

DECISION ON THE MISSION TO EUROPE 1987

Congress accepts the report of the ACTU Mission to Western Europe as the framework and basis of a strategy for the Australian Trade Union Movement.

The outstanding lesson of this report is the necessity for cohesive and active integration of policy in the spheres of the macro-economy, wages, prices and incomes, the social wage, trade and industry, the labor market, industrial democracy and efficient, effective trade union organisation.

Only by this active integration is it possible to forge increasing living standards.

Such a strategy is predicated on the objectives of full employment, low inflation, equitable distribution, equality and the quality of life.

It involves the utilisation of economic policy, a centralised wage policy, industry restructuring and upgrading, with account of market forces, a social wage package, a comprehensive range of labor market and training programmes and bringing unions together for effective use of resources and negotiating strength.

In Australian circumstances in particular it involves more direct means of ensuring the increase of productive investment.

The adoption of this framework acknowledges a key interventionist role for the public sector in any successful strategy for reconstruction of the Australian economy.

Congress accepts that future growth of living standards is dependent upon Australia having a sufficient number of world class enterprises that are competitive in the arena of rapidly growing international trade.

There is a need to master all the requirements of world class enterprises with guaranteed delivery of high quality products and services which because of the degree of value added in their production also represent a high degree of wealth creation.

Congress notes that this requires the integrated and effective use of technology, new forms of work organisation management and work practices, higher levels of skill formation and the growth of genuine industrial democracy as a real force in production.

There is a need for integrated application of policies in industry sectors, and on a regional basis with effective job placement and vocational guidance services and where necessary relocation options.

Overall the Report demonstrates the great value of "tripartite" bodies to discuss, formulate and implement policies.

It also demonstrates the vital importance of effective independent trade union input to consultative processes and into negotiations and agreements at all levels of industry and society.

Congress therefore determines that in pursuing the implementation of policy it will be done by taking the Report into account.