

# PRECONFERENCE DISCUSSION BULLETIN

For the founding conference of  
the Socialist Alliance

*Number 1*

*July 2001*

*IMPORTANT NOTE: ALL AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAFT PLATFORM AND CONSTITUTION  
MUST ARRIVE WITH THE NATIONAL CONVENORS BY JULY 23, 2001*

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**Socialist  
Alliance**

## NOTE ON PRECONFERENCE DISCUSSION

The following decision of the National Liaison Committee, taken at its June 22 hook-up, outlines how to participate in the preconference discussion. All members are urged to participate, so that we can have as rich a discussion as possible and so that the decisions of our Founding Conference are as useful and relevant to building the Socialist Alliance as we can make them. As many issues of the preconference bulletin will be produced as is necessary to contain the discussion.

1. All contributions to be forwarded to the (Acting) National Convenors, who to have the responsibility to produce the bulletin in electronic form;
2. The bulletin to be forwarded as an email attachment to each local group convenor, who will have the responsibility of making the bulletin available to all members in the local group area, and of running off and distributing as many hard copies as is necessary to ensure that every member has access to the bulletin;
3. The costs of producing any hard copies of the bulletin to be borne by local groups in whatever form they think suitable (i.e. special levy, charge per copy etc);
4. Contributions to the bulletin not to exceed 2000 words and should focus on conference agenda topics and on how to build the Alliance. The deadline for contributions to the bulletin to be July 23 to allow time for all local groups and members to read all contributions before voting on delegates to conference.

***Remember: all contributions should be sent to [nlc@socialist-alliance.org](mailto:nlc@socialist-alliance.org) and the deadline for contributions is Monday, July 23.***

## DRAFT PLATFORM OF THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE

*The Socialist Alliance stands on a platform of total opposition to the profit-driven economic rationalist agenda of social austerity, privatisation and deregulation. While tremendous wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few, millions of us face transport chaos, low pay, job insecurity, homelessness, racism, and environmental destruction. By empowering communities and redistributing the wealth of society we can create jobs, expand public services, and improve welfare and services. The tremendous wealth of Australia is concentrated in the hands of a tiny minority. Only by ending the concentration of power in the hands of that minority can the wealth that exists be used for the benefit of working people. Every major industry should be re-organised on the lines of social provision for need-publicly owned, and democratically controlled by the workers and the community.*

*The Socialist Alliance will stand candidates in the next federal election to give a voice to working class struggle, to the need for working-class political representation. We will stand to offer an alternative that Labor is not. We recognise that on issues such as the GST, health, education, Labor is offering far less than what traditional labor voters want. The Socialist Alliance stands in complete opposition to the racist and right-wing Pauline Hanson's One Nation party.*

*If elected, a Socialist Alliance candidate would reject the perks and personal pay-outs of parliamentary office and take only an average workers wage. In parliament, Socialist Alliance candidates would use their position to give a voice to workers struggles and social movements, fight reactionary policies and promote the mass campaigns that can defeat the attacks on jobs and living standards.*

*A movement for change must be built by developing policies, campaigns, industrial struggles and co-operation with all workers, environmental, anti-racist, and other social movements and to put forward an alternative to corporate control of society.*

*A sustained mass campaign of total opposition to the ruling class offensive can bring together the forces to replace capitalism with a socialist society, based on co-operation, democracy and ecological sustainability.*

### **AXE THE GST, TAX THE RICH**

- Tax the rich and slash the defence budget to fund free universal provision for health, education, and care of dependent people.
- Free tertiary education
- Free quality childcare
- Repeal the GST and introduce a highly progressive system of taxes on incomes, profits and wealth of the rich - reverse drastic reductions in business taxation of recent years
- Free quality aged care
- Increase social security benefits, no work for the dole, no mutual obligation

### **PUBLIC NEED NOT CORPORATE GREED**

- End government funding of private schools, hospitals and health insurance.
- No subsidies to wealthy schools.
- Fund Medicare not private health funds
- Expand public services

### **FULL UNION RIGHTS**

- Every worker should have the right to join a union and oblige their employer to recognise and negotiate with the union. Unions should have the right to gain access to workplaces, to inspect company plans and books, to strike, to picket effectively, and to act in solidarity with other unions or social causes.
- Repeal anti-union laws - the Workplace Relations Act and sections 45 D and E of the Trade Practices Act.
- No individual contracts

### **FIGHT CORPORATE GLOBALISATION**

- For international solidarity, to gain union rights, basic public services, and a living wage for workers around the world
- Cancel Third World debt. The agents of global capitalism, the WTO, IMF and World Bank must be replaced with a global plan of economic reconstruction to end poverty
- Stop Howard's military expansion; no military ties with repressive regimes
- Promote peace and international co-operation

### **FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY**

- For a democratic Republic with representatives receiving no more than a skilled workers wage

- End racist harassment of Aborigines and ethnic groups
- Disarm the police to stop police killings
- Decriminalise personal drug use; for safe injecting rooms

### ***END DISCRIMINATION***

- Full reproductive freedom; repeal abortion laws
- Repeal all laws that discriminate against lesbians and gays. Full equality for same sex couples.
- End all discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, disability and political ideology
- Equal pay for equal or comparative work for all, including women, young people, Aboriginal workers and the disabled
- Fully funded refuges for women and children who have been victims of sexual or physical abuse

### ***FOR ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT***

- Money for public transport;
- Effective action on greenhouse gas emissions; develop renewable energy sources;
- No uranium mining, no reactor; no logging old growth forests.

- Worker - community - green alliances to counter profiteering developers

### ***SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS***

- Repeal Howard's ten point plan and extend native title
- Negotiate a Treaty recognising prior ownership and Indigenous land rights;
- Increase funding for and Aboriginal control of community services;
- Abolish mandatory sentencing;
- Full compensation for the Stolen Generation

### ***FREE THE REFUGEES***

- Close the detention centres;
- Full rights for asylum seekers
- Open the borders, funding for settlement

### ***JOBS NOT PROFITS***

- Shorter working week with no loss in pay; nationalise companies that threaten mass sackings and guarantee workers' entitlements;
- Stop casualisation;
- Stop competition policy massacring jobs
- No enterprise bargaining

# DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE

*This draft has been produced by Dick Nichols based on an initial draft by Peter Boyle plus amendments received from Janet Burstall, Phil Sandford and Alison Thorne. It has yet to be discussed by the National Liaison Committee, which agreed at its June 22 telephone hook-up that it should be made available for preconference discussion.*

*The National Liaison Committee will produce specific proposals about the National Executive and the national officeholders in a later preconference bulletin.)*

## 1. NAME

The name of the organisation shall be the Socialist Alliance, hereinafter referred to as "the Alliance".

## 2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

2.1. The Alliance is a coalition of socialist parties and socialist individuals supporting a common action platform for the purpose of contesting local, state and federal elections. On the basis of this platform the Alliance also seeks to build campaigns involving trades union and communities to fight for the resources and services that workers, unemployed, women, pensioners, Aborigines and migrants, really need.

2.2. The Socialist Alliance shall stand candidates to give a voice to working class struggle, and meet the need for working-class political representation.

2.3. The Alliance seeks to build a movement for change by developing policies, campaigns, industrial struggles and co-operation with all workers, environmental, anti-racist, and other social movements and to put forward an alternative to corporate control of society. A sustained mass campaign of total opposition to the ruling class offensive can bring together the forces to replace capitalism with a socialist society, based on co-operation, democracy and ecological sustainability.

2.4. In parliament, Socialist Alliance representatives would use their position to support workers' struggles and social movements, fight reactionary policies and promote the mass campaigns that can defeat the attacks on jobs and living standards.

2.5. If elected Socialist Alliance candidates shall pledge any income above the average wage of a skilled worker to the Alliance to help fund its work.

## 3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1. Any individual who broadly agrees with the aims and objectives of the Alliance and agrees to participate in the non-sectarian, co-operative spirit of the Alliance is eligible to join. Membership fees for 2001 shall be \$50 high waged, \$20 waged, \$10 unwaged, \$5 high school student per year.

3.2. The Socialist Alliance encourages full participation of all members as activists and leaders at local, state and national levels of the organisation and as candidates and branch officers. The Alliance actively encourages working class women, indigenous people, immigrants, queers, people with disabilities and young people to take on leadership roles within the Alliance.

3.3. The Socialist Alliance is politically pluralistic and encourages all individuals and perspectives to participate fully in our struggle for a socialist society and in our way of working as an alliance. Members of other parties, organisations and groups who join the Socialist Alliance are expected to be able to keep their identity as members of these organisations whilst participating fully in the development of the Alliance.

3.4. To further this end, membership assumes a commitment to a non-sectarian and co-operative way of working, looking to build unity, positively supporting and encouraging the notion of alliances and ensuring that any critical debates are conducted in a positive manner and without personal attacks.

3.5. Once decisions have been taken by the elected bodies of the Alliance all members are expected to present that decision as the position of the Alliance, both in public and in dealings with other political organisations. At the same time individual Alliance members and affiliate organisations are free to indicate their agreement or disagreement with any Alliance decision.

## 4. NATIONAL CONFERENCE

4.1. Policy shall be decided democratically by an annual National Conference or by Special Conference. These conferences shall be open to all members but decisions shall be made by delegates proportionally representing the membership of local Alliances. Conference decisions shall be by show of delegate cards and by simple majority.

- 4.2. Delegate ratios shall be decided by the National Executive (or in the case of the inaugural
- 4.3. National Conference, the National Liaison Committee) after consultation with local branches and district and state-wide bodies.
- 4.3. National Conference shall elect a National Executive, and any national officeholders and national bodies.
- 4.4. For 2001-2 the national officeholders shall be [details to be provided].
- 4.5 For 2001-2 the National Executive shall be composed of [details to be provided].
- 4.6. If one third of the paid-up membership requests it, a Special Conference of the Alliance will be called in addition to the National Conferences.
- 4.7. The implementation of policy and new activities between Conferences, and the organisation of annual and any other Conferences, shall be carried out by officeholders and leadership bodies elected by the National Conference.
- 4.8. The officeholders and leadership bodies shall be accountable to the National Conference and to any Special Conference called for the purpose of considering their actions.

## **5. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE AND NATIONAL OFFICEHOLDERS**

- 5.1. The officeholders and leadership bodies shall be responsible for the running of the organisation and for finance, membership, arrangements of meetings, communications with local groups and individuals, national bulletin production and distribution, liaison with other groups and organisations, and arrangements for seeking and enabling electoral registration and compliance with electoral laws; and any other matters delegated to them by the Alliance as a whole.
- 5.2. The National Executive has the power to appoint other officers of the Alliance where required to fulfill its duties as outlined in this constitution.
- 5.3. The National Executive has the duty to canvass the broadest possible consensus within the Alliance on all important matters.
- 5.4. The National Executive shall meet, in face or by phone, at least every two months. It shall coordinate election campaigns nationally and shall allocate specific national tasks such as media liaison and the development of draft policy documents in specific areas.
- 5.5. Individuals acting on behalf of the Socialist Alliance nationally, or the National Executive,

should report the substance of their work to the National Executive by email.

## **6. LOCAL BRANCHES.**

- 6.1. The basic unit of the Socialist Alliance shall be the local branch. A branch shall have at least seven members. Members live in the area covered by the branch, which shall be organised on the basis of federal electorates.
- 6.2. The quorum at Branch meetings shall be five, or 25 per cent, whichever is the greater. Branch decisions shall be by show of hands and by simple majority.
- 6.3. Branches shall elect office bearers, including a Convenor, Treasurer and Returning Officer, annually. Office bearers can be voted out at any properly convened Branch meeting. A properly convened Branch meeting is one that is held at a regular time, or is one for which at least two weeks notice is given.
- 6.4. Branches shall be responsible for ensuring a political discussion at branch meetings, carrying out campaigns in their area in support of workers' and social movement struggles, and for the running of election campaigns.
- 6.5. Providing their material does not contradict the core Alliance platform, local Alliance groups shall be free to raise additional, specific demands within their material.

## **7. STATE, DISTRICT AND CITY-WIDE ORGANISING COMMITTEES**

- 7.1. States or city-wide regions may choose to have organising committees to coordinate campaigns across branches and to coordinate state electoral campaigns.
- 7.2. State-wide or city-wide conferences shall elect their own executives and officebearers, as required, and shall have control of all campaigns at their corresponding level. Such committees shall usually be formed on the base of one delegate per branch, with affiliate organisations who are not represented by branch-elected delegates also eligible to nominate a representative.

## **8. CAUCUSES**

- 8.1. Any individual member or affiliate organisation shall have the right to form a caucus for the purpose of influencing Alliance policy and activity. As far as possible caucus meetings shall be open and transparent. However, once Alliance policy and campaigning priorities are decided caucuses are expected to abide by them and not organise public campaigns in opposition to Alliance policy.

8.2. Any oppressed group within the Alliance shall have the right to form a caucus. All oppressed group shall have a right to participate in a caucus if it is formed.

## **9. ELECTION CAMPAIGNS AND PRESELECTION**

9.1. Branches shall pre-select the candidate for their area/electorate. Nominations shall be called 21 days before a scheduled branch meeting. The Returning Officer shall supply candidates for pre-selection with a list of all eligible voters.

Candidates shall be given equal time of at least five minutes each to speak to the Branch. The pre-selected candidate shall be the person with the most votes.

9.2. Branches shall also be responsible for their own election campaign including raising finance to nominate candidates and production of material (above and beyond whatever common election material that can be provided centrally). They shall also be responsible for their campaigns, and for fulfilling any local legal requirements and providing necessary information to the National Executive for the purposes of complying with the

members the Alliance who are part of a particular

election legislation (records of membership, donations, etc.)

9.3. Senate, state upper-house and city-wide candidates shall be preselected by state or city-wide conferences of the Alliance.

9.4. In the event of disputes about candidates within or between branches or affiliate organisations the National Executive shall have the final say.

## **10. AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to this Constitution shall be made by simple majority vote of the National Conference.

## **11. BY-LAWS**

Interim by-laws dealing with matters pertaining to the structure and functioning of the Alliance not set down in this Constitution may be adopted by the National Executive. Such by-laws shall be submitted to the following National Conference for ratification.

# MINUTES OF NATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE TELEPHONE HOOK-UPS

1. June 1, 2001

*The hook-up began at 7pm.*

## **1. Membership and registration (Ian Rintoul reported)**

Agreed unanimously:

- That membership lists be held and membership cards distributed at state level, and a national list compiled for Federal registration. (That is membership cards would thus have a state prefix, i.e. V35 for member number 35 in Victoria, Q70 for member 70 in Queensland).
- That the next period leading up to the declaration of the poll at the Aston by-election is a critical period for recruiting members and requires an all-out effort by all.
- That care should be taken in checking that the address given by new members is the same as that at which they were registered on the electoral roll.

## **2. Finances (Dick Nichols reported)**

Agreed unanimously:

- That 40 per cent of income from membership dues is to be sent to the NLC account.
- That all local groups should elect a treasurer.
- That local groups should establish a provisional state/regional committee to determine their use of income from membership dues.
- That income going to the NLC will be available for use by local groups on a needs basis.

## **3. Senate candidate preselection procedure (Lisa Macdonald reported)**

Agreed unanimously:

- That further email discussion take place leading to a specific proposal as to procedure (i.e. whether via all-membership state/regional conference, NLC or other) at next NLC hook-up.

## **4. Founding Conference (Brian Webb reported)**

Agreed unanimously:

- That the founding conference of the Socialist Alliance be held on August 4 and 5 in Melbourne.
- That the conference be delegated.

- That all Socialist Alliance members be eligible to attend the conference.
- That no multiplication of proxies (i.e. multiple voting by a single delegate) will be allowed.
- That the delegate ratio, method of electing delegates and final draft agenda be established at the next NLC hook-up after email discussion.

## **5. Socialist Alliance initiatives**

Agreed unanimously:

- That the Socialist Alliance adopt the proposal for a June 30 National Day of Protest against the GST.
- That the NLC prepare a list of further national initiatives after email discussion.

## **6. Drafting of constitution (Dick Nichols reported)**

Agreed unanimously:

- That a draft constitution for adoption at the founding conference be submitted to the next NLC.
- That the draft be “minimalist” (i.e., be confined to providing basic rules of procedure for the Socialist Alliance).
- That existing proposals for amendments to the platform which have been received and which bear on the constitution to be considered in the drafting of the document.

## **7. Amendments to platform (Dick Nichols reported)**

Agreed unanimously:

- That all proposed amendments to the Socialist Alliance platform other than those that bear upon conference procedure be circulated to all members before the founding conference and be voted on there.

## **8. Publications (Ian Rintoul reported)**

(a) Socialist Alliance recruiting leaflet

Agreed unanimously:

- That the draft as circulated and with the amendments suggested be published, with comrades Brian Webb, Dick Nichols and Janet Burstall finalising the text.

(b) Newsletter

Agreed unanimously:

- That the Socialist Alliance produce a monthly newsletter in four-page broadsheet form.

- That the content be as follows: (Page 1) Recruiting piece “Why Socialist Alliance?”; (Pages 2 and 3) Round-up of launches, local group activities, interventions (Page 4) Endorsements. Also to include: the Socialist Alliance platform in point form, any media coverage; letters of support and a joining ad.
- That the first issue be produced on Monday, June 18 as a supplement to *Socialist Worker*, *Green Left Weekly* and to the newspapers of any other of the founding organisations who wish to publish it.
- That the typography to be based on existing “Socialist Alliance” logo and be distinctively different from the typography of the existing left press.
- That there be a run-on as determined by the demand from local groups with the cost of bundles to be ascertained as soon as possible and communicated to local groups.

Agreed by a vote of 6 to 3:

- That at this stage the broadsheet should not include an open forum section, and that the specific ways in which private and public debate should take place in the Alliance be decided at the founding conference.

(In favour: Ian Rintoul, Lisa Macdonald, Brian Webb, Alison Thorne, Jenny Campbell, Dick Nichols. Against: Janet Burstall, Phil Sandford, Carlene Wilson.)

### **9. Approach to unions (Dick Nichols reported)**

Agreed unanimously:

That the draft letter to unions be endorsed.

### **10. Orientation to the Progressive Labor Party (Alison Thorne reported)**

Agreed unanimously:

- That in the light of the forthcoming (June 9-11) PLP national conference the Socialist Alliance repeat its offer to that organisation and ask to be able to address the PLP conference on the issue of PLP-Socialist Alliance relations.
- That if no response is received to this letter it be distributed to all PLP members attending the conference.

## **2. June 22, 2001**

### **Attendance and apologies**

The participants in the hook-up were: Carlene Wilson, David Glanz, Jenny Campbell, Alison Thorne (Melbourne), Janet Burstall (Canberra),

### **11. Orientation to Socialist Party (Dick Nichols reported)**

Agreed unanimously:

- That the Socialist Alliance invitation to the Socialist Party and all other socialist organisations from which no response has yet been heard be repeated.

### **12. Web page policy (Dick Nichols)**

Agreed unanimously:

- That only Socialist Alliance activities and the activities of movements which the Socialist Alliance supports be posted on the web page.
- That all local groups be encouraged to submit news of their activities to the convenors for inclusion on the web page.

### **13. Correspondence**

A. Request for support to US Freedom Socialist Party Ballot Access case (letter circulated)

Agreed unanimously

- To endorse.

### **14. Associate membership (Ian Rintoul reported)**

Agreed unanimously:

- Not to have an associate membership category at this stage and reaffirm that all who are in broad agreement with the Socialist Alliance platform are eligible to become members.

### **15. Any other business**

Agreed unanimously:

- That the convenors would try to produce a fortnightly email news bulletin to keep local groups informed of Socialist Alliance developments.
- That all local groups would be assigned an @socialistalliance email address for the receipt of minutes and any other information.
- That the next hook-up of the NLC would be on Friday, June 22 at 7pm.

*The hook-up finished at 8.40 pm.*

Phil Sandford, Lisa Macdonald, Brian Webb and Dick Nichols (Sydney). Ian Rintoul gave his apologies owing to clash with Sydney public

meeting of Indonesia detainees. His report on finances was given by Dick Nichols.

**1. Finances and fundraising: (Dick Nichols reported)**

**Agreed unanimously:**

- That the division of income between district and local groups be decided by district coordinating groups;
- That the Alliance approach Rod Quantock to do benefits for us in Sydney and Melbourne (at least);
- That the Conference band might go to defraying the remaining costs of the Aston by-election;
- That the NLC oversee rapid production of t-shirts, badges and stickers etc for the Alliance, with local groups being informed of what is being produced by which group so that orders can be sent in;
- That David Glanz oversee the design of a national poster;
- That Janet Burstall investigate production of Socialist Alliance tea towel.
- That the convenors check with the local groups and district organising groups to see whether one would be willing to organise a Red Raffle, which should have significant prizes (e.g. holiday overseas, original donated work of art).

**2. Conference: (Dick Nichols reported)**

**Agreed unanimously:**

That the following guidelines apply to the founding conference of the Alliance

- Preconference discussion bulletin
- 1. The NLC to produce a preconference discussion bulletin in the following way:
  - (a) All contributions to be forwarded to the (Acting) National Convenors, who to have the responsibility to produce the bulletin in electronic form;
  - (b) The bulletin to be forwarded as an email attachment to each local group convenor, who will have the responsibility of making the bulletin available to all members in the local group area, and of running off and distributing as many hard copies as is necessary to ensure that every member has access to the bulletin;
  - (c) The costs of producing any hard copies of the bulletin to be borne by local groups in whatever form they think suitable (i.e. special levy, charge per copy etc);

- (d) Contributions to the bulletin not to exceed 2000 words and should focus on conference agenda topics and on how to build the Alliance. The deadline for contributions to the bulletin to be July 23 to allow time for all local groups and members to read all contributions before voting on delegates to conference.

- (e) Janet Burstall to provide a demonstration early next week of the mode of functioning of a web-based discussion site. The NLC to vote on the desirability of such a site as soon as possible.

- Conference organisation

1. The Melbourne organising group to set up a conference organising committee, to be strengthened as needed by the NLC.

- Travel expenses

1. The NLC to produce a conference fee structure that helps to subsidise the travel costs of those delegates who face the highest travel costs (namely Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory).

- Resolutions and amendments to conference

1. All resolutions and amendments to the founding platform and draft constitution moved from local groups or by NLC members to be sent to the (Acting) National Convenors by July 23, so that they can be included in the preconference bulletin and be available to local groups before the election of conference delegates.
2. Resolutions and amendments on all other issue may be moved up to and at the conference.

- Eligibility to stand as delegates for conference

1. Any financial member of the Alliance to be eligible to stand for delegate to conference.

- Method of delegate election

1. *Members "at large"*: The National Convenors to check membership lists to see how many Socialist Alliance members live so far from a local group that they cannot readily participate in local group activity, including election of delegates. To recommend to the next NLC hook-up a preferred method of giving such members representation at the founding conference;
2. *Time and date of delegate election*: The convenor of each local group to advise all

members of that group of the time and place of the delegate election;

3. *Delegate ratio*: The local group to be entitled to one delegate for every five members. Once delegate numbers are determined on the basis of multiples of five, a majority proportion of five (i.e., three or more) to entitle a local group to a final delegate. (For example, a local group of 17 would be entitled to elect three delegates—three for 15 members plus none for 2)—while a local group of 18 would be entitled to four delegates—three for 15 members plus one for three).
4. *Representation of the NLC*: NLC members to be seated as delegates to conference.
5. *Gender balance*: Local groups to be encouraged to seek gender balance in their delegations.
6. *Returning officer*: The delegate election to be conducted by a returning officer elected by the local group. The returning officer to ask for volunteers to help count the vote if a vote proves necessary.
7. *Voting method*: Voting to be on the basis of proportional representation. Janet Burstall to provide a draft set of guidelines for returning officers, to be finalised at the next NLC hook-up.

- Replacement delegates

1. If a delegate is to be absent for a session or part of a session he or she to be eligible to nominate a replacement delegate.

- Status and responsibilities of conference delegates

The following rules to apply:

1. Local groups not to be entitled to mandate delegates to conference.
2. No delegate to be entitled to confer a proxy or proxies.
3. Delegates not to be entitled to vote *in absentia*.
4. Delegates to be seated no later than 10 minutes after the start of conference sessions. If they are unable to be present a replacement delegate to be seated.

- Conference attendance

1. Alliance members who have not been elected as delegates to be urged to attend the conference as visitors. Non-delegate members to be eligible to speak with delegates taking precedence.
2. The conference to be open to the media and observers as well as members and delegates

- Reporters to conference

1. The NLC to elect reporters to conference on all listed agenda items. NLC members who wish to move amendments to any report to be granted the necessary time to do so.
2. The reporters to treat any amendments and resolutions from local groups that fall under their item

- Draft agenda

The following draft agenda to apply and to be further concretised in the light of pre-conference discussion. Times are indicative only:

*Saturday, August 4, 2001*

**0900-0945: Registration**

**0945-1000: Adoption of standing orders**

**1000-1300: Adoption of draft platform of the Socialist Alliance**

1000-1030. Report from NLC

1030-1245: Discussion

**1300-1400: Lunch**

1400-1545: Discussion

**1545-1605: Afternoon break**

1605-1745: Discussion

1745-1800: Summary and final vote

**1800-1900: Evening meal**

**1900-2100: Public rally**

*Sunday, August 5*

**0900-1200: Election campaign tasks of the Socialist Alliance (preselection methods, preferencing, resolution on parliamentarians, lessons of Aston by-election)**

0900-0930: Report from the NLC

0930-1045: Discussion

**1045-1110: Morning tea break**

1110-1145: Discussion

1145-1200: Summary and vote

**1200-1500: Adoption of the Constitution of the Socialist Alliance**

1200-1230: NLC report

1230-1300; Discussion

**1300-1345: Lunch**

1345-1445: Discussion

1445-1500: Summary and vote

**1500-1520: Afternoon break**

**1520-1600: Resolutions not treated elsewhere in conference agenda**

**1600-1700: Election of the National Executive of the Socialist Alliance**

1700-1800: Election of the National officeholders of the Socialist Alliance

1800: The Internationale

- Draft conference standing orders

The following draft standing orders to be submitted for conference approval:

1. *Conference presiding committee.* As part of the standing orders the NLC to nominate a conference presiding committee;
2. *Voting.* Voting on reports, resolutions and amendment to be by show of delegate cards. Method of voting for Alliance elected positions to be determined at the next NLC hook-up;
3. *Majority required.* Decisions to be by simple majority;
4. *Speaking limit.* The speaking limit to be five minutes and every speaker to be advised when they have spoken for four minutes. Speakers may ask the conference for extensions;
5. *Procedural motions and dissent in ruling of the chair.* In the case of procedural motions and dissent in the chair's rulings only one speaker to be allowed for and against;
6. *Presentation of resolutions and amendments.* All resolutions and amendments to be submitted to the conference presiding committee so as to be made available in printed form for delegates.

### 3. *Electoral registration and preselection of candidates (Brian Webb reported)*

Agreed unanimously:

- Senate candidates to be preselected by state/territorial conferences of Socialist Alliance local groups. The conferences to not be delegated and to consider other issues relevant to building the Alliance. If any affiliate organisation of the Socialist Alliance feels that it has suffered discrimination as a result of this process, to be eligible to appeal to the incoming National Executive which will have the right to alter Senate tickets. The NLC to only override the Senate preselection vote of state conferences if this is necessary to ensure adequate and balanced representation of the affiliate organisations.
- In the case of an early election the NLC to preselect Senate teams after consultation with state/regional liaison committees.
- Unless there is an early election preselection for all Senate positions to take place after the founding conference.

### 4. *Relations with other parties*

#### a. *PLP. (Alison Thorne reported)*

**Agreed unanimously:**

- That the convenors send a letter to the PLP asking for a meeting to discuss concrete forms of collaboration in the forthcoming Federal Election and that the Alliance open letter to PLP members be placed on the web page;

#### b. *Socialist Party (Dick Nichols reported)*

**Agreed unanimously:**

- That the convenors send a further letter to the Socialist Party, inviting them to respond to our previous letter and indicating our willingness to discuss any issues of concern to the Socialist Party in its relations with the Socialist Alliance.

#### c. *NSW Greens (Lisa Macdonald reported)*

**Agreed unanimously:**

- Lisa Macdonald to distribute a written account of meeting to NSW local groups and NLC.

### 5. *Negotiating method with other political organisations (Brian Webb reported)*

**Agreed unanimously:**

That once a negotiating position has been developed after internal Alliance discussion, all members and affiliates involved in negotiations with other organisations should represent that decision.

### 6. *HIH and One.Tel petitions (Phil Sandford and Janet Burstall reported)*

- Phil Sandford indicated he would put his thinking on the HIH petition in the preconference discussion bulletin.

### 7. *Method of producing Socialist Alliance statements (Brian Webb reported)*

**Agreed unanimously:**

- To adopt the following policy. "The convenors have the right to produce petitions, leaflet texts and media releases on any urgent national issue, providing that these statements are based on the founding platform of the Socialist Alliance. The convenors will consult with the NLC on the production of such statements, except in urgent circumstances. In the case of any major new national political event the convenors to make sure that there is full consultation with NLC members."

### 8. *Draft constitution (Dick Nichols reported)*

**Agreed unanimously:**

- To produce the draft constitution as developed to date in the preconference discussion bulletin as a text for further discussion and amendment.

**9. District coordinating groups (Lisa Macdonld reported)**

**Agreed unanimously:**

- To recommend that all districts where there are more than one local group adopt the structure of district coordinating group established in the Sydney area, namely, a committee composed of one delegate elected by every local group, with the affiliate organisations being eligible to have a representative on the committee if they are not represented by local group delegates.

**10. Web page (Dick Nichols reported)**

**Agreed unanimously:**

- To urge all local groups to keep the Convenmors advised of all local group activities, to carry the web page address on all Socialist Alliance propaganda so that the web page can become a useful organising tool for the whole Alliance. To list supporters of the Alliance by category on the web page.

**11. Campaign initiatives (Brian Webb reported)**

- (a) National convenors to produce statement on the GST.

- (b) Need to think of future national initiatives, for example around NAIDOC week and reconciliation.

**12. Other matters (Dick Nichols reported)**

- Publications
  - (a) Recruiting brochure at printers
  - (b) Broadsheet to be produced in the July 4 *Socialist Worker* and *Green Left Weekly*. NLC comrades and local groups to be approached about contributions.

- Approach to unions

**Agreed unanimously:**

- To mail out the letter sent to unions to all members of the Socialist Alliance for use at rank-and-file level.

- Local group convenor names

**Agreed unanimously:**

- That the names of the elected convenors of local groups be listed in the first edition of the electronic information bulletin, the preconference discussion bulletin and place on the web page.

**13. Date of next NLC hook-up**

The next NLC hook-up to be held on Friday, July 6 at 7pm.

*The hook-up finished at 9.30 pm.*