THE ECONOMY, INDUSTRY AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT

1989 Resolution

1.1 The Australian economy has been experiencing high levels of economic growth since 1983/84. The rate of growth has been one of the highest amongst OECD economies. In terms of employment it has led to the creation of over 1.5 million new jobs and this outstanding achievement can be related directly to the policies pursued by the union movement and the Labor Government.

1.2 Congress notes with concern that many employers have chosen to exploit the high growth economic environment by raising prices rather than making early decisions to invest in increasing productive capacity.

1.3 Australia continues to experience an over reliance on commodities in regard to Australian exports along with a lack of sufficient growth in the production of higher value-added manufactured goods for export and import replacement.

1.4 This has meant that high levels of demand generated by our success in creating record employment growth have not been able to be met from domestic production but have resulted in a serious worsening in our Balance of Payments and attendant unacceptably high interest rates.

1.5 This requires the continuation of the high priority allocated to the implementation of the ACTU's industry and trade development policy with special attention to areas such as the acceleration of the enhancement of skills and improvement in training for the Australian workforce, the downstream processing of resources, improving the position of established manufacturing, greater allocation of resources to export-focussed investments and attention to an expansion of service sector activity in the area of international trade. In addition we need to upgrade and strengthen the Australian Manufacturing Council, and more effectively co-ordinate the various tripartite bodies whose areas impinge on industry and. trade development to give effect to the policy.

1.6 Congress reaffirms the comprehensive statements made at the 1987 Congress on Economic Policy and Industry and Trade Development policy and endorses those policies in their redrafted and amended form as set out in the Congress documentation.