illawarra Association, said that Federation should demand that the authorities formulate 'a code of unprofessional practices'. Any teacher, who had a class of 48 children and then accepted the responsibility of supervising another class in the absence of a colleague, was 'guilty of grossly unprofessional practice'. Another speaker, Mrs Crowe of Newcastle, said she knew she was being 'unprofessional' if she taught 70 children, but what else could she do, she asked rhetorically.

In these speeches the industrial and professional are inextricably linked. As workers, teachers should not meekly accept poor working conditions. As professionals, teachers should not accept the poor learning conditions of students, which reflected the poor working conditions of teachers. Greater finance would overcome some of these problems. The authorities, were yet to accept that there was a growing crisis in education. The Public Service Board, in particular, seemed unwilling to concede that there was such a crisis. To Federation, the Board seemed to be almost complacent about this crisis.

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(2) Education, 1 February 1960, p.4.
(3) ibid., p.4.
(4) ibid.
(5) ibid.
The Board's 1960 Annual Report expressed the view that conditions for school children and for teachers were better than ever and would continue to improve. (6) Gloria Phelan commented that the Premiers did not seem to share the Board's sanguine view of conditions in schools. Their statement, Some Aspects of Australian Education, she said, had noted the increasing gap between the needs and demands of the community, and what the states could provide in educational services. (7) It was the Public Service Board then, that was the principal obstacle to a proper recognition of the problem. It was therefore reasonable for the Federation to argue that the replacement of the Board with an Education Commission consisting of educational experts, was a necessary condition for a systematic and comprehensive response to the education crisis of the 1960s.

Phelan recommended that all young teachers should read the publication The Case for an Education Commission, which the Federation had published in 1959. (8) The front cover of the booklet depicted the four members of the Board standing on the necks of the children and teachers of N.S.W. With a combination of forceful and irreverent argument, the booklet suggested that no four men could adequately administer the Department of Education as well as administering all other state government departments. The Board's 1960 Report revealed, she said, how out of touch with

(7) Education, 4 October 1961, p.3.
(8) ibid.
educational developments the Board had become. What was needed was a Commission of 'experts' including teachers. Only such a body could understand the growing importance of education and the urgent need to overcome 'serious deficiencies in the supply of teachers, school buildings and equipment'. There would be a new partnership between the Commission and the Minister for Education in the control and administration of education appropriate to the needs of the 'modern world'. During the early 1960s, in the rhetoric of the union, the establishment of the Education Commission came to have a central role in solving the problems identified in the finance for education, the Wyndham Report and the working conditions campaigns.

The Chairman of the Public Service Board, Sir John Goodsell, told the 1960 Federation Annual Conference that changes were being considered by the Board and the N.S.W. government concerning the functions of the Board in the education field. A delegation elected by the conference discussed the proposed changes with Minister Wetherell. He indicated that he was not in favour of the establishment of a Commission but promised that the changes being contemplated would enhance decentralisation of the administration of education.

(9) ibid., 4 October 1961, p.3.


April 1961, Federation was informed that a large number of administrative functions undertaken by the Board would henceforth be carried out by the Director-General of Education. This transfer of functions, although extensive, fell short of the Federation's demand for a separate authority.

The principal preoccupation of the Federation during 1961 was to persuade the ALP to implement the Wyndham Report. The 1961 Federation Annual Conference concerned itself with the details of the process of implementation. Both Wetherell and Wyndham spoke to the conference and called on teachers to co-operate in what they both conceded would be a difficult period of implementation.

In his first 'President Writes' for 1962, Don Taylor argued that the decision to begin implementation in that year highlighted how increasingly inappropriate it was for the Public Service Board to retain control of education as well as other areas of government activity. Editor Matt Kennett said that this situation was compounded by the fact that senior officers of the Department had emerged as the principal obstacles to fruitful co-operation between Federation and the Department in the implementation of the Wyndham scheme. Both Taylor and Kennett

(12) These functions included classifications of schools, dealing with applications for positions of headmistress and headmaster, payment of some allowances and the issuing of teachers' certificates.


(15) ibid., p.2

(16) ibid.
argued that Federation, as the professional organisation of teachers, had a right to be involved in the planning and administration of the educational enterprise.

The 1962 state election presented Federation with an opportunity to raise the Commission question. Education gave some publicity to the 1959 Liberal Party promise to establish a Commission to control all matters of appointment, promotion and service conditions.\(^{(17)}\) It was also argued that Labor's policies of promoting the decentralisation of education and yet retaining the Board's control of education were 'incompatible'.\(^{(18)}\)

The principal focus of the Federation's election intervention was, however, on the federal funding issue. All candidates were asked to give public support to the Premiers' statement Some Aspects of Australian Education. The parlous state of science education was given particular prominence. A survey of school conditions was publicised in order to demonstrate the need for large scale finance for education.\(^{(19)}\) The central objective of the campaign was to persuade candidates in the state election to add their weight to the growing pressure on the federal authorities. This took precedence over the question of the Commission.

\(^{(17)}\) ibid., p.3.
\(^{(18)}\) ibid., 21 February 1962, p.5.
During the course of the campaign another issue arose which distracted Federation's attention from the federal funding issue. Federation had expressed some fears that the bursary system proposed to assist parents to keep their children at school beyond the school leaving age, would be used as the 'thin edge of the wedge' for a more general commitment to State Aid.\(^{(20)}\) Indeed, Cardinal Gilroy had been reported as saying that he was confident that Catholic parents might not have to wait too long for a measure of educational 'justice'.\(^{(21)}\)

During the election campaign it was reported that senior Catholic Church officials had held secret meetings with Heffron. This was denied by both sides. If Heffron had intended to offer some measure of State Aid, then all reference to it was deleted from the policy speech. The Liberal Party offered an expanded bursary scheme, increased assistance for textbooks and greater concessions for school travel, but did not offer direct assistance to non-government schools.\(^{(22)}\) Federation expressed its concern at these developments and warned 'that no good can come from an extension of government aid outside the State system.\(^{(23)}\)

Federation gave priority to the general funding issue over the question of the Commission. Having made that decision,

\(^{(20)}\) S.M.H., 28 June 1961.

\(^{(21)}\) ibid., 3 July 1961.


\(^{(23)}\) Education, 21 February 1962, p. 5.
Federation was then forced to make an essentially defensive response to the possibility of direct State Aid being given by the parties.

Soon after the election, however, the Public Service Board presented Federation with an opportunity to renew its campaign on the Education Commission. On 4 April 1962, the Board sent a team of inspectors to Gateshead High School in Newcastle ostensibly to investigate how the school was using its personnel. This was an unusual procedure, because inspectorial duties in schools were usually carried out by officers of the Department of Education. This was to become one of the most celebrated incidents in the continuing warfare between Federation and the Board. It was given additional point by the fact that one of the inspectors was former technical teacher and right-wing Federation activist Gerry Gleeson. Moreover, it was believed that the Education member of the Public Service Board Harry Heath was behind the whole exercise. (24)

The inspectors arrived at the School with little notice and with the declared intention of conducting an 'Organisation and Method' survey. Its specific purpose was to determine the value of the work of clerical assistants in schools, particularly in relation to the duties of teaching staff. The inspectors questioned a number of teachers. They were asked about the work of clerical assistants and whether someone other than a teacher could carry out routine marking work. This line of questioning

(24) Interview with Ivor Lancaster, 16 May 1983.
led to the suggestion that some work of teachers could be taken over by non-teaching staff. If so, would it not be possible for teachers to take additional face to face teaching periods?\(^{(25)}\)

This line of questioning had potentially profound industrial, educational and professional consequences. Would it be an opportunity to increase the teaching load of teachers, even taking into account the time offset by some duties being performed by other staff? Was this to be the Board's solution to the teacher shortages instead of training more teachers? There were also implications for the demarcation between the work of teachers and non-teachers. In 'craft' terms it appeared to be a 'dilution' scheme. In 'professional' terms, tasks regarded traditionally as professional work were to be performed by 'non-professional' staff. In 'educational' terms it threatened a lowering of the standard of educational services to children, in particular, their right to be assessed by a properly qualified teacher. Did it not strike at the heart of industrial and professional rights of teachers? These matters were of great concern to the Gateshead teachers. Ivor Lancaster was dispatched by Federation to investigate the matter.\(^{(26)}\)

Lancaster and the Gateshead teachers brought the matter to the attention of the Newcastle Secondary Teachers' Association. In association with the Newcastle Teachers

\(^{(25)}\) \textit{Education}, 16 May 1962, p.4.

Association, a joint public meeting was called on the issue on 17 April.\(^{(27)}\)

Five hundred teachers attended the meeting and heard reports from Lancaster and the Gateshead teachers and a keynote address from Don Taylor. The resolution carried at the meeting rejected the claim that the investigation was about the work of clerical staff, and argued that the objective was to increase the teaching load of some teachers. The intention would be to have certain duties of teachers, such as the marking of essays and other English assignments, essentially professional work, performed by untrained personnel. The resolution accused the Board of attempting to hamper the activities of the Director-General and his inspectorial staff with its intrusion into the workings of individual schools. 'The whole procedure', it concluded, 'smacks of soulless techniques and other speed up devices for which there is no place in the child's social, cultural, moral and academic training.' The incident, in the view of the Newcastle teachers, only served to emphasise the urgent need for the government to establish an Education Commission.\(^{(28)}\)

Writing in Education, Taylor roundly condemned the activities of the Board. He argued that the basic conditions for good teaching were a reasonable teaching load and small class
sizes. The Board should be concerned with those problems instead of indulging in cost-cutting exercises. There was no justification or excuse, moreover, for the Board to usurp the function that rightly, logically and for the good of education, belong to the Department of Education and its administrative head. (29)

As well as publicising the incident in Education, Federation endeavoured to mobilise the membership against the Board. The Federation made the issue a centrepiece of its campaign during second and third terms, 1962. (30)

Federation forwarded a petition to schools which condemned the Board and demanded that no similar surveys be conducted. The accompanying letter warned:

Your school may be next. The Board's Survey Committee may arrive at your school tomorrow and demand that you, off the cuff, make statements that could be used in determining the working conditions of your 24,000 fellow Federationists.

There was no 'code, legal or ethical', that could 'justify such [an] outrageous procedure.' (31)

This incident gave renewed impetus to the campaign for increased expenditure on teacher training. For Federation the solution to the problems wrought by demographic change and increased retention rates in secondary schools, was for more teachers to be trained. The Board, in Federation's view, was

(29) ibid., p.2.

(30) N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1962, p.10

(31) M. Kennett, Circular to Federation Representatives, 1 May 1962, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
endeavouring to increase the teaching loads of secondary teachers and to offset this somewhat by giving teachers' work to non-teachers. The Board should urge the government to increase teacher trainee allowances in order to attract young people to teaching instead of promoting dilution schemes and unprofessional practices in the schools.\(^{32}\)

Nevertheless, it should be noted that Federation did not effectively resist the increase in teaching loads of secondary teachers when ancillary staff were first appointed, in any significant numbers, to secondary schools in 1960. Generally speaking, teaching staff were allocated to a secondary school on the basis that two-thirds of the staff taught twenty-eight periods, and one third taught twenty-seven periods, with masters and mistresses teaching twenty-two periods. In practice, however, many teachers taught in excess of these periods in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. The Federation leadership, however, by failing to rouse the membership against increased teaching loads occasioned by the appointment of ancillary staff, breached a fundamental principle that appointment of ancillary staff should not be offset by increases in face to face teaching by teaching staff.\(^{33}\)

\(^{32}\) See resolution of meeting of representatives of country associations, Education, 30 May 1962, p.8 and a meeting of teacher trainees, Education, 13 June 1962, p.1.

\(^{33}\) Federation raised the matter with the Public Service Board and the Department of Education, see N.S.W.T.F. Annual Report 1960, pp.26-27 and Executive Minutes, 27 November 1961, p.420. The situation, it seems, was tacitly accepted by Federation.
The Gateshead incident, however, illustrates the difficulty of drawing sharp distinctions between the words 'industrial', educational', and 'professional' in the work of teachers. Phrases such as 'teaching hours' and 'work load' are usually regarded as industrial concepts. Terms such as 'untrained staff', 'non-professional' and 'unprofessional practices' are set within a professional frame of reference. References to the right of children to be taught by a properly qualified teacher are essentially educational concepts. In this dispute these concepts tended to be used without clear distinctions being drawn by their users.

Industrial, educational and professional language became inextricably linked at the 1962 Annual Conference. Winifred Mitchell seconded a resolution on working conditions prepared by the North Illawarra Teachers' Association. There was, she said, a direct relationship between the advancement of secondary education and the improvement of teachers' working conditions.

'None of the aims of the Wyndham Report can become anything but a travesty of what was intended for them if large classes remain a feature of our schools, if there are insufficient classrooms, and if teachers have to carry heavy teaching loads.'(34)

This theme was taken up in the conference resolution on the Education Commission. The conditions of the schools were such that the establishment of a Commission should be regarded as 'a basic need'. If the industrial conditions of teachers and educational conditions of students were to be improved in the face

(34) Education, 6 February 1963, p.4.
of the demographic pressures and increased community expectations about education, it was absolutely necessary for teacher professionals to be involved with other experts in the operation of a separate education authority.

The notion of professionalism has a number of meanings. In the Gateshead incident and in the Federation's Education Commission policy it was used as a term which connotes specialised expert knowledge only possessed by a qualified teacher. On the other hand, various State authorities generally equate the notion of professionalism with compliance to the order of things as decided by higher authority. This concept had also been used within the union to argue that it should conduct itself as an organisation which eschews noisy, militant and confrontationist methods in favour of the firm, but polite, presentation of 'cogent argument'. It was also used to legitimise salary increases for teachers as a means of enhancing status. In Victoria in the 1960s it was used to assert control of entry into the occupation of teaching in order to resist dilution by unqualified people. (35)

The various meanings given to the notions of professional and industrial were the subject of some discussion within the union during 1962. In June, Education published an article by E.H. Graham of Lane Cove Public School. (36) He argued that


teachers' organisations in Australia, Britain and the United States tended to be principally concerned with what he identified as industrial matters. He characterised the 'average' teacher unionist as a 'radical reactionary':

radical in the sense of questioning the poor conditions in many schools and reactionary in the sense of stunting the educational and professional growth of teachers ...(37)

Teachers' organisations, he said, had moved some distance towards the assertion of their professional right 'to a more democratic partnership type of educational administration to match the particular tenets of their way of life'. They had only, however, moved a small way towards the goal of professionalism. This would be best achieved if teachers' organisations encouraged their members 'to improve their professional qualifications in order to improve their roles as educators and enhance their professional status'.(38) 'Professionalism', he suggested, was not just concerned with questions of autonomy and control, but also with questions of educational content and process and pedagogical practice, as well as with the society's perception of teachers. The Federation's Commission policy was, however, more specifically focused on the question of control. The union's advocacy of change in secondary education demonstrated a concern for pedagogical practice, at least in a general sense. Finally the Federation had often invoked the discourse of professional status in salaries negotiations with the authorities.

(37) ibid. 13 June 1962, pp.3-4.
(38) ibid.
While this article did not provoke any specific response, its publication coincided with a letter from a teacher, Mary Pickard, from Narrabeen Girls High School. She accused Federation of ignoring the essential business of teachers as professionals. Over a long period, she suggested, *Education* has concerned itself mainly with the physical environment of schools. Meanwhile, what has actually gone on inside the classroom - the really important work of education has never really been examined in a truly scientific way.\(^{(39)}\)

J. Thompson replied to the letter. The sorts of matters which concerned Miss Pickard, he suggested, were usually discussed in Departmental publications. He noted, perhaps a trifle cynically, that such articles were usually written by those 'seeking promotion' and who 'don't wish to offend their betters'. The Federation was, rather, a trade union concerned with teacher welfare in every sense of the word and since, although teachers do not live by bread alone, they must eat. The Federation's journal cannot and should not attempt to be purely academic and literary in character.\(^{(40)}\)

The contributions of Pickard and Thompson represented two characteristic views held by Federation members. Miss Pickard saw herself primarily a 'professional' concerned principally with classroom practice. The union, therefore, should take account of the fact that this was the way many other teachers saw themselves. Thompson, on the other hand, saw himself as a

\(^{(39)}\) ibid., p.4.  

\(^{(40)}\) ibid., 25 July 1962, p.5.
traditional industrial unionist. It was the function of the Federation to concern itself with the traditional industrial concern of the welfare of its members. Perhaps, then, it can be suggested that the Federation leadership's tendency to characterise the union as an industrial, professional and educational organisation was a recognition of the need to incorporate as wide a spectrum of the membership as possible in the campaigns of the union.

That elusive but ubiquitous concept of professionalism appeared in yet another guise. Since the beginning of 1961, negotiations had been taking place between the Public Service Board and the Federation concerning the salaries of academic staff of the University of New South Wales, many of whom were members of the union. The negotiations broke down and so the matter was referred to a Conciliation Committee of the Industrial Commission on 25 September 1962. Conciliation Commissioner Gorman brought down an award which reflected, to some extent, the movements in teachers' salaries which had flowed from the Engineers' Award granted by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission in June 1961. The N.S.W. Minister for Labour and Industry referred the academic staff salaries decision to the Full Bench of the Industrial Commission. The Federation Executive immediately protested at the reference and called a series of mass meetings to consider the matter. Federation was concerned that if the practice of referring decisions of Conciliation Commissioners to the Full Bench was to become an established precedent, this
could have serious implications for all Federation members.\(^{(41)}\)

The mass meetings duly condemned the decision. The Sydney Town Hall meeting processed to Parliament House to interview members on the matter.\(^{(42)}\) That was usual practice. In addition, however, Deputy President Sam Lewis, on behalf of the Executive, moved a resolution which threatened that if the matter was not settled in 21 days, then a further meeting should be held to consider action. In the meantime, schools were to consider forms of action including the 'holding of a meeting in school time'.\(^{(43)}\) Strike motions were a rarity at Federation meetings. One (unnamed) member at the Town Hall meeting moved the deletion of the strike proposal from the recommendation. More significantly, however, he expressed a particular view of the nature of teacher professionalism. *Education* reported that he 'stressed the fact that teachers are members of a dignified profession, and expected to act accordingly'.\(^{(44)}\) His amendment was lost, but his speech, invoking a particular conception of professionalism, provoked an editorial in the same issue of the journal.

*Education* pointed out that the speaker at the meeting had appealed to his colleagues to act professionally in salaries negotiations. This, it was suggested, was a common enough statement at protests about salaries matters but


\(^{(42)}\) ibid.

\(^{(43)}\) ibid., 14 November 1962, p.1.

\(^{(44)}\) ibid.
'professional' and 'unprofessional' are words too often bandied around without any real thought given to what they imply ...

on the other hand,

many people are prepared to argue that 'industrial' action by teachers leading to improved conditions of work and pay result in an improved educational system. Having achieved this result they feel that the originating action is 'professional' rather than 'industrial'.(45)

The editorial cited the Wyndham scheme as an example of a major educational advance resulting from action by the Federation. Perhaps teachers could fulfil the dissenting members' image of professionalism if they had the right to decide the remuneration they should receive. If they had the power to do this they would receive their just dues as Doctors, Dentists and Lawyers receive theirs.(46)

As government workers, teachers could not aspire to such a model of professionalism. Nevertheless, a measure of professionalism could be achieved if teachers had some role in the administration of education. The specific dispute about salaries had arisen when negotiations between the Board and the Federation broke down. Only then, did the process of conciliation, and ultimately the Minister's intervention, bring into train arbitral procedures. Perhaps the need for this time consuming process could be obviated if teachers had some role in the body undertaking the initial negotiations. Again the argument came back to the need for an Education Commission.

(45) ibid., p.2
(46) ibid.
Because of the refusal of the N.S.W. government to establish a Commission, Federation never had to resolve the contradiction of an organisation of workers negotiating with a body containing members elected by the organisation. It was only after 1976 when the N.S.W. Labor government established a working party to set up a Commission, that it became necessary for the union to face that contradiction. It is, therefore, appropriate to ask whether the Federation's discourse about the Commission constituted little more than a series of catchcries about the evils perpetrated by the Board, or whether Federation did have a well-developed conception about the role of the union in the control of education in the state.

The resolution on the Commission adopted by the 1951 Annual Conference said that it would subject to the control of the Minister and Parliament, be responsible for:

(a) Education policy.

(b) The organisation of sub-departments for the implementation of policy.

(c) Matters of general administration.

(d) The control of all staff, including the teaching staff. (47)

This suggests that the Commission would be dominant in the formulation of policy and in the administration of the education system. It implies that the Departments of Education and Technical Education would remain subservient to the Commission.

The 1960 Annual Conference resolved that the Commission would be responsible for the formulation and administration of education policy. On Gerry Gleeson's initiative the following qualification was inserted:

The Commission shall not supersede the Director-General of Education. Further, the Commission shall not supersede in any way the existing responsibilities of the Director of Technical Education and the Technical Education Advisory Council. (48)

Such a qualification was hardly consistent with the notion that the Commission would be the pre-eminent education authority in N.S.W. The priority of the Federation in this period was to have the Commission established. Its powers could be negotiated after such a decision was taken. The fact, however, that such a major qualification crept into Federation policy without any controversy indicates that its Commission policy served the prime, although not exclusive, purpose of being a weapon that could be used by the union against the Board, (49) rather than a carefully constructed plan for the proper control of education in the state.

Not until the late 1970s did the Federation concede that parents' organisations had a legitimate role to play in an Education Commission. There was fruitful co-operation between the Federation and the parents' organisations in campaigns for greater finance for education. The 1944 Annual Conference policy on secondary curriculum envisaged that parents would have some role in the committees which would advise the curriculum committees

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(49) This was deleted from Federation policy in 1974. See 'Draft Submission to the Working Party for the Establishment of an Education Commission', 11 October 1976, p.5, Education Commission Committee, N.S.W.T.R. archives.
consisting of departmental and Federation representatives. The federal New Deal for Education policy in the late 1940s suggested the establishment of a Commonwealth Board of Education on which there would be representatives of A.T.F. and parents' organisations. A state Education Commission would also include parent organisation membership. This formulation however, was never given more than notional assent by Federation, and did not appear in policy statements after 1948. On the other hand, there was no sustained demand from parents' organisations for a role in the governance of education until the 1970s.

At the 1964 Annual Conference, however, Douglas Whitton moved that the Commission should consist of 4 members: one elected by the Federation, one N.S.W. government nominee and one representative of parents with a chairman acceptable to all parties. He argued that it was

not enough to go out and attack the Public Service Board ... We've got to also, somehow or other, convince other people, if we had control, or a large say in the control of the new Commission, that we would do a better job.

The P. & C. Federation, he argued, did not support the establishment of a Commission and would not do so until they were convinced that it was not a body largely or exclusively concerned with the interests of teachers.


(51) Annual Conference 1964, Transcript, p.39.
His seconder, J. Thompson of Inverell, conceded that the proposal for parent representation was not a popular one within the Federation. He pointed out, however, that he had two interests in the matter,

first of all my interest as a teacher, my own interest and, of course as a parent. There'd be a lot of you in the same position.\(^{52}\)

Although he expected that teachers and parents would have similar interests in reducing class sizes 'better buildings, more facilities, more equipment', there would be times when the interests of the two groups would not coincide. In that case there should be someone able to put the parents' point of view on 'any body controlling education'.\(^{53}\)

The mover of the original mover, Executive Member Joyce Clarke, was able to dismiss Whitton's amendment because it reduced Federation's representation to one person. Moreover, she said, there is often disagreement among individual parents' and citizens' associations, and therefore it would be difficult for one person to present a united parent view.\(^{54}\)

The form in which Whitton moved the amendment, by suggesting a reduction in Federation representation rather than an increase in the size of the Commission, meant that it was easily defeated. Nevertheless, it did raise the question of the control of education.

\(^{52}\) ibid.

\(^{53}\) ibid., p.40.

\(^{54}\) ibid., p.42. Unlike the N.S.W.T.F. the policies of the state bodies of the parents' organisations were not binding on their affiliates.
If the Federation had supported the inclusion of representatives of parents' organisations in the membership of the Commission, its political strength, relative to the N.S.W. government, may have been enhanced. Whitton was virtually alone in raising the matter in the late 1950s and early 1960s. His attempts were usually greeted with hostility from his fellow Annual Conference delegates. (55)

The conception of professionalism expressed in relation to the control of education articulated within the Federation, implicitly excluded 'non-experts' from participation in the Commission. One of the prime criticisms of the Public Service Board was that 'no four men', three of whom were not 'experts' in educational matters, could hope to administer the complexities of the education enterprise. What was needed was a specialist, 'expert' body, which would include the representatives of the organised rank and file workers 'at the chalkface'. The rhetoric was one of 'professional expertise' run together with notions of 'workers' control' or 'participation.' There was simply no place for parents, even if they had demanded it, within that concept.

The question of parent and community representation was, however, only a marginal part of the Education Commission debate within the Federation. Another question, namely the disciplinary powers of the Public Service Board, was central to the argument.

(55) For example see Annual Conference 1967, Transcript, p.18a.

(56) No Four Men Should have these Powers, N.S.W.T.F. leaflet, and Speakers Notes, 1963.
The 1960 Annual Conference resolution characterised the Board as a "law unto itself." (57) The 1962 Conference resolution declared that the Board had demonstrated itself to be a centralised and authoritarian bureaucracy, the exercise of whose powers can be tyrannical and dangerous to the professional security and citizens' rights of teachers. (58)

A particular example of the Board's powers had become a part of Federation folk-lore. It concerned Sam Lewis.

In 1955, Lewis was teaching at Newtown Junior Technical School. He became involved in an altercation with a pupil, and struck him across the face. The matter was investigated by an officer of the Department of Education. Lewis expressed deep regret for his action and gave an assurance that the incident was in no way typical of the methods he adopted to maintain discipline. He received a warning, and the Department took no further action. Subsequently, however, the Public Service Board intervened and Lewis was transferred to another school as a disciplinary measure. This action, widely believed to have been taken at the behest of Lewis' former opponent Harry Heath, sparked considerable controversy, not only about the incident itself, but also the whole question of discipline in schools. The matter was subject to lively discussion in the afternoon tabloids and in the

(58) ibid., 6 February 1963, p.4.
state parliament. (59) In response, a large protest meeting of 1,500 teachers was organised by Federation, where even some of Lewis' political foes expressed outrage at the Board's action. (60) Education declared that the episode highlighted the need for an Education Commission. Even the Sydney Morning Herald, no great admirer of Lewis, was moved to ask editorially, 'Does the Public Service Board govern New South Wales? (61) While Lewis never returned to Newtown school, the controversy further undermined confidence in the Board and helped to firm the membership's resolve that a Commission ought replace the Board.

Margaret Kent-Hughes told the 1964 Annual Conference that she never had much difficulty in obtaining 100 per cent response in her school to a petition calling for the replacement of the Board by a Commission. (62) By the 1960s its Commission policy had achieved the status of sacred writ in Federation thinking.

The case often cited in Federation's publications about the disciplinary powers of the Board concerned a teacher who had been accused of committing offences against pupils. The charges were investigated by the police and the Attorney General's Department. Eventually the criminal charges were dropped. The Board, however, continued its enquiry into the matter as the

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(60) Education, 1 February 1956, pp.2-3.

(61) S.M.H., 14 January 1956.

teacher had been suspended when the charges were first laid. He remained under suspension, without pay, for more than twelve months. The Board eventually found the teacher guilty on several of the counts, which the Attorney General had dropped because of conflicts within, and inadequacies of, the supporting evidence. The teacher, who had a heart condition, died before the Board announced its penalty. Helen Palmer took up the case in earnest, pressed its importance on the Federation leadership and it eventually became the centrepiece of any Federation account of the abuse of power by the Board. (63)

Sam Lewis made this the feature of his speech on the Board at the 1962 Annual Conference. An unnamed correspondent (64) of Nation magazine had been present in the hall. The correspondent outlined Lewis' brush with the Board and his speech in support of the proposition that the Board was

'a centralised and authoritarian bureaucracy ... whose power can be tyrannical and dangerous to the professional and citizens' rights of teachers.'

The Nation article outlined the occupational hazards under which a teacher works, the susceptibility of teachers to groundless charges and the 'case of Mr. A.', the teacher charged with offences against pupils. The article concluded by noting that the Federation had concentrated on removing education from


(64) Probably Helen Palmer herself.
'under the heavy wing of the Board', but it had 'not yet created a powerful image of what a Commission could do.' (65)

In 1957 another teacher was charged with an offence against a pupil. He was acquitted of the criminal charge. The Board, however, suspended him, and after 9 months delay found him guilty on the same evidence rejected by the Court, and demanded his resignation. In 1962, two Board members, the Crown Solicitor, various departmental advisers, two stenographers and a number of Departmental officers visited a North Coast town and sat for three and-a-half days to inquire into a case of alleged inefficiency on the part of the teacher. (66) These cases were often cited by Federation spokespeople and in Federation publicly on the misdeeds of the Public Service Board, and on the desirability of a Commission. After cataloguing the sins of the Board it was 'no exaggeration to say that the Board has the power of life and death over teachers. Its powers over public education were no less far-reaching.' (67)

The Board it seemed, could not even plan properly. Federation frequently cited the Board's underestimation of school enrolments for 1956 to 1965 as a prime example of the Board's lack

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(65)  *Nation*, 12 January 1962, p.5.
(66)  *No Four Men Should Have These Powers*, p.1.
of ability to collect sound information on which to make proper planning decisions. The Federation cited the following:\(^{(68)}\)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Board's Estimated Enrolments</th>
<th>Actual Enrolments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>513,000</td>
<td>518,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>531,100</td>
<td>539,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>547,800</td>
<td>561,446</td>
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<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>562,000</td>
<td>580,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>587,000</td>
<td>660,000</td>
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This was striking evidence of the 'official ineptitude' of the Board, said the Federation.\(^{(69)}\)

It is not suggested that the leadership or members of the union thought that all problems would disappear if the Commission replaced the Board. The misdeeds of the Board, however, made effective weapons for the union to use in its quest for a Commission. Moreover, it was politically easier to attack the Board rather than the government or the Department of Education, particularly during Don Taylor's presidency. As enrolments began to swell in secondary schools in the early 1960s, the union had to step up its campaign for a Commission. In the period before the 1965 state election the Commission became the central issue for the Federation.

The Liberal Party's commitment to establishing a Commission was useful in advancing the campaign. The first priority, however, was to convince the entrenched Labor government

\(^{(68)}\) ibid.

\(^{(69)}\) ibid. See also Reasons for the Establishment of an Education Commission, Leaflet, N.S.W.T.F., 1956 and A Board of Four Members, N.S.W.T.F., 1957.
to change its frequently expressed opposition to the establishment of a Commission. Wyndham argued that a Commission containing employee representatives was inconsistent with the principle of Ministerial responsibility. Even if a formula could be found to overcome this problem, teachers, he argued, were not the only community group interested in education.\(^{(70)}\) He was not above encouraging Federation however, to direct its fire towards the Board rather than the Department of Education,\(^{(71)}\) yet at the same time advising the government not to accede to the Federation's demand for a Commission.

A Catholic dominated government, moreover, would have been wary of a Commission with significant Federation membership. The first priority of Heffron and Wetherell was to obtain funds for education. Their success indeed did not always please other Ministers within the government. Both Billy Sheahan, who had lost to Heffron by one vote when Joe Cahill died in 1959, and A.G. Enticknap had expressed the view that the state had gone 'education mad'.\(^{(72)}\)

Even Wetherell gave public assent to the notion that other areas of state activity had not received the attention they observed owing to the government giving Education a continuing


\(^{(71)}\) Bruce Mitchell, Teachers, Education and Politics, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, 1975, p.191.

priority. (73) Heffron and Wetherell were hardly likely to complicate their position in Cabinet by agreeing to the establishment of a Commission. The Catholic authorities, moreover, would have been concerned that such a Commission would have influence over their own system. A Catholic dominated Cabinet was hardly likely to agree to that, even if it was wary of committing the government to direct financial assistance to Catholic schools. Within the Parliamentary Labor Party itself there was little support for the concept. (74)

Federation had, perhaps, a little more success outside the Parliamentary Labor Party. The matter had been raised with candidates in the 1962 state election. (75) It was sufficiently sensitive within the Labor Party for the state conference of the Party to instruct its Education committee to examine the matter and report to the 1963 conference.

From 1962 to 1965 relationships between Federation and the state government deteriorated. This reflected the increased vigour of Federation's campaigns on working conditions and its frustration at the continuing refusal to establish a Commission. When Don Taylor retired in 1963 he was replaced by Sam Lewis whose ties with the Labor Party were not as strong as those of Taylor. Moreover, the retirement of Heffron as Premier removed a

(73) Education, 19 September, p.2.

(74) In 1961 elements with the Parliamentary Labor Party proposed a Commission, designed to curb the power of Wyndham. The proposal was not pursued. Daily Mirror, 3 August 1961.

personality from the government who had usually maintained a cordial relationship with Federation.

During the 1950s and 1960s Federation used the tactic of dramatising the plight of particular schools to gain support for its campaigns and to reinforce the notion of a growing crisis in the schools. One way of tackling the crisis, it was suggested, was to have an 'expert' body that could devote its full attention to the crisis and not be distracted by the problems of other departments of the state.

In June 1962, the Australian Financial Review published two detailed articles on the education crisis. It rendered legitimacy to the claims of Federation and its allies. The articles were used by Federation and the Parent Teacher Education Council in their campaign to urge Heffron to take the initiative on the funding question at the 1962 Premiers' conference. The notion of crisis, however, could be given greater concrete reality when it could be related to the deficiencies of a specific school.

On Tuesday, 20 August, 1963, the Sydney Daily Mirror ran a story on Bankstown Junior Boys High School. The Federation representative at the school, Dick Waring, took the initiative of bringing the condition of the school to public attention. He arranged for Sam Lewis and Jack Williams to visit the school on 19 August. Lewis later wrote:

to say we were shocked by what we saw cannot adequately describe our reactions. The next day a number of Executive members and officers visited the school. On that afternoon the Mirror story appeared. Further publicity was achieved when a group of officials from other trade unions visited the school and declared that their members would refuse to work in such conditions.\(^{(78)}\)

In response to the publicity, Education Minister Wetherell visited the school. On the same day he told Parliament that he had authorised immediate repairs to the existing buildings, and given approval for work to commence on a new school.\(^{(79)}\) While the use of these tactics were designed to raise funding issues, they were also calculated to reinforce the notion of a crisis. In such an atmosphere it was a politically valid exercise to project the view that part of the solution to the problem was the establishment of an 'expert' body to administer and formulate policy on education in the state.

At its conference in June 1963, the A.L.P. decided to defer the Commission question for another year. At the time Federation was conducting a salaries campaign. The union was able to link the salaries question with its Commission policy. Not only were the Board's inadequacies as a controller of education manifest, but much could be made of the Board's provocative behaviour in salaries negotiations over the years.\(^{(80)}\)

\(^{(78)}\) Education, 4 September 1963, p.2.

\(^{(79)}\) ibid.

\(^{(80)}\) ibid., 14 August 1963, p.8 (salaries meetings), 4 September 1963, p.1 (school delegates' meetings).
The role of the Board in salaries negotiations was given particular emphasis during 1964. From 1946 and throughout the 1950s the Board and the Federation had usually managed to reach agreements on salaries and allowances. In 1960, however, agreement was not reached and the Board referred the matter to the Industrial Commission for determination. Federation had avoided the arbitration process since the 1930s and was very reluctant to submit itself to arbitration in 1960. During that year, however, the union conducted a long and complicated salaries case. Hearings began in September 1960 and dragged on into 1961. It was the first major work value case for teachers. Evidence was taken from twenty-four witnesses (twenty of whom were for Federation). The transcript of the proceedings filled more than 1,500 pages.\(^{(81)}\) In 1963 salaries negotiations with the Board broke down again and the matter was heard by the Industrial Commission until well into 1964. \textit{Education} carried extensive reports of the hearings.\(^{(82)}\) Each report implied that all the time and work in the court could be avoided if the Board was capable of conducting proper wage negotiations with teacher employees.

During the course of the hearing the Board signed salaries agreements with police,\(^{(83)}\) and clerical and administrative


\(^{(82)}\) Education, 26 February, p.16; 25 March, p.8; 22 April, pp.6 and 8; 13 May, p.8; 27 May, p.6 and 8; 10 June, pp.6 and 8 and 16 September 1964, p.2.

\(^{(83)}\) \textit{Ibid.}, 22 April, 1964, p.2.
officers (84) within the state Public Service. Federation argued that a similar agreement could have been made with teachers. The large number of teachers meant that both the Board and the government desired to delay salaries increases for as long as possible. Lengthy court hearings helped achieve that objective. These tactics were condemned at numerous meetings held by Federation on the salaries issue in 1964. Considerable emphasis was placed on the need to have the control of education removed from the Board as a first step in obtaining any reasonable approach to the problems of teachers, including the salaries question. (85)

Technical teachers had additional reasons to be dissatisfied with the Board. At the 1963 Annual Conference Technical Teachers' Association President Bert Hilling reported on a decision of the Board to increase technical teachers' working time by three hours a week. A new system of overtime was devised by the Board which, in effect, reduced payment for teachers who travelled from one college to another to teach classes. Technical teachers, unlike school teachers, did considerable amounts of overtime in areas where there were shortages of trained personnel.

Hilling told Conference that since the appointment of Heath to the Board in 1955, it had engaged in a systematic policy of economic discrimination against technical teachers, particularly by failing to give adequate compensation for travelling time between colleges. He sought endorsement of a

(84) ibid., 5 August 1964, p.2.
(85) ibid.
proposition that technical teachers could take 'any action' deemed appropriate to resist the Board's latest actions. The possibility that such action might include strike action was a little too much for Federation to contemplate in 1964. A resolution was carried supporting action by technical teachers after they had consulted the senior officers and General Secretary.\(^{(86)}\) Although strike action did not take place and the matter was eventually arbitrated in the Industrial Commission\(^{(87)}\), this incident illustrates that disaffection with the Board extended to technical as well as school teachers.

It was in the context of this discussion that the distinctions between the notions of what constituted the 'industrial', the 'professional' and the 'educational', become difficult to draw. The actions of the Board concerning the hours of technical teachers and its refusal to sign salaries agreements with Federation were, by the usual definition, industrial matters. The Commission was therefore seen as, at least, the first step towards achieving better industrial relations. But it was also seen as a necessary condition to finding solutions to problems in those spheres of activity which tended to be characterised as 'professional' or 'educational'. By 1964 the Federation was arguing with a renewed vigour that the establishment of the Commission was fundamental to a solution to

\(^{(86)}\) ibid., 12 February 1964, p.5.

\(^{(87)}\) Crown Employees (Teachers - Technical Education Department Overtime) Award, Industrial Arbitration Reports, Vol. 69, 1969, pp.29-42.
all problems faced by education in N.S.W. whether 'industrial', 'professional' or 'educational'.

In 1964 Heffron retired as Premier and was replaced by J.B. Renshaw. Federation maintained its barrage against the Board in public, while renewing its lobbying on the general issue in private. Renshaw was invited to open Annual Conference, a duty usually performed by the Minister for Education. There was much interest in what the new Premier would say about the Education Commission question at the Conference.

On the eve of the Conference, Federation published a letter from Opposition Leader, R.W. Askin, on the Commission question. It was the Opposition's view, he said that

with over 25,000 teachers in the Education service and approximately 650,000 public school pupils and an annual expenditure of well over 100 million for Education, the time was overdue to set up a separate Commission to administer Education matters in this State.

The Opposition proposed a three member Commission, one of whom would be appointed from a panel of names nominated by the Federation. (88) This was somewhat short of Federation policy, so Askin invited the union to contact him so that 'it may be possible to reconcile our views'. In the 1960s the Commission question had moved to the top of the union's political priorities. Askin's declaration, therefore, put just a little more pressure on Renshaw to make a similar declaration.

Renshaw's speech to the Conference was a well-prepared and detailed defence of his Government's education record. He set the context by indicating that 71.8 per cent of the state's receipts from uniform taxation was spent on education. This indicated, he said, the degree of the government's commitment to education. Federation, he said, made every effort to ensure that all the responsible authorities knew the problems associated with conducting such a large enterprise. All this was designed to lead to the conclusion that the government, after some consideration, was not prepared to accept the submission ... that we would set up an Education Commission to be superimposed and placed upon the same set of circumstances of Ministerial control and the Public Service Board as your employing authority for the future. He sugared the pill, somewhat, by indicating that the government was prepared to receive submissions about adjustments to the present system and indeed, about the Commission itself.

Renshaw's announcement was greeted with less than enthusiasm by the assembled delegates. That afternoon the conference debated the issue. The mover of the motion, Joyce Clarke, said that the Board was an anomaly in a democratic community. She cited the familiar case of the 'very well loved and respected teacher', suspended by the Board for eleven months, 'subjected to long drawn out and humiliating proceedings, which

(89) Annual Conference 1964, Transcript, p.2. See also Education, 3 February 1965, p.1.

(90) Annual Conference 1964, Transcript, p.4-5.

(91) ibid.
resulted in his having a coronary occlusion and dying as a result of that'. \(^{(92)}\) The Gateshead incident, she said, revealed that the Board exercised powers over education which had been previously thought to be the prerogative of the Department of Education. Teachers' professionalism was, moreover, undermined by their subjection to the regulations of the Board. Teachers' work was judged by their fidelity to these regulations which stifled 'initiative and independent thought'. \(^{(93)}\)

The Board, moreover, had little concept of proper planning, she argued. In 1955 and 1956 Federation had publicised the necessity for a significant increase in teacher training and set out its enrolment estimates for the following years. The Board replied with a document, sent it to the Herald, and to numbers of members of Parliament, which underestimated enrolments by 'tens of thousands'. \(^{(94)}\) Even the Board's claim that its prime function was to ensure efficiency and economy in the public service, was hardly justified by the facts. Its failure to provide laboratory assistants, for instance, led to a wastage of the time of science teachers who were, in any case, 'in very short supply'. \(^{(95)}\)

If the Board had ever served any useful purpose in the educational sphere, it was now clearly out of date. Clarke cited the decision taken by the Western Australian Government to replace

\(^{(92)}\) ibid., p.29.
\(^{(93)}\) ibid., p.32.
\(^{(94)}\) ibid.
\(^{(95)}\) ibid.
a complicated system of appointments and disciplinary boards for teachers, with a single Teachers' Tribunal. The Victorian Teachers' Tribunal itself, she added significantly, had resulted from the decisive intervention in the 1945 Victorian state election by the Victorian Teachers' Union. She concluded by saying that the establishment of the Commission would not solve 'all our problems, but it would clear away some of the obstacles that oppose us when we try to set out a decent education system'. (96) In that context, she warned, Askin's proposals - while significant - did not meet Federation policy.

Her seconder was Doris Jobling, a young teacher from the Blacktown area who referred, particularly, to that section of the resolution which declared that the establishment of the Commission was 'the prime responsibility of every Federation member and officer and a priority consideration for 1965'. This could only be brought to fruition if a generally apathetic membership was mobilised into sustained lobbying of their local politicians. She said that the Blacktown District Education Commission Committee had already endeavoured to mobilise local teachers. The local member she said, had not been committed to the establishment of a Commission. After a series of deputations from local teachers, he was now 'stating publicly ... that he is convinced that the Education Commission is right'. The central task for 1965, then, was to ensure that the great mass of teachers be mobilised to

ensure that education is placed 'in the hands of educationalists'.

Another speaker, Eric Earley, used his considerable oratorical skills to call for no less than a mobilisation against the Labor government. Teachers had to be aroused the way they were in salaries campaigns, otherwise Federation would continue to pass ritual resolutions on the matter, but do little about them and achieving almost nothing.

The only real dissenter in the ensuing debate was Douglas Whitton who moved, yet again, for parent representation on the Commission. In speaking on his amendment he warned that the promises of opposition political parties are often reviewed when they achieve government. The Federation had been 'led up the garden path' on the federal aid issue.

We got Federal aid but we opened a side door that's going to be difficult to close; the side door is allowing Federal money to go to private schools and denominational schools in a way in which it is going to be very difficult to withdraw.

Although his proposal for parent representation was defeated, his warning about party promises was to prove to be prophetic.

The Conference established a committee to plan a major campaign during the months approaching the 1965 state election. A considerable sum of five thousand pounds was set aside to finance

(97) ibid., p.35.
(98) ibid., p.37.
(99) ibid., p.39.
the campaign.\(^{(100)}\) Federation councillors and officers visited many metropolitan and rural centres to further the cause. Such activities were familiar enough in Federation history. The level of intensity of the campaign, however, indicated that the Commission question was to be the first priority of Federation in the 1965 state election. In the 1962 election it had tended to take second place to the funding question and the threat of State Aid.

Federation leaders were careful to suggest that the establishment of a Commission was not to be the panacea for all the problems of education. Its achievement, however, was projected as being the first condition for a flexible and sympathetic understanding of the education enterprise. These sentiments were expressed in *Education*’s first editorial in 1965. It then went on to make what some later interpreted as a thinly-veiled threat to the Labor government.\(^{(1)}\)

Federation was keen to suggest that the government risked alienating the support of teachers in rejecting the Commission option. The Liberal Party’s promise, although not identical to Federation policy, might prove to be attractive to teachers. The editorial did not, however, advocate a vote for or against the government, nor a vote for the opposition parties. But the Federation’s attitude did constitute a significant shift of emphasis compared to the 1962 election. Askin had made a similar, although less specific promise in 1959 and 1962. Federation had

\(^{(100)}\) ibid., p.42. Full text of resolution in *Education*, 3 February 1965, p.4.

\(^{(1)}\) *Education*, 3 February 1965, p.2.
pointed that out, but made no particular effort to ever imply support for the Liberal Party. In the 1965 election, Askin's promise was used actively as a lever to endeavour to snift the Labor Party. By concentrating on the Commission question, Federation could not avoid giving favourable publicity to the opposition parties and unfavourable publicity to the Labor Party. Indeed, Sam Lewis, perhaps aware of this, pointed out to members that 'the Federation scheme for an Education Commission is not just any Commission' and thus tacitly dissociated Federation from unqualified endorsement of the Opposition's proposal. In the less subtle world of electoral politics there were, however, usually only two choices in an electoral system which has preferential voting as a central feature.

Renshaw met a Federation deputation on 10 March to hear further argument. Nevertheless, when election policies were announced, the Liberal and Country Parties endorsed the concept; the Labor Party did not. The Opposition promised a Commission which would 'take over the responsibility of the Teaching Service from the Public Service Board'. Federation was promised unspecified representation on the Commission.(2) During the election campaign Askin, however, informed Federation that he would negotiate with Federation about the precise composition of Federation.

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(2) Sun-Herald, 16 May 1965 and The Australian Liberal, April 1965, pp.9-10. See also N.S.W. State Elections 1965 Policy Speech by the Leader of the Country Party (N.S.W.) by Mr Charles Cutler... delivered at... Orange...April 5, 1965, p.5. This was a 'co-ordinated' policy with the Liberal party.
the Commission. (3) This reassurance given by Askin, and Renshaw's final refusal to consider establishing the Commission meant that if Federation concentrated on this question during the campaign, it could not but be to the advantage of the opposition parties. Indeed in the light of this, Federation made private approaches to Renshaw through a Labor backbencher, Bill Rigby, to endeavour to persuade him to change the Party's position. These approaches came to nothing. (4)

With all its qualifications Federation's decision was historic. The Federation, despite its claims to be non-party political, had maintained reasonable relations with the state Labor Party. It had, moreover, shown more than a little enthusiasm for federal Labor's education policy for the 1963 election. Its emphasis on the Commission question gave the message to outside observers and to the 'average' member of the Federation that the conservative parties were to be preferred in this election.

Federation, however, dissociated itself from the Opposition's proposal to provide funds for the purchase of text books in non-government as well as government schools. During the campaign Federation declared that State Aid, as well as the Commission question, had become an election issue. (5) Federation reported that an approach had been made to Askin before

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(4) Interview with Ivor Lancaster, 16 May 1983.

(5) ibid., 31 March 1965, p.38.
the election to ascertain his views on State Aid. He had indicated that a final decision on the question would be made in the light of the reactions of the general public. Federation suggested that Askin's State Aid policy traded principles for votes. Members were asked to raise both the Commission and the State Aid question in pre-election deputations to politicians. A few days before the election, Federation joined with the two parent organisations in taking out a full page advertisement in the Herald which said that State Aid was both economically wasteful and socially undesirable.

The State Aid question diverted Federation's attention to some extent, from the Commission issue. Nevertheless, most of the Federation's publicity and lobbying efforts were directed at emphasising the desirability of a Commission. Over one hundred country and metropolitan centres were visited by Federation Officers and Councillors. Sam Lewis, who gave little quarter on the State Aid question, declared however, that the Commission was the priority issue for the Federation.

(6) ibid.
(8) S.M.H., 29 April 1965.
While both Lewis and Deputy President Jack Whalan emphasised that the Federation was not seeking 'any kind of Commission', there was some muted criticism of the Federation's stance. Two letters appeared in Education during the campaign. Harry Hesse suggested that the editorial in Education published on 3 February implied that the Labor government ought be replaced. He said that it was 'naive in the extreme' to trust the policies of the Liberal and Country Parties. Another correspondent, Bruce Toms, said that educational progress was only made when there had been 'united action' of the membership. Opposition Parties, he suggested, tended to offer 'the moon' just to achieve office. Both Hesse and Toms were close associates of the Left leadership within the union. Supporters of that leadership rarely expressed disagreements in public. It was indicative that there were some reservations about the course embarked upon by Federation during the election campaign.

The Australian Labor Party lost the election after being in power since 1941. Out of that defeat grew the oft-repeated legend that Federation had been a major cause of that defeat. Certainly the Federation's advocacy of the establishment of the Commission had attracted considerable attention during the election. In the ensuing years the 1965 election strategy was often cited when Federation was accused of always supporting the

(11) ibid. 5 March 1965, pp.21-22.
(12) ibid., 14 April 1965, p.49.
(13) ibid.
A.L.P. There were, however, many issues in that election, not the least, the length of time the government had been in office. It was said to be an unimaginative government led by men approaching dotage.\(^{(14)}\) Askin was seen as a tough, vigorous, pugnacious opponent for the admirable, but rather dour, Renshaw. Labor's defeat was attributed to its failure to attract support from young voters.\(^{(15)}\) Moreover, in five crucial electorates, D.L.P. preferences elected Coalition candidates, thus ensuring the defeat of the Labor Party.\(^{(16)}\)

Whether or not those teachers who traditionally voted Labor changed their allegiances cannot be tested in any empirical way. What can be said, however, is that the Federation's emphasis on the Commission question focused teachers' attention on the Opposition's policies in a way that had not been, hitherto, the case. Moreover, Askin offered significant benefits to public servants generally, including leave loadings and additional superannuation benefits.\(^{(17)}\) Teachers, as a majority of state superannuation contributors and a significant proportion of the state public service, stood to benefit from those promises.\(^{(18)}\)

\(^{(14)}\) S.M.H., 2 April, 21 April 1965.

\(^{(15)}\) ibid., 2 April, 3 May 1965.


\(^{(17)}\) ibid., 29 April 1965 (Liberal Party advertisement).

\(^{(18)}\) S.M.H., 27 August 1965 (article by Donald McLean, education correspondent).
What is significant however, is not whether Federation's action played an important role in the defeat of the government; rather that it was believed that Federation had played such a part. That Federation had helped to defeat a government became a part of Federation folk-lore, which was useful to cite when Federation was accused of being too close to the A.L.P. on other occasions.

The matter is also important because the election of the Liberal Country Party government reinforced the expectation that teachers would, at last, escape from the less than benign control of the Board. When that expectation was not met, a deep bitterness grew within the union.

The Education Commission was the issue that almost subsumed all others for the Federation in the 1960s. The policy was the symbol of Federation's self-image as an educational, professional and industrial organisation. A Board with diverse interests and responsibilities, three of four members of which were not educationists, could not hope to be committed to the advance of education, even if the intentions of the individual members were honourable. The solution was to replace it with a body of 'professional' experts. As the 'professionals' at the workplace, teachers, through their 'professional' organisation had at least equal claim to membership to that body as the 'expert' nominees of the government. Such a body could then launch a sustained attack on the 'industrial' problems besetting teachers and the 'educational' problems of children. The establishment of the Commission was, for the Federation, a necessary, but not sufficient condition, for a well-planned, intelligently
administered education system in a rapidly changing modern world. In such a world, a bureaucratic body which began life in 1895 seemed such an anachronism. Ultimately the 1965 election tactic failed. Federation had made a political intervention in a manner never attempted in its history. Would the failure of this tactic mean a return to the well tried tactic of 'united action'? But by the mid-1960s the teaching force had changed considerably, and those changes were beginning to be reflected in the union organisation itself. What then constituted 'unity' and 'action' in the mid-1960s? It is to these questions we now turn our attention.
CHAPTER FIVE

'UNITED ACTION'

WHAT KIND OF UNITY?

WHAT KIND OF ACTION?
On the first morning of the 1967 Annual Conference, Sam Lewis gave his final Presidential address. He reflected upon Federation's achievements during his forty-eight years' membership of the union. Its greatest achievements, he argued, had resulted from the 'united action of teachers' or 'action in unity'.(1) 'The future of teachers, he concluded, 'depended not on less, but on greater unity in action, at school, district and national and even international level'.(2)

While Lewis had not invented the concept of united action, he and his followers had invoked it as their great rallying cry in their constant endeavours to ensure the Federation remained a vigorous, active, public campaigning organisation and not just a polite respectable lobby group relying on the goodwill of the authorities to accept the cogency of Federation's arguments.

The notions of 'action' and 'unity' were not always compatible. If public campaigning became too vigorous, it would lose the support of members who were discomforted by public display. The action needed to have the widest possible appeal among the membership. The projection of the Federation as both a trade union and a professional association facilitated the mobilisation of a larger segment of the membership than if the organisation was simply characterised as a trade union.

(1) 'Presidential Address (Mr. S.P. Lewis, B.Ec), Official Opening 1967 Annual Conference New South Wales Teachers' Federation', Annual Conference, 1967 Transcript, p.3 N.S.W.T.F. archives.

(2) ibid., p.8.
In Lewis' view the mobilisation of the union membership was a necessary part of the long road to socialism. On the eve of his first term as President, he had told the 1945 Annual Conference that since he was sixteen he had been 'caught up in the romance of the common man'. He had 'no intention of renouncing that romance'.(3) He had no illusions that the great majority of Federation members shared his general political outlook. He would never, for instance, affirm or deny his membership of the Communist Party. Nevertheless, rallying the Federation membership was part of the continuing struggle of the common people, even if many members saw themselves as professionals, removed somewhat from the common people.

At the height of his second presidency, in 1965, Lewis endeavoured to preach the gospel of united action to a new generation of teacher unionists. He told a conference of trainee teachers that teachers possessed a most potent 'power of united action'. If the power was used 'in a planned, responsible and intelligent way', it would 'largely determine the improvements made in their conditions and in education'.(4)

Even if allowance is made for the rhetorical flavour of these occasions, these speeches are classic formulations of that article of faith which had sustained Lewis and his followers since the 1930s. By the mid-1960s, the united action of the membership had assisted in the achievement of many of the Federation's

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(3) Education, 31 January 1946, p.94.

objectives. But there had also been unintended consequences of that activity. The historic commitment to the direct federal funding of schools had also legitimised State Aid. The union's intervention in the 1965 state election had appeared to demonstrate the union's political power, but had ultimately wrought no concrete moves towards the establishment of an Education Commission.

What then did unity mean in the mid-1960s? Was the concept of 'united action' merely a rhetorical device to rouse the membership? Was it a 'given' quality? Or was it defined and redefined in specific historical contexts? Who defined it? Did those who dominated the union's decision-making structures define what was unity and what was appropriate action in such a way as to marginalise the interests of union members who did not dominate those structures? An examination of the disparate elements within the Federation will assist in providing answers to these questions.

**Women Members**

Women have always constituted a majority of the teaching service and usually of the Federation. In 1920 women constituted 55 per cent of the teaching service, 56 per cent in 1945, and in the early 1970s, 57 per cent. Although women were never more than 45 per cent of the secondary teaching service, the percentage of women in the infants and primary teaching service ranged from 48
per cent in 1939, 60 per cent in 1945, 64 per cent in 1968 to 68 per cent in 1972.\(^{(5)}\)

The policy of equal pay had been union policy since its formation in 1918. This policy, together with the union's opposition to the Married Woman (Teachers and Lecturers) Act was some evidence that the interests of the majority of members were of some priority within the union, despite the traditional male domination of its decision-making structures. The equal pay campaign was sustained at varying levels of intensity until the N.S.W. government conceded the principle in 1958 and it was phased in between 1958 to 1962.\(^{(6)}\) The campaign to repeal the Married

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Women (Teachers and Lecturers) Act had been an important concern of the Federation during the 1930s and 1940s. It was finally repealed in 1948.\(^7\)

The equal pay campaign, while strongly supported within the decision-making structures of the union, was not uncontested within the male membership. In 1953 Harry Bembrick wrote to \textit{Education} about a survey he had conducted on the question. Of the male school teachers surveyed, he indicated that 90 per cent had expressed opposition.\(^8\) A group of male teachers lobbied Members of the Legislative Assembly against equal pay, an action which was condemned by Federation Council.\(^9\)

The commitment to equal pay, however, was not strong enough to prevent the Federation withdrawing in 1952 an application to the State Industrial Commission for equal pay when the Public Service Board refused to negotiate general salary increases for all teachers while the case proceeded.\(^10\) When the new agreement was negotiated it still retained lower differentials for women teachers. Despite an unofficial meeting of women teachers to protest at the decision, the union finally accepted the view of the Board that it could not grant equal pay when 'the principles adopted by all industrial tribunals in

\(^7\) See 'This Iniquitous Act Must Go', \textit{Education}, 25 July 1947, p.287.


\(^9\) \textit{Education}, 9 December 1953, p.115.

\(^10\) \textit{N.S.W.T.F.}, \textit{Annual Report} 1952, pp.15-16.
Australia establish it should not be granted.\(^{(11)}\) The desire of the whole membership for salary increases took precedence over the particular rights of women teachers.

The material issued by Federation in support of equal pay had to direct its message to as wide an audience as possible. The general direction of the campaign literature was that women teachers did the same job as male teachers and therefore all should be paid the same 'rate for the job'. Nevertheless, the appeal of some of the specific arguments was cast wider than the rights of women.

The practice of paying women less than men for the same work is a tradition based not on justice, but on the realisation that it provides employers with a fund of cheap labour.

It was pointed out that during the 'last depression' cheap female labour was used to replace 'the more expensive male labour and men lost their occupation to women'. While this had not been the case in teaching with the operation of the Married Women (Teachers and Lecturers) Act, it was suggested that it was in men's interest to be concerned with the possible implications of a cheap labour force. \(^{(12)}\)

The issue was also linked to the growing shortage of teachers. Women, it was argued, were not being attracted to teaching because of the unequal remuneration and status of women within the service. Because of equal pay and opportunity with men

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\(^{(11)}\) Cited in \textit{ibid.}, p.16.

\(^{(12)}\) \textit{N.S.W.T.F., Concerning Women Teachers, Facts You Should Know. Leaflet, Equal Pay and Equal Opportunity files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.}
in other professions and occupations, women were finding the teaching service less attractive.\(^{(13)}\) If women could be attracted to teaching it would ease the burden for all teachers. In order to disarm some restive men within the Federation it was necessary to argue that equal pay had benefits for all members. It was a reasonable tactic, but it was indicative that the majority of the membership, namely women, did not carry political clout within the union commensurate with their numbers. Indeed, many of the arguments were primarily directed at a minority of the membership: men. The fact that they were frequently used is indicative of the strength men possessed within the decision-making structures of the union.

Perhaps even more controversial was the question of equal opportunity for women and men teachers. While the question would only concern a minority of teachers, those seeking or occupying promotions positions, it was the source of considerable controversy within the union in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The policy of equal opportunity was designed to give both women and men teachers access to all promotions positions. Women, for instance, should be able to become heads of primary schools, whereas until that time the most senior position that could be occupied by a woman was head of a girls' department of a primary school, subject to the authority of a headmaster of the whole

\(^{(13)}\) N.S.W.T.F., Reasons Why Teachers are Seeking Equal Pay for Women and Men Teachers, Equal Pay and Equal Opportunity files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
school. In the secondary service, it would also have given women access to promotions positions within co-educational and boys' secondary schools. On the other hand, men would be able to apply for positions previously reserved for women in primary schools and for promotions positions within girls' high schools.

The amalgamation of the promotions lists was a relatively simple task in secondary schools, particularly after 1959 when all new high schools built were co-educational. The infants and primary promotion structure, however, presented greater difficulties.

The 1956 Annual Conference set out the basis of equal opportunity. It declared 'that all promotion positions should be open to women and men on an equal footing' because the 'principle of equal pay involves the principle of equal opportunity'. This was qualified, however, by the statement that teachers applying for such positions must have relevant experience in that area of teaching. This was to protect the infants' area from an immediate invasion by men. It, however, prevented infants' women from seeking immediate promotion in the primary area.

Nevertheless, the Public Service Board remained reluctant to concede the principle of equal opportunity. In 1954 the Board proposed to permit women and men equal opportunity in 'mixed' primary schools, but to limit the scheme initially to the most

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(14) Until the early 1960s, first and second class primary schools were generally divided into girls' and boys' departments.
junior positions. (15) This proposal was subject to negotiation between the Federation and the Board in the following years. Federation argued that equal opportunity could be instituted in secondary schools forthwith, but that 'no appointments be made in infants and mixed primary departments ... until the proposals have been accepted by the (Federation) associations'. (16)

The Board, however, continued to argue that as women had a much higher resignation rate than men in the service, then women were generally promoted more quickly than men. (17) It was not prepared to proceed with equal opportunity in secondary schools alone unless

the overall advantage already enjoyed by women should not be further enhanced to the detriment of male teachers and future recruitment of male teachers. (18)

The phasing-in period for equal pay was due to be completed in 1962. From 1958 to 1962 there were frequent negotiations between the Board and the Federation. The Board, however, was not prepared to concede the Federation argument that equal opportunity was an automatic concomitant of equal pay. In 1961 it declared that

(16) 1957 Annual Conference Resolution in Equal Pay and Equal Opportunity files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
(18) ibid., p.17.
in spite of equal pay legislation and arguments about equality of the sexes, it is apparent to the Board, as it must be to everybody endeavouring to maintain an efficient service, that the sexes are complementary rather than equal.(19)

Infants' teaching, then, should remain the province of women, while married male teachers should have preference over women in the allocation of vested residences attached to schools. The Board did concede, however, that since women were allowed to continue teaching on marriage, conditions for promotion should be such that married women have some prospects of promotion.(20)

The Board recognised that married women were likely to be less mobile than married men or unmarried women and men. Therefore, it argued, married women would tend to remain in one school where they will achieve seniority and be promoted, though more slowly in that school. In general married women will be most likely to wait for promotion and avoid moving around the country.(21)

After long and complicated negotiations from September 1960 until mid-1961, the Board finally instituted its equal opportunity proposals for implementation from the beginning of 1962. Men were to be given access to promotions positions in girls' secondary schools, but not to positions in infants' departments or schools. Women were to be given access to promotions positions in primary departments and co-educational

(20) ibid.
(21) ibid.
secondary schools. Men were to have preference over all eligible women for the position of Principal in boys' secondary schools, while women would have preference in girls' secondary schools. Where there was a shortage of eligible women in certain sections of the secondary service, such as mathematics teaching, men were to have access to promotions positions in girls' secondary schools.

Neither the Board nor the Federation seemed to reveal any awareness of the factors which produced lack of eligibility among women, such as broken service or temporary status. There was no suggestion that senior women who had been affected by the Married Women (Teachers and Lecturers) Act should be compensated for their imposed break of service. While it is not suggested that the agreement between the Federation and the Board was completely to the union's satisfaction, it was finally accepted.

In recommending its acceptance, President Don Taylor revealed that he was aware of competing constituencies within the Federation. He endeavoured to balance the rights of women teachers to 'more equal' opportunity against the concern of male teachers that equal opportunity introduced a further factor in the competition for promotion.

The Board had explicitly recognised the relative lack of mobility of women teachers. Taylor argued that the agreement enabled senior women to hold promotions positions in common

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(22) 'Equality of Opportunity for Men and Women Teachers', The Education Gazette, 1 August 1961, pp.337-341. See also E. Cameron, (Secretary, P.S.B.) to H.S. Norington, 18 July 1962 concerning a joint Federation-Board approach to the N.S.W. Industrial Commission. Equal Pay and Equal Opportunity files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
secondary schools. It further removed the barrier against the promotion of women in single sex high schools in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong. The general provision of co-education in primary schools should, he added, provided further opportunities for women in primary schools. He noted that much of the opposition to equal opportunity had been based on the fear that the abolition of girls' departments in primary schools would result in an overall reduction of promotions positions. The Board, however, envisaged no loss of positions at the same salary level. Nevertheless, Taylor noted that in each first class school one person from either sex would forfeit the right to be 'head'. He suggested, perhaps rather optimistically, that this would be offset by the growing tendency for teachers to work as a group of professionals co-operating in a common task.

This, he said,

should overcome the objection to what is, in reality, nothing more than a change of title.(23)

Most of this was calculated to convince the membership of the justice of the changes designed to give women greater access to promotional opportunities. Nevertheless, he revealed a deeper knowledge of social processes when he addressed those who were nervous about the impact of the changes on male teachers:

In this connection this needs to be said: while our present social pattern continues, man as head of the family will be subject to greater economic urge. He'll do more study and more readily accept unfavourable appointments.

Therefore,

.... the change will not produce the disastrous results feared by some.

On the other hand, he concluded, it was neither logical nor just to deny women who are prepared to equip themselves and ready to accept responsibility the right of full progression in the teaching profession.(24)

The equality of opportunity that was being offered did not compensate for historic inequalities experienced by women. Nor did it take account of factors which meant that fewer women would be eligible for promotion than men. The maintenance of a monopoly by women teachers in the infants' area did little to offset these fundamental and deep-seated inequalities. Increasing enrolments ensured that eligible and mobile women would have greater promotional opportunities without men being significantly disadvantaged in the competition for promotion. It was not until the late 1970s, when enrolments were falling and in response to a stronger feminist presence in the union, that the efficacy of the equal opportunity 'settlement' was questioned.

Even if there was any consciousness of the deficiencies of the 'settlement' among women teachers, there is little evidence that they were expressed. An examination of the correspondence between the Federation and the Women Teachers' Association for the period 1961 to 1965 reveals that the matter was not raised by this largest group of women teachers in the Federation. This Association, however, was one of classroom teachers and perhaps its lack of interest in the matter may be related to the fact that

(24) ibid.
its members were not primarily concerned with matters of promotion in their day-to-day working lives. The Women Assistant Principals and Deputy Mistresses Association did, however, expressed some concern about the implementation of equal opportunity. Women who had previously occupied positions of Mistresses of girls' departments of primary schools were usually appointed to positions of Deputy Principal of 'mixed' primary schools. As such, they became subject to closer supervision by the Principal than perhaps had been the practice when as Headmistresses, they had been subject to the formal authority of Headmasters. They had often exercised autonomous power in their own girls' departments, as did many mistresses in infants departments. As such, Girls' Mistresses had developed working relationships with Department of Education inspectors largely independent of their Headmasters. They were often invited independently to meetings called by departmental officials outside the school. With the amalgamation process some of these prerogatives declined in usage.

Early in 1962 the Women Assistant Principals and Deputy Mistresses Association complained to the Federation that many of their number were not being invited to meetings as had been the case when they had administered their own departments. Women who had 'for years successfully administered' girls' departments were now being 'relegated virtually to the position of assistants'.(25) They demanded that Federation take action to protect the 'professional status' they had hitherto enjoyed.

The language here was one of status, not the rights of women as such. Federation indeed took up the matter, but it did not become part of a general campaign to assert the rights of women teachers. The fact that the initiative for such a campaign did not come from active women within the Federation ensured that the inherent inequalities of the equal opportunity settlement were not challenged for many years.

Certain sections of the male membership did not so readily recognise the potential advantages for generally more mobile men in the new system. In 1962 the Inverell Teachers' Association argued that men should be able to seek promotion in the infants' area. \(^{(26)}\) General Secretary, Matt Kennett, replied that based on 'the discussion at Federation Council on the matter, the Federation's acceptance of this position was in accord with the general opinion of teachers in the service'. \(^{(27)}\)

In 1964 the Kandos-Rylstone Teachers' Association argued that women teachers were achieving their first promotion list in primary departments and then proceeding to the position of mistresses of an infants department. \(^{(28)}\) The Federation replied by indicating that a teacher with list one transferring from the primary to infants area could not proceed beyond the position of Deputy Mistress in an infants department. It was conceded that

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\(^{(26)}\) L.H. Townsend to M. Kennett, 16 March 1962, Inverell Teachers' Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

\(^{(27)}\) M. Kennett to L.H. Townsend, 21 May 1962 in Inverell Teachers' Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

\(^{(28)}\) Association resolution, 3 August 1964 in Kandos Rylstone Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
some women were receiving more rapid promotion to senior positions in primary schools. It was becoming clear, however, that 'more of the junior promotion positions in the primary service were being allocated to men'. (29)

The North Illawarra Teachers' Association expressed concern at the more rapid promotion of women in the infants' area. (30) Federation agreed that this was the case at 'lower' levels of the promotion ladder, but that there were sufficient safeguards to prevent undue competition at more senior levels. The 'range of opportunity for those who choose to serve in the infants section is restricted to achievement of the status of mistress A (a third list position)'. Moreover, former Mistresses of girls' departments 'have been compelled to take charge of second class primary schools before becoming eligible for consideration to become Principals of first class schools'. (31)

While the operation of equal opportunity did not become a matter of major disputation in the union, the question was still raised from time to time in the following years. In 1966 the Men Teachers' Association referred an enquiry from one of its members about the operation of the scheme to the Federation Executive. The member had argued that young women who had been placed on the

(29) D.J. Brady to D.D. Cornelius (Secretary), 14 August 1964 in Kandos Rylstone Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.


(31) I.G. Lancaster to H.G. Saunders, 29 October 1964, North Illawarra Teachers' Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
first promotions list were receiving rapid appointment to the position of Deputy Mistress in the Sydney metropolitan area. This, he suggested, would eventually result in women becoming Principals of men who were previously much senior to them. (32)

The nature of the complaint is interesting because teachers who were in a position to accept 'unfavourable' appointments could also be similarly advantaged. The inspection and promotion system was such that a teacher could accept a first list appointment in an 'unfavourable' area and apply to be inspected for the next list. If successful and after a specified period of service, the teacher could apply for first list positions ahead of those who did not hold second list positions. Thus the more mobile teacher, more likely to be a man than a woman, could repeat the process through the list system and eventually be in a supervisory position over people with far more years of service, but whose relative immobility left them behind in the promotions race. What gave this teacher's complaint some edge was that women were appearing to be achieving rapid promotion without having to have the burden of 'unfavourable' appointments which had been the fate of generations of Spencer Buttons. (33)


(33) Spencer Button is the hero of Brian James' (John Tierney) novel The Advancement of Spencer Button, Pacific Books, 1967, first published by Angus & Robertson, 1950. It is a fictionalised biography of a teacher who treads a path of unfavourable appointments, through the promotion system to the pinnacle of principal of a high school. Needless to say, his wife and family trod a similar path.
The matter, it seems was the subject of lengthy discussion by the Federation Executive. It reaffirmed its conviction that due regard will be had to ensuring that all promotions positions in any one school are not held by teachers of the same sex.

General Secretary Lancaster's reply to the Association went on to point out that men teachers have benefited substantially from the introduction of equal opportunity. In particular reference is made to the appointment of Deputy Master/Mistress in Class 1 primary schools where formerly two men and two women were appointed to the primary section. In many cases now the ratio is three men to one woman, and in some country areas the four positions are held by men.

Therefore, he said the Executive did not consider it unrealistic that in a First Class Primary School at least one of the four positions in the primary section should be reserved, if at all possible, for a woman teacher. (34)

While there are obvious differences about the precise effects of equal opportunity, it is clear that the Federation Executive was of the view that men had not been disadvantaged in its operations. Federation did not challenge a system which promised more rapid promotion to mobile teachers. In 1961, 21 per cent of secondary school Principals were women. By the late 1970s only 10 per cent of secondary schools had women Principals. (35)

(34) I.G. Lancaster to R. Walsham, 21 April 1966, in Men Teachers' Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives. See also C. McKenzie, (Secretary, Narrandera Teachers' Association) to I.G. Lancaster, 14 September 1964 and I.G. Lancaster to C. McKenzie, 28 October 1964 in Narrandera Teachers' Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

(35) Examination of a practice in New South Wales Teaching Service by the Anti-Discrimination Board under Section 20 of the Anti-Discrimination Board September 1979, N.S.W. Anti-Discrimination Board, 1979, p.5. The original reference was made under the Anti-Discrimination Act of 1977.
perhaps harsh to accuse Federation of colluding with the authorities in constructing a system in which married women (i.e. most women) could not compete on an equal footing with men. (36) Nevertheless, it is clear that the leadership understood in 1961 that the new system would advantage more mobile, rather than less mobile people, and that social patterns being what they were, it was more likely to advantage men rather than women. Indeed when complaints were made about the operation of the system by men, the Executive's response was usually that men, rather than women, had fared better in the system. This raises fundamental questions about the specific historical construction of unity.

'United action' was less effective as a rallying cry if women and men had salary differentials. 'Equal opportunity' was a logical corollary of equal pay. To ensure that the union did not split over the matter, it was necessary to construct a system where both sexes appeared to make some gains. Removing the obvious barriers to progression within the promotions system for women was necessary to gain the endorsement of women members. To not challenge the less obvious, but nevertheless real, inequalities within the system, was necessary to forestall the active mobilisation of men against the system. At the time, perhaps, this was all that was possible. This is not to say, however, that the union leadership was unmindful of the deeper social significance of the system in whose construction it had assisted.

(36) ibid., p.75.
The Federation's espousal of equal pay and opportunity reflected, in part, the continual pressure of a group of formidable women unionists led by such women as Lucy Woodcock, Vera Leggett and Doris Osborne. On this basis the Federation could claim to be mindful of the interests of the majority of its members, women. This commitment, however, was not matched by a proportionate participation of women in the decision-making bodies of the union.

From 1961 to 1981 the maximum number of women on the 17 member Federation Executive was six. The common figure was usually three or four women. In the mid-1960s women rarely comprised more than 25 per cent of positions on Federation Council. In 1966, for instance, 42 of Federation Council of 204 members were women. Twenty five of these, however, were members of four associations: the Women Teachers' Association, the Women Assistant Principals' and Deputies' Association, the Infants Mistresses' and Principals' Association and the Secondary Teachers' Association. This position was further complicated by the practice of endeavouring to represent all areas of the membership on the Executive. The marginalisation of women in a few associations therefore, further limited opportunity for representation on the Executive. The concentration of women members in a few associations, however, probably guaranteed that women could not be excluded from the Executive altogether.


Until 1967 many country associations were represented by city based teachers. It became common practice for a country association to elect a teacher who had once taught in the area covered by the association. Many of these teachers did their 'country service' as classroom teachers, sought promotion, accepted positions in unfavourable areas and then finally took up positions in Sydney. This meant that many country associations were represented by male teachers in promotions positions. This resulted in participation of male promotions teachers in the Council, beyond their proportionate presence in the membership as a whole. This can be illustrated by reference to the Principals' Association. It elected three representatives to Council in its own right. During the mid 1960s, moreover, five leading members of the association also represented country areas on Council. (39)

It is not suggested that Principals always acted in a unified way on Council. What it did mean, however, was that the particular interests of certain groups were more likely to be expressed than the interests of other groups. From the early 1960s Federation moved towards a system where more and more associations elected local teachers as their representatives. By 1967 the Council could claim to be more directly representative of

(39) ibid., Les Snape (Cowra), Jack Case (Kandos-Rylstone-Portland-Oberon), Jack Winston (Wellington), Bill McCallion (Gloucester-Dungog) and Bill McCarron (Manning River). Addenda to Annual Report 1966, pp.5-6.
the broad membership than it had ever been in its history. This, however, did not immediately increase the participation of women in the Council's activities.\(^{(40)}\)

To achieve election as a representative on Council usually required a record of activity at the local association level, through regular attendance at meetings and membership of the Association Executive. There is no evidence that during the 1960s local associations actively encouraged the participation of women. For instance, the provision of child care at meetings was an initiative taken by associations only in the latter half of the 1970s. Indeed the presence of women activists at the association level was regarded as somewhat of an oddity. In this connection, the 1966 Annual Report of the President of the Murwillumbah Association makes interesting reading. The President (a local male primary principal) noted that the average attendance at association meetings was 15 people. He was however,

\(^{(40)}\) It was not until the 1980s that women achieved 30 per cent of membership of Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975-1976</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-1975</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-1980</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-1982</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>30.8</td>
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</tbody>
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pleased to mention that two of our regulars are ladies and I felt that I should congratulate Mrs. Morton and Miss Elbourne for their interest. (4)

It seems that it was surprising to find two women among the regular attenders at an Association meeting. While the President of the Murwillumbah Association was not, perhaps, an entirely typical case, it is indicative of the marginal role played by women in the union, relative to men. It is, therefore, not surprising that many matters of particular relevance to women teachers did not concern the union greatly for most of the 1960s.

Country Teachers

Was the Federation also dominated by Sydney-based interests? Was the definition of unity as well as being a male constructed concept also one which reflected city interests rather than country interests?

The centralised nature of the education system militated against a great deal of local or regional initiative either at a Departmental or Federation level. The major departmental decisions were still made in Sydney. It was therefore, a Sydney-based Federation which conducted the negotiations with, and directed towards, with the various authorities.

The indirect representation of the remote areas on Federation Council was clearly unsatisfactory for both the Federation and the local association. Absentee Councillors could, at best, only visit the associations they represented a few times

a year. Association meetings in the country usually took place on Saturday mornings and were often as much social, as political, occasions. Federation Council meetings took place on Saturday mornings every two weeks during school terms. The frequency of Council meetings therefore limited further the opportunity of absentee Councillors to report to local areas. The visits of Councillors were sometimes supplemented by a visit from a Sydney-based Federation officer. In 1966 there were fourteen full-time officers of the union, only six of whom were field organisers. By necessity then, visits of officers were infrequent.

Absentee Councillors, moreover, were not just delegates of local associations. While they were expected to represent the views of their areas, they were also expected to promote Federation policy to remotely situated members. This dual, and potentially contradictory role, sometimes caused difficulties. In 1964, for instance, Camden Haven Association on the mid-north coast of N.S.W., complained that visiting Councillors seemed to be 'issued with scripts from which they do not depart'. They should also be 'prepared to listen to local points of view, report on activities and discuss the needs of individual districts.'

While this contradiction was not entirely resolved by the general provision of direct representation on Council, it did provide a greater sense of local involvement in the central decisions of the union. This did not, however, increase the level

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of centrally provided union services to local areas. At the 1964 Annual Conference there was a move to establish regionally-based Federation organisers. The mover of the resolution, B.J. Maher, argued that the Federation needed to match the administrative decentralisation of the Department of Education.\(^\text{(43)}\) Lancaster opposed the proposition. He argued that, despite the existence of Department of Education area offices, most major decisions were made in Sydney by the central authorities. He also argued that Federation needed to make the most flexible use of the organising staff of the union. If there was a major problem in a given area, then the General Secretary should be able to deploy as many staff as possible in that area. Federation staff, he argued, could not match the personnel resources of the Department and so the Federation staff had to be used in the most flexible and efficient manner.\(^\text{(44)}\) What was not said, however, was that the leadership feared that their political control of officers' activities would be lessened in a more decentralised union structure.\(^\text{(45)}\)

The motion was defeated. But the discussion revealed a level of dissatisfaction in country areas with the service provided by Federation. The demand for regional officers could be countered with arguments about practicality. They were not so easily expressed in relation to direct representation on Council.

\(^\text{(43)}\) Annual Conference 1964, Transcript, p.33.

\(^\text{(44)}\) Ibid., pp.35-36.

\(^\text{(45)}\) Interview with Bill Leslie, 1 July 1983. Leslie was Assistant General Secretary in the late 1960s.
Indeed, the achievement of full representation by 1968 rendered greater legitimacy to the Federation's historic strike decision in that year.

### Outer Metropolitan Teachers

The post-war growth of enrolments led to the opening of a large number of new schools in the outer metropolitan area of Sydney. This introduced a factor in Federation politics of which the union structure had to take account.

During the 1950s there were a few outer metropolitan associations such as in the Manly-Warringah, Sutherland Shire, Parramatta and Hornsby areas. The first major outer metropolitan association to be formed in the 1960s was the Blacktown Association. Soon after its formation in 1962 it requested the Federation to allocate automatically, members appointed to teach in the Blacktown district to the local association rather than to the relevant sectional association.\(^{(46)}\) The Federation replied that the union rules required that 'all members employed in the metropolitan area shall be members of the sectional association appropriate to their status'.\(^{(47)}\) Council, however, did possess the power to establish local associations. This had, indeed, been the case with the establishment of the Blacktown Teachers' Association. Secretary Bruce Mitchell, on behalf of the Association, argued that local associations were 'better able to

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assist and represent teachers by the virtue of our distance from Sydney'. The Blacktown Association proposed that Federation amend its rules so that members were automatically allocated to a local association where one existed. Members would retain the right to transfer to a sectional association appropriate to their 'status on the nature of the duties performed by them'.\(^{(48)}\) This reversed the hitherto prevailing method of allocating members to an association.

The Blacktown Association argued that this would enhance the achievement of unity within the union. In a letter forwarded to Federation associations it argued that local associations brought 'more teachers together on a unified basis'. They would also assist in the organisation in more effective action. They were able to

respond to the need to organise teachers and parents around the peculiar local problems associated with the rapidly expanding areas. They were proved their worth in practice.\(^{(49)}\)

This view prevailed at the 1962 Annual Conference. Sectional associations henceforth needed to justify their existence. United action at the local level had been enshrined in the Federation rules. This was to have important implications for the organisation of Federation campaigns in the years to come. This development, together with the move towards direct representation of country teachers, enhanced the ability of the union to mobilise its members when the occasion demanded it.

\(^{(48)}\) B.A. Mitchell to M. Kennett, 29 November 1962, Blacktown Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

\(^{(49)}\) Cited in ibid.
Secondary Graduate Teachers' Association

These initiatives concerning country and outer metropolitan teachers were affecting the concept of 'united action'. The concept of 'professionalism' was also the subject of disputation within the union. Differing concepts of professionalism had been invoked to legitimise the various funding, salaries and Education Commission campaigns. In the late 1950s another conception of professionalism was invoked by a section of the membership to improve its economic status relative to other sections of the membership.

In 1949 Federation adopted a policy on teacher training which called for four year training for all teachers.\(^{(50)}\) This was considered to be an important tactic for enhancing the professional status of teachers. By the mid-1960s, however, there were large and increasing numbers of teachers in the service who did not have four years' training. In the secondary area where graduate status was commonly accepted as a minimum qualification there were large numbers of two year trained ex-primary teachers. This trend, together with the institution of two year 'junior' secondary courses in teachers colleges, reflected the growing teacher shortage in secondary schools. The proportion of graduates in the secondary service fell from 50 per cent in 1964

\(^{(50)}\) Education, 17 August 1949, p.18.
to 42 per cent in 1966.\(^{51}\) This decline in the proportion of graduates led to the claim that there should be a salary differential for teachers who were graduates. Federation policy argued that teachers should be compensated for income foregone through extra years of training but that there should be no salary differential beyond that consideration.

At the 1944 Annual Conference there was a move to establish the principle of a differential rate for secondary teachers beyond that of years of training. It was opposed on the ground that it would be placing one section of the union in an artificially superior relationship with other sections. There should be a common salary scale, argued Sam Lewis, because it was consistent with the notions of 'common policy' and 'common action'. The move was defeated as were similar moves in the late 1940s and 1950s. During the 1950s there were pressures within the secondary service to permit the Secondary Teachers' Association to have the right to negotiate separately with the Public Service Board. These pressures were countered with the argument that four year trained teachers were represented on the Salaries Negotiating Panel. Legal opinions were sought in 1954 and 1957 by some dissident secondary teachers about seeking registration of an autonomous Secondary Teachers' Association within the Teachers' Federation. The opinions were generally to the effect that it

would be very difficult to gain registration,\(^{52}\) either as a part of the Federation or as a separate organisation.\(^{53}\)

In 1959, the Secondary Teachers' Association argued that a measure of autonomy was necessary for secondary teachers in salaries negotiations. The Association argued that the compensation for years of training formula was insufficient to attract graduates to teaching. The S.T.A. asked Federation to present secondary teachers' salary cases separately from those of other school teachers in accord with the practice followed for technical teachers and Teachers' College lecturers.\(^{54}\) Federation declined the request.\(^{55}\)

On 29 November 1959, seven secondary teachers applied for registration as a trade union. The application was refused on the technical grounds that it had not been made on the proper official form. The Industrial Registrar, however, kept the matter in abeyance. Federation protested at the action. The Secondary Teachers' Association condemned the application but its President, Bess Mitchell, warned the Federation that there was considerable dissatisfaction with the union's continual refusal to permit the

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\(^{53}\) For an account of these moves in the 1950s, see ibid., pp.378-384.


\(^{55}\) ibid.
salaries to be negotiated in the same manner as technical teachers.\(^{(56)}\)

In May 1960 this dissatisfaction manifested itself when 25 secondary teachers formed the Secondary Graduate Teachers' Association. It aimed to establish the right to negotiate on behalf of secondary teachers separately from the Federation. It also aimed to restore the right of all secondary teachers to be allocated to the Secondary Teachers' Association. It seems that 500 teachers joined the Graduates' Association in 1960, but there is no evidence that this involved forsaking Federation membership.\(^{(57)}\) The new Association, however, accused the Federation of being dominated by primary teachers led by a politically motivated leadership, more concerned with displays of public militancy, than with negotiating just salaries.\(^{(58)}\)

The Association never became any more than a secondary graduate 'ginger group' within the Federation. It did not attract a significant membership nor was it able to undermine the legitimacy of the S.T.A. as the official voice of secondary teachers within the Federation. Its activities in the 1960s were largely confined to intervention in salaries negotiations and hearings before industrial tribunals. In February 1961, it sought to intervene in the Federation case before the Industrial Commission. Both the Federation and the Public Service Board opposed leave to intervene. Leave was refused, although without

\(^{(56)}\) \textit{Education}, 13 April 1960, p.3.  
\(^{(57)}\) Spaull, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.385-386.  
\(^{(58)}\) \textit{ibid.}
prejudice to future applications. (59) A similar attempt to intervene in the 1963-4 salaries case was also rejected. (60) Its fundamental problem was that such a small association could not easily establish that it more effectively represented secondary graduate teachers than the Federation. In 1969 a group of secondary promotions teachers sought leave to intervene in the 1969 salaries case, again without success. (61)

The N.S.W. arbitration system, ironically, protected Federation in salaries matters. Federation preferred to negotiate salaries agreements with the Board. It became the practice of the Board, however, after 1960 to refer the matter to the Industrial Commission when agreement was not reached with the union. The Commission was obliged to and preferred to deal with the only registered industrial union for public school teachers rather than small splinters of it.

The activities of the Secondary Graduate Teachers' Association never really threatened to cause a fissure in the union. Its existence, however, helped to ensure that the union leadership and successive salaries committees had to be aware of the particular interests of secondary teachers. Its existence perhaps, also strengthened the negotiating hand of the Secondary Teachers' Association. That is not to say that the Secondary Teachers' Association always had its way in salaries negotiations, but the presence of a small, but often noisy graduate group, gave the Association a weapon it would not have otherwise possessed.

(59) N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1961, p.27.
(60) N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1964, p.7.
Some of the discontent which produced and sustained the Graduates' Association was removed by the enrolment growth in the secondary area during the 1960s. The increased enrolments allowed many senior graduates access to higher salaries, and to the responsibilities and status of promotions positions. For younger secondary graduates increasing enrolments provided much more rapid promotion than had been the case for their older colleagues. It is perhaps no coincidence that the Graduates' Association was largely a spent force as a separate organisation by the mid-1960s. A combination of the N.S.W. arbitration system and rapidly increasing secondary enrolments assisted the union to keep its secondary members part of the 'unified' fold.

The Federation and Politics

One of the criticisms by the secondary dissidents of the Federation was that the union indulged in political affairs beyond its legitimate interests as an organisation interested in education. In the late 1940s and early 1950s the Federation Anti-Communist League and its sympathisers had levelled this charge most effectively against the Left-Centre leadership of the union. Harry Heath identified two approaches to the conduct of the union in the wider society. Some people, he said, wanted a somewhat noisy organisation which adopts conventional militant trade union methods. This would involve Federation in many activities which are not closely allied to teachers' immediate interests ....
Other people, of whom Heath was one, considered that more can be accomplished by quieter methods, particularly by building up public esteem for the teaching profession and by emphasis on the great value of education to the community.\(^2\)

There had been 'too much thought ... given to politics and too little ... (thought to) securing improved salaries and conditions for its members'.\(^3\) The Centre and Left in the union had responded to this by arguing that the union had to make political pronouncements in order to defend and enhance the welfare and the civic rights of teachers. In the late 1940s and early 1950s the union took strong positions on all manner of political matters such as the powers referendums, bank nationalisation and the Communist Party Dissolution Bill as well as questions of war and peace.\(^4\)

It was the latter question which occasioned a major dispute within the Federation in the mid-1960s that threatened to undermine the unity of the Federation. This concerned Federation affiliation to the Association of International Co-operation and Disarmament.

The Federation had sent observers to the Australian Convention on Peace and War in 1953, when the leadership of the Federation had passed into conservative hands.\(^5\) In 1959 when

\(^{62}\) *Education*, 4 February 1953, p.3.


\(^{65}\) *Education*, 9 October, 1953, p.91
the Centre-Left had once again gained ascendancy in the union's leadership the Federation sent a top-level official delegation to the Australian and New Zealand Congress for International Co-operation and Disarmament which was held in Melbourne.\(^{(66)}\) The endorsement of the report of the Federation delegates to the 1959 Congress sealed the Federation's formal association with the peace movement.\(^{(67)}\) This did not, however, involve any significant mobilisation of the broader membership and, as such, was largely tolerated within the union.

In 1962, however, it was proposed that the Federation send a delegation to the Soviet Union.\(^{(68)}\) This was both to be a study tour of Soviet educational facilities and a contribution to a measure of international understanding. The proposal set off a lively controversy within the union.

Bill Gollan wrote of a recent journey to Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. Federation members, he argued, could learn much from studying Soviet educational developments, where education was in no sense, either 'narrowly vocational or based on dogma'.\(^{(69)}\) In June 1962, Don Taylor proposed to Council that the union send a three member delegation to the Soviet Union to study educational developments. A lively debate ensued.

\(^{(66)}\) ibid. 9 December 1959, p.2. Delegates included Lewis, Norington, Lancaster, Mattick, Eric Nicholls, Mervyn Ball and Harold Glasby.

\(^{(67)}\) ibid.

\(^{(68)}\) The invitation was issued by I. Gruikov, President of the Educational and Scientific Workers' Union of the U.S.S.R.

\(^{(69)}\) Education, 13 June 1962, p.7.
Bill Myles called the proposal 'a very clever political manoeuvre which aims to encourage Communism favourably'. (70) Myles, by no means a radical, was not, however, a red-baiter. Stan Kelly, a red hunter of some note, conceded that the Soviet Union had 'tremendous achievements ... in all fields'. He felt sure, however, that Council knew 'how these achievements' had been made. (71) Self-styled 'moderate conservative' Frank Doyle, warned that the proposal would cause unnecessary discord within the union. (72) After strong supporting speeches from Lewis and Florence Hornibrook, Council decided to send the delegation. (73) The decision provoked a vigorous debate in Education. E.A. Wilson alleged that 'a small segment of Marxist sympathisers' were using Federation 'to further the aims of World Communism'. (74) Communist Party member, Alec Elphinston, accused Wilson of trying to 'fuel the fires' of the Cold War. The Soviet Union had consistently stressed the need for 'peaceful co-existence among nations'. He praised Federation's contribution to the peace movement. (75) R. Hattersley warned that education was a key weapon used by the Soviet Union in the 'universal class

(70) ibid., 27 June 1962, p.8.
(71) ibid.
(72) Annual Conference, 1966, Transcript, p.75.
(74) ibid.
(75) ibid., 8 August 1962, p.7.
Douglas Whitton struck a less ideological note when he argued that the delegation proposal was beyond the normal interests of a teachers' organisation.

Despite the controversy, twenty three people nominated for the three positions on the delegation, including such impeccably conservative people as Les Snape of the Principals' Association and Bessie Mitchell of the Secondary Teachers' Association. Of the three delegates elected, Professor J.F.D. Wood of the University of New South Wales, Bill Kavanagh of the Technical Teachers Association and Bessie Mitchell herself, only Kavanagh could be said to be associated with the Left. They reported favourably to the 1963 Annual Conference on their visit. Taylor also wrote favourably of the Soviet Union during an extensive overseas trip he took in 1963. His comments, however, provoked another spate of letters on the subject. Nevertheless, Federation invited a representative of the Educational and Scientific Workers' Union of the U.S.S.R. to visit Australia towards the end of 1963.

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(76) ibid.
(77) ibid., 11 July 1962, p.6.
(78) ibid., 8 August 1962, p.1.
(80) ibid., 17 July 1963, p.5.
(82) N.S.W.T.F., Annual Report 1963, pp.36-37.
Despite the vigour of the reaction of some of the warriors of the Right, the matter did not provoke a general mobilisation against these reciprocal visits. While there was some resentment of union funds being used in this way, the visit of a few Federation leaders did not constitute general membership endorsement of the social and educational policies of the Soviet Union. The involvement of Don Taylor and Bess Mitchell allayed the fears of some that the union was being manipulated by a Marxist minority.

After Taylor retired at the end of 1963 he took an active role in the organisation of the 1964 Congress for International Co-operation and Disarmament in Sydney. Federation took a leading role in organising the Educationists' section of the Congress. The Federation delegation to the Congress included Lewis, Lancaster and Mattick together with Nance Cooper and Col Rennie from the Left, Jack Whalan from the Centre and Des Brady, Mrs. E. Preston-Stanley(83) and Doris Osborne from the Right of the union. The political heterogeneity of the delegation probably ensured that the Congress was not the source of great controversy within the union.

Sam Lewis told the 1964 Annual Conference that the question 'of World Peace and Friendship' was more than ever 'a vital issue for teachers ... for the future of Australia and ... of the human race'.(84) Taylor told Conference that the Peace

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(83) Mrs Preston-Stanley said that she had rejoined the union in late 1940s to 'fight the Communists', Education, 1 November, 1964, p.4.

Congress had not been 'dominated by any particular school of thought or group of people who have any attachment to any particular philosophy'. (85) He moved endorsement of the resolutions carried by the Educationists' section of the Congress. Although opposed by Brian Smith of the Goulburn Association, the motion was carried. (86) Conference also authorised Council and Executive to give 'appropriate support to the proposal for launching a permanent National Congress to work for International Co-operation'. (87) Taylor took a leading role in drawing up the constitution for such an organisation and moved its adoption at a meeting of sponsors of the Congress. (88)

- In the meantime, Federation Council addressed itself to the growing conflict in Vietnam. In April it called for a cease fire followed by negotiations among all parties. (89) Ian Lowe, a former Federation Organiser, defended the union's right to make such pronouncements. 'Teachers everywhere,' he said should be concerned that 'schools in Vietnam had been bombed'. Moreover, the expenditure on armaments meant 'fewer homes and schools ... children are condemned to malnutrition and illiteracy ...'. (90)

Having said that, he went beyond Federation's official position and attacked the Australian government's support for the United States intervention in Vietnam. It was necessary for teachers to

(86) ibid.
(88) N.S.W.T.F. Council, Minutes, 5 June 1965, p.77-78.
(89) ibid., 10 April, 1965, p.58.
(90) Education, 28 April 1965, p.70.
at least, support Federation's call for negotiations. It would be not only a humanitarian stand, but also it would have profound 'relevance to teachers' professional activities'.

Lowe's letter provoked a number of responses. B. Morrow argued that the Vietnam conflict was part of the struggle against the designs of Communists who were 'set on world domination .... force is the only way' to counter Communism. Federation therefore should not be associated with any body which did not oppose Communism. K.A. Preece argued that Federation should not affiliate with any organisation which went beyond the objectives of the union. Affiliation with A.I.C.D. would fracture the unity of the union necessary for making improvements in salaries and working conditions.

Don Taylor reported to Council on 5 June about the formation of the A.I.C.D. Council voted to recommend affiliation, but invited Associations to comment on the proposal. The Sydney Morning Herald and the Telegraph condemned the decision. Radio public affairs commentators joined the clamour. Eric Baume characterised the Federation as a bunch of 'white collar wharfies'. 'Andrea' (Doris Jennings), queen of 'chat and giggle' on Sydney morning radio said that teachers were using social studies lessons to preach the 'horrible

(91) ibid.
(92) ibid., 16 June 1965, p.85.
(93) ibid.
(94) Council, Minutes, 5 June 1965, pp.77-78.
(95) D.T., S.M.H., 8 June 1965.
gospel of peace.' Lewis and Lancaster issued press statements defending the decision. Copies of these were sent to schools and colleges.

The controversy was sufficient to arouse a number of schools and associations. Goulburn Association demanded that the question be referred to all branches. Narrabri-Wee Waa Association reported that 'it had held a lengthy and ... heated discussion' on the question. It demanded to know whether Federation considered that A.I.C.D. was 'Communist inspired'. Narrandera Association said Federation should not concern itself with matters that would detract from the public image of teachers. Rather it should concentrate on improving 'the working conditions of teachers'. Bass Hill primary school demanded that the question of affiliation be put to a full postal ballot of

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(97) S.P. Lewis and I.G. Lancaster, Circular to Federation Representatives and Association Secretaries, 10 June, 1965, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

(98) D. Perkins to I.G. Lancaster, 8 October 1965, Goulburn Teachers' Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.


(100) C.M. McKenzie to I.G. Lancaster, 7 July 1965, Narrandera Teachers' Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives. See also F.L. Downing (Secretary, Culcairn Teachers' Association) to I.G. Lancaster, 29 June 1965. 'Peace' files, N.S.W.T.F. archives. See similar resolutions from schools and associations opposing affiliation in same files.
the members.\(^1\) Even the militant Illawarra teachers' Association counselled caution. It recommended that the matter be deferred to Annual Conference. In the interim Federation should content itself with urging teachers to join A.I.C.D. as individuals.\(^2\)

The leadership, it seems, heeded this advice. Lewis reported to Council on 3 July. He referred to debate in the press, and in particular to the public statements issued on behalf of some associations, staffs and individuals. Such activity could not enhance unity. The press, he said, had played up the matter in order to foment discord within the union. Council then adopted his recommendation that

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\text{in the interests of unity of the teachers of this State the Federation not affiliate with the Association of International Co-operation and Disarmament.}\(^3\)
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For Lewis and his supporters it was a bitter blow. The realisation that general union pursuits and peace activities were not regarded as being compatible placed real limitations upon his leadership. Lewis, however, told the 1965 Annual Conference that he did not retreat, in the least, from his personal commitment to peace. He invoked the plea of the 1948 UNESCO conference, for all 'educationists, scientists, artists and writers ... to denounce the pernicious idea that war is inevitable'.

\(^1\) A. Lee and 15 other teachers to I.G. Lancaster, 15 June 1965 in 'Peace' files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.


\(^3\) Council, Minutes, 3 July 1965, p.96.
affiliation to A.I.C.D., he believed, was consistent with that plea. The decision not to affiliate had been a victory for 'forces outside the Federation, with some assistance from Federation members.'(4) They had indeed mobilised a politically passive membership against the leadership and the activists of the union.

The Federation Reform Committee

The A.I.C.D. controversy stimulated the re-emergence of an organised right wing group within the Federation, which became known as the Federation Reform Committee. Teachers in this group included Stan P. Kelly, a Sydney Primary Principal, A.F. Jeffrey, F.S. Salter and Harry O. Boyle who were secondary teachers and Marceline O'Riordan, a secondary teacher at the Correspondence School. Kelly and Boyle were members of the Liberal Party,(5) while O'Riordan was widely believed to have connections with the National Civic Council. They made effective use of the Daily Telegraph(6) and attracted support from Liberal members Tom Mead, Member for Hurstville, in the State Parliament and W.C. Wentworth in the Federal Parliament. They also circulated

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(4) Annual Conference, 1965, Transcript, pp.32-33 'forces outside the Federation' would include the Daily Telegraph.


(6) The proprietor Frank Packer was opposed to all that was Left.
leaflets and pamphlets to schools and associations which often featured vivid descriptions of alleged activities of Federation leaders, officers and activists. While they did not have many open supporters among Federation activists, they were able to use the Federation's most frequently mobilised tactic, publicity, against the union organisation.

The first opportunity for the Reform Committee to test its strength came in late 1965 when the biennial elections for the senior officers occurred. Kelly stood against Lewis for the Presidency, Jeffrey against Whalan for the Deputy Presidency and Boyle against Elizabeth Mattick for the Senior Vice Presidency.

In his election policy statement Kelly said that there was no provision in the Federation constitution to 'change defence policy, yet Mr Lewis tried to lead teachers into the Communist front A.I.C.D.' The choice for teachers was between 'public respect' or a 'Communist President'.(7) A.F. Jeffrey declared that he had 'no political or religious axe to grind'. He was moved by the desire of many Federation members that the 'politics' of the union should be 'those of a professional body, moderate, militant [sic] and above all respected by the general public ... (and) truly representative of the rank and file of the profession'.(8) Boyle promised 'a sophisticated and wide ranging campaign to rehabilitate' the leadership's standing in the eyes of those who influence, and those who make political

(8) ibid., pp.148-149.
decisions. Lewis and Mattick promised the continuation of the policy of united action of members 'in co-operation with all sections of the community ... around the maintenance and expansion of the public school system of education.'

Kelly alleged that there had been serious financial mismanagement within the union concerning officer and staff salaries and expense incurred in erecting a new Federation building in Sussex Street, Sydney. Another candidate, standing against Lewis, George Stanton alleged 'patronage and nepotism' within the union. Boyle claimed that there were no members of the Liberal, Labor or Country parties on the Federation Executive.

These statements were referred to a special Council committee consisting of Mervyn Ball, Frank Doyle, G.A. Dodd, Doug Broadfoot and Jack Williams. Of these only Williams could be said to be associated with the Left leadership. Speaking on behalf of the committee, Broadfoot said that the policy statements of Kelly, Stanton and Boyle 'contained mis-statements (and) breached Federation's Code of Ethics.'

Lewis was sufficiently concerned about the activities of Kelly, Jeffrey and Boyle to take the unusual step of devoting his

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(9) ibid.
(10) ibid.
(11) ibid.
(12) ibid. Stanton was a conservative Newcastle Primary Principal.
(13) ibid.
(14) ibid., p.148.
'President Writes' column to the matter. He alleged that a section of the Liberal Party was endeavouring to interfere in Federation's internal affairs. He deplored, in particular, that the union's support for 'peace and friendship' had become grounds for attack and distortion. This campaign of falsification and misrepresentation is associated with the attachment of the label 'communist' and 'leftist' to people, organisations, and activities, irresponsibly and with little discrimination.

The decision-making bodies of the Federation, far from being dominated by the Left, represented a 'true cross section of the varying opinions of teachers'. The activities of the opposition team were calculated to foment division within the union. (15)

The election attracted some interest in the Sydney press with the Sydney Morning Herald and Bulletin running stories on the matter. (16) The matter was discussed at the state Council of the Liberal Party. A councillor, Alan Viney alleged that in the past teachers who had opposed the Communists had found themselves transferred to other places. It appeared that the Federation had a representative on the Transfer Committee, because the moves were more than a coincidence.

It was important that the Federation be 'cleaned up' but it could only be done by 'teachers themselves, able to speak fearlessly'. (17) Lewis reported on the publicity to Federation Council on 9 October. He deplored some of the statements that had

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(15) ibid., p.146.


been made during the election and reported that two Federation members had consulted their legal advisors to take appropriate action. Council adopted Lewis' recommendation that Federation provide legal support for these members in these actions.\(^{(18)}\)

The election became a contest between 'united action', on the one hand, and the unspecified 'professional approach' and the red-baiting of the opposition forces, on the other. Whatever other criticisms could be made of Lewis, Whalan and Mattick, their record of service within the union was formidable particularly when compared to that of Kelly, Boyle and Jeffrey. The incumbents were able to project themselves as the embodiment of a well established Federation tradition of action on issues which were of concern to the broad membership as well as the wider community. The adherence of Lewis and Mattick to the peace movement and their widely suspected membership of the Communist Party could be tolerated, provided their main activities were perceived as being within the broad Federation tradition of united action. The opposition group, although not without support, could be represented as endeavouring to destroy the edifice of united action and return the union to a tame cat organisation which relied on polite lobbying and 'cogent argument'.

The opposition also possessed another less obvious, but important deficiency: none of them was a woman. Since the 1930s one of the senior officers had been a women.\(^{(19)}\)

\(^{(18)}\) Council, Minutes, 9 October 1965, p.153.

advertisement supporting Elizabeth Mattick's candidacy which proclaimed that 'at least one of the three senior officers ... should be a woman'. (20) The advertisement was designed to reinforce the notion that the incumbents were more representative than the all male interlopers.

As had been the case in 1952 Lewis tended to be the focus of attention during the campaign. While Lewis attracted 8,000 first preferences, his majority over Kelly and Stanton was only 636 votes. Whalan and Mattick, however, managed majorities of nearly 2,000 in a total poll of 15,000 votes. (21)

The support for the opposition team and for Stanton indicated that it was possible to mobilise a substantial anti-leadership vote. The great weakness of the opposition group was that it was unable to make an enduring alliance with conservative elements in the union as had happened in the 1950s, when the Catholic Action activists had formed an alliance with conservative headmasters. Nevertheless the strength of the anti-incumbent vote was a warning that temptations to adventurism needed to be kept in check.

(20) Education, 20 October 1965, p.149. It was authorised by D. Dear, John Frederick, Bert Hilling and Mary Reid.

(21) President Deputy President Senior Vice-President

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(Education, 2 February 1966, p.10).

The anti-leadership vote encouraged the formalisation of the alliance into the Federation Reform Committee in early 1966. Having had some measure of success in embarrassing the leadership, the Reform Committee decided to attack leading Left officers. Two of their prime targets were Doris Jobling and Bill Leslie.

Doris Jobling became a Federation organiser in 1965. Although from a conservative background, she had been attracted to the Communist Party primarily through her Federation activity. Unlike the older generation of teacher Communists, she made no secret of her party affiliations. Leslie, on the other hand, was an A.L.P. member, but with close connections to the C.P.A. members of the Federation. He had come into contact with Communist Party members while teaching on the North Coast in the early 1950s. He taught with Sam Lewis from 1956 until 1962. In that year he was elected as an organiser and by 1966 was Assistant General Secretary (Organisation). Leslie, Lancaster and Jobling as well as David Beswick and Tim Hornibrook constituted an influential group of Left members of the administrative staff of the Federation. During a demonstration against President Lyndon Johnson in Sydney in October 1966, Leslie was arrested and charged with 'placing himself in the Sydney Domain, a public place to beg alms.' The Reform Committee circularised schools and associations asking whether union funds would be used to pay for Leslie's defence. Reference was made to a decision to pay $2,000 towards legal costs of five teacher trainees who had been arrested.

(22) Interview with Bill Leslie, 1 July 1983.
during a civil rights demonstration in Sydney in 1964. One of the trainees had been Lewis' daughter, Jeannie Lewis. Would this precedent be invoked to pay for Leslie's defence?^{23}

The document also listed other Left officers, Councillors and Executive members. These included Executive members Ken Johnson and Les Hokin and Sutherland Councillor Alan Cross, as well as Hornibrook, Beswick and Jobling. Would the 'political activities' of these people be also subsidised by Federation.?^{24}

On another occasion the Reform Committee alleged that Jobling attended a Communist Party meeting during working hours, while having the use of a Federation motor vehicle.^{25} She was requested to give an account of her movements on the day concerned. The Federation Executive satisfied itself that no improper use had been made of Federation vehicles. It issued the following warning to members

Federation Officers ... have the same rights as Federation claims for other teachers - to think and act in civic matters as they think fit without dictation, especially from an irresponsible group which, apparently has its own secret service.\(^{26}\)

This did not satisfy some sections of the union. The Barham-Moulamein Teachers' Association, for instance, warned that the

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(23) Federation Reform Committee, Circular (n.d. but 1966). Copy, Sam Lewis papers' N.S.W.T.F. archives.

(24) ibid.


(26) Federation circular to schools and associations, issued by Federation Executive, 10 October 1966 (signed by all Executive members).
political activities of some Federation officers tended to give credence to the Reform Committee's allegations. These activities endangered 'the worthwhile work of sincere Federationists about better conditions in schools.'

The internal divisions were compounded by a growing hostility between the Federation leadership and the state government. Federation condemned the new government's first budget for ignoring the real needs of public education, in particular by allocating $100,000 for interest payments on loans taken out by non-government schools. It also expressed the fear that the government would reduce Federation representation on an Education Commission or delay its implementation indefinitely. By the 1965 Annual Conference there was some concern that the government would not honour its election commitment.

Education Minister, Charles Cutler opened the 1965 Annual Conference. He said that he 'would not be rushed into establishing an Education Commission.' He also defended the government's increased assistance to non-government schools. He argued that these schools had to face the same challenges as public schools, particularly those resulting from increased retention rates in schools.

(28) Education, 6 October 1965, p.137.
(29) Australian, 2 October 1965.
(31) ibid., pp.10-11.
Federation for permitting its trainee members to conduct a demonstration at the official opening of Wollongong Teachers' College. Such 'militancy amongst teacher trainees' was not', he said, 'in keeping with the dignity of the teaching profession.' He was not the least impressed by 'undignified, deliberately ill-clad and noisy demonstrations', which seemed to be encouraged by Federation.\(^{(32)}\)

In his reply Sam Lewis pointed out that the level of militancy was related directly to the degree of financial provision made by governments.\(^{(33)}\) The signs for a reasonably harmonious relationship between the union and the government were not encouraging.

This concern deepened when the N.S.W. government announced that it proposed to legislate for supervised trade union ballots. It provided that the committee of management or 5 per cent of the union membership could apply to the Industrial Registrar for a supervised election conducted by the State Electoral Commissioner. The two major state registered unions affected by the legislation were the Public Service Association (23,000 members) and the Teachers' Federation (29,000 members). It was widely assumed that the measure was designed to undermine 'Communist control' of the Federation.\(^{(34)}\) Publicity Officer Broadfoot, said the Federation regarded it

\(^{(32)}\) ibid., p.8.
\(^{(33)}\) ibid., p.13.
\(^{(34)}\) Australian, D.T., S.M.H., 8 June 1966.
as an impertinence for a government or outside body to interfere with the conduct of a union which is registered with the Industrial Commission. (35)

Lewis said that the real purpose of the legislation was to produce a 'tame-cat' Federation. (36) Council warned that the union would be handed over 'to a disgruntled and insignificant minority! The legislation had to be resisted, it said, lest the 'effectiveness of professional organisations and trade unions' in the state is completely undermined. (37) Despite the protests the government proceeded with the legislation.

The Federation also believed that its capacity to organise publicity campaigns was being attacked from another direction. Illawarra Teachers' Association had become particularly adept at gaining publicity for the paucity of facilities in the growing industrial city of Wollongong. Illawarra and North Illawarra Teachers' Associations had established effective links with the Illawarra District Council of Parents' and Citizens' Associations in a local version of the classic 'united front' tactics so highly developed by Federation. (38) In the course of publicising the survey of

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(35) Australian, 8 June 1966.
(37) ibid.
facilities assembled by these organisations, two Federation representatives from Berkeley and Port Kembla High Schools were summoned to the office of the Area Director of Education. There, they were read Regulations 17 and 23 of the Public Service Act. The provisions prohibited public servants from commenting on the administration of any department of the state, or disclosing any information gained in the course of employment other than for the discharge of 'official duties'.(39) There had been no attempt to enforce these regulations on teachers acting as union members since the 1920s.(40)

The teachers were not threatened directly, but were informed that their actions could result in their being charged with a breach of the regulations. The Illawarra Association understood immediately that if these implied threats succeeded in silencing teachers generally, one of the key weapons used by Federation to advance its policies would be curtailed severely. The Association called a protest meeting at which 350 teachers attended. It was decided to ask all schools in the area to write to the Illawarra Mercury about conditions at the various schools and to protest at the attempt to intimidate teachers. Eventually letters were sent by 48 schools signed by more than 850 teachers. They were published in the Mercury on 15 and 16 June, 1966.

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(40) Mitchell, op.cit.
Support for the teachers came from a public meeting called by the District Council of the Parents' and Citizens' Associations the two Illawarra Teachers' Associations and the Secretary of the South Coast Labor Council. These support statements as well as the letters from schools were consolidated into a four page broadsheet and widely distributed as part of general Federation campaign against the regulations.

The campaign was successful. The Minister and a spokesman for the Public Service Board caused a statement to appear in the press that they did not wish to restrict teachers' rights to canvass schools' needs through publicity campaigns. The effective action of Illawarra teachers and their parent and trade union allies had protected a central strategy of the union. For a union that did not strike, government success in this 'try on' of the union would have had most serious consequences.

The feeling that the union was being attacked from within and without was, however, increasing rather than lessening. This uneasiness was given further substance when William Charles Wentworth made a spirited attack on Sam Lewis during an adjournment debate in the House of Representatives.

Wentworth intervened in the biennial elections for Federation Council. He called on teachers to support candidates endorsed by the Reform Committee, which he said was 'an organisation dedicated to getting the Communists out of the

control of the Teachers' Federation'. He named Sam Lewis as the leader of the 'Communist Group'.(42) On another occasion he accused Lewis of 'prostituting his position...in order to further the aims of the Communist Party.'(43) Labor members Gordon Bryant(44) and Bert James defended the Federation. James said the Reform Committee were a 'violent reactionary group' and a 'front' for the Liberal party.(45)

This was followed by an exchange of letters between Lewis and Kelly in the Telegraph. Kelly demanded to know whether Federation would pay the legal expenses of those Federation members who were arrested during the demonstrations against President Johnson.(46) Lewis countered with a letter stating that the Federation was not officially represented at the demonstration. He assured readers that there was ample machinery within the Federation for members to deal with the conduct of Federation affairs. The Federation, he said, was 'the property of its members, not of any group', especially a group such as the Reform Committee which calls itself 'non-partisan' but is, in fact sponsored by such 'non-partisans as W.C. Wentworth, M.H.R.'(47) Kelly had maintained that the Reform Committee would not exist if

(43) ibid., 26 October 1966, p.2242.
(44) ibid., pp.1977-1978.
(45) ibid., p.2352.
(47) ibid.
the Communist party Education 'fraction' did not meet to discuss tactics within the union. The Committee's objective, he said, was 'to confine the union's activities to industrial and professional matters.'

Lewis also publicly challenged Wentworth to repeat his charges outside Parliament. Wentworth sent Lewis a private letter in which he enclosed a letter he proposed to send to the Daily Telegraph. He did not repeat his specific charges but rather more carefully suggested that

Mr Lewis' public activities show that he has frequently aligned himself with the Communist line... (moreover), Mr Lewis has been named as a Communist in print, and he has taken no action against those who have so named him.

He requested Lewis to give him an undertaking that he would take no action against the Daily Telegraph or its editor if his letter was published. Lewis declined to give such an undertaking. He pointed out, however, that Wentworth's proposed statement did not repeat the charges to which the original objection had been made.

The activities of the Reform Committee and the attacks on Lewis by Wentworth, while distracting for the Federation leadership, were probably counter-productive. While there were

(48) ibid., 4 November 1966.
(49) ibid., 1 November 1966.
(50) W.C. Wentworth to S.P. Lewis, 16 November 1966, in Annual Conference, 1966, Transcript (attached papers), N.S.W.T.F. archives.
(51) S.P. Lewis to W.C. Wentworth, 28 November 1966 in ibid.
often bitter arguments within the Federation, attacks from 'outside' often had the effect of closing ranks within the union. The Reform Committee's propaganda relied on the suggestion that the membership was being duped by a small group of Communist manipulators. This perhaps, tended to insult the intelligence of active Federationists who did not see themselves as mere pawns of the Communist Party. While the Reform Committee's charges had some impact and attracted a measure of support, they also provoked hostile responses from those who could not easily be smeared as dupes. Barry Manefield, for instance, questioned Stan Kelly's offer of himself as a candidate for representative on Council for the Assistant Principals' and Deputies' Association. Kelly, he said, never attended meetings of the Association, although he seemed to be not short of time to attend meetings of the 'so-called' Federation Reform Committee. (52) W.J. Bentley of the Technical Teachers' Association said that Reform Committee's advice for the technical teachers election for Council was 'McCarthyism, pure and simple'. (53)

Despite the efforts of the Reform Committee, the opposition candidates made little impact. Stan Kelly and Harry Boyle retained their seats. At the most four other Reform candidates were elected. The Reform Committee's lack of a base within the membership is indicated by the fact that 102 out of a total of 159 Councillors were elected unopposed. (54) 72 out of

(53)  ibid.
(54)  Canberra Times, 26 November 1966.
93 associations did not need to hold an election.\footnote{55} The \textit{Australian} described it thus: 'Liberals fail in Union'.\footnote{56}

Although the Reform Committee had made few inroads into the Federation Council, it was necessary for the leadership to isolate the dissidents completely. At the 1966 Annual Conference Lewis moved a resolution describing the activities of the Committee as inimical to the interests of teachers, pupils and public school education, and disruptive of the unity of the N.S.W. Teachers' Federation.

Lewis said that the Committee had been associated with 'all sorts of people in this country, but not one of them who could be regarded as being a democrat or progressive.'\footnote{57} Seconding the motion, Elizabeth Mattick said that the Reform Committee was opposed to 'united action'. It wanted disunity and inactivity\footnote{58}. Self-styled 'moderate conservative', Frank Doyle, confessed he was occasionally a little troubled by the activities of some Federation officers, but he rejected the charge that the majority of Council were 'leftists, pro-leftists or politically naive'.\footnote{59} Joyce Clarke moved an amendment affirming confidence in Lewis. The attacks made by Wentworth and his ilk, she said, were not only slurs on Lewis but also reflected on the intelligence of teachers and the way they conduct their

\footnote{55} \textit{Australian}, 10 November 1966.  
\footnote{56} \textit{ibid}.  
\footnote{57} Annual Conference, 1966, \textit{Transcript}, p.43.  
\footnote{58} \textit{ibid.}, p.44.  
\footnote{59} \textit{ibid.}, p.77.
affairs. Teachers were not so stupid as to permit one person to seize control of Federation resources 'to advance the Communist cause'.(60)

While the claims of the Reform Committee were not sustained, the question of the role of the Communist Party and its allies requires some consideration. Clearly Communist Party members were well-placed within the leadership of the Federation. Although Lewis had consistently refused to affirm or deny his membership of the C.P.A., he was generally regarded as a Party member as were Ivor Lancaster and Elizabeth Mattick. There had also been allegations that officers David Beswick, Tim Hornibrook Doris Jobling and Les McGowan were Party members. In addition, Executive members Ken Johnson and John Frederick were also regarded as being close to the Communist party. The charge that the Education fraction of the Communist party had periodic meetings to consider tactics, strategies could not be denied. Communist Party members had great influence within the Federation. The union, however, was hardly the plaything of the Communist Party.

Support for individuals such as Lewis was widespread throughout the union, despite the attacks upon him. Moreover, the concept of 'united, action' was not just a mobilising slogan. Funding campaigns and the demand for the Education Commission were widely supported throughout the union. The leadership was generally given credit for vigorously pursuing these matters.

(60) ibid., p.80.
The presence of the left-progressives within the decision-making bodies of union, however, permitted certain issues such as peace, disarmament and Aboriginal education and welfare to gain some publicity within the union. The A.I.C.D. controversy, nevertheless, had illustrated the limits to which some issues could be taken when there was a membership mobilisation against union involvement in them. For the leadership the maintenance of unity was the prior requirement. Without unity, there could be no action.

Generally speaking, however, there was no significant membership resistance to the union organisation's involvement in Aboriginal issues. The Federation was closely associated with the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. It took up the question of Aboriginal education. It opposed the segregation of Aboriginal children in separate schools. It took initiatives about educational facilities in Aboriginal reserves. Gloria Phelan was a frequent and articulate supporter of Aboriginal people.

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(63) E.g., H.S. Norington to E. Wetherell, 31 October 1961 in Aboriginal Education files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

(64) She was secretary of the Federation's Aboriginal Schools committee. She also drafted the Federation's submission to the Joint Committee of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly on Aborigines Welfare.
While these initiatives were sometimes questioned by associations which contained schools with a high proportion of Aboriginal children, there was never any major attempt to mobilise sections of the membership against them. (65)

Nevertheless, there was some resentment that the Federation leadership was dominated by a Phillip (later Sussex) Street ruling establishment. One of the most outspoken opponents of this 'establishment' was Jack Case, the Secretary of the Principals' Association. His bulletins to members often attacked the leadership in the latter part of the 1960s. (66) He argued that the Federation consisted of a number of 'yes' groups, led by leaders of associations who had difficulty obtaining quorums for their meetings. (67) Primary teachers' interests, moreover, were being overlooked by a leadership dominated by secondary teachers. Amidst the Reform Committee controversies in 1966, he confessed puzzlement at the 'vehement denials' of the existence of a 'ruling party' in the Federation. (68)

It is a party dedicated to the support of the President, organising constantly, ready at all times with plans to support its policies, its members, and to sell the paternal image of its leader. (69)

(65) E.g., Moree Teachers' Association; see D. Jamieson to I.G. Lancaster, 15 April 1965. The Association argued that Federation should confine its activities to 'educational issues'. See reply I.G. Lancaster to D. Jamieson, 5 June 1965, arguing that racial discrimination had a profound effect on the Aboriginal 'child's incentive to study'. (Letter drafted by Phelan).


(68) Ibid., March 1966, p.2.

(69) Ibid., October 1966, p.2.
The party capitalised on every event. It even accepted defeat in order to ensure members 'that democracy is at work'. It managed to keep 'its finger on the pulse of the popular reaction' in order 'to adjust its policies'. Nevertheless it resented opposition and regarded itself as the true 'representative of the teachers'.

These sentiments were somewhat removed from those of the Reform Committee. Nevertheless they represented a disaffection with the leadership of the Federation and a belief that certain elements, particularly Principals, were largely excluded from exercising influence within the union. With such disaffection it was perhaps not so surprising that the opposition groups were able to attract a respectable vote in the 1965 senior officers' elections, even if they were much less successful at the Council elections a year later.

Even taking account of the vague feelings of disaffection among sections of the membership, it can be probably said that the Federation Reform Committee's tactics did not advance its cause to any considerable extent. To suggest that a large section of the membership was the plaything of a small group of Communists was to ignore the number of Federation members active at school and association level. Moreover, what the so-called clique stood for was for the most part espoused by a large number of members. The leadership group was cautious enough not to move too far ahead of the membership. Sam Lewis, above all, realised this. To exercise effective leadership was to strike a balance between advancing certain policies and tactics with members, and adopting tactics and policies which had little acceptance within the

(70) ibid.
union. United action had been the concept to be used to forward the interests of members, but the need to maintain unity limited action. If the action taken moved too far ahead of the membership it could be adventurist and individualist, not collectivist.

Teacher Trainees

There was one group within the Federation, however, which was qualitatively different from the bulk of the teacher membership. Teacher trainees were not full members of the union. They were less constrained by the limitations of united action. Nor were they subject to occupational restraints as teachers. How did they, then, fit into the concept of united action which was operative in the union in the 1960s?

In some senses teacher trainees had been the 'shock troops' of the Federation before the larger assembly of teachers went on strike in 1968. In 1951 teacher trainees from Sydney Teachers' College had absented themselves from classes and marched on Parliament House to demand increased allowances. In 1956 President Don Taylor warned of chaos in schools unless more teachers were trained. This could not happen, he said, unless allowances were increased considerably. The Sydney Morning Herald did not agree that this was the best way to meet the teacher shortage. It, nevertheless, noted that

agitation to raise the allowances paid to student teachers has become almost a chronic feature of life in N.S.W., since 1951

(71) Education, 10 July 1951, p.73.
(73) S.M.H., 31 July 1956 (editorial).
During the 1960s teacher trainees' campaigns became an important part of Federation activity. They did, however, cause the Federation officials a few problems. In 1962 a major campaign was undertaken. In March, students at Alexander Mackie Teachers' College staged a 'poverty day' to dramatise their state of penury. The campaign was intensified in May. On 2 May Lou Walsh, a former Federation member, presented a petition to the State Legislative Assembly containing 4,126 signatures. The next day trainees descended on Parliament House on mass deputations to their members. This proceeded without incident. The following day, however, there was a clash between students and police which attracted considerable publicity. The Federation protested to the government about the police action as did Opposition Leader Robin Askin and Labor M.L.A.s Bill Rigby and Thomas Dalton. Nevertheless Premier Heffron defended the police. Subsequent deputations, however, proceeded without incident. In all 750 trainees from Sydney Teachers' Colleges took part in deputations.

The campaign culminated in a state wide conference of trainees on 'Improved Status and Pay'. 600 trainees marched on the Sydney Town Hall. An audience of 1500 people, many of whom were representatives of trade unions and community organisations,

(74) Sun, 23 March 1962.

(75) O.T., 9 May 1962, Tribune, 16 May 1962. See also J.B. Renshaw (Acting Premier) to M. Kennett, 18 June 1962, Trainee Teacher files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.

(76) Mirror, 9 May 1962.

(77) These events are outlined in N.S.W.T.F., Report on Teacher Trainee Activity (undated, but 1962), Trainee Teachers' Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
were addressed by the Secretary of the Labor Council, J.D. Kenny, Paul Allsopp of A.C.S.P.A. and A.G. McLaine of the University of Sydney. The conference carried resolutions calling for regular fortnightly allowance payments, the right to negotiate for increased allowances through the Federation, workers' compensation benefits and federal funding of teacher education. (78)

The importance given by Federation to the trainee campaigns is indicated by the sharp reaction to a dissenting letter written by Douglas Whitton. In a letter to the Sydney Morning Herald he was critical of the confrontationist tactics used by the trainees in their campaigns. He also questioned the wisdom of the Federation's demand that they be afforded the status of employees. As such, he said, they would lose concessions usually granted to students. (79)

This intervention questioned a key strategy of the Federation in the early 1960s. After a report by Don Taylor Council condemned Whitton for taking his criticisms outside the union. (80) The Executive reminded Whitton that there was an accepted code governing the conduct of members of trade unions and professional organisations requiring loyalty to fellow members. (81)

The activities of students also brought them into conflict with college authorities. In Wagga Wagga general campaigns were complicated by student dissatisfaction with the

(78) ibid., pp.28-30.
(79) S.M.H., 24 July 1962.
(81) M. Kennett to D. Whitton, 12 September 1962. Trainee Teachers' files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
rigours of the regime imposed in a residential college by the Principal, M.E. Hale. In 1962 students demonstrated against his regime.\(^{(82)}\) In 1965 they presented a petition to Education Minister Cutler on the same matter. \(^{(83)}\) At Wagga Wagga Teachers' College, at least, it was difficult for the Federation to focus the activist students' attention on the general matters affecting students and the provision of teachers.

Federation also had to organise campaigns against the active opposition of college authorities. The Principal of Alexander Mackie said he would not recognise the Students Representatives' Council unless the names of the organisers of the 1962 'Poverty Day' demonstration were revealed to him. When this was refused, he carried out his threat. Federation had to intervene and persuade the Principal not to obstruct the development of organisation among trainees.\(^{(84)}\) The Principal of Bathurst Teachers' College threatened to bar trainee meetings if they degenerated into 'demonstrations or strikes'.\(^{(85)}\)

In the first half of the 1960s Federation had to establish the legitimacy of teacher trainee activities. Even if under direct Federation supervision, these activities were frequently conceived as an assault on the authority of Principals

\(^{(82)}\) Wagga Wagga Advertiser, 5 May 1962.

\(^{(83)}\) ibid., 29 June 1965.


\(^{(85)}\) Ralph Faulkner to Tim Hornibrook, 13 May 1965, Trainee Teachers' Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
who tended to run their colleges as schools rather than tertiary institutions. In the latter part of the 1960s, however, Federation had to address itself to tactics which owed more to the growing level of 'student revolt' than to the notion of united action promulgated by the Federation leadership.

Of particular embarrassment to the Federation was the publication of the Trainee Teachers' Association. It had begun life in the mid-1960s as a publication called Status. It endeavoured to place student activity designed to enhance status within a context of the broader Federation concerns about teacher training. In the latter 1960s this rather 'safe and responsible' publication transmogrified into Thoth. This journal owed more to the porno-political shock tactics which tended to characterise student publications in the late 1960s. The draft of one issue of the journal in 1967 caused particular consternation. It featured an article entitled 'Super Chuck'. It was a rather vivid article about Education Minister Cutler. Sam Lewis regarded it as little more than 'a form of cheap ridicule...and not likely to assist teacher trainees'. Some of these statements, he said, were libellous and certainly 'would not be printed with any authorisation of the General Secretary of the Federation'. For Lewis the publication represented a classic example of the 'individualistic' approach to political activity, far removed from the Federation tradition of 'united action'. It would not, in his estimation, meet the approval of either teachers or the great majority of trainees. (86)

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(86) Document marked 'Sam's Comments' (n.d. but 1967), Trainee Teachers' Association files, N.S.W.T.F. archives.
While this did not constitute a major challenge to the leadership's concept of 'united action', it was a sign of a different style of politics. The leadership had fought off the attacks of opposition groups who demanded a quieter, more professional approach in contrast to united action. The activities of some sections of trainees was a different kind of action. It was regarded as individualist and adventurist and undermined the notion of unity. It was possible that these views about action would have some impact in the teaching service and within the union itself. But that was not a major immediate problem for the leadership.

In the first half of the 1960s, nevertheless, the leadership had succeeded in maintaining a united Federation. Structural changes in the union had, moreover, increased the participation of country and other metropolitan teachers. The rights of women members had been advanced, but only to an extent tolerable to men with a stake in the promotions structure. Moves by some secondary graduates to breach a common approach in salaries campaigns were resisted. Attacks upon the leadership from both inside and outside the union were withstood, although at the cost of abandoning the attempt to link the union more closely to the peace movement.

The concept of 'united action' had, however, never been immutable. It tended to maximise the participation of some groups within the union and tended to marginalise other groups' interests and level of participation. Nevertheless the particular construction of 'united action' had served the union reasonably well. Profound economic, social and political changes had taken place in the 1960s. The changes were to have a significant impact on the union. They were to assist in the redefinition of the concept of 'united action'. It is to these changes we now turn our attention.
CHAPTER SIX

THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

c. 1966 - 1975
The purpose of this chapter is to review the economic, political and social context in which the N.S.W.T.F. operated during the period 1966 to 1975. The success of the Federation in its campaigns for a greater allocation of funds to education, depended upon the extent of the social surplus produced by the Australian economy, and the willingness of the various authorities to allocate an increasing proportion of that surplus to education. This chapter, therefore, surveys social and economic developments and political changes in the period 1966 to 1975, in order to set the context for the remaining chapters in this thesis.

The 'long boom' which lasted from 1945 to 1974, was the most significant since the boom which lasted from 1860 to 1890. Economic growth, as measured by Gross National Product in real terms, increased by an average of four per cent a year during the 1950s. It accelerated to five per cent a year during the 1960s. It dropped back to four per cent in the less favourable economic climate of the period 1970 to 1972. In 1973, the figure rose to 5.7 per cent, but fell drastically to 0.6 per cent in 1974, and improved to a level of 3.4 per cent in 1975.

While the boom continued into the early 1970s, the political and economic certainties which had characterised the period until 1966, began to recede. The retirement of Sir Robert

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(3) Official Year Book of Australia, 1977-78, p.742.
Menzies in 1965 was followed by a period of internecine warfare within the Liberal Party. Between 1965 and 1975, the Federal Parliamentary Liberal Party had five leaders. On the other hand, the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party experienced a resurgence under E.G. Whitlam, who replaced A.A. Calwell after the 1966 federal election. Whitlam's tenure, however, was marked by considerable controversy within the A.L.P. over party organisation and policy development, particularly over the question of education.

Established tenets of Australian economic and industrial life were overturned or called into question. The wage fixation system of a basic wage plus margins, which had operated since the 'Harvester Judgement' of 1907, was abandoned by the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission in 1966. Another fundamental tenet of Australian economic life, the protective tariff, which had been the basis of Australia's import substitution industrialisation since the First World War, was called into question. Finally, the latter part of the 1960s and the early part of the 1970s were characterised by a level of industrial disputation which significantly exceeded that of the 1950s and the early 1960s.\(^{(4)}\)

There were also important social changes in Australia in the post-war period. These included the revival of the women's movement, the growth of the Aboriginal rights movement as well as a growing demand for educational provision which itself was, in

part, a product of the post-war baby boom. The post-war migration program had also important economic and social consequences. Indeed, all of these social changes had important economic and political dimensions.

**Economic and Social Changes**

Significant changes took place in the paid labour force in the period 1947 to 1971. While the 'blue collar' workforce increased by 50 per cent in that period, 'white collar' employment grew by 140 per cent. Indeed, two-thirds of the increase in the labour force was in the 'white collar' area. As the country became richer and the service sector began to rival the primary and manufacturing sectors in economic significance, so 'Australia became increasingly a country in which people were taught, entertained, cared for and administered'.

In 1964, there were 2,003,450 workers in 347 unions in Australia, covering about 57 per cent of all wage and salary earners. Of these, over 500,000 were members of 192 'non-manual' unions which constituted about 30 per cent of the total union membership. By December 1972, however, trade union membership had fallen to 53 per cent of the paid workforce. By December 1975, there had been a 12 per cent increase in union membership, with 58 per cent of the total paid workforce being

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members of unions. This increase reflected, in part, the success of white collar unions in enrolling women employees in the private sector following the 1973 Equal Pay case. It also reflected, in particular, the federal Labor government's policy of actively encouraging union membership in the rapidly expanding Commonwealth public service. (7)

Generally speaking, white collar unions were not affiliated with State Labor Councils and the A.C.T.U., although the N.S.W.T.F. was an exception to this situation. There were, however, in existence four 'peak' organisations for white collar unions. They were the Australian Public Service Federation, a confederation of public service unions in the states, the Professional Officers' Association, the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations (A.S.C.P.A.), and the Council of Commonwealth Public Service Organisations (C.C.P.S.O.). In 1969, A.S.C.P.A. had about 40,000 members and the C.C.P.S.O. about 100,000 members. (8) The N.S.W.T.F. was affiliated to both the A.C.T.U. and A.C.S.P.A.

A.C.S.P.A. itself was founded in 1956 and was largely the product of the wage fixation practices adopted by the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission in the 1950s. Until that time, it had been the practice of the Commission to express wages of white collar workers in 'all up' terms. During the early 1950s, however, the Commission considered white collar wages in terms of


the basic wage plus margins. This meant that white collar workers as well as blue collar workers, were adversely affected by the 1953 decision of the Commission to suspend quarterly adjustments to the basic wage. This was compounded by the 1954 Metal Trades wage decision which forbade a flow-on to white collar salaries. This was aggravated, moreover, by the fact that salaries of many white collar workers, including teachers, could not be supplemented with over-award payments.\(^{(9)}\)

Thus the arbitration system was less favourably regarded by white collar unions generally. Its decisions were believed unduly to favour employers, who increasingly resorted to arbitration procedures in lieu of making agreements directly with unions. \(^{(10)}\) Increasingly, white collar workers considered that employers no longer treated them with the respect they deserved. Rather than regarding white collar workers as responsible employees whose claims warranted sober discussion, employers displayed increased reluctance to enter meaningful negotiations and come to agreements on salaries and conditions. The United Bank Officers Association said that the increasing resort to arbitration by employers obscured 'the refinements of mutual appreciation and respect' between management and employees.\(^{(11)}\)

The difficulty encountered by salaried workers in obtaining over-award payments, together with the tendency of blue collar unions to resort to industrial action when necessary,

\(^{(9)}\) ibid.
\(^{(10)}\) Martin, op.cit., p.184.
\(^{(11)}\) Cited in ibid., p.185.
contributed to the growth of the feeling that manual workers were improving their general position relative to non-manual workers.\(^{(12)}\) 'Moderation and loyalty' to the employer, declared the journal of the A.C.O.A. may be 'admirable in principle', but has 'come to be viewed as a liability in practice.\(^{(13)}\) During the 1960s white collar unions presented cases before industrial tribunals, arguing changes in the 'work value' of their members.\(^{(14)}\) By the late 1960s, however, airline pilots,\(^{(15)}\) bank officers\(^{(16)}\) and teachers had also resorted to strike action on both wages and working conditions.

A significant segment of the service sector of the labour force was occupied by the teaching force. In 1950, there were 48,403 teachers in Australia; in 1960 there were 60,029 teachers,  

\(^{(12)}\) ibid., p.185.  


\(^{(14)}\) The concept of 'work value' was often difficult to measure in practice, especially for white collar workers. See B.J. Chapman, J.E. Isaac and J.R. Niland, (eds.), Australian Labour Economics: Readings, MacMillan, Melbourne, 1984, p.440.  


There was also a significant growth in the rate of female participation in the paid labour force. In 1947, women accounted for 22 per cent of the labour force, whereas in 1970 the figure had reached 30 per cent. In 1947, only 20 per cent of women workers were married; in 1970, 60 per cent of women workers were married.

Women, however, made up a significant proportion of the 'reserve army' of labour in post-war Australia. Married women, and Southern European migrant women in particular, did poorly paid and unattractive jobs, but were also among the first to be laid off in times of unemployment.

The growing number of women in the work force gave impetus to the longstanding demand for equal pay. In 1950, the Arbitration Commission set the female rate at 75 per cent of the male rate. Throughout the 1950s and during the early 1960s, the trade union movement pressed for amendments to relevant state and federal statutes.

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(19) Horn, op.cit. p.69.

federal legislation in order to enshrine the principle of equal pay. The decision of the N.S.W. government in 1958 to legislate for equal pay for women teachers was an important landmark in the struggle for equal pay. The majority of women workers, however, were still paid less than men performing similar work.

The Commonwealth government, however, resisted legislative change in this area. The A.C.T.U. was reluctant to accept the Commonwealth's invitation to argue a test case on the issue before the Arbitration Commission. In April 1967, however, the Commission awarded equal margins for equal work in the Clothing Trade Award. It also granted an across the board increase to both female and male rates in the National Wage Case of June 1967. This influenced the A.C.T.U. to prepare a case for equal pay for work of equal value to be pursued through the Commission.

The A.C.T.U. chose the Meat Industry Interim Award case to test the matter. It applied for an increase to the female award rate, so that it would equal that of the male rate. It also argued that such an increase should be paid to all women in the industry irrespective of the nature of the work they performed. The Commission rejected this latter submission, but rather decided to implement the principle of 'equal pay for equal work' to be phased in from October 1969 to January 1972. The decision, however, had no effect on the large number of women who worked in predominantly female staffed occupations such as nursing or office work.

In 1972, the A.C.T.U. presented another case to the Commission. The judgement of the Commission extended the principle of 'equal pay for equal work' to that of 'equal pay for
work of equal value'. This was to be phased in from the beginning of 1973 to 30 June 1975. In May 1974, the Commission abandoned the allowance for the family component in setting the minimum wage. The Commission ruled that women workers would be entitled to 85 per cent of the new minimum wage from the date of its operation, 90 per cent by September 1975, and 100 per cent by June 1975.\(^{21}\)

The union movement's traditional support for equal pay was, in part, based on the fear that women would be employed in preference to men if wages were not equal. In the late 1960s and the early 1970s, there was a revival of the feminist movement whose demands went beyond the question of equal pay. Influenced by writers such as Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millett, Betty Friedan and Germaine Greer, to name the best known,\(^{22}\) young, mainly middle-class women, began to demand equality in a number of areas. The demands included control of fertility, extension of child care services, equal opportunity in employment, and greater access to the political processes of society.\(^{23}\) In education there were demands for greater recognition of women's and girls' experiences and an extension to the employment rights of women.

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By the mid-1970s, these issues were being taken up in earnest within the New South Wales Teachers' Federation.

The teaching service, however, had always had a high level of participation by women. In 1920, women constituted 55 per cent of the public school teaching service in New South Wales; 56 per cent in 1945, and 57 per cent by 1971. Although there was never more than 45 per cent of women in the secondary teaching service, the percentage of women in the infants and primary service ranged from 48 per cent in 1939; 60 per cent in 1945; 64 per cent in 1968 and 68 per cent in 1972.

The post-war immigration program was also a factor of fundamental importance in the growth of the Australian labour force. Between 1945 and 1973, immigration contributed 60 per cent to the increase in population. Migrants accounted for 50 per cent of the increase in the work force in that period. Migrant workers provided a significant proportion of the labour for the

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post-war expansion of manufacturing industry.\(^{(28)}\) In 1966, migrant labour provided 49.48 per cent of workers in the clothing industries; 44.7 per cent in textiles, and 40.6 per cent in the petroleum products industries.\(^{(29)}\) By 1966, 41 per cent of post-1947 migrants were employed in the manufacturing sector, whereas only 25 per cent of workers in that area were born in Australia.\(^{(30)}\) The 1966 census, however, revealed that migrants comprised only 7.9 per cent of employees classified as professional or technical workers and 10.1 per cent as clerical workers, whereas of the people classified as 'tradesmen [sic], labourers and process workers', 48.8 per cent were migrants.\(^{(31)}\)

The influx of children from non-English speaking backgrounds provided additional difficulties for an already hard pressed education system.\(^{(32)}\) The assimilation policies followed by the authorities in the late 1950s and early 1960s, however, hindered an adequate response to the problem.\(^{(33)}\) In


\(^{(29)}\) ibid., pp.111-112.

\(^{(30)}\) ibid., p.113.

\(^{(31)}\) ibid., p.114.


the period 1961 to 1971, there was a decline in the number of children from Northern Europe, and an increase, in both absolute and relative terms, in numbers of children from Middle-Eastern, Southern European and Asian countries. A large proportion of these children belonged to families of unskilled and semi-skilled workers, who themselves had little formal education. (34)

By the late 1960s, there was a growing interest in the schooling of migrant children. The N.S.W. Department of Education carried out surveys of the educational needs of migrant children in 1968 and 1969. The Commonwealth contributed 100,000 dollars for the employment of special child migrant teachers in 1969-70. (35) By 1974-75 the federal government supported 1,891 equivalent full-time migrant teachers for 87,373 children. (36) This reflected in part, representations made by government to teachers and migrant welfare organisations. (37)

The 1960s also saw the intensification of the Aboriginal advancement movement. The establishment of the Federal Council

(34) ibid., pp.21-23.

(35) ibid., p.37.

(36) ibid.

for the Advancement of Aborigines (F.C.A.A.T.S.I.) in 1959, (38) provided a national orientation to the hitherto often divergent work of Aboriginal welfare organisations at local and state levels. F.C.A.A.T.S.I. became the principal organising body for campaigns for political, industrial and land rights for Aborigines. (39)

In 1965, the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission ruled that all Aborigines employed as stockmen in the cattle industry in the Northern Territory should be paid the same wages as white stockmen by December 1968. (40) In 1967, the Constitution was amended so that the Commonwealth would have power over Aboriginal affairs. As a result of this decision, the federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs was established. While it carried out important work during the late 1960s and 1970s, its effectiveness was limited by the federal government's reluctance to override the powers of the states and territories in Aboriginal affairs. (41)

During the late 1960s and 1970s, there was a growing interest in Aboriginal education. (42) In 1973, the Interim

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(38) The title was changed in 1962 to include Torres Strait Islanders.


(40) ibid., p.19.

(41) ibid., pp.33-34.

Committee for the Australian Schools Commission recognised that Aboriginal children were 'one of the most educationally disadvantaged groups' in the nation.\(^{(43)}\) In 1975 the Schools Commission argued that Aboriginal education could not be considered separately from questions of nutrition, health and welfare. The Commission established a standing committee to advise it on Aboriginal education.\(^{(44)}\) These initiatives were supported by the N.S.W.T.F., itself an affiliate of F.C.A.A.T.S.I., although it could not be said that Aboriginal education was a major priority of the union.

The increase in the labour force took place against a background of almost full employment. Between 1954 and 1960 and between 1962 and 1971, the average unemployment rate per annum fell below 2 per cent. Only during the 1960-1961 recession did the rate exceed that level, reaching 2.4 per cent in 1961.\(^{(45)}\) This situation probably played some role in the 1961 federal election when the Liberal-Country Party coalition survived only with a one seat majority.

From May 1972 to May 1973, however, the average monthly unemployment figure had risen to 2.18 per cent.\(^{(46)}\) In December, 1974, the figure was 2.9 per cent.\(^{(47)}\) By June 1975,

\(^{(43)}\) Schools in Australia..., p.106.
\(^{(44)}\) Schools Commission. Report..., p.103.
\(^{(45)}\) Official Year Books of Australia, various issues.
\(^{(46)}\) Horn, op.cit., p.112.
the unemployment rate was almost 5 per cent of the workforce. This reflected the severe contraction of the economy in 1974 and the early part of 1975.\(^{(48)}\)

Workers shared in the post-war wealth through wages, although not so much through the provision of services by governments, (the 'social' wage), until the 1970s. Between 1947 and 1969, the real value of award wages increased by 31 per cent, while real earnings, taking account of over-award and overtime earnings, increased by 78 per cent. Except in the early 1950s and in 1974-75, the relative shares of G.N.P. enjoyed by Labour and Capital did not vary significantly.\(^{(49)}\) For the most part, the increased prosperity of workers depended on increased national product, not on a redistribution of wealth through the wages system.

In 1974-75, there was, however, some transfer from Capital to Labour. In 1973-74, the Consumer Price Index increased by 12.9 per cent and by 16.7 per cent in 1974-75. In 1973-74, average weekly earnings, however, increased by 16.3 per cent and in 1974-75 by 25.8 per cent.\(^{(50)}\) With G.N.P. increasing by 0.6 per cent in 1974 and by 2.4 per cent in 1975, the economy could not withstand wage increases without some net transfer from Capital to Labour. The introduction of wage indexation in 1975

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\(^{(48)}\) Hagan, op.cit., p.351.

\(^{(49)}\) ibid., p.212. In 1974-1975, profits as a percentage of G.N.P. fell to 10.9 per cent, the lowest in 25 years. See Maximilian Walsh, Poor Little Rich Country: The Path to the Eighties, Penguin, Ringwood, 1979, p.78.

\(^{(50)}\) Walsh, ibid.
was designed to redress that balance, and thereby increase the return on investment.\(^{(51)}\)

The ability of unions to maximise their share of the economic prosperity of the late 1960s and early 1970s, had been assisted by the destruction of 'penal' clauses as a restraining factor on union activity in 1969. In 1950, the Metal Trades employers successfully sought the insertion of clauses into the awards of the Australian Engineering Union members, banning them from striking or imposing work limitations in their pursuit of industrial objectives. Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, many unions were fined when they defied similar clauses in their members' awards.\(^{(52)}\) Unions regarded the penal clauses as a severe limitation upon the right to strike. Many unions refused to pay fines levied upon them.

In December 1967, the Arbitration Commission gave judgement in the Metal Trades Work Value case. Judgements in the Metal Trades cases were regarded as the bench-marks for wage fixation. The Commission, on this occasion, ruled that employers could absorb, in part or in full, current over-award payments in the increases awarded by the Commission. The metal unions were determined that such increases should be additional to existing

\(^{(51)}\) J.F. Cairns, Change, Planning, the System and Inflation. Speech by the Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer, Dr. J.F. Cairns, to the 31st Conference of the Australian Labor Party, 4 February, 1975, p.16. Cairns warned of the deleterious consequences of 'the too rapid redistribution of income from profits to wages and taxes'. See also Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, National Wage Case, April, 1975, Melbourne, Wednesday, 30th April, 1975. Reasons for Decision, pp. 3-4 and 7.

\(^{(52)}\) Hagan, op.cit., p.219.
over-award payments. In January and February 1968, there was, therefore, a wave of stoppages in metal and engineering works throughout the nation. In late February, the Commission ruled that 70 per cent of the increases should be paid on top of existing wages. In August, it ordered payment of the balance of the increases. Having been defeated in the absorption battle, the metal trades employers insisted on the exaction of fines on the unions in accord with the penal clauses inserted in their awards. The metal unions refused to pay.\(^{(53)}\)

The issue came to a head in May 1969, when the judicial wing of the Arbitration Commission, the Industrial Court, took action to collect $8000 in fines from the Victorian Branch of the Tramways and Motor Omnibus Employees' Federation, arising out of train stoppages in Melbourne. The Branch Secretary, Clarrie O'Shea, refused to provide the financial records of the union, or to submit to an oral examination about the union's financial affairs. The presiding judge, J.R. Kerr, sent him to gaol. Within a few days, one million workers stopped work in protest at O'Shea's incarceration.\(^{(54)}\) Although the penal clause provisions remained in the statute books, albeit in a modified form after amendments made in 1970, from 1969 the penal clauses ceased to be an effective weapon to be used by employers. In the early 1970s, the balance of power between Capital and Labour was somewhat more in the union's favour than had been the case since 1950, at least, as far as industrial legislation was concerned.

\(^{(53)}\) ibid., p.226.

\(^{(54)}\) ibid.
Nevertheless, for most of the period between 1949 and 1975, wage increases came from continuing prosperity, not from a fundamental redistribution of wealth away from Capital towards Labour.

**Political Factors**

(i) **Decline of the Liberal Party**

Robert Gordon Menzies was the 'lucky' Prime Minister, presiding over an unparalleled period of economic prosperity and political stability in the 'lucky' country.\(^{55}\) His retirement in 1965 was followed by a sustained period of instability within the Liberal Party which Menzies himself had created in 1944. Menzies' loyal deputy, Harold Holt, succeeded as Prime Minister. He led the coalition into the 1966 election, campaigning strongly in defence of his government's decision to send Australian troops, including conscripted soldiers, to Vietnam in support of the American position. Labor leader, Calwell, a lifelong opponent of conscription, led the A.L.P. to defeat. The A.L.P.'s vote fell by 5.5 per cent,\(^{56}\) and the Liberal-Country Party was returned with a record majority of 40 seats in the House of Representatives of 122 members.\(^{57}\)

\(^{55}\) Donald Horne, *The Lucky Country*, Penguin, Ringwood, 1964. The term 'lucky' country was coined by Horne.


Holt, however, drowned at Portsea on 17 December 1969. He was succeeded by John Gorton.\(^{(58)}\) Gorton's political style and policies provoked criticism from the Country Party and from sections of the Liberal Party.\(^{(59)}\) In the 1969 election, the government's majority was cut from 40 to 7 seats by a revitalised Labor Party under the leadership of E.G. Whitlam.\(^{(60)}\) Gorton survived a challenge to his leadership soon after the election. A few months later he resigned and was replaced by William McMahon when a confidence vote in Gorton's leadership was tied.\(^{(61)}\) The Gorton-McMahon period had left a divided Liberal Party.

McMahon's government faced serious economic difficulties during 1971 and 1972. Between 1968 and 1971, the external liquidity liability of the United States doubled. It had financed the war in Vietnam by printing money rather than raising additional taxes.\(^{(62)}\) This inflationary factor affected the industrialised world. The situation was exacerbated in Australia by a minerals boom in 1970-71 and an associated upsurge in stock market speculation. As a result, Australia's international reserves tripled between December 1970 and December 1972. McMahon's reputation for economic competence, earned in more


\(^{(61)}\) Oakes and Solomon, *ibid.*

settled times, began to dim. In 1970-71 the money supply increased by 5.8 per cent; by 10.5 per cent in 1971-72, and in 1972-73, by 25.7 per cent. One does not need to be an unreconstructed monetarist to recognise the inflationary consequences of such increases.\(^{(63)}\) A deflationary budget in 1971 had little impact on inflation, but helped to increase unemployment. The Country Party successfully held out against a revaluation of the dollar in early 1972.\(^{(64)}\) As the government entered the 1972 federal election, 100,000 Australians were unemployed.\(^{(65)}\) Such a figure was politically unacceptable at that time. It was the final blow for the government.

(ii) The Revival of the Australian Labor Party

The Gorton and McMahon governments faced a revitalised A.L.P. After the 1966 election debacle, E.G. Whitlam, a man who proclaimed himself 'destined' to be Prime Minister, was elected leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party. He set about reforming the internal procedures and governance of the Party which was designed to increase the influence of parliamentarians in Party forums. Whitlam also spearheaded a fundamental recasting of Party policy. Between 1963 and 1969, nearly 80 per cent of the Labor platform was rewritten.\(^{(66)}\) Policies were developed in areas of urban and regional affairs, health, social welfare, housing and education. The Party sought to appeal to the new

\(^{(63)}\) Walsh, \textit{op.cit.}, p.56.
\(^{(64)}\) Oakes and Solomon, \textit{op.cit.}, p.43.
\(^{(65)}\) Hagan, \textit{op.cit.}, p.144.
\(^{(66)}\) Walsh, \textit{op.cit.}, p.144.
suburban constituency in the rapidly developing outer areas of capital cities. Its commitment to planned development held appeal to technocratic elements. Its education policies were designed to meet the crisis occasioned by the post-war baby boom. It appealed not only to parents with school age children, but also to the growing education lobby led by the teachers' unions. The adoption of the 'needs' education funding policy was designed to take some heat out of the State Aid debate which had raged since Menzies' initiative in 1963. In general, the policies were calculated not only to give reality to Labor's traditional claim to be a reforming party, but were also designed to project the image of a modernising party with appeal to those who placed a high priority on efficiency and competence. (67)

Labor had buried the notion of nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange as a means of achieving its 'socialisation' objective. The party, nevertheless, had lacked an alternative strategy designed to attract people to its cause. Labor's revamped platform was called 'democratic socialism' by Whitlam and other Labor leaders. This was analogous to the platforms of successful Social Democratic parties in Northern Europe. (68) Labor's critics on the Left were less impressed than were many others. The accession of the A.L.P. to

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(68) Walsh, op. cit., p.144.
office in 1972, was characterised as the victory of 'technocratic Labor' and the O.E.C.D. economic model for advanced capitalist countries. (69)

A.L.P. policies inspired by Whitlam had their first real test in the 1969 federal election. The economy was not an issue, although the style of the Gorton government came in for criticism. The 7.5 per cent swing to Labor erected the launching pad for its ultimate victory in the 1972 federal election, after twenty-three years in opposition. (70)

Since the 1950s there had been demands from various quarters for the Commonwealth to enter directly into the financial provision of schools, technical colleges and teachers' colleges. In the 1958 federal election, both major parties included education in their policy speeches. (71) Since the 1963 election, when both parties promised to use Section 92 of the Constitution to make specific purpose grants to the states for educational purposes, there had been a sharp debate about whether the Commonwealth should also assist non-government schools. Opponents of State Aid had an effective weapon to use against the federal Liberal-Country Party government, when it rendered assistance to non-government schools and yet, many of the needs of government schools remained unmet. Whitlam indeed, took the

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'needs' argument and used it to his own political advantage. After considerable controversy within the A.L.P., about the State Aid question, the Party by 1969 had adopted a 'needs' policy for education. The assessed needs of both government and non-government schools were to be met with Commonwealth capital and recurrent grants. These would be based on the recommendations of a Schools Commission after it had 'independently' assessed the needs of both school sectors. Thus, the government school sector would be 'bought off' through direct access to Commonwealth recurrent funds and the political difficulties of the State Aid debate would be ended. The existing Commonwealth initiatives in the funding of technical colleges, teachers' colleges, universities and colleges of advanced education, would also be systematised and rationalised by a series of commissions along the lines of the Schools Commission. (72)

The growing community demand for education reached its peak in 1972 when opinion polls demonstrated that education was perceived to be the central issue within the electorate. (73) Labor made education the centrepiece of its policy for the 1972 federal election. One of the first acts of the new Labor government was to establish an interim committee for a Schools Commission chaired by Professor Peter Karmel. In the period


1972-1975, Commonwealth expenditure on education increased by 79.7 per cent in money terms or 26 per cent in constant price terms. Total expenditure on education rose from 4.9 per cent to 6.5 per cent of G.N.P. in the same period. (74)

(iii) Extra-Parliamentary Politics

All political phenomena are, to a greater or lesser extent, extra-parliamentary. Disputation within the parliamentary arena reflects the political, economic and social differences of the wider society. However, occasions arise when parliamentary divisions do not adequately reflect the degree of polarisation apparent in broader society. Such was the case over Vietnam and conscription. After the 1966 election, Labor was equivocal about these matters. While there was no great enthusiasm within the Parliamentary Labor Party about Australia's role in Vietnam, the Party was constrained from giving unequivocal commitments to end conscription and withdraw troops from Vietnam. This only became possible when the Western position deteriorated in Vietnam and domestic opposition to the war and to conscription, grew into a mass movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The style of politics which characterised the anti-war movement influenced both parliamentary politics and the tactics and strategies of other political organisations, such as teachers' unions.

Despite the equivocation of the Federal Parliamentary Party and leadership, some A.L.P. politicians took a leading role in the anti-war movement. The most notable were Jim Cairns and

Tom Uren. They worked to develop a broad coalition of unions, students, academics, church members, party members and citizens without any particular political or religious affiliations against the war and conscription. (75) Rallies, demonstrations, petitions, acts of defiance against the National Service Act were featured in the campaign. More militant sections of the movement, especially some student elements, adopted more confrontationist tactics. (76)

While there was a considerable diversity of views among students, anti-war and conscription activities emanating in universities and colleges constituted a new kind of 'youth politics'. The first waves of the post-war baby boom which reached the tertiary level of education provided an active and often idealistic personnel for continuing confrontations with the state authorities. This culture of resistance also manifested itself within the tertiary institutions themselves, where traditional procedures and pedagogical practices were called into question. 'Student power' was a rallying cry and a legitimator of


resistance and confrontation. (77) Indeed, this was a widespread phenomena throughout the Western world. The most spectacular confrontations between students, and state and academic authorities took place in Britain, Europe and North America. They had, however, their echoes in Australia.(75)

Student activists were an ideologically motley group of people. They ranged from orthodox A.L.P. supporters to Maoists, anarchists, petty bourgeois idealists, Trotskyists, Communists and some who defied convenient classification. They tended to be dubbed, not always with precision, as the 'New Left'. Their confrontationist tactics, despite the diversity of their ideological origins, not only challenged the State and the Academy, but also the traditional, cautious Marxist-derived politics of the 'Old Left'. The youthful, 'New Left' challenged the tactical wisdom and ideological assumptions of those who


had carried the burden of extra-parliamentary oppositional politics during the Cold War period. There was more than a little element of the arrogance of youth in their attitude to their older comrades.(79)

Teachers were not immune from these broader political influences. A teachers' moratorium group was formed by a number of active Federation members. This group had no formal status within the union, but it influenced the nature of its pronouncements on war and peace and on conscription. It also influenced the introduction of more aggressive and confrontationist tactics into the union's everyday affairs. These teachers formed a loose alliance with some of the younger teacher members of the Communist Party of Australia. The Party itself, however, had undergone fundamental change during the 1960s.(80)

(iv) Divisions within the Communist Party of Australia

E.F. (Ted) Hill and fewer than 200 members left the C.P.A. in 1963, and formed the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist). This split reflected the differences between the Soviet Union and China, and the associated tensions within the 'disintegrating monolith' of the international Communist movement. In the ensuing years, there were tensions within the

(79) Rowan Cahill, a former student activist at the University of Sydney, makes this point in the introduction to his History of the Seamen's Union, Seamen's Union of Australia, Sydney, 1982, p.95. See also Meredith Burgmann, 'A Death Threat, A Brick, and Oh for the 60s', National Times, 23-29 March 1984.

C.P.A. between those who supported the Soviet 'line', and those who wished to seek a more independent, national road to socialism in a manner inspired by the Italian Communist party.\(^{(81)}\)

These tensions were exacerbated when the armies of the Soviet Union and other members of the Warsaw Pact entered Czechoslovakia in August 1968. On 21 August, the national committee of the C.P.A. unanimously issued a public protest against the 'clear violation of the socialist principle of national determination, [and] of relations between socialist parties and between Communist parties'.\(^{(82)}\) Despite this unanimous declaration, some leading Party members publicly disagreed with the Party's anti-Soviet stand.\(^{(83)}\) Nevertheless, the Party persisted in its criticisms with a series of increasingly hostile letters passing between the C.P.A. and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,\(^{(84)}\) as well as a torrent of public criticism in Party publications. The supporters of the Soviet position were equally vigorous in their criticism of the official Party line on Czechoslovakia, and about the direction to be taken by the Party in the future.\(^{(85)}\)

These matters came to a head at the Twenty-second Party Congress in March 1970. The Congress was dominated by members who


\(^{(82)}\) Tribune, 22 August, 1968 (special issue).


supported the 'independent' rather than the pro-Soviet line.\footnote{36} National Secretary, Laurie Aarons, delivered the main report, in which he attacked vigorously the pro-Soviet elements in the Party. He argued that the Party needed a new revolutionary strategy designed, in part, to win 'young workers and students' to it. Intellectuals, moreover, who 'take a left radical and critical attitude to capitalist society were growing in number', he said. They were 'potentially very important for the revolutionary workers' movement'. Aarons argued that the pro-Soviet opposition forces lacked a revolutionary perspective, their political style was defensive, a 'mere holding operation'.\footnote{87} The coup de grâce was delivered when all pro-Soviet members, save Pat Clancy, were defeated in the elections for the national committee. Within the next few months there was a series of expulsions and resignations from the Party, culminating in the formation of the Socialist Party of Australia, in late 1971.\footnote{88}

\footnote{86} ibid., p.58. See also Len Fox, 'Communist Party - What Future?', Outlook, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1970, p.12. This article commented on the Sydney District Conference of the C.P.A., which preceded the National Conference.

\footnote{87} Wells, 'The Communist Purge'. \textit{op.cit.}, p.59.

These divisions had important consequences for the N.S.W.T.F. During the Cold War period, older Party members such as Sam Lewis, Ivor Lancaster and Elizabeth Mattick did not advertise their Party membership. Younger members, who had not lived through the McCarthyism of the 1950s, were less reticent about their Party affiliations. The differences about strategy and tactics which revealed themselves within the Party were reflected in the Federation. More experienced Party members were loath to disturb the 'united front' which they had worked so carefully to build. Younger Party members wished to forge a new alliance with the non-Communist radical, idealist and 'New Left' forces which had emerged in the union in the late 1960s and which had gained considerable strength within the Federation's various decision-making bodies.

By 1971, the Federation found itself operating within a political context which was characterised by a resurgent Labor Party and a declining Liberal Party at the federal level. Education was given great prominence in the policies of the political parties, although the State Aid question was a troubling complication for the public education lobby. How the Federation dealt with this complication is the subject of the next chapter.

In N.S.W., however, the Liberal Country Party government, elected in 1955, was entrenched. The constraints upon the Federation in dealing with a N.S.W. Labor government were no longer operative. The new government faced both the post-war baby boom reaching the secondary schools and the increased retention rates after age 15, which had been wrought by the implementation of the Wyndham Report and which reflected a growing demand for a higher level of education generally. From 1966 to 1976, the
Federation was engaged in an almost constant struggle with the N.S.W. government. The well-established methods used by Federation were being called into question by a new generation of union activists who had grown up amidst the economic certainties and the relatively stable politics of the post-war era. The hegemony of a generation of Federationists reared in war, depression and then the Cold War was being challenged. The changing nature of the struggle between the union and the various State authorities, together with the related struggles within the union, are the subject of the last four chapters of this thesis.