



# THE Rattler

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS' ACTION GROUP

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## Land Rights: After Tracy No Excuses!

PEOPLE all over Australia were horrified by the tragedy that struck Darwin at Christmas.

We were shocked at the pictures and stories of families, suddenly homeless, forced to leave places where they had lived for years. We felt for those who remained, living in lousy conditions under arbitrary rule.

A section of Darwin's population, however have lived under exactly these conditions for over a hundred years. The Larrakia people and the other black residents of Darwin have been living a lousy existence, under arbitrary rule ever since they were driven from the places where they had lived for thousands of years.

Cyclone Tracy didn't exactly create equality of suffering. Black leaders have claimed that blacks were treated as second class citizens during rescue operations. But it has given the Labor government an opportunity to make good some of the long-standing black grievances.

The Larrakia, who used to inhabit 100 square miles of Darwin, before the white man came, have had a number of land claims in for a long time. To help fight for their claims, black people in Darwin formed the Gwalva Daraniki Association (it means "our land" in Larrakia).

The most sacred place for the tribe was called Gooandal. It's now called Emery Point and is inside Larrakeyah Army barracks.

The barracks blew away at Christmas. So did a lot of other places that Justice Woodward said were affected by "town planning considerations ... the possible effects on rights of other persons acquired in good faith." They do not exist anymore and they are no longer grounds for not meeting the Larrakia's claims.

While the Labor Government is busy breaking so many promises, the Darwin reconstruction gives it a chance to make good one of the first promises it broke. Land rights for Aborigines.

But the January edition of *Bunji*, the newsletter of the Gwalva Daraniki Association reports: "The settlers are rushing about like ants, rebuilding. They are filling our land with their rotting garbage."

# \$1 Million Rise

## BHP GOT IT... BUT YOU WON'T!

HAVE YOUR WAGES gone up by 30 percent in the last 10 months? Will you be making over a million dollars more next week? Have you had six wage rises in the last two years?

Believe it or not, there are people who have received that kind of income boost this month. Of course, they are not workers whose wages rise "cause inflation". They are the directors of BHP, Australia's richest, largest and most powerful locally owned company.

They have been allowed price rises of 42 percent in the last 23 months: 7.8 percent a year ago, 5 percent in April, and 8.7 in July. Now they are going to get another six percent. The *Financial Review* says that BHP's steelmaking operations are now TWICE as profitable as they were two years ago.

These rises are proof that the Prices Justification Tribunal does just what the name says: it justifies prices! And they are proof that the cause of inflation lies in the power of monopolies, not in wage increases.

The largest increase will flow directly to 105 industries. In each of these industries the management will immediately demand "wage restraint" from their employees, to make up for the increased costs. If you work for one of these companies, get ready to defend yourself.

Despite the price rises, the monster is still hungry. Because profits are still too low for them, BHP is cutting back steel production, especially at Port Kembla. This will lead to unemployment in the metal trades, and the workers will be informed that it's their own fault for "pricing themselves out of a job". Then when they turn up at the dole office, BHP Chairman Ian McLennan might be there to call them "idle bludgers" and Billy Snedden will call for a crackdown.

When workers strike they are accused of holding the country to ransom. When OMI announces retrenchments, the government complains about the arrogance of "foreign multinationals" which it says are beyond its control. But here is an Australian company which is holding the whole bloody country to ransom.

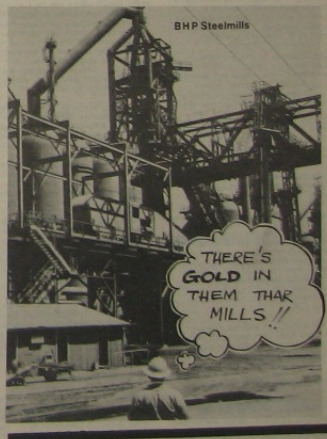
The Labor government can do something about that. It could call on the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union, which is affiliated to the ALP, to launch an industrial campaign to force BHP to cut prices. It could call on consumers to hold public protests, and use Local ALP branches to organise those

protests.

It could send the Commonwealth Police to seize BHP's books and open them to the public, so we could see just how much BHP needs these ridiculous price rises.

Needless to say, it could also give the Prices Justification Tribunal some teeth. At your next union meeting, you might bring up a resolution in your branch, or organise some protest action of your own.

Meanwhile, if some one tells you that your paltry \$8 per week wage claim is causing inflation, just think of BHP.



BHP Steelmills

EVERHOT - WHAT WENT WRONG.....P7  
METAL TRADES AWARD.....P8

General Spinola

Jack Munday

is different from... McMahon and Gorton is that he was actually born into the Upper Class. Perhaps they don't trust anyone else to defend their interests these days.



# UGANDA:

## Workers Confront the Right

adapted from Socialist Worker

PORTUGAL is facing its third major political crisis since the dictatorship of Caetano was overthrown last April. An attempt by former Caetano supporters to reorganise the cause of a "democratic left" party was prevented at Oporto last weekend by a mobilisation of workers and students led by the revolutionary left. And rank and file industry soldiers refused to allow cavalry to break up the left-wing demonstration.

This followed close on an attempt by two of the parties in the government, the Socialist Party and the "Popular Democratic Party," to divide and weaken the trade union movement.

Behind all these manoeuvres lies an attempt by Portuguese big business to reassert its political hold on the country.

After the overthrow of Caetano, the ruling class in Portugal was forced to make all sorts of concessions by the spontaneous development of the mass struggle. It had to agree to large wage increases, to cut the working week, and had to sack many managers who had been tainted with fascism.

It accepted Socialist and Communist Party ministers into the government as a way to prevent the situation getting right out of hand. In return the "left-wing" parties ordered their supporters to return to work, denounced official strike-hunters as "fascists" and accepted a Labour Pact not to be confused with a more recent union law which worse than the Fimil Causes here.

Meanwhile big business continued to dominate industry, the courts, the police and important sections of the army. This was shown recently when the government arrested a number of prominent businessmen for economic sabotage. They were released by a judge who condemned their arrest as "illegal."

But attempts by big business to regain complete control over the government in the summer and autumn were defeated. To a large extent this was due to the scale of popular protest, but also important was the fact of many sections of the army including prominently paratroopers — that right-wing government would continue the immensely unpopular war in Africa.

### offensive

Now the wars in Africa are more or less over and big business feels that it can really move on to the offensive.

Shortly before Christmas right-wingers took complete control of the Socialist Party, with a third of the members splitting away to the left. Since then the Socialists have been given a domination of nearly \$500,000 by the Dutch Social Democratic Party. In the past the original source of such funds has often been found to be the CIA.

The Socialists and the Popular Democrats have been hoping to weaken the trade union by forming right-wing splitters, as in France and Italy during the cold war.

The Communist Party is now frightened it is going to be kicked out of the government and lost control over the unions, so it has been attempting to resist these manoeuvres.

But at the same time it is still refusing to mobilise the rank and

file of the workers' movement for an all-out struggle. The Party refused to take part in the demonstrations in Oporto last weekend.

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# TRABALHE:

## White Prospects Pale

John Vorster of South Africa and Ian Smith of Rhodesia must be two of the most worried men in Africa. For years they maintained thoroughly racist regimes, sweating a profit out of black labour, and for all the pious phrases of liberals

around the world, they did a thriving business. Economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations have been a joke.

But the coup in Portugal last April changed a lot of things. In Portugal's own colonies in Africa the struggle for independence had been winning victories, particularly in Guinea and in Mozambique where the Frelimo guerrillas already had the support of about 1 million of the seven million people. When a section of the Portuguese army decided their war in the colonies couldn't be won, and took over the government to end it, there was an immediate upsurge in the independence struggle's all over Southern Africa.

The Portuguese agreed to grant independence. However, they stalled for time, insisting on a "coalition government of transition" in Mozambique to last until June this year. This period, they hoped, would allow them to take Frelimo and make arrangements for preserving their economic interests in Mozambique after independence.

The success of Frelimo has given a tremendous boost to movements in Southern Africa. In Rhodesia (whose African name is Zimbabwe), Prime Minister Ian Smith realised that he was rapidly reaching the end of his road. His immediate reaction was repression: he doubled the draft, sent hand-picked militias to patrol tribal trust lands, created free-fire zones in guerrilla areas, and forcibly resettled whole villages.

When these measures failed to halt the steady progress of the black fighters of ZAPU and ZANU, he made a new turn. He got the cooperation of Tshaban president Kenneth Kaunda in arranging a ceasefire, and getting ZAPU and ZANU to agree to merge with the African National

Council. The ANC is acceptable to Smith because it isn't a political organisation. If ZAPU and ZANU become absorbed into it, it could mean the end of the armed struggle against the Smith regime.

Meanwhile Smith has mounted a massive propaganda campaign, telling the supporters of the non-violent guerrilla movements that a ceasefire has been declared. If he can successfully demoralise those movements he will have survived the immediate threat to his government.

Smith and Vorster are generally working overtime trying to find some solution to the unrest which will allow their white-supremacist regimes to survive. They can count on the help of black leaders like Kumba, who fear that a military

take-over would mean the end of their own governments. Kaunda hailed Vorster's hint of compromise as the "voice of reason" which Africa and the rest of the world have been waiting for.

And in Mozambique, where the Frelimo leaders has cooperated with the Portuguese in suppressing strikes and riots by black workers.

What Smith, Vorster, Kaunda and the Frelimo leaders all fear is that if the general unrest and instability reach a certain point, the workers of Southern Africa might swing into action themselves. After the coup in Portugal there were important strikes in Mozambique, and there has been a build-up in the struggles of black workers in South Africa. In September there were protests in Durban (South Transvaal), and there had been strikes by 10,000 textile workers and thousands of farm workers.

The black workers have the power to spread the struggle to South Africa, to open the liberation movements in a socialist direction. This would spell the end for the white capitalist political class in Africa, and the end of getting ZAPU and ZANU to agree to merge with the African National

Mike Grewcock

# "...s My bloody union card and want the job!"

"I very went down to see the foreman. He was about 5 foot 5, said, 'I'm looking for a job.' On you want a job for your fifth job I'd gone on that day, looking for work. I said, 'I'm not looking for a job for my husband -- that's my bloody union card and I want the job! He looks like me. I was standing on a slight rise and this tiny little man was looking up at me by about six inches, and said, 'Do you think you can do the work?' -- and he's really serious. 'I stood up with my full height and looked down at him and said: 'Can you?' By this time a whole lot of blokes had gathered round and for once they were laughing at someone else except me. He sort of chuckled and looked sheepish, and said, 'Well, I've hurt my back,' and I said, 'Well, you better get off the bloody job, -- labouring's no job for a person with a bad back!'"

Sandra Zurbo doesn't like having to put people down, but as she says, "to get me a job with A.V. Jennings which I think was perhaps one of the organizers helped me a couple of times, but on the same day the union says we're going to confront this on the job and take it to the rank and file."

Sandra is not the only person critical of the Victorian branch leadership. "It's amazing the number of people who are pissed off with their union," this has been particularly true since the Federal intervention into the NSW branch. "Since about August, virtually not one issue of importance to the industry has been raised. Issues such as permanency and union hire have been dropped. The issue has been that first we have to get our own house in order; meaning NSW."

Many labourers believe that the leadership is corrupt and that it sometimes works hand-in-glove with the employers and pushing them at union meetings, through their breadsheet on Site, and in talking with the workers on the job.

### corrupt

The Committee has succeeded in getting the union as a whole to adopt policies, such as 4 weeks annual leave and sick leave. It was also responsible for improved internal democracy for a time, in the form of monthly job delegate meetings. The issues they are now concentrating on include severance pay, permanency and union hire.

Unfortunately, action on the policies of the Rank and File Committee has been slow to get going in the last few months, according to Sandra, because they were forced into a corner over the defense of NSW.

"Because we support a lot of their policies, and because the Victorian leadership consistently made a bet on us, we allowed ourselves to fight on that ground, rather than continue our fight over permanency." As a result of this, Sandra believes, some people lost interest in the committee and dropped out.

Sandra points out that the central need for a rank and file group is consistency, the feels this has been lacking in the St Rank and File Com-

## Sandra Zurbo talks to Janey Stone about Builders' Labouring

consciousness built up in NSW and it's only been by rank and file action."

Now can we rely on spontaneous actions alone. As Sandra puts it: "Most struggles are very long term, and therefore there's a need for organization. If you rely on spontaneous bursts at a meeting, the issue just gets lost until someone spontaneously decides to take it up again. Ongoing struggles need to be tied together on a regular basis."

The Rank and File Committee of the Builders' Labourers is trying to do this by taking issues of crucial importance to the rank and file labourers and pushing them at union meetings, through their breadsheet on Site, and in talking with the workers on the job.

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itter. "For instance, on Site has suffered from a lack of continuity in its appearance." Members of the group plan to improve coverage of job actions, and talk to workers when distributing the breadsheet, in an attempt to involve more militants in the rank and file Committee.

"On the whole, we've found that rank and file organization can force the union leaders to take up issues and fight around them. In the last couple of meetings the Rank and File Committee has strengthened, and I hope this week we can come closer to more democratic unionism."

## Students Oppose Scab Intervention

After a fiery debate and in the face of threats and intimidation from Gallagher's supporters, AUS (Australian Union of Students) Annual Council came out in support of the NSW branch of the Builders' Labourers' Federation in their struggle against intervention by the Federal Management Committee.

Delegates voted decisively against a policy of non-involvement in the dispute. As Maudie Peter Galvin, an AUS official had been working on the North Shore of Sydney as an interpreter for the Federal office, he had been invited by Gallagher as de-facto support.

It was pointed out by rank and file Builders' Labourers who spoke during the protest, that they had often taken industrial action in support of students' demands. So they expected support from students now they were under attack by the Federal alliance of Federal Union Officials, the NSW State Government and the Master Builders' Association.

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## Stonehouse: the one that got away?

"WE ARE INVOLVED in the struggle to change society. We are not fighting change society. We are not fighting change society. We are not fighting change society." That was John Stonehouse at a British Labour Party conference in 1969.

In 1974, John Stonehouse disappeared while swimming at South Beach (well-known working class summer holiday resort).

Between his election in 1957 and his disappearance last year, Stonehouse discovered the "good life" and accumulated a taste for the power of a capitalist. As early as 1959, a year before his speech, he had been shown off Rhodesia for making



## Very little Hitler...

LATE LAST YEAR in a TV interview he made warning of the possibility of a Chilean military coup against Labor. Not too many people took him seriously. He was then a member of a group of dissatisfied young military officers. I talked to one of them recently. He assured me that they have support from eighteen separate bases. He really believes that a military coup would be supported by the vast majority of Australians, including workers.

Actually, these would-be Napoleons of the Junior Officers Movement wouldn't even be supported by their own officers. The Chilean capitalists and the multi-nationals were frightened over a number of actions, not so much of the Allende government, but of the Chilean working-class which had gone beyond Allende. The particular sins of Allende that worry the military are that Labor has not cut the defense budget, despite the new concepts to bully and new toys to play with. What's so galling for the pocket-squanderer is that someone, not even the libs - gives a stuff.

## film review

# Chinatown

J.J. Gittes thinks he's a cynic. He used to work at the cop in Chinatown where everyone's corrupt. Now he's a private investigator checking on unfaithful spouses. When one investigation suddenly turns into a murder case, he's sure he can find the culprits.

The murder victim is Hollis Mulwary. He used to be a cop. He's been discovered a fraud, but he'd been so good that he gets drowned in his own water. Gittes begins to look for his murderer, and discovers a huge conspiracy to make millions in property speculation.

Some one is damming water from the city's reservoir to the right. The idea is to create a water shortage, and to convince the city to vote for a new water project. Gittes turns out to be designed to serve Los Angeles at all - instead of will irritate the San Fernando Valley. Gittes discovers someone has been buying up the land in the



## tooth and made



## Anyone we know?

A RECENT ARTICLE in the Melbourne Stock Exchange Journal contained a list of countries with which Australia does not have an extradition treaty (to bring criminals back to Australia) with notes on how much co-operation to expect from each country if you "suddenly arrived" there with a suitcase full of money.

Now we know what the Journal is for!

left Chinatown, he hopes he has left them behind.

Gittes himself is a strange character. On the surface, he is the typical detective-movie hero: grim, tough, clever. But strangely, he keeps walking into ambushes. The first time he almost loses his nose to a knife-wielding hood, the second time the police trap him, the third time Noah Cross and his boys walk in and stick a gun in his face. Why is he fighting something he can't win, or get reinforcements?

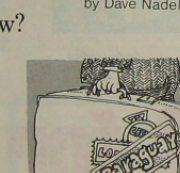
Obviously he doesn't know what he is up against. Chinatown is only a synonym, the most blatant case of a system of corruption, and evil and fear that goes far beyond his city borders - and which is represented by Noah Cross. For the world down his liveries is out of his depth, and he's fighting something much too strong for him.

At the finish, on a Chinatown street, Cross tried to shoot the young man who is his daughter, and a sort of "night man". Gittes tells her mother to "let the police do this" and she shouts back, "I'll shoot the police!"



## Eddie helps himself

DEEPEST SYMPATHIES to Sir Edward! He woke up a few weeks ago to find that the Lake Zillwara had run into Hobart's Derwent Bay, knocking it down and sinking it! The Lake Zillwara was carrying two and a half million dollars worth of zinc to Risdon for I.B. Durrill. Sir Edward is Chairman of I.B. Not only that, but the insurance on a large chunk of the zinc was held by the Commercial Union. Sir Edward is Chairman of Commercial Union. Oh well, at least the brewery workers have got back at Carlton (Sir Edward is Chairman of Carlton and United Brewers!).



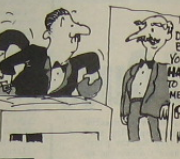
Gittes can't grasp corruption that big, and is led away in bewilderment. His friends say, "Come on, this is Chinatown" as if that explained things. But Chinatown is only a synonym, and it will take more than a few clever detectives to crack the disease.

COME IN. YOU DON'T HAVE TO FOOL ME!!

What's more, protection ensures that our industry remains "uncompetitive". It allows us, in fact, to subsidize ourselves to survive. And these often are the worst employers: they maintain sweatshop conditions and are the least unionised. While we don't want the workers in our industry to be employed, we certainly have no interest in protecting their employers. The government is to nationalise these industries and reorganise them.

Why, then, are many union leaders prepared to keep on import quotas? They like them because they can get better wages and better conditions by side, motivated by a spirit of nationalism. Instead of looking at the capitalists for the causes of their problems, workers are encouraged to blame them on the "Japs" or the "Yanks". So in addition to protecting jobs at the expense of the consumer, we have little better jobs at the expense of other workers overseas.

Take footwear, for example. For the last seven years, Indian import quotas send cheaply made shoes to Australia. Now the government has decided to slash a 34 percent duty on them. Taken together with the new quota on footwear, which reduces cheap imports by two thirds, this virtually guarantees that our shoe makers are displaced poor, begonia, or are the lowest caste in India. If they are displaced, they have little hope of finding other employment.



## SWAG Publications

Publication newly available from the S.W.A.G. Literature Service:

Chris Haman, Russia; How the Revolution was Lost. 20 cents

Paul Ginsborg, The Politics of Capitalism. 40 cents

Roger Kline, Can Socialism Grow through Parliamntarism? 20 cents.

Popular Reports: Recipe for Disaster. 10 cents.

Trautman, Hanks and Cliff, And of course... The Russian Revolution of 1917. 10 cents

## How the Revolution was Lost

CHRIS HAMAN

## SWAG News

OUR GROWTH last year has made it possible for us to reorganise into three branches, which mean new members can assume more responsibility. Some of our new members are:

WEEKLY MEETING: 10.00 am, 1st Floor, 151 Pitt St. 10.00 am, 1st Floor, 151 Pitt St.

WESTERN BRANCH MEETS IN DUNEDIN ON SUNDAY NIGHTS.

THE SOUTHERN BRANCH MEETS IN ADELAIDE ON SUNDAY NIGHTS.

During the summer we have had a class series on socialist politics. The first set of classes covered national liberation struggles in Africa, the Middle East and Ireland. The second set, which is designed to provide background for a coming Conference discussion, is on Russia and China.

Wednesday, 5 Feb: "Russia, How the Revolution was Lost."

Saturday, 26 Feb: "In Russia a Russian: 1917"

Monday, 5 March: "China"

S.W.A.G.'s two-day Conference will be held on March 13-14. Attendance at the classes and the public classes will be free. If you would like to come, write to:

Social Workers' Action Group PO Box 187, Fitzroy, Vic. 3065 Tel. 455-3244.

meeting. But all workers should be suspicious of the love-dovey relations between the leader of the group, Mick Miconalis, and the man who is known as the "Ape" - not known as a supporter of rank and file groups or any other part of the bureaucratic movement.

The advantage of the hydro project is that it can be financed by Government a face-saving way out of the right it has needed to be used. It will cover the objections of the SEC and that was our way out.

by Phil Griffiths

# The protection racket

by Tom O'Lincoln

Everybody has an "answer" to unemployment. The most popular fact, being pushed by Bob Hawke, is high tariffs and import quotas. It is argued that to keep jobs in the short run, but it's no real answer.

From Australia's beginnings we had a protected economy. Industry is sheltered by walls of tariffs and import quotas. The protection racket is a racket because some opposition by the Free Trade Commission has not collapsed altogether. But the tariff walls are hardly in our long term interests.

A tariff is a tax on imports. Naturally it makes goods dearer, and therefore Australian consumers buy Australian products instead. That allows Australian manufacturers to expand their operations and provide more jobs. But the consumer is paying for it, because the prices of goods skyrocket.

Because imports are dearer, domestic producers can put up their prices as well as their wages - through higher prices - end up paying for their own jobs. This is predictable - we've been arguing since after issue the key to the government's economic strategy is to encourage the workers to be less than grateful for their jobs.

It's not only a question of wages. Inflation threatens the stability of the economy, destroys business confidence - which leads to more unemployment. In the long run, the problem isn't solved; just put off.

What's more, protection ensures that our industry remains "uncompetitive". It allows us, in fact, to subsidize ourselves to survive. And these often are the worst employers: they maintain sweatshop conditions and are the least unionised. While we don't want the workers in our industry to be employed, we certainly have no interest in protecting their employers. The government is to nationalise these industries and reorganise them.

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Why, then, are many union leaders prepared to keep on import quotas? They like them because they can get better wages and better conditions by side, motivated by a spirit of nationalism. Instead of looking at the capitalists for the causes of their problems, workers are encouraged to blame them on the "Japs" or the "Yanks". So in addition to protecting jobs at the expense of the consumer, we have little better jobs at the expense of other workers overseas.

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# SWAG Publications

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Paul Ginsborg, The Politics of Capitalism. 40 cents

Roger Kline, Can Socialism Grow through Parliamntarism? 20 cents.

Popular Reports: Recipe for Disaster. 10 cents.

Trautman, Hanks and Cliff, And of course... The Russian Revolution of 1917. 10 cents

CHRIS HAMAN

## SWAG News

OUR GROWTH last year has made it possible for us to reorganise into three branches, which mean new members can assume more responsibility. Some of our new members are:

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THE SOUTHERN BRANCH MEETS IN ADELAIDE ON SUNDAY NIGHTS.

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Wednesday, 5 Feb: "Russia, How the Revolution was Lost."

Saturday, 26 Feb: "In Russia a Russian: 1917"

Monday, 5 March: "China"

S.W.A.G.'s two-day Conference will be held on March 13-14. Attendance at the classes and the public classes will be free. If you would like to come, write to:

Social Workers' Action Group PO Box 187, Fitzroy, Vic. 3065 Tel. 455-3244.

meeting. But all workers should be suspicious of the love-dovey relations between the leader of the group, Mick Miconalis, and the man who is known as the "Ape" - not known as a supporter of rank and file groups or any other part of the bureaucratic movement.

The advantage of the hydro project is that it can be financed by Government a face-saving way out of the right it has needed to be used. It will cover the objections of the SEC and that was our way out.

by Phil Griffiths

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by Phil Griffiths

INTERNATIONALISM. We fight to build an international revolutionary movement, opposed both to the ruling classes and to the bureaucratic class. While defending the right of nations to self-determination, we oppose national chauvinism and work to overcome national divisions.

DIKTATORY. Democracy in its society is very limited, yet in times of crisis capitalism will destroy itself and the right to democratic rule will be restored. We will not support any movement for a crash movement for change. Therefore the defence of democratic rule and the right to democratic rule will be restored. We will not support any movement for a crash movement for change. Therefore the defence of democratic rule and the right to democratic rule will be restored.

It's no use just talking about the world. We need to change it. If that's what you want to do... join us!

THE BATTLE 15 February 1975

McMahon and Gordon is that he was actually born into the upper class. Perhaps they don't trust anyone else to defend their interests these days.



# THE Battler

FOR WHOM THE (SCHOOL) BELL TOLLS

by Tess Lee Ack, VSTA member

SCHOOL'S IN -- and for secondary teachers, it's back to the never-ending battle to get decent working conditions.

At a branch representatives' meeting on February 7, 350 teachers discussed the Education Department's latest moves on working hours. This was one of the largest reps' meetings for a long time.

The Department's moves are the latest of a series of attacks on the VSTA and teachers generally -- the new hours are even longer than the Department itself had originally called for. The atmosphere at the VSTA meeting was angry. Although the Central Council, which is more conservative this year, recommended delaying action over a conditions for a while, a motion from the floor was almost unanimously carried, calling for VSTA conditions prior to stand.

The VSTA first presented its Conditions case to the Department in 1967. Conditions for all teachers gradually improved because of

VSTA direct action, but in 1974 the backlash began. The Department, under pressure from the Principals' Association, decided it had to prove who was boss.

At first it tried the soft sell approach, and invited the VSTA to "negotiate". At this point, the VSTA leadership forgot all the lessons it had learned in years of wrangling with Thompson and his mates, and called on the membership to stop strike action over conditions until agreement had been reached. This was a mistake, and we are paying the price for it now.

The VSTA leadership soon realised that they were being coned by the Department, and called off the ceasefire. But by then Thompson had played his next card. He rushed legislation through Parliament giving the Tribunal (a supposedly neutral body -- but two of the three members are appointed by the government) the power to lay down conditions, which it gleefully did for the start of the new year.

## "with the Labor Council's support, we'll discredit them for all time"

John Bradley on the NSW Power Strike

WHAT A STRIKE! They had to face threats of fines and gaol, threats of expulsion from their union by the government, subversion by the trades and Labour Council and a massive shutdown of industry designed to turn half a million workers against them. And they held out for three weeks!

Four Thousand New South Wales power workers, working for the State's Electricity Commission went on strike for improvement of conditions and an \$18 a week rise to complete a 340 claim lodged last March. The industry was one chosen by the ACTU to spearhead the campaign for a 35 hour week because its high productivity had not filtered through to the workers' pay envelopes.

The Sydney Morning Herald described the strike as "a savage quest for social democracy" and the power workers' boss, Energy Minister Freudenstein as "friendly and soft-spoken". And was this "friendly" Liberal Party Minister saying? After threatening to "root out and deal with" the power workers he went on: "If we use blood and



Power worker in the control room of Munroah Power Station, NSW.

guts tactics, we'll win within a short time, but we'll still support the original claim that demands an \$18 a week rise and a 35 hour week. They attacked and sabotaged negotiations. It was only by relying on

Some of us expected the union to come back strongly, especially after the Committee's blue last year, and after the militant teacher action over inspection last October.

But so far it looks like militant on this issue than the leadership. There will be another meeting on February 21 to discuss action proposals; but since these meetings cannot make binding decisions, the Central Committee will decide on what action we'll take.

A half day strike state-wide would provide an opportunity for a mass meeting, where teachers could get together and decide on action. It would break the isolation which small branches in some schools must be facing, and give them the feeling of being part of a state-wide fight.

Teachers are traditionally more militant early in the year. Now is the time to hit back at the Department. The fight could be linked to other issues where teachers are under attack, such as the inspection issue (still unresolved) and the recurring problems of victimisation.

Meanwhile, back at the Education Department:



## what we think

The State Government has a lot of experience in teaching. Their favourite trick is to turn parents against teachers. They portray teachers as lazy and irresponsible.

The AGE newspaper is the biggest helper. They say that the teachers want to work only sixteen hours a week. The truth is that the VSTA wants to limit teaching time that amount, so that teachers will have time to properly prepare classes, in addition to yard duty, staff meetings, the assemblies, and a lot of other work they have to do.

If the Education Department can force teaching hours up, which will save them a lot of money (which they can use to fatten their bureaucratic budgets) but the quality of education will suffer. No guesses for WHICH schools will suffer most.

If the teachers can win a strategy, and parents will also win. Don't let the ball shit artists of the press beat you against the teachers.



# THE Battler

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS' ACTION GROUP

Number 5 April 5, 1975 Published monthly except January 10 cents

## 'DEDICATION DOESN'T PAY THE RENT' NURSES DEMAND MORE

ON WEDNESDAY March 26, four thousand angry nurses stormed Parliament House. The nurses, some of whom came from as far as Bendigo and Geelong, had assembled in uniform on the steps of Parliament to protest against delays in meeting their claim for a 50k pay rise with further rises over two years to give them parity with primary teachers.

The nurses are members of the Royal Australian Nursing Federation, hardly a union at all their Industrial Officer, Geoff McDonald, has often claimed that the RANF would never use the strike weapon to protect its members. That's part of the reason that the RANF only represents most nurses. More militant and union-conscious nurses have traditionally joined the Hospital Employees Federation (HEF). The HEF is now trying to buy into the dispute.

The protest began with a meeting which "condemned the State Government for inaction over the claim". As far as the union leadership was concerned, that was all the mass meeting was there to do. They wanted to start calming things down. But the nurses had different ideas. They drowned out one of their "leaders" by yelling "We want Hamer!" and surged up the steps, trying to get in. Parliamentary attendants barred the doors and police linked arms.

Clyde Holding appeared, at last, to tell the nurses how much he supported their cause, but that nothing could be done until they went back down the steps and organised a deputation. The nurses moved back into the Burke St intersection where they were jostled and pushed around by the Police, who tried to direct two fire-trucks towards the crowd. The trucks turned around and went another way.

When it was obvious that nothing was happening with the delegation, the nurses decided to march downtown.



### Angry Nurses Storm Parliament House

They say "He shall not be moved" and carried banners and placards saying "White and fight", "Support us, your life may depend on it" and "Medication doesn't pay the rent".

But neither militant marches nor uniform bans will force Health Minister Scanlan to improve nurses' conditions....

## 'BORN TO RULE'

If there were an aristocracy in Australia, Malcolm Fraser would be a member of it. The new Opposition Leader owns a very large property in Victoria's western districts. His grandfather, Simon Fraser, owned the same property and was a member of Parliament. During that time he was intended for services to the community; services like building up a grain-finishing plant, covering three states. Sir Simon was also a Grand Master of the Loyal Orange Lodge -- an organisation almost as reactionary as some of the things his grandson believes.

Fraser himself has gone from Melbourne Grammar to Oxford University virtually straight into Parliament. He has never actually worked. That's for the peasants. He doesn't even run his own farm. In the past, the Liberal Party has been led by lawyers and businessmen, running it for the benefit of the even richer -- corporate business, multinationals and the "sausageocracy". Now one of the even richer is leading the party -- Malcolm Fraser -- Melbourne Club member and third generation "squatter".



Fraser was described in the papers as "not the right-winger you would expect" and "progressive ideas on industrial relations such as labour participation". He has progressive ideas on industrial relations are a plan for new forms of Penal Clinics against strikes and a special industrial police to enforce them. Fraser's "progressive ideas" are an attempt to crush Trade Union militancy.

His "worker participation", introduced overseas by such well-known progressives as General De Gaulle, amount to asking workers to participate in their own exploitation via control and profits still firmly in the hands of the bosses.

All Liberal governments directly represent the Upper Class -- the only way in which Fraser is different from Shadbolt, McMahon and Gordon is that he was actually born into the Upper Class. Perhaps they don't trust anyone else to defend their interests these days.

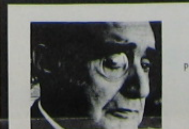
## Why They Fell

PORTUGAL - CENTRE PAGES

BUILDERS LABORERS - PAGE 3

also

VIETNAM, CAMBODIA, US COLLAPSE... P2  
EVERYMAN - WHAT WENT WRONG... P7  
METAL TRADES AWARD... P8



General Spino



Jack Mundy



# IMPERIALIST DEFEAT LOOMS IN INDO-CHINA

The Indochina war has been decided. The United States and their puppets in Saigon and Hanoi have been defeated. That is the simple fact that emerges from every press report.

In less than three weeks the Saigon government has effectively given up Vietnam including Hanoi. The only loyal capital city in the South is the latest report. In the same time, the Cambodian generals can't stop the Khmer Rouge from blowing up the civilian control tower at Phnom Penh airport - the airport is the only remaining source of supplies since the Khmer Rouge was cut off from the sea.

It is obvious from statements that Gerry Ford is making that the American movement has not yet worked out why, for all its huge application of materials and money it is being forced from the start to lose the Indochina war. And yet the answer is simple!

The rulers in Saigon and Phnom Penh have no basis of popular support, outside of the reactionary landlords. Their governments are riddled with corruption.

For example, it is well known that large chunks of paper, the pay which is allotted for these non-existent soldiers is declared by the general to be lost. In practice, the government distributed amounts to its officers to buy photographs of the troops and issue identity cards. No photos were taken, because the cameras all ended being sold on the black market.

And the same sort of games are played with food and other supplies. If they should any Vietnamese or Cambodian support their official government?

## refugees

World readers (that's most of them) know that the Phnom Penh street monopoly is performing a daily show about as the refugees from Hanoi have - designed to prove that the majority of Vietnamese don't want to live under U.S.C. rule. That's what doesn't say is that throughout the Vietnam War the U.S. Air Force and its Saigon friends have declared Viet Cong dead helicopters "free fire zones". In a few fire zones are supposed to be hot zones and shoot anything that comes in. And the people who hate the Saigon government don't want to be caught in a free fire zone.

Some sections of the population are strong supporters of the Viet Cong and their cause. Most of the rest prefer to stay in the existing regime. The Viet Cong and their masters, the United States, are fighting to drive out these corrupt regimes and their masters, the United States.

In warring the Indochina war, the US was the only fighting Communist. It was fighting the whole population of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. The only agreement was with all the whole brutal population of the area.

Now Washington is sick of the whole thing. Congress will not give Ford any more money. Neither will the regime in Saigon and Phnom Penh, the regime like a house of cards. It is only a matter of time until the puppet governments in these two countries. What they will do is to be.

Indochina they will call themselves "socialist". In Vietnam, the Viet Cong are clearly controlled by the Communist Party of Vietnam, and

## ...so what happened to March?

We apologise to our readers for the non-appearance of the March issue and for the victims of incredibly printing mistakes - however, we have been so busy in the past few months that we do not expect problems in the future. We think that the future will be continued over an extra section.

The MATTERS is edited by Dave Hades for the Socialist Workers' Party. Correspondence to PO Box 187, 586, Victoria.

they will establish a set-up much like that in the North. Industry will be placed in the hands of the state, and moves will be made to collectivise agriculture.

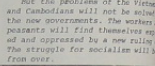
At the same time, strikes will be banned, freedom of speech and the press will be taken away, and the Communist will establish a bureaucratic dictatorship.



Thieu

That won't be any more than the present regime, which also has civil liberties. They will only be able to do more things than a far cry from socialism. They will be able to do more things than a far cry from socialism.

In Cambodia, it is not so clear who controls the rebel forces. The Viet Cong was a revolutionary figure who was depicted, in 1970, will be returned to power. The Viet Cong is more or less a head, as he admits himself. The Viet Cong is more or less a head, as he admits himself. The Viet Cong is more or less a head, as he admits himself.



Lon Nol

The new Cambodian government will talk of socialism too, but we doubt if you'll find freely elected representatives of the workers and peasants running the show.

Socialists support the victory of the Viet Cong and the Thieu regime because they are leading the fight against the United States and its puppets. We support the right of the countries of Indochina to independence from the American imperialists.

But the problems of the Vietnamese and Cambodians will not be solved by the new movements. The workers and peasants will find themselves oppressed by a new ruling class. The struggle for socialism will be long and hard.

## NOISES FROM THE NEW ORDER

John Sullivan

STREET EAST April, daily radio broadcasts from Indonesia have warned the people of Portuguese Timor against the dangers of communist takeover. What they are really saying is that when Indonesia takes over any attempt at resistance will be savagely dealt with.

The broadcasts, which began when the Portuguese dictatorship fell, brand the three major East Timorese parties as "communist". In fact, the local Indonesian movement is a mildly liberal-nationalist and the parties involved have only become vocal since the new Portuguese government began discussing the possibility of independence.

The propaganda campaign is directed by General Ali Murtopo, head of Indonesian's internal security and director of operations. All his job of coming to East Timor is the Indonesian man as soon as Portugal makes it available. As well as radioed distributers, martial music and recorded machine gun fire, all is relayed upon remote-controlled airplanes, mainly around pro-Indonesian minority groups such as Apodi, the party which expresses the fervent desire of about thirty East Timorese to become Indonesian.

Why does Indonesia want the region? Probably because it is up for grabs. Who knows? The New Order wants to expand. More specifically, the General's fear that an independent East Timor could provide an example to the people for secessionist movements in other parts of the archipelago.

In talking over the island, Indonesia is helping East Timor to see "the people of Timor" who are not much respected, and their wishes are treated in an act of free choice. "But we parsons" are not so concerned for the rights of the people of Timor in absence. Formerly, their rights will be respected as others.

On February 14, the Melbourne "Age" said that "East and West Timor" is a merger between Portuguese Timor and the Indonesian "neighbour". Of course, the Indonesian capital is the legal international capital. The merger is "to be a merger (sic)". Indonesia

political stability so much desired by its capitalist patrons. One million Indonesian citizens have died because of the New Order's drive to reach civil rights, another 100,000 are in political prisons.

It is not so much that the Viet Cong are at all radical - we would simply a trifle different to the Viet Cong in most instances. The Viet Cong is a supporter for New Order placed under house arrest recently because of his activities as a reporter for Newsweek?

Subversive organisations such as unions and political parties have been completely eliminated by the New Order regime. So, we are informed, the people can go about their work with



ALI MURTOPO

Indonesian citizens' rights are respected.

After the General's fear the people will be a part of organized violence, was imprisonment and cold terror, followed by the Indonesian brand of some of his more primitive brand of

## STRIKES

AS PART of its campaign to wreck the NSW branch of the Communist Party, the My Day Organising Committee has targeted the NSW U.I.

Jordan and Falter were punched and kicked by a group which included senior NSW officials and student activists. The Labour Union in Jordan was then dragged down the steps of the My Day Organising Committee and thrown into Victoria 5.

The student Hesters involved in this fight belong to the "Medical Students Movement" (MSM) which has been repeatedly attacked while selling their own "Medical Students Movement" and physical attacks on its opponents.

# Festivals in Motion

NORM GALLAGHER

by Phil Griffiths

Jack Munday

Some Builders Labourers will not be joining the Federal controlled branch. The NSW branch has been formed by the NSW branch and a host of other NSW leaders have been expelled from the NSW branch. The NSW branch has already been deprived of its political leadership.

The NSW branch and the federal union go back a long way... to the fight against the NSW branch in the Communist Party of Australia, during the 1950s. Gallagher is a leader of the NSW branch, the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist). The NSW branch is a leader of the NSW branch, the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist).

At mass meetings and in a branch election, the rank and file stayed solid in its support of Munday, Pringle and Owen.

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At mass meetings and in a branch election, the rank and file stayed solid in its support of Munday, Pringle and Owen.

That's how the NSW branch of the Builders Labourers Federation admitted defeat at the hands of the union's rank and file.

For six months, the branch has been under direct physical attack by Federal leadership since, for six months Gallagher has been operating a five month branch in NSW issuing the only union cards recognized by the Federal union.

The NSW branch has a credible option to this.

At mass meetings and in a branch election, the rank and file stayed solid in its support of Munday, Pringle and Owen.

unanimously decided to take out Federal officials, who Gallagher's union and organ a rank and file group to support the NSW branch and later expelled them from the union.

The NSW branch has a credible option to this.

At mass meetings and in a branch election, the rank and file stayed solid in its support of Munday, Pringle and Owen.

## Hostesses' Reg's wings

by CHRIS SIMPSON

IT'S NO wonder Peg Ansett said she would like to go to Hawaii. She would like to go to Hawaii. She would like to go to Hawaii. She would like to go to Hawaii. She would like to go to Hawaii.

Hostesses' Reg's wings



TIPS ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS FOR GRIEVING WORKERS

## what we think

WHY GALLAGHER WON... THE DEFEAT of the NSW branch of the B.L.U. is a victory for violence. It is a victory for violence. It is a victory for violence. It is a victory for violence. It is a victory for violence.

By that I do not mean the NSW organization crumbled. It is the active support of most members. Gallagher won... why? Because he had the support of the rank and file. He had the support of the rank and file. He had the support of the rank and file.

At mass meetings and in a branch election, the rank and file stayed solid in its support of Munday, Pringle and Owen.

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At mass meetings and in a branch election, the rank and file stayed solid in its support of Munday, Pringle and Owen.

The lessons of this struggle are clear for all workers.











The AMU leadership does not appear to have any strategy for winning our current loss of claims.

Weld workers are claiming a rise of \$20 a week plus full wage inflation, or \$50 wage cut in lockstep. The 40 point claim also includes a charter of rights for Shop Stewards and a 15 hour working week with no loss of pay to reward the work around with the unemployment.

The employers have refused to grant any part of the claim and are referring it to the Arbitration Commission. Mass meetings will be held on April 10 and 11 to ratify the claim and the leadership's proposals. So far, the full details of the claim have not been circulated to members of the AMU. It is over changes.

Despite widespread sackings in the industry, the leadership has had no plan for fighting the sack except 'do the best you can in your own shop'. What's the point of having a union at all if they take that attitude?

report from Brisbane

## 200 BREACH SOCIAL SECURITY

TWO HUNDRED people occupied the Social Security Department's Brisbane office on March 26. They were demanding a better deal for mothers on social security benefits and especially for one black woman, Karen.

Before long, Superintendent Headland of the Commonwealth police in Queensland arrived. He 'dealt firmly' with the occupiers, telling them that if they didn't leave they'd be dragged out in any fashion his men deemed necessary. The Commonwealth police were assisted by the Special Branch and other State police. Eighteen people were arrested, ten of them women, and taken to the watchhouse as a fine example of Commonwealth/State co-operation.

At the watchhouse they were all thoroughly searched. The women, however, were ordered to strip - one of them in an open cell in front of a large number of men and women, police and prisoners. The other were allowed the privacy of closed padded cells. This was an attempt to intimidate and humiliate the women, who were also subjected to insults ('sluts', 'whores') and rough handling. The police tried to isolate one black woman - a supporting mother like Karen - from her fellow-prisoners, but the other women refused to let them take her away. Next morning there was a demonstration on the steps of the Australian Government Centre.

The Aboriginal Housing Service had brought Karen's case to the attention of Inside Welfare (a group of radical social workers). Inside Welfare led the occupation and demonstration. The occupiers' demands included:

- that Karen receive immediate Supporting Mother's benefits and back pay with interest,
- that women applying for welfare benefits be assessed without regard to their private lives and sexual relations,
- client files must be open to all clients applying for benefits.

In his March report to members, Victorian state secretary John Halfpenny says that 'the first two months of 1975 have produced a steep increase in the number of retrenchments in many sections of the metal industry'. He goes on to tell us that 'a recent survey conducted by a firm of management consultants revealed that 62% of employers in the metals...



Kevin Bain, AMWU member

# Metal Trades Award FOR THE BIG PUSH!

Kevin Bain, AMWU member

What is his answer? A call for the public sector to be strengthened? That's a cop-out. He would be leading a fight to save jobs. The outcome of the recent struggle shows that militancy and determination at the level of the individual shop is not enough. That struggle was most effective when the workers from Clydesdale were actively involved in support actions. Organising support is the officials' job. If we can't rely on them ... then we'll have to do it ourselves.

Unemployment in the industry is going to make the claim harder to fight for. That's why a fight against sackings is a necessary part of the fight for

the claim. And the claim for the 35hr week is a practical step to cut unemployment in the industry.

Last year, Victorian metal workers smashed through 'closed awards', but only after it had been accepted. This struggle against the closed award must be taken up by the whole union rather than pushed onto isolated plants after they have accepted. This year we have strong opposition from the government. It has said it will oppose any rises for workers outside its industrial formula for percentage cost-of-living rises with a cut-off point. And it has threatened to penalise the employers if they pay more. Still the union has not published its campaign proposals for members to discuss and organise around. More the pity we need a militant united fight, but can we look to our officials to lead it?

admitted to visiting her ex de facto, and having sexual relations with him. This disqualified her for Supporting Mother's Benefit.

### spying

What have a woman's sexual relations to do with supporting herself and her children? To the policy makers in welfare departments, it's obvious: a man who sleeps with a woman should pay her - sorry, 'support' her. Both State and Commonwealth welfare agencies are notorious for spying on unmarried or separated women, in order to find someone else to saddle with responsibility. Investigators can call at any time to check on a woman's fidelity to the department (including 6 months prior to application for benefits), and also her fitness as mother and housekeeper.

Supporting mothers are not allowed to earn more than \$7 a week without their bene-

fits being reduced. Even if a woman could get a job when she has very young children to look after on her own, she wouldn't be allowed to.

Up to the time of the demonstration Karen was not getting Supporting Mother's benefits, maintenance payments. Until a few days before that she was setting an emergency family assistance payment - of \$7 a week when this was continued she had no financial support whatsoever. Most cases are intervened and Karen is receiving Special Emergency benefits, which will continue for 6 months. She still hasn't got the Supporting Mother's benefits. Nor have many other women. The regulations that selves must be changed, and must the attitudes of those who administer our money. The area of our own moral standards. One of the clerks said 'this is only the beginning' of the campaign to change them.

## INSIDE SOCIAL SECURITY by a former employee

WITH LABOR came into office two and a half years ago, Open government was one of its major policy plans. I worked in the Department of Social Security (Melbourne) for over a year from January 1974 and saw the situation from the inside. Every Friday, Commonwealth police would bring a list of names to the child Endowment Section to find out addresses. State police also had (more limited) access to the files. But this wasn't all: anonymous letters making accusations about a beneficiary's personal life all consumed taxpayer's money. Some of the information on files consist of wild slanders

which determine whether or not money is paid. Social Security Minister Hayden has been telling us that taxpayers have a right to benefits when they need them and that information supplied is confidential. But organisations like the Australian Commission of Victorian Citizens and other Victorian bodies have access to information on the files, as well as other Commonwealth departments. As Whittan said before 1974 when he campaigned for official secrecy 'the public has a right to know'. Perhaps he meant 'his' people's government bureaucrats.

2 JUN 1975

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## A VICTORY

### goodbye to all this...

The Vietnamese have won. It is all over but the shouting. The Americans have left; the advisers (the official peace-seller) who spread death and destruction for over twenty years. Thieu and the other well-paid American puppets have flown the country - taking their gold with them. Poorer South Vietnamese who collaborated have been abandoned. It is over.

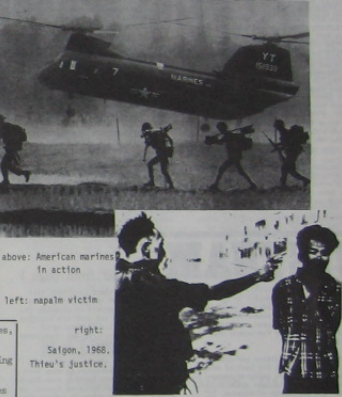
This is a victory for the Vietnamese. It is a victory because an invading army has been thrown out. It is a victory because a corrupt puppet regime which was never able to survive without a direct foreign presence was overthrown. It is a victory because death and destruction will stop.

It is a victory because the Provisional Revolutionary Government, which is the choice of the majority of Vietnamese, will come to power. We might not like the P.R.G. - we certainly don't think they are socialists - but they are the choice of the Vietnamese people.

The American government knew this when they first invaded Vietnam. The Pentagon Papers show that the US was engaged in aggression in Vietnam even before the Geneva Convention of 1954. When the then US President Eisenhower and the South Vietnamese dictator Diem refused to hold the elections provided for in the Geneva Conventions, Eisenhower said: 'Had elections been held, possibly 80% of the population would have voted for Ho Chi Minh.'

SO THERE WERE NO ELECTIONS. INSTEAD THERE WAS A WAR. TWO MILLION DEATHS LATER, HO CHI MINH'S SUCCESSORS ARE ABOUT TO WIN VIETNAM.

continued page 2



above: American marines in action  
left: napalm victim

## STOP PRESS

MELBOURNE, April 31 - As the Battler goes to press, the Full Bench of the Arbitration Commission has just announced its decision in the 1975 National Wage Case.

for compensation in price rises, by giving indexation for one or two weeks ago, metal workers next every three months, we are going to have to justify our rise for that period... even though it will only be to cover prices that have already risen.

The decision gives no comfort to workers and no guarantee. It's major effect is to increase the power of the Arbitration Commission, unless workers' representatives vote increases on their indexation out of their own pockets. That is, with unions raising the Arbitration Commission can nearly cut their throats!

This is hardly a decision at all. The Commission has really got around employer demands that indexation would be quickly barred.

## Metals Claim: STRIKE NEEDED!

Kevin Bain, AMWU member

What are the officials doing with our campaign? A few weeks ago, metal workers met to discuss the Combined Unions' 41-point list of claims and the campaign tactics recommended by the Union leaders.

At the Victorian meeting, the long official mes-

sage to ASK THEIR BOSSES to put pressure on the Metal Trades Industry Association (MTIA) to reduce direct negotiations. The bosses' reactions would then be telegraphed into the union for the officials to make a decision on further activity.

continued page 8

## Chrysler jails worker

see page 8



# PROOFS for the PARASITES for the WORKERS

THE MORTON AGO, E.P. Industries (Electrolytic Zinc) offered its workers in Tasmania a choice: a four day week on four days' pay or the sack on one day's notice on 400 of them. E.P. was quick to give the sack by a further 20% on top of the 20% cut and sacking the 400 months earlier. Actually E.P.'s profits were increased at the time but they didn't stop them from crying poor and threatening layoffs. Then Santa Claus arrived in the person of the Hon. J. Cairns and Manufacturing Industries Minister Senator Jim McCallinan.

In a quiet deal that didn't even go through Cabinet, the two Jim presented E.P. Industries with the option that there were no sackings for six months.

This may seem like the labor government is doing the right thing by workers and protecting jobs, isn't it? Well all the government would have had to do was nationalise E.P.'s Ridon plant. When McCallinan and Cairns did was to promise to pay E.P.'s wage bill for 470 workers for six months and thereby guarantee its profits.

This is in line with the decision taken at Federal last February. The AIP conference at the time wrote the party's platform to include specific protection of "private enterprise". This is the result. Any group of wealthy blackmailers who threaten that they might sack their workers get immediate present from the labor government.

To underline that policy Cairns and co visited the A.P. plant in Tasmania. The Australian Pulp and Paper Manufacturers (a monopoly) are an Australian owned company. They didn't get a government bailout. His third major firm is the source of the family wealth in Carlton and Dated Breweries. CIB is willing to smug its family wealth government assistance to maintain profits. They are relying on their control of 40% of the family wealth brewing industry to allow them to increase prices with impunity.

By DAVE NADEL

## OPEN HOUSE IN CANBERRA

WILEY THOMAS everywhere are riddled off and hassled by landlords, the situation in Canberra is worse than most places, but at last there seems to be a group doing something about it... the Canberra Tenants' Association Committee.

Canberra is notorious to have rent control, even on privately owned houses. There is also an extreme shortage of houses and rooms for rent. This is the result of the rent control. The rent is set so low that the private owner is losing money. The rent is set so low that the private owner is losing money. The rent is set so low that the private owner is losing money.

Lower paid workers, single people, deserted wives, pensioners, students and others are often forced to break the law and sleep in pay sheltered tents. Families are being charged a rate for the hire of goods in the house. One group of students was offered a dilapidated three-bedroom house for \$10 a week!

The Committee has recently broken away from the Strive Tenants' Action Group. It includes representatives from the Youth Trades and Labour Council and the Australian Students' Association. Its formation is based on the emphasis of direct action.

## SWAG'S LITERATURE SERVICE

The following publications are available from the Swag's Literature Service. Full list can be obtained from SWAG at the above address.

- Hal Draper, *Who's Working Class?* - 100
- Donald Hillis, *The Meaning of Marxism* - 100
- Ken Birchall, *Services Against* - 50
- Nicolaus (the Communist Parties) - 50
- Richard Hyman *Marxism and the* - 100
- Sociology of Trade Unions - 100
- Class and History - 100
- Paul Smith, *Women Fight Back* - 100
- Chris Haywood, *Revolution and* - 100

files consist of wild slanders

# SLASH LABOR nurses get 12%

by a student nurse at a Melbourne district hospital

Despite protest action over the last month, nurses have once again failed to gain wage increases which would give them parity with primary school teachers. Instead of the 10% increase demanded, only 12% was granted, meaning a 10% decrease after 3 years training (including 12 months of unpaid public the appalling wage increase of \$120 weekly which is 52% a first year teachers with the amount of non-nursing doctors but why should they be doing them anyway?

The government just doesn't bring results. Unless it can be sufficiently flexible and strike action seems to be the only way to force wages which will never receive fair pay for the demanding and responsible job which they are doing.

Past actions, which have been mainly of the non-nursing doctor type, have shown the public the appalling wage increase of \$120 weekly which is 52% a first year teachers with the amount of non-nursing doctors but why should they be doing them anyway?

Nurses themselves are badly organised, since of the 24,000 in Victoria, only 5,000 are members of the Royal Australian Nurses' Federation (RANF). This is the water association which nurses see themselves as a militant

# Our trains running are by Spencer Flinders

So you're sick and tired of the train you catch on your morning? You're fed up with trains being cancelled at the last moment, especially when, after a hard day at the office or factory, you're waiting on a crowded platform and your reading of the Herald is rudely interrupted by an announcement that your train home won't be run? That's understandable. When 'Herald' writes the suburban rail system it is chaos, they're not far from the truth.

But what you're not in the 'Herald' are the reasons for this chaos. The Hauser Government's policy of upgrading public transport is a farce. There's no building plenty of new trains. But what good are these trains if there's not the staff to cope with the additional traffic? Perhaps you've heard that the Victorian Railways has recently laid on a lot more staff. They have. But the railways were actually short of staff before the significant increase in the number of commuters of the last year or so. The increase in staff doesn't make up for the previous shortage, let alone provide the railways to cope with the additional traffic.

As the housing situation worsened, the housing moved forward and began to occupy private dwellings, especially those left vacant by squatters. It occupied a house after the tenants were evicted, leaving the private owner with a 'fall rent'. The house is owned by Mr. Ray Langlands, the Labor Party spokesman on Consumer Affairs in the A.C.T. Legislature. 'Bumbers got the notice to evict the occupiers, but they returned a week later.'

In its last action, the committee occupied a mansion which had been empty for seven years. Thirty-three people were arrested after obtaining Gordon Branks, the Minister for the A.C.T., to order the police to "revoke the leases of speculators who were holding out for higher profits."

When every job is on duty, there's not enough staff to provide efficient services. Because of the

body, and until they work as such, no real action is going to be possible. The industrial officer, Geoff McEwen, also since none of the nurses want to have been contacted to take the case to the Appeals Court. This is an election, and in the meantime nurses lose the 12% already granted to them, with no guarantee that they will get more after the hearing. Also, if the appeal does fail, a new lot of claims cannot be lodged with the wage board for another 12 months.

The best action for nurses would be to demand that the 12% increase be granted at the Appeals Court. This would mean that the nurses would lose the 12% already granted to them, with no guarantee that they will get more after the hearing. Also, if the appeal does fail, a new lot of claims cannot be lodged with the wage board for another 12 months.



Nurses on strike in Britain - they were supported by local workers.

general staff shortage. It also means that 'unfilled' jobs are being taken up by guards. You see, in the interests of 'cutting down on public spending' (or, if you prefer, in the interests of having finance for the Victorian Government's other train services) they don't want to pay more workers at the 'Herald's' rate. This is slightly higher than the pay for the 'unfilled' grades such as station assistants (who, on the basic 40 hours, get the wonderful sum \$110.40 before tax).

For a long time now, the Australian Railways has been making a profit (and has been making the Victorian Railways lose over the Federal Government.

## deficit

And so, in a 'public spending, Victorian Railways employees harder to provide a less efficient service. And then train run late, it's not only the commuters who are inconvenienced - guards have to take care of their well breaks! As always, the workers' train made to pay.

The 'Herald' will call you railway workers are paid too much by pointing to the large Victorian Railways deficit... over \$50 million last year. But they don't tell you that the bulk of the railway's loss is not on passenger

## RAILWAYS: Increase wages, not fares

This was a great help - we already knew that. It was about the well-statement by Brown on State Secretary Bone, that the workers' train made to pay.

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## women

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## PORTUGAL'S NON-ELECTIONS

by Chris Simpson

PORTUGAL has just had its first "free" elections since the fascist takeover in 1926. The elections were to the Constituent Assembly, which will decide Portugal's new constitution. Legislative elections are to be held before the end of the year.

According to the latest election figures, the Socialists are in the lead with about 38% of the vote, followed by the Popular Democrats with about 26%, and the Communist Party which has 12.5%. It sounds like a victory for the left is on hand but the elections give a little indication of what's really happening in Portugal.

As matters go, the Armed Forces Movement (AFM) will still hold the reins. The elections were staged in the main street but it's something of a farce to describe them as free before the voters even see the polls. It's the 12 parties (including the three largest) had agreed to establish a form of government proposed by the AFM, which was confirmed. AFM rule into the constitution.

The AFM is a group of middle-range army officers and sergeants who overthrew the fascist regime in April last year. It has no intention of relinquishing power.

Among the six smaller parties which did not claim the record are those of

## NETAM

continued from page 1

Monksville, in Australia, the Liberal Opposition is opposed to massive housing and industrial expansion. They want to reduce the number of troops and supported and participated in organizing Vietnamese and meeting refugees.

The Liberal Opposition has attacked the Labor government for lack of even-handedness in Vietnam. It has also attacked the Labor government for not doing enough to support the Vietnamese people who are being persecuted by the P.R.C. that large sections of the

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THE BATTLE is edited and printed by Dave Nadel for the Socialist Workers' Action Group.

IT'S THE BATTLE 301 May 1975

all classes appearing and benefits

THE BATTLE 301 May 1975

files consist of wild slanders

Victorian Railways: modernisation on the cheap...but it doesn't work.











**WORKER JAILED IN ADELAIDE**

Militant car-worker, Peter van Arend, is in jail for fighting for the right to work. Peter was one of 50 tradesmen sacked by Chrysler from its South Australian plant at Tonley Park in February. He refused to take the sack and turned up for work next day. He was arrested on April 9 by Supreme Court sheriff and his deputy turned up for work, the company called on the court to act. He is being held in Adelaide jail for contempt of Court. His real crime is contempt of Chrysler.

As 'The Battler' went to press he was due to be released. During the boom of 1973-74, the car companies' efforts were directed at speeding up the production lines to fill their expanding orders, paying as little as possible to employ extra workers. But since the beginning of the year, the car industry has been in recession, doing everything possible to lay-off workers and destroying previously won working conditions.

Early in February, Chrysler attempted to transfer 100 workers, including 50 tradesmen to the production line. This was not done to boost production because Chrysler had thousands of cars it couldn't sell. The idea was to persuade the workers to 'voluntarily' resign.

Work on the line is horrible... far worse than in the toolroom in other areas where they had been working. If the workers handed their own notice in, there would be no retrenchment payments, and no complaints from the Government.

But the workers had different ideas. As soon as the company told them they were a militant side-line, demanding a return to their old jobs and the implementation of the 32 hr week on full pay, instead of retrenchment. The company gave in after 4 days and negotiated a severance scheme with the Vehicle Builders Union. The tradesmen accepted the scheme when the company agreed.

chairs refused to cooperate after the vote. After the union officials had bulldozed the severance scheme through, Chrysler went to the courts to stop Peter from turning up to the factory. Shortly after, he was arrested. At no stage had the union officials suggested any alternative way for him, or the rest of the Chrysler workers, to fight the sack. No no stage either, had the Labor



**What We Think**

The sacking of Peter van Arend is a clear warning to all militants. The bosses do not support the Police because they look nice in uniform and they do not use the Courts because they like the serious atmosphere. The bosses know they can't look to the law to defend their interests because the laws have been written to defend the 'rights of property' and that doesn't mean the kind of property workers own. Ever gone to a police station to report a missing pushbike?

When a shop steward meeting came out in support of Peter's stand, the company offered him a job on the line. He refused. On March 19, the promised mass meeting on the severance scheme was finally held. The VBU officials, desperate to get the scheme through, refused to allow any speakers from the floor, refused to recognise a motion of dissent on this ruling, and refused to recognise a motion from the floor instructing the union executive to renegate the severance scheme and implement its policy of the 32 hr week. When this motion was carried by an overwhelming majority, the

Government would have appointed most of the judges responsible for these trials, made any attempt to intervene between the Government, the Courts and the union's members. Chrysler had lots of friends, Peter's friends are on the line, in the toolroom and in the Vehicle industry bank and File group. They're prepared to fight for him. Chrysler should not be allowed to get away with it.



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In the current economic conditions, we need a more militant, political campaign that defends itself

**METALS AWARD FIGHT**

from page 1

At the Springsville meeting, the first three speakers, all shop stewards, opposed the implication in the officials' resolutions: that the severity of strong shops would take action while arbitrary sackings and low pay continued. Where else, where else, is this an award fight so we want everyone to get the largest increase possible from the minimum pay and conditions. The strong shops will lead the fight between awards.

The speeches prompted an amendment from the floor that further meetings be held during the week of the 28th of April. The dispersion of the campaign has really provided ammunition for the employers. With spokesman Alan Edwards claims that 'the reports we have to date are that there is only minimal disruption. The men want job security.' But job security is not guaranteed by belt-tightening exercises.

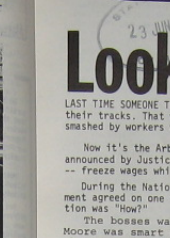
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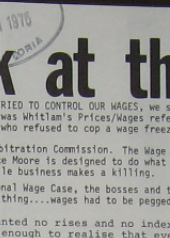
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Number 7 21st. June 1975

**Look at the Metal Trades**

LAST TIME SOMEONE TRIED TO CONTROL OUR WAGES, we stopped them in their tracks. That was Whitlam's Prices/Wages referendum. It was smashed by workers who refused to cop a wage freeze.

Now it's the Arbitration Commission. The Wage Indexation scheme announced by Justice Moore is destined to do what Whitlam couldn't -- freeze wages while business makes a killing.

During the National Wage Case, the bosses and the Labor government agreed on one thing...wages had to be pegged. The only question was 'How!'

The bosses wanted no rises and no indexation. But Moore was smart enough to realise that every union in the country would fight back against that. Clyde Cameron wanted wage indexation to the average wage, to make sure additional rises 'unnecessary'. But that wasn't good enough for fighting for better pay. Moore needed indexation. But he needed a scheme that tied us to his rises and no more.

His solution is brilliant. And dangerous to every worker. Because the indexation is conditional, because the judges decide what we get every three months, any union winning an 'excessive' pay claim risks losing its own indexation. It could also threaten the indexation rise for every other worker.

Moore's scheme offers us a fatal temptation. 'If you win and I will look after you. But ignore my rules and you'll lose your indexation and threaten everyone else's'.

This is just the kind of ammunition that the right-wing needs. Now they have a new argument against militants; 'You're wrecking Indexation!'

It's a gift for fat-rsed union bureaucrats. No more being embarrassed into a fight for justice. The whole working class must rally to the support of those unions and shops which to challenge Moore's rules. And Labor Party members have to fight the Government's rotten rule.

We have no need of parliamentarians who support massive price rises for the BHP monopoly and then attack the pay claims of metal workers.

Nothing would please us more...to be able to do what President Nixon was able to do in America -- an income and prices freeze for six months...then extend it.

We need rank and file militants who are prepared to lead the fight against the bosses.

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**Metal bosses can afford it!**

"There is nothing in our bin to pay increases." - Alan Edwards, President of the MTA talking to the press.

Edwards, who calls himself a 'rough pay' is leading the bosses' fight against the Combined Metal Unions' claim for a \$20 rise with indexation and the 35 hr week. We don't believe him. If the bin is so empty, why don't the bosses just hand it over to us? We invite us to go over their books and accounting procedures?

Some of the 'bins' are very full. The giant Australian National Industries is a major steel merchant and manufacturer of general engineering equipment and fittings. In 1974, it made \$8.2 million profit in the past three months... 20% more than for the whole of the previous year. Maybe the year before was a bad one... but in 1973 it made \$8 million more than the year before!

These are profits that our couldn't hide. What about the profits that most companies do hide? Most metal industry employers are feeling the squeeze, but they're still operating very nicely, thank you. There's not the overtime crowd that there was a year ago, but most have enough work to keep them making money. But that's not enough...they want to make as much as possible...and to do that, they've got to screw it out of somebody...and what about those other hidden profits? What about accumulated profits? Workers don't make a living off during lean times, but bosses do. Why should our bread and butter be cut 20% to keep them in clover?

8. THE BATTLER 21st May 1975

Social Security benefits also

files consist of wild slanders







# How to smash bosses

## PLAN by John Sullivan

On Friday, June 6th, Monash University finally crushed a strike of blue-collar workers after four weeks of threats, lying publicity, blatant scabbing and a consistent refusal to negotiate.

On June 1st, the industrial unions on campus served a 24-point list of claims. The Uni bosses had an offer back by May 6th that touched 13 of the points. The reply incorporated minor claims that touched 13 of the points. The reply incorporated minor claims that touched 13 of the points. The reply incorporated minor claims that touched 13 of the points.

The University Administration flatly refused such claims as closed shop agreements, 1 1/2% loading on normal leave and over-award rates of \$20 - plus ten other points that sought to bring working conditions into line with University and community averages.

The Bosses obviously wanted to provoke a strike at the beginning of term, that's why they replied so soon and with so little. With the 13,000 students off campus, provision of services becomes less crucial; strikers are deprived of any support students might mass, and the Uni avoids over \$200,000 a week in unpaid wages.

The workers rallied that had been provoked into a strike, but felt powerless to do anything. If they didn't go, it would be demoralising, so they went out and stayed out, and set themselves for a long fight.

The white-collar workers on campus expressed their solidarity with the strikers and set up a hardship fund. They set up a bad publicity campaign, because the Admin has their union, the MUA, tangled up in a bad publicity campaign. This made it hard for the more militant workers to call for action in support.

### scabbing

It was now clear that the Administration was going all out to crush the strike. Scabbing was going on all over campus. The scabbers were all over campus. The scabbers were all over campus. The scabbers were all over campus.

At University Council meeting, the Vice Chancellor, Louis Matheson, explained his stand by saying that he was "holding back the clubs". And for good reason, he also turned a few lies around.

Matheson claimed that the log would cost \$25 million if not in full. Funny thing, the 93 professors cost more than this in salaries alone. They never seem to have trouble getting more from their pockets. Actually, the cost of the log would have been closer to \$200,000.

A slight warning: the Monash professors got a slight warning of \$60 a week each. The government paid out that \$300,000, understood, without a murmur.

### threats

But our leaders do not live by lies alone. Matheson (who is now on a retainer on about \$600 a week) sent a letter to every one of the striking workers, explaining that if they didn't turn it in pretty quickly, there'd be sackings. He explained later that the officials had sheet that he took this "moral action" (officials don't) because of the deep personal concern he felt over mounting loss of wages and needless hardship caused by the strike. If they didn't turn it in pretty quickly, there'd be sackings. He explained later that the officials had sheet that he took this "moral action" (officials don't) because of the deep personal concern he felt over mounting loss of wages and needless hardship caused by the strike.

Just before the vacation was due to end, the Administration began spending thousands of dollars on ads in the Dallas, telling the Uni that the University was going to re-open despite the strike, which the ads described with characteristic impartiality.



We interviewed Merle Cain for "The Battle" article. Merle, a cleaner, is a shop steward with the Miscellaneous Workers' Union.

These questions were asked during the strike.

**The Battle:** What's the general feeling now that the strike has run over two weeks?

**Merle:** There are always a few weakies but the general feeling is strong to stay out until we win. We were all wild about the way the University treated our claims. We stopped work and then found out that the University had put up signs all over the Union building that business would return to normal in a few days. Well, I thought - business won't be returning to normal all that quick, unless we get what we're claiming.

**Q:** What did the cleaners think of the thirteen points the University decided to allow?

**Merle:** The points they have allowed haven't made anybody happy. Many of them have been in operation anyway. Points like the equal pay claim are going to come into operation in the next few months - this was knocked back. Actually, the most important points to us are not the pay claim but the conditions claim at this time. We are just after the same working conditions as workers at other Universities and the same as other workers get at this University. The University keeps talking about how it can't meet our pay claims because it has no money left from the government, and ignoring the important conditions claims. We need the rise, alright, but we also need the other improvements.

**Q:** If your demands aren't met will you keep striking?

**Merle:** The administration had better realise that we are not coming back until we win.

**Q:** If the workers had closed the University down, it would have given them a trump card in the negotiations that were due for June 6th.

**Merle:** Bank and file militancy had been really strong through the early stages of the struggle. It remained that way to the end in a number of unions especially the cleaners. The catering to have trouble getting more from their pockets. Actually, the cost of the log would have been closer to \$200,000.

**Q:** How about the Trades Hall Council block and your union leaders?

**Merle:** They're a weak lot of animals, but are. That's Jordan... This log claim can come up again 'know, We'll finish it up over time and we won't be open back until we get something.



PICKETS AT THE MONASH GATE... KEPT OUTSIDE, AWAY FROM THE SCABS

# NOT NOTICE!

THE PRESSURE is really on: The government and the Arbitration Commission are determined to freeze wages. The bosses are going to use every device they get to cut our pay and smash our organizations. The Monash strike and the Contain-ers' strike both show what the bosses are prepared to do to our wages down. And they've got friends.

They've got the law on their side. That's why Peter van Arred, the Chrysler militant, was jailed (see Battle p.6). That's why the Monash workers in Britain were summarised.

Some bosses have learnt how to deal with strikers, they've learnt how to use them to their own advantage. The Monash strike was provoked, so was the strike at Massey. But the bosses at Massey figured out something they didn't bargain for - the workers took over their plant.

In certain circumstances, a strike can be just what the boss wants. If business is slack, if some maintenance is needed, the bosses can close down and they don't have to pay anyone. No retrenchment money, nothing. And the workers are waiting to come back when the boss is ready.

Now an occupation is a different ball game. The workers take over the bosses' office and machinery. There's no telling what might happen, what damage might be done - just look at what the workers at Massey's found!

Inside the factory, the strikers are warm and dry. They are kept together. They can hold regular meetings, plan and co-ordinate activity. And just being there forces the boss to actually consider your claims - FAST.

Monash workers did the "right thing". They were told to picket outside the University or face arrest. They obeyed and were demoralised and beaten by scabbing they couldn't get and lies they couldn't expose. They were "nice". They were smashed.

It's not nice having your TV repossessed. It's not nice having your car impounded. It's not nice being the manager and facing the Italian is not a nice when their dividends are down. Capitalism is not a nice when their dividends are down. Capitalism is not a nice when their dividends are down. Capitalism is not a nice when their dividends are down.

# 10 week strike: no rise

Workers at Containers Ltd in Footscray have won a \$10 rise and beaten the sack. Here's how they did it.

They first submitted their claim for a \$20 rise in October last year. Most other shops in the area were \$15 over the rate paid by Containers. After a stoppage last year, and sterile negotiations with the workers decided to strike.

They set up a 24-hour picket outside the factory and maintained it right through the strike. There was no attempt to stop scabs getting into the factory, but the strikers were able to keep out suppliers - some "owner drivers" smashed their way through the picket, damaging strikers' cars. The bosses were fighting back hard.

After eight weeks, the company fired 24 of the strikers. Despite last year's record \$4 million profit, Containers "couldn't afford" to keep them. Some strikers refused to be demoralised. For ten weeks, they stayed out until the company admitted defeat, offered a \$10 pay rise and reinstated the sacked workers. That still left some Container workers \$5 behind. They won't, but they could have won more if they stopped the scabs. But the lesson is that wage rises go to workers who are prepared to fight for them.



Five thousand workers at the Massey Ferguson plant in Coventry, England, have occupied the factory as part of their strike for a decent wage rise.

Shortly after the strike began, the workers occupied key areas of the plant including the computer office. While locking through the files, they found a very important confidential document written in code by the Union to fit in with four months in May 1975.

The bosses had planned production of low cost tractors for the summer and then provided it, but they didn't plan the workers' reaction. Instead of just striking, the workers have now occupied the whole plant for 6 weeks.

Now the management are fighting back. Armed with the law on their side, the Company has summoned 10 workers to the High Court. The workers respond: Burn the Summonses! As the Battle goes to press, the Court cases are due to begin. There have been strikes in solidarity by other workers in the area.

Monash Ferguson, who runs a factory in Melbourne alone, are a huge and powerful company. They are currently involved in curbing wages or sackings workers in Australia, Britain, Canada and the US. The way to beat these international crooks is with international solidarity.

Messages of support can be sent to: Massey Ferguson Strike Committee, 1000 Airport Road, Ringwood, St. Nicholas Island, England.

The Battle would be happy to pass on any news of strikes or contributions to the strike fund.

# OCCUPATION!

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# Militants lead in Adelaide

by Mike Grewcock

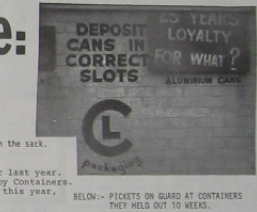
Metalworkers in South Australia have made it quite clear that they don't intend to accept any more wage freeze. They are not impressed with the proposals of the Union leadership either. A meeting at St. Clair attended by over 400 metalworkers rejected proposals for a 24 hour stoppage and demanded a 48-hour stoppage and occupation. In fact, the union leaders could say was that "the vote is taken on a national level and that a vote against the 24 hour proposal would endanger the chance of any success."

It's not surprising that South Australian metalworkers have taken such a militant stand. The South Australian economy is totally dependent upon DM, Chrysler and large appliance industries. With the co-operation of the South Australian government and most of the union leadership, they are making us pay for their current economic crisis, high sackings and poor conditions.

I was an assembler at Simpson-Pope - great adult wage \$48.00. At the end of last year Pope's laid off most of their workers and have only started re-hiring over the last couple of months. They've now got a large backlog of orders and are making plans to increase the fact that no-one can live on their wages by working a "normal" system.

Recently, a home system already, but since the lay-off, they have increased the number of machines that have to be made before you get the "bonus". It is a bonus that is not at least a 40% overtime a week.

And what does our union-the Australian Federation of Engineering Employees do? All of it! They are not prepared to put up a fight over nearly 20 years, not because they like the home system over anything. It is a bureaucratically run, bureaucratic union. They are appointed or elected stewards for workers confronted with similar situations at Chrysler and other plants have found the right solution to this: they've formed rank and file groups to fight against the bosses' attack on their living standards.



BELOW - PICKETS ON GUARD AT CONTAINERS THEY HUNG OUT TO MEETS.



PICKETS AT THE MONASH GATE... KEPT OUTSIDE, AWAY FROM THE SCABS

# WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING!







# THE Batter

## Doctors laugh all the way to the Medibank

by Tess Lee Ack

On July 1st, moderately sick Australians will be able to avail themselves of the services of Medibank. Thanks to the power games of the Hamer government, very sick to people (those who need hospital treatment) will have to wait until October. The Federal Labor Government and the South Wales have been wrangling over Medibank for a long time. From the way Hamer and his mates "Court and Lewis" have been carrying on, you'd think that Medibank was a real National Health Service. It isn't. We might have got one, if Whitlam and his mates hadn't been scared to take on the AMA-HBA machine.

However, Medibank is a partial gain and should defend it from the likes of Hamer. Hamer is spending thousands of dollars of our taxes on advertising, in an attempt to undermine Medibank. His hypocrisy is sickening. He tells us Medibank discriminates against psychiatric patients. This is bloody rich coming from the man whose government has done more than anyone to disadvantage these people by refusing to give decent pay rises to psychiatric nurses.

The AMA's role has been just as obnoxious. Their action in raising fees 12% just before the introduction of Medibank is a deliberate act of sabotage, since the government has only recognised a rise of 4% for Medibank purposes. So is their advice to doctors to not bulk-bill. If a doctor bulk-bills, you pay nothing. If he or she doesn't, you have to pay 15% (plus 8% to cover the recent

rise) of a bill, if it is less than \$35, and \$5 (plus 8%) of a bill over \$35. Doctors will be losing if they bulk-bill, given the rise, so there's a big incentive for them not to do so. The AMA is also protecting the doctors who have managed to get an effective majority on the Board of HBA and a number of other health funds.

So far, no-one seems to have done very much about these

attempts to sabotage Medibank. But they must not be allowed to get away with it. The people who can benefit most from Medibank must take up the fight to defend it.

Doctor Keith Benn, of the Doctor's Reform Society, talked to us about the way private health insurance funds are sising to confuse the public and had the following advice to offer: "on July 1st, cancel all medical insurance, as Medibank will cover you. If you've paid for the year, you can get a rebate for the year after July 1st, that you've paid. The health benefits people naturally aren't advertising this, according to Dr. Benn, because 'they've had a briefing to rip off as long they can.' The policy is apparently to get by as well as they can until the Libs get back into power and Medibank hospital insurance till October, but Dr. Benn says there are about 15 small health funds (one is the Latrobe Valley fund) which are co-operating with Medibank.

These measures give some protection to the individual but a concerted fight is needed against the doctors (Dr. Benn

calls them "bloody-minded bastards") who won't bulk-bill. He thinks the Trade Union movement should research and list those doctors and publicise it widely, perhaps even operating a phone service, so that they can be avoided. Such a boycott would result in the doctors losing money, which they wouldn't like at all...it might even persuade them to change their minds on bulk-billing.

The list would be a big job, but it could be compiled by anyone keen enough. The Australian party is already thinking of drawing one up. So are we, for that matter, and we will be doing so for selected working-class areas where we sell "The Batter" watch for future issues.

But it would be much better for the Trade Union movement as a whole to see it as part of their job of defending working people from big business. They could use it more politically, and it would have a lot more impact. Trade union boycotts, especially when encouraged by the ALP, have been successful in the past. Medibank, despite its limitations, can work if the Labor movement and all organisations of the working-class take a hand.



Hospitals will be free in South Australia soon, but in Victoria, Hamer keeps it happen.

## Metals Claim stagnates

by KEVIN BAIN, AMWU member, Dandenong

UNLESS SOMETHING DRAMATIC HAPPENS, and soon, workers covered by the Metal Trades Award have no chance of getting an Award rise until the middle of next year. Justice Moore (of Indefatigable fame), supported by the Labor Government, has postponed consideration of a rise "to a date to be fixed". There is no way that Moore will give us a rise then either, because he has already said that the Metal Unions do not have a case for "catching up" with community movements.

Although fitters are on the magnificent rate of \$106.90 and Trades Assistants (T.A.s) on \$95, the employers have managed to create confusion on the subject of over-award payments. Many tradesmen and some T.A.s are paid over the award, but the task of award fights is to get a rise written in. Building industry workers are currently exercising their legal right to get \$26 a week over-award payment from their employers' paychecks.

The Metal Trades Industry Association (MTIA) will do the same if they think they can get away with it. They have already threatened to abort any award rise. The business press is gleefully applauding the decline in wage increases from 10% in the September Quarter last year, through 5.4% in December to 3.5% in March.

Justice Moore

At the same time, in another Court, the Labor Government was busy arguing in favour of BHP's application for a 14% rise in the price of steel. The Australian Financial Review commented: "the government's submission does not even attempt to analyse the merits of BHP's case" and "represents an all-out attempt to influence the Tribunal into setting a precedent for other companies to 'approach the Tribunal on the same basis as BHP has adopted' i.e. purely on the grounds of 'low profitability'". BHP made only \$5 million out of steel in the six months to Dec-

ember '74. Business nowadays must really be a struggle.

The split in the ranks of the Union officials has turned the struggle into a series of half-hearted protests which have demoralised militants and played into the hands of the MTIA. The obvious lack of response after the first one-day stoppage was followed by more of the same. At some meetings, the strike motion was defeated; more because of the lack of confidence in the leadership's ability to win anything than any other factor.

Justice Moore and the Arbitration Commission won't give anything, neither will the bosses. The campaign must be escalated immediately and significantly. Since indemnity was "handed down", commercial clerks have got \$15 and storemen and packers \$6-40. If indemnity is dropped in July (which is quite possible going by Moore's comments), then we will get nothing until next year.

A number of our union officials are starting to talk about next year's campaign...while we're still in the middle of this one! The Going Rates Award is being brought up as an alternative to the present minimum rates award. AMWU policy (confirmed this year) opposes the Going Rates concept, because it directly restricts the power of the union. It would mean that the union would be further shackled to the Arbitration Commission as a ceiling rate would be

enforced. The power of the unions is in the strong belief with their ability to lead the fight on behalf of the weaker shops.

Some officials - even so-called "Communist" - have been trying to hide their failures by criticising those unions which tie their awards to ours. They want metal workers to "break free", to leave other workers behind. This is dangerous rubbish. It ignores every basic principle in the Labor movement... the strong must stand with the weak; workers must combine and act together. We must make our fight, every one's fight. To "break free" would not only weaken the whole labor movement, but damage our own campaign! It would cut off from workers who will now support us because they benefit.

This has been happening. Railworkers in Melbourne, painters and dockers and council workers in Sydney have all come out in support. This must be built and extended! This will greatly increase our chance of winning the claim, as well as recognising the Metal Trades claim for what it is... a National Wage case. The resources of the ACTU should be mobilised behind the fight.

The whole Capitalist class is watching the outcome of the Metal Trades claim. A defeat for metal-workers or any acceptance of the rules attached to indemnity will be the signal for a direct attack by employers on the Tesser-organised and weaker sections of the Australian working class. Our fight is with

# THE Batter

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS' ACTION GROUP

Number 8, July 19, 1975. 10 cents.

## LABOR'S LOANS CROSS we don't like their friends



JUNIE MOROSI: it wasn't her ex-life that should have been anyone's concern, but what was a failed businessman doing as secretary to a Labor Treasurer? She and her husband appeared to involve Jim Cairns with some very shady people like.....

ERIC SEAR CONKS: management consultant, fisser, self-proclaimed CIA agent and admitted liar.

GEORGE HARRIS: businessman, football bureaucrat and name dropper. He seems to be a mate of everyone from Bob Menzies and Dick Hamer to Jim Cairns, and offers to arrange loans for them all - with a cut for himself.

REX CONNOR: as Minister for Fuel and Energy wanted government ownership without nationalisation. So he tried to borrow \$4 billion from shady international financiers like Sirhan Shamani (however he really uses).

## but look at their enemies

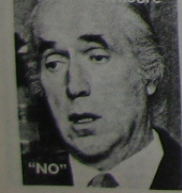


SIR FREDERICK WHEELER: parliament boss of the Treasury and chief of the Gold Standard as an industrialist's watchdog. Someone very close to the top of his department is leaking documents to...

PHILIP LYNCH: deputy-leader of the Liberal Party. This former businessman with National Civic Council links distinguished himself in the last government as minister for censorship and anti-union laws. He controlled the flow of stolen documents along with.....

GRAHAM PERKINS: editor of the "Age". He fancies himself as a linguist, but actually he's just a messenger-boy for bosses like.....

R. A. SEASHORE: boss of Unib Mining, one of the companies that Connor was borrowing money to buy out. He would have been compensated for his \$15 million a year profits, but he wanted more.









# Lynch Perkin's Attack

THE WHOLE LOANS AFFAIR has been carefully conducted by the new Phillip Lynch, the deputy leader of the Liberal opposition, and Graham Perkins, the editor of the Age.

Behind them both stands the shadowy figure of Sir Frederick Whitlam, Permanent Head of the Treasury, who, despite its apparent loyalty to the government in the Senate on Wednesday (July 17) is clearly committed to defeating the interests of capitalism ending the interests of capitalism regardless of the government's future.

At the very least, Wheeler sent a document (with a paragraph missing) to the Attorney-General's department without showing his boss, somebody in his department, with or without his permission (probably wib), his key Lynch will supplied with confidential papers. Why?

Lynch's motives in all this are clear. He wants his party back in government. Lynch is the man who drew up vicious lies against workers' rights to strike; he is the man who presided over the construction of thousands of

unwilling young Australians. He is the man who as shadow treasurer, calls for the government to slash expenditure on everything except defence.

When in government, his party spent as little as it could get away with on pensions, education and general living conditions in areas like Western Suburbs of Melbourne and Sydney. Lynch sees the loans crisis as yet another opportunity to return to the government benches in Canberra.

Perkins has far more complex motives. He works for Harold McDonald, managing director of The Age newspaper in which the Fairfax family holds a controlling interest. The Age represents that section of the bosses who supported the election of the ALP in 1972 and 1974, mostly because they thought Labor could sell wage control to the libs. Workers were successfully taken the libs.

These are the bosses who are worried about inflation. Not because it effectively cuts our wages, but because it hurts their still-limber profits.

# The plans of Minerals Rex

While "The Age" and the lesser lights of the press gaff have been attacking any Labor Party that presented itself in the mining line, the Liberal and Country Parties have concentrated their fire on Rex Connor. It's not just because Whitlam is unable to drop Connor as he did Cairns. It's also because Connor's loan is most threatening to the people that the Libs and Country Party love most: the big multinational mining companies.

Connor is a strong nationalist. He wants Australian control of all mineral

resources. Not workers' control, and certainly not via compulsory nationalisation. Rex wants to buy out the multi-nationals. That costs a lot of money and there is no way known that the government was going to give it to him.

So Rex had to go to the international financial mafia, however, even if Connor had succeeded in borrowing the money, the ICF Senate majority would have attempted to buy out Connor before allowing him to buy out companies like CRA (Cominc Ristretto of Australia) or Utah Exploration.

# The fall and fall of Jim Cairns

It is very easy to see Jim Cairns as either a martyr or a fool. He is neither. He is a victim in one sense. As Treasurer, first committed himself to supporting capitalism; notably at the Perth ALP conference. He helped write it into the ALP platform. But he

wanted to support capitalism his way. He developed a strategy of inflating industry out of the recession... with government handouts, social welfare and wage cuts like inflation tax. Treasury and the bosses wanted to control inflation with direct cuts in wages and spending; so they destroyed him.

Cairns is not a martyr because he falls by refusing to choose sides. He wanted to help both the bosses and workers. And in time like chess, that can't be done.

Dropping Cairns from Treasury was not enough. Whitlam wanted Cairns "kicked out of the Cabinet. The reason for this is that Whitlam wants to reduce further the influence of the larger left unions on his party.

Cairns, along with Connor is an intransigent representative of the unions and their leaders in the caucus. The less influence they have, the easier it is for Whitlam to Hayden to please Treasury and the

Cairns left himself open. In government, although he still kept ties with unions and officials, he needed his friends to advise him in his business policies. It would appear the more "respectable" people were not prepared to trust Cairns. The neo-conservative group. So the business advisers he was given were either rogues like George Harris and

Perkins and his friends are not necessarily trying to get rid of Labor. They want to control it. Their aim is to get anyone who might not support a budget that attacks workers' living standards out of Cabinet. They want, and they say it quite openly, a budget that attacks social welfare on wages.

The loans crisis cannot tip Labor out of office. But it can destroy its popularity and self-confidence. It can also weaken the Trade Union movement's influence on Labor politicians. What all this means is that the Cabinet is now scared that if they do not follow the Bosses' instructions to the letter, the Senate, which Labor does not control, will reject the budget and Labor will get slaughtered at the ensuing election.

The LYNG-PERKINS ATTACK is not merely an attack on several individual politicians, many of whom, like Whitlam, do not act in our interests anyway. THIS IS AN ATTACK ON US ALL. It is aimed at disciplining the Labor Party to attack the people who elected it and the workers whose unions support it.

# Tales of the Loan Arrangements



WHAT YOU MEAN "WE" WHITE MAN?

# Loan crisis CASUALTIES SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Dunstan government has scribbled home in the South Australia with an ex-Labor Independent but the balance of power.

MIKE GREWCOCK writes in Adelaide telling how it was done.

Dunstan fought the election on the basis that his government was possible for any of the Cabinet orders and that his record in the areas of transport, health and education reform warranted another term for workers, however, this is not consolation.

Dunstan has produced some minor reforms, but as far as inflation, unemployment are concerned, he has not been closer to Gough in his solving the problem...prop private enterprise and attempt to freeze wages.

Dunstan is now in an even weaker position to do an state level. Whitlam has done on a federal level surround himself with right wing policies.

"Labor has failed to resolve the problem of the average worker, who is paying the price for the present economic crisis through inflation and unemployment. This should be so, following the introduction of the following:

- A variable scale of working hours with no loss of pay so that all available work is shared without causing unemployment.
- All wages to be increased according to an A.C.T.U.-controlled price index.
- Nationalisation of the means of production without compensation and without workers' control.
- Nationalisation of the banks, insurance companies and other financial institutions, and how best to fund workers' control."

In South Australia at present Chrysler and OMI are laying off workers. Their price is \$100 million. In return, the Dunstan government is trying its hardest to cut wages to the unions with calls for wage

# Why you can't afford a house in Sunshine



WHY YOU CAN'T AFFORD A HOUSE IN SUNSHINE

# TASMANIA

During the loans affair, Labor lost the Bass by-election. A rank and file meeting of ALP members in Hobart passed the following motion of no confidence in Whitlam and his policies.

"This meeting has no confidence in the economic policies of the Whitlam Government. These policies are the dictates of the bankers and businessmen and have helped to cause the re-emerging Labor defeat in the Bass by-election."

"Labor has failed to resolve the problem of the average worker, who is paying the price for the present economic crisis through inflation and unemployment. This should be so, following the introduction of the following:

- A variable scale of working hours with no loss of pay so that all available work is shared without causing unemployment.
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- Nationalisation of the means of production without compensation and without workers' control.
- Nationalisation of the banks, insurance companies and other financial institutions, and how best to fund workers' control."

Meanwhile there was Theodore to be dealt with. During the Depression, every government in Australia fell. In Queensland, Labor had lost a by-election going for it that Bjelke-Petersen has done. It took a depression to win. But when the non-Labor parties were in, they had access to the treasury through all sorts of interesting schemes.

Before entering Federal politics, Theodore was a plan, and Treasurer of Queensland. His power base was the Australian woolgrowers, which he joined as a member. While Treasurer, he bought for the Queensland government a million dollars from Amsel and Frimels, (now corrupt ALP and Labor Party officials) who had been in the Queensland wool industry. This deal was so successful that the Federal government would not touch it. A plan, Queensland nationalist government started an inquiry into the plan. Theodore was forced to resign. He was then found his private Royal Commission, which found his private woolgrowers deal. Sir Phillip reinstated him. This

# BOSSUSERS

This is not the first time that a Labor government in the midst of an economic crisis has been faced with a threat to its existence, especially based on the misconduct of the Treasurer. The type of crisis was different. So were the charges against the Treasurer. But the cause was the same. The bosses and their friends wanted to exert direct control over the policies of a Labor government, and they wanted to weaken the influence of the Labor movement on these policies.

In 1929, after 13 years in opposition, Labor was elected to government. The ALP leader, Jimmy Scullin, was seen as a voice-winner and skilled parliamentarian, very much as Whitlam was in the early 1970s. Scullin was elected on a high tide of expectations, but facing a hostile Senate, Scullin rejected a coalition with the Liberal Party and gained full parliamentary control. Some Labor people and socialists of the time believed this was because Scullin thought a hostile Senate would allow him to control "left wing extremists" in Caucus.

Almost in the same week as Scullin was elected in Australia, the stock market plummeted in New York. Within a few months, the whole western world was in the midst of the Great Depression, and the Scullin government was faced with the task of dealing with massive unemployment in Australia.

Three basic approaches to dealing with the Depression were pushed around in parliamentary circles. The first approach was to deflate and balance the budget; in other words, to cut workers' wages and social services like pensions. Supporters of this course included Sir Robert Gibson, Chairman of the Commonwealth Bank, Sir Otto Niemeier, representative of the Bank of England, most employers, and virtually every conservative politician in the country. Gibson's rationale was that there was no home food, like Sir Frederick Wheeler today, he was in a position to manage the government policy over the direct opposition of Cabinet. His Treasury opinion was so strong that Scullin re-appointed him in June, 1930, behind the back of his government.

The second approach was proposed by Federal Treasurer Ted Tappin. It was to increase government spending, this was not seen as threatening to the bosses, their profits and their assets. Lord Roper, and Roosevelt actually approved that approach in the USA in the thirties. Neither were actively opponents of capitalism. Theodore's opinion, while not helping the bosses, also softened the blows of unemployment for the working class.

The third plan, first proposed by Jack Lang (NSW Premier) was based around repudiating debts to overseas lenders. This activity was threatening to an influential section of the bosses, though it would help the workers. Nobody in any parliament would help to support such a plan. Theodore's solution was to nationalise under workers' control, but he was not sufficiently scared of Lang to pass Federal laws to have him removed from office. This was after the Scullin Government had fallen.

Meanwhile there was Theodore to be dealt with. During the Depression, every government in Australia fell. In Queensland, Labor had lost a by-election going for it that Bjelke-Petersen has done. It took a depression to win. But when the non-Labor parties were in, they had access to the treasury through all sorts of interesting schemes.

There are differences between the attacks on the two Labor Treasurers. For one thing, Theodore was a conservative politician in the country, Gibson's rationale was that there was no home food, like Sir Frederick Wheeler today, he was in a position to manage the government policy over the direct opposition of Cabinet. His Treasury opinion was so strong that Scullin re-appointed him in June, 1930, behind the back of his government.

The real power: the bosses, their class supporters.

You even summed it up early this month when you said our boss cannot tolerate even the faintest sniff of socialism and power that is not stamped towards the ordinary people of Australia.

WHEN THINKING of buying a house in Sunshine, you can't afford it. You're not on your own. According to figures compiled by Dr. Peter Brown, an economist with the CSIRO, only 18% of workers in Melbourne's working class can afford to buy a house to set up homes can afford it.

However, you will be pleased to know that you can't afford it. You're not on your own. According to figures compiled by Dr. Peter Brown, an economist with the CSIRO, only 18% of workers in Melbourne's working class can afford to buy a house to set up homes can afford it.

John Kontek and Barry Kappel, who own a real estate agency, not houses; Kontek and Kappel don't actually live in these houses. They're real estate agents, and these houses are for speculation. But your boss is buying and selling houses in the Sunshine area for profit. About \$400,000 and all million all told.

He's how they are doing it. If the other agent would arrive, the other agent would arrive, offer a bit more than the valuation and buy your house for a million of dollars less than its market value. The place would then be sold and the agents would split the profit. Best, huh?

But not so good. A Sunshine Council official has proposed that the Sunshine Council be set up to level where workers can no longer afford to buy homes. It's the question of collusion that we find Kontek and Kappel in trouble.

The sort of collusion we find in our houses who steal from people's homes, but not thieves who steal from people's pockets.

# THEODORE

THEODORE HIMSELF

THEODORE HIMSELF

THEODORE HIMSELF

THEODORE HIMSELF

THEODORE HIMSELF

THEODORE HIMSELF

THEODORE HIMSELF

THEODORE HIMSELF







# THE Battler

"IF WE CAN'T HAVE A STRIKE WITHOUT THE THREAT OF GETTING SACKED, THEN WHAT RIGHTS HAVE WE GOT LEFT?"

That's what Roy Villinger, a worker at Lucas asked me last Monday. The hundreds and fifty workers at the Lucas battery factory in Heltenham (Melbourne) have been sacked by the bosses for going on strike. They are claiming better conditions and an improved bonus system.

"For 210,000, they expect us to do the dirtiest work in all Melbourne. And it's because we are new Australians that we are being asked to do it. It's the worst deal in all Lucas."

"Every week we get the blood test from the doctor and the sister, we also have to piss in the bottle, you know? They are testing for lead in the blood, the conditions are terrible. We ask for soap to wash our hands and they bring us brushes."

Greek workers at Lucas.

The company had promised to consider the workers' demands and give them an answer. But instead of answers, they kept getting further promises that the company would consider their demands. On Monday July 8th, the company promised an answer on Tuesday, but the workers went on strike. On Tuesday, the bosses promised an answer on Thursday, but they heard nothing until Friday, when they all got a telegram telling them that because they were on strike, they were fired and could collect their pay from the security guard.

The workers in the Electrical section went back to work, but the battery workers just got angry at the crude attempt at blackmail. The battery workers met outside the Lucas factory last Monday to continue their strike and press their demands.

"They have a bonus system... it has 100 minutes in every hour. We are supposed to make 317 Batteries a day. With the bonus, we work like hell, sometimes make up to 600 batteries. We should get at least another \$100... we get \$30. They have the biggest profit I ever heard of. That's how they use the Negroes in Africa. They complain about the shortage of migrants and then expect them to do all the dirtiest work. They want more and more labour."

"We asked for a scale to calculate the bonuses; some

# Lucas Wires Threat

by Phil Griffiths

YOUR FAILURE TO RESUME WORK IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DISPUTES PROCEDURE EXPLAINED TO YOU BY MR R HANBLING YOUR SHOP STEWARD MAKES YOUR TERMINATION UNAVOIDABLE STOP ONE WEEKS PAY IN LIEU OF NOTICE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION FROM THE LUCAS SECURITY OFFICE AT 10AM 15/7/75 STOP LOSS OF BUSINESS RESULTING FROM THIS STOPPAGE HAS ALREADY REDUCED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY BUT DETAILS OF REINSTATEMENT AVAILABLE TO YOU ON PREVIOUS CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT ARE OBTAINABLE FROM THE PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT STOP  
 ATNc 930311 EXT 282 OR 342  
 ATNc AMROSE PERSONNEL MANAGER JOSEPH LUCAS (AUSTRALIA) PTY LTD  
 Every striking worker at Lucas, including the shop steward, received one of these standover telegrams on Friday, July 11th.

lines have waited six months and still haven't got them."

Last Monday, officials of the Electrical Trades Union, the AMU and the Storemen and Packers' Union turned up at Lucas to negotiate with the bosses. The company offered to withdraw the notices if the workers went back. They also offered to begin immediate 'discussions' on the bonus scheme, but added that they were definitely not going to agree to any wage rises.

At the strike meeting, the officials reported on the negotiations, but refused to give any leadership to the struggle "because we've just walked in, halfway through. It's your fight, you started it and it's your decision what you do with it."



## 'Battler' Fighting Fund

OUR first fighting fund has gone OVER THE TOP. The Battler needs \$200 a month to stay afloat, and in June, we raised \$372.88!

Thanks to the following:  
 RA \$10  
 JB \$2  
 SF \$2.85  
 SA \$20  
 PFP \$10  
 W \$8  
 Trade and Treasury stall \$70.04  
 North East fundraising party \$150

The July Battler Fund is open again. Despite last month's success, our position is still touchy. We have to meet our \$200 target this month as well. You can help with a supporting subscription to 'The Battler' (\$10) or a donation of any amount. Please make cheques payable to SNAC and mail them to: The Battler, Box 187, Fitzroy, Vic 3065 or hand them to your Battler's seller!



11 JUL 1975



# THE Battler

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS' ACTION GROUP

Number 9, August 16, 1975. 10 cents.

# WHAT THE PRESS WORKED FOR: 'PROFITS' BUDGET.

ON TUESDAY, August 19, Bill Hayden will stand up in the House of Representatives and read the 1975 Budget speech. And in boardrooms around Australia, the bosses will drink his health.

For over two years, the Labor Government tried to do it both ways. It tried to improve life for Australian workers at the same time as trying to manage Australian capitalism. And it failed at both.

It has presided over the worst recession for forty years. And on Tuesday, Bill Hayden will reverse most of the reforms the government actually succeeded in starting.

The Budget will slash spending on Education, the means test will stay and there will be less money for pensions and social welfare schemes. The Compensation and Rehabilitation scheme will be shelved, along with schemes for improving life in suburbs like Sunshine and Liverpool. Unemployment relief work is being phased out. At the same time, the Treasurer will announce a massive order of weapons and equipment for the Armed Forces.

This is an attack on all working-class Australians. But it's an attack on us as individuals, rather than an attack on us as workers. That makes it harder to fight back. At work, we use the unions to defend ourselves. As individuals, what do we have?

The union movement must take up the budget as a political issue.

Labor was in trouble from the start, because it is committed to reforming society through Parliament. But while it may have had the numbers to "control" Parliament, the captains of industry had control of the economy. And that's what's

## profits

In November last year, the Labor government began a deliberate policy of boosting profits and restraining wages. It protected the car industry with tax cuts and import quotas, it wrote protection of profits into the party platform. It handed out over a million dollars to companies that threatened to sack workers and it fought every wage claim as if it was treason.

But business was still not satisfied. Cameron and Cairns were still considered to be "soft" on the unions and social

welfare. So the Treasury (under the guiding hand of Sir Frederick Wheeler) and the press manufactured the loans crisis to humiliate and discipline the Labor government. And the Labor leaders went right along with it. Whitlan sacked Cairns and Cameron, replacing them with right-wingers.

Faced with a recession, the Labor government was in a dilemma. The bosses and the press were screaming for something to be done. And hundreds of thousands of workers were out of a job. Social reforms don't seem very impressive when you can't get work.

But there is only one way for a capitalist economy to get out of a recession. And that's by boosting profits at the expense of wages. With business screaming for action, Whitlan had a choice: either attack workers' wages himself, or lose a snap election and have Malcolm Fraser do it for him.



Bill Hayden: specially appointed Treasurer because the bosses trusted him to swing the axe.

Finally, the bosses demanded blood. Government spending is causing inflation, and inflation is causing unemployment, they screamed. The deficit has to be cut. Labor has to sacrifice its "idealistic schemes" in favour of "hard-headed realism" and "economic rationalism". What they mean is business profit.

What they mean is business profit.

So the "idealistic schemes" which are so important to our lives are to be axed. The government has written inflation into the rule book by supporting the price rise... solely to boost their flagging profits of \$100,000,000 a year (see centre page). And unemployment is higher now than it was a year ago when the government started its program of boosting profits.

Whitlan and his party collected a lot of money from the Trade Unions and votes from their members to get where they are today.

We have to make it clear inside our Unions that we finance Labor to support our interests, not BHP's. We cannot continue to rely on just voting for Labor. Parliamentarians to defend us. We have to organise ourselves.

# THE B.I.P. STORY

page 4

MAN!







# The socialist Darlings of Australian capitalism

Report by  
Tess Lee Ack

## ... & their justified profits

Can you imagine the fuss if a trade union went to the Arbitration Court for seven pay rises in the space of two years and got every one of them?

The papers would scream about inflation. The bosses would howl they could not afford to pay, and that if they did they would have to pass the cost along to the consumer by putting up prices. The Labor government would reluctantly oppose the rises and the Liberal Opposition would attack the government for not opposing the rises more vigorously.

There's no danger of any of that happening. The Arbitration Court is far too loyal a boss's court, but in another court of the land the seventh rise in two years was granted and NOT ONE MILLION ON KENSFARMS COMPLAINED.

The Prices Justification Tribunal was supposed to place the same restrictions on bosses that the Arbitration Court places on workers. Which is why BHP has not been knocked back once in all the times it's gone there asking for more.

Yet BHP's price rise is the most inflationary thing that could happen at the moment. As every factory worker knows, steel is the single most important element in manufacture whether it is in heavy industry where the product is steel or the light industry where the machines involved in production are steel. Therefore, any rise in steel will get it's way through to the consumer. Even the Herald, which supports the rise, calculated it would cause a 1/2 rise in the cost of living. He calculates it closer to 5/8.

The next thing we'll see is 1/2, 3/8.

even the best  
Battler seller  
can't reach  
everyone...



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In a recent interview with the Melbourne Herald, Sir Ian McLeann, the broken Hill Proprietary company limited (BHP) since 1977, as "the lucky country". Why? - because everyone has a well-paid, described and good living standards because they are well-educated because they can choose the kind of life we want to lead? No. According to Sir Ian, the fact is that "Australia is a very good place for any mining or industrial worker". Well, that's very nice for him. Born into a rich family, educated at Scotch College and Melbourne University, and for nearly 30 years one of the top executives of Australia's most powerful company, he may well think of himself as "lucky". But BHP employs 60,000 people. Very few of those would have as much cash as Sir Ian to think they are "lucky".

BHP doesn't have a very nice history, and its friends and relations in political circles aren't very nice either. Because BHP is such a huge enterprise, dealing with essential goods (mainly iron and steel), and with a huge number of subsidiary companies, anything it does affects most of us in one way or another. It can have enormous influence on Australia's economic and political life. The latest price rise is just one example. And BHP has been affecting people for a long time.

BHP was set up to mine silver-lead at Broken Hill in 1885 by a syndicate of seven men. It did extremely well for them - share prices rose from 17 in 1885 to 305 in 1888. The original seven thought they'd better quit while they were ahead, so they sold out. That's how BHP got into the hands of the big businessmen -- not foreign capitalists, but the genuine home-grown article, many of the same families (like the Darlings and Baillies) that control a lot of Australian business today.

### exploited

BHP's fantastic profits in the early years were due partly to the profitable nature of silver-lead, but perhaps equally to the fact that the miners were incredibly exploited. They worked 48 hours a week for low wages under appalling conditions. Many miners died in accidents or from lead-poisoning. The workers had to fight in a series of strikes in the 1890's for recognition of their union and minimal improvements in conditions, like a 2-hour cut in the working week. In 1892 they struck for four months against the company's policy of employing non-union labour. During the strike, union leaders were jailed and an army of police sent to smash the strike, the bosses cut wages and restored the 48 hour week.

John Keating II, one of BHP's directors and later chairman until 1914, declared his intention to "drive his industry to meeting unionists out of existence".

and was now firmly established, in spite of Darling, and was to play an important role in later years.

The Darling fortunes came from what and flour; the Baillies' from lead speculation. In 1916, the Baillies built Colling Wood in Melbourne, from which they and their friends in the business world directed their expanding company interests, of which BHP was only one. The Collins House Empire, it was known, moved into many areas and in 1961 was described by the Financial Review as "the most prolific parent of new industrial enterprises Australia has ever seen".

Under the control of the Darlings, continued to expand. When the silver-lead began to give out in the late century, BHP switched to steel manufacture. They weren't the first, but with the Collins House connections, it wasn't too long before they were the biggest, able to take over all the competition. After a serious strike at the Alibon works in 1914, the NSW Labor government looked into the possibility of nationalising a State Iron and Steel Works. It went so far as to pass a bill, but when BHP announced its decision to establish a State Iron and Steel Works, the government's plans were dropped. By 1915, BHP had a complete monopoly of the iron and steel industry in Australia.



W.L. Baillieu

of the iron and steel industry in Australia.



These are BHP's steel mills.

After shifts within the company it continued, Darling remained powerful for many years, but not alone. The position Lewis became General Manager in 1921 and backed up the company policy of super-exploitation and union-busting. They had no qualms about the use of the word by administration seem to be a "unjustified failure". These pleasant character traits appear to be shared by his nephew, NSW Premier Tom Lewis (and also one of the most men in parliament). Assistant Lewis ruled BHP (presumably unconstitutionally) for over 30 years, ousting Darling and eventually becoming the company's first full-time Chairman. The 30 year period included the Depression and World War Two. Men, women and children starved in Newcastle, but BHP did not suffer drastically during the Depression - it was already too big. Lewis got on very well with Tom Menzies, Prime Minister for the first two years of the war. That was when Menzies earned the name "Big Iron Boss". According to one historian, "Menzies gave Lewis all the co-operation, finance and power which he sought". Although he preferred Menzies, Lewis managed to get by with little or no damage to BHP profits when the Labor Party's John Curtin was elected.

Since the war, BHP has been one of the most profitable enterprises around, mainly a result of the minerals from Australia. They moved into a large number of metal industries, including manufacture of rails, wire, electrical machinery and tools of all kinds. It has a major interest in the Commonwealth Aircraft Factory and their most recent coup was to get ownership of half the oil and natural gas discoveries in Bass Strait, together with production and distribution rights. Even so, the other half, who said capitalists have to compete to list all the companies that BHP owns, don't seem to have a major interest in it. It would seem to have a restricted interest in it, but not a major barrier. Their interests are spread all over Australia either. They have imperial interests in Bougainville, New Zealand and Vietnam (mainly in off-shore mining rights). They had a major interest in Vietnam, until the F.A.G. victory.

It is not surprising that politicians, particularly of the Liberal variety, fall over each other trying to get close to BHP - the man who control it that is, not those who work in the mine and mill.

Sir Henry Water, former Victorian Premier, asked Sir Ian Lewis to be chairman of the interim committee to set up Monash University. Lewis declined, but BHP didn't miss out. J.C. Monash, managing director of BHP, is currently a member of the Monash University Council. The people who talk about red under the bed should take a look at BHP.

They're under the beds of a high proportion of Australian hospitals, for anyone with the added luck of being poor, destitute, particularly in the Liberal or Labor parties. And after the election, they have the opportunity to grant a price rise based on profitability. Some after the election, four from Labor. Meanwhile, the workers who mine and manufacture BHP's goods are on being exploited and other workers who are living standards because BHP has to keep its profits up.

Sir Ian McLeann is right. Australia is a lucky country. For anyone with the added luck of being poor or destitute, the Liberal or Labor parties have the opportunity to grant a price rise based on profitability. Some after the election, four from Labor. Meanwhile, the workers who mine and manufacture BHP's goods are on being exploited and other workers who are living standards because BHP has to keep its profits up.

Small text block containing names and addresses, possibly related to the industrial union mentioned in the article.

## Industrial murder ... & Resistance

A Royal Commission was set up in 1914 to investigate the unusually large number of deaths in BHP's mines. The danger of working in the mines was high on the Amalgamated Miners' Association's list of grievances. Royal Commissions in various days were set up to investigate as they are now. It came to the conclusion that "the safety of the men is guarded already very carefully by the management and the men, both as a matter of humanity and of business." The union decided that, if its members were going to lose their lives, then they would lose what was dearest to them: their profits. They had no qualms about the use of the word by administration seem to be a "unjustified failure". These pleasant character traits appear to be shared by his nephew, NSW Premier Tom Lewis (and also one of the most men in parliament). Assistant Lewis ruled BHP (presumably unconstitutionally) for over 30 years, ousting Darling and eventually becoming the company's first full-time Chairman. The 30 year period included the Depression and World War Two. Men, women and children starved in Newcastle, but BHP did not suffer drastically during the Depression - it was already too big. Lewis got on very well with Tom Menzies, Prime Minister for the first two years of the war. That was when Menzies earned the name "Big Iron Boss". According to one historian, "Menzies gave Lewis all the co-operation, finance and power which he sought". Although he preferred Menzies, Lewis managed to get by with little or no damage to BHP profits when the Labor Party's John Curtin was elected.

Working conditions remained the key industrial issue in the mines. In 1919, the workers struck BHP again. It was literally a fight for their lives, and the strike lasted nearly two years. A government investigation found that many of the miners suffered from influenza or pneumoconiosis -- brought on by inhaling dust particles thrown up by the drills. This disease more often than not led to tuberculosis. During the two years of the investigation and strike, 22 men died of TB. In a fantastic display of solidarity, workers all over Australia supported the miners, and it paid off. Tremendous gains were won: 15 hour week for the underground men; night shift was abolished; the 250 men with pneumoconiosis and TB received pensions; 1400 men received a fortnight's paid holiday throughout the mines and mills were increased. Almost all of these victories were revolutionary for the time it can be done.

IT'S STILL HAPPENING! In July this year, nine BHP workers on the wharves at Port Kembla who were affected by the poisonous fumes from the nearby steel works went to the First Aid Post for treatment. When they went back to work the fumes got to them again, but they were threatened with the sack if they dared leave their jobs again. A union official went to see the wharves, but they got certificates giving them the next few days off work. They were sacked. The midnight shift was stood down for a few hours and then told to start work under the same conditions. When they refused, they too were sacked.

A week later, two men were killed and eleven injured, four of them seriously, in an explosion at the Port Kembla Steel Works. Union officials were refused permission to enter the site. In fact, BHP didn't even bother to tell the union what had happened. A union man for BHP showed some concern for the fact that the battery would be closed down for a week when for the absence of men and material. After all, what are human lives compared with profits?

## SWAG BOOK SERVICE

Just arrived from Pluto Press!

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 Workers' Handbook No. 1  
 "The Rewards of Work: How to Fight Them" by Patrick Minter.  
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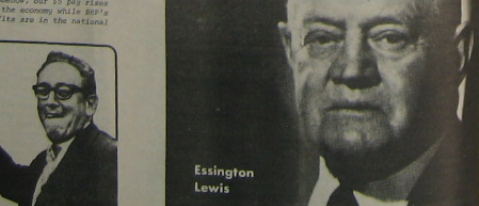
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 Physical hazards; patterns of work; chemical hazards; disease; prevention of accidents; the legal machinery; safety; winning damages; industrial machinery; the directory of toxic substances.

**WORKERS' HANDBOOK NO. 2**  
 "Your Employer's Profits" by Christopher Levy.  
 This book is reviewed on page 3 of the Battler.  
 \$2.25 (+\$0.07 post)

For a full list of publications and orders, write to SWAG BOOK SERVICE, P.O. Box 181, Fitzroy, 3061.

The author of this book states that workers will not achieve good health "until a massive and concerted effort is made on the conditions of work that cause not only disease, but also increasing mental stress and disruption to social life."

By this definition, millions of workers are clearly not enjoying good health. The BHP workers don't just happen to be unlucky.



Essington Lewis







# THE Battler



# THE Battler

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS' ACTION GROUP

Number 10, September 13, 1975 10 CENTS

COAL MINERS are fighting a national campaign for higher wages (increased to the cost of living) and improved conditions. Our reports come from Queensland and the NSW 'South Coast'. There is a national overtime ban, and the miners held a five day strike two weeks ago. They are using the fact that the coalmines rely heavily on overtime.

The miners have run into some pretty hysterical opposition. In Queensland, the Bjelke-Petersen government slipped on power rationing and threatened to declare a State of Emergency (again!). In Wollongong, they have been locked out and threatened with the sack.

For the miners, the important demands are not just the money demands (a pay rise and a privately negotiated indentation agreement). They are fighting for security of tenure and unlimited compensation for injury.

Coal mining is one of the most dangerous industries... Miners risk death and injury through illness (miner's disease or pneumoconiosis, TB and other lung complaints), and accident. In 1973, there was an explosion in one of the West Moreton mines supplying Swanbank power station. A number of miners were buried under thousands of tonnes of rock and earth.

But miners are only eligible for six months compensation, though many injuries last for much longer. Miners are demanding an unlimited period of compensation. The owners merely offered extended "compassionate leave".



Miners at a meeting in Wollongong. Photo: Common Cause

## MINERS FIGHT TWO STATE ATTACK

Reports from Brisbane & Wollongong N.S.W.

### Queensland

The Swanbank power station is situated around three miles in the West Moreton field, at Ipswich, just west of Brisbane. Swanbank supplies nearly all electric power to South-east Queensland, including Brisbane. For months, the coal reserves at Swanbank were run-down due to mismanagement and the mine-owners' cashing in on high export prices. The mines also rely on the miners doing lots of overtime. So when the Miners' Federation and the Combined Miners' Union slipped on an overtime ban, there was a sudden shortage of coal... and especially at Swanbank.

When the miners went on a five day strike, the government introduced severe power rationing, hundreds of thousands of factory workers were stood down. The real cause of the power rail

oning was the running down of reserves, but the Bjelke-Petersen government, and the Minister for Mines (Camm), blamed the miners and threatened to use sea-labor to mine the coal and rail it to Swanbank. Only the implied threat of a general strike stopped them.

The Brisbane Trades and Labor Council stepped in to 'solve' the dispute. They decided to ask the miners to work through their mid-year holidays and produce enough coal to keep Swanbank operating. Mines minister Camm demanded that his quota of 63,000 tonnes a week actually start arriving before he would lift the restrictions. The TIC figured that this could be made up by mining 28,000 tonnes at West Moreton and ralling 35,000 tonnes from the Blackwater mine in central Queensland.

Led by well-known company director and union secretary, Jack Sporton, the TIC officials

tricked their way out to the mines. The Combined Mining Unions co-operated by throwing every insult under the sun at the miners who wanted to actually enforce their overtime ban and win their claims.

The miners agreed to exempt Swanbank power station from the campaign and guaranteed to supply the coal demanded by the government. However, at their meeting, many rank and file miners spoke bitterly of the progress of the campaign and the way the union officials were leading it.

The power restrictions have now been lifted, but that doesn't help the miners - their overtime ban is being undermined. The unions are now threatening a complete ban on the export of coal unless their demands are met. This attacks the bosses and can't be used by the media to divide the workers. It should have been struck at the start of the campaign!

### N.S.W.

In Wollongong, on the NSW South Coast, coal miners have linked their struggle to the national metal trades campaign. They are also fighting for award provisions already won at the Clutha mines.

At the South Bulli Colliery 889 miners were fired by the owners, Ballambi, for enforcing the Unions' overtime ban. The miners at South Bulli were working 7000 hours of overtime a week... equivalent to full-time jobs for 200 workers. It is that level of exploitation that's making the overtime ban effective.

At the Coal Cliff, (owned GSA, see also article on page 2) 800 workers were locked out on July 5th. They received support from special levies amongst Port Kembla wharves, and other workers. They continued strikes by continuing their battles and leading the struggle on the South Coast.

OVER FIVE PERCENT of the Australian workforce is now unemployed! Even the Government admits that another 100,000 workers will be unemployed before things get any better. The Moore "guidelines" on Wage Indexation are attacking workers' living standards. Even the few crumbs that Indexation was supposed to give us are being stolen while the Arbitration Commission and the bosses' lawyers wait for the latest decision for two months after the promised date.

The ACTU is holding its biennial congress this week (beginning September 15). Delegates from all over the country will be gathering at South Melbourne Town Hall to decide policy for the Trade Union movement for the next two years.

There are two central things this congress should be doing. Planning a fight against unemployment and planning a fight against wage restraint. Working out what action it will take to defend the jobs and living standards of the hundreds of thousands of workers it represents.

Instead of which it is certain to be spending large amounts of its time discussing Bourkes Discount, ACTU-Solo and all the other business enterprises that the ACTU shouldn't even be involved in. Most of all it will be discussing how the Trade Union movement should save the Labor Government even if it means further wage cuts (restraint).

The ACTU congress is supposed to be the one time in each two year period that the rank and file of the movement gets to exercise some control over the leadership. In fact, many of the delegates are in no way answerable to their rank and file and most of these won't get a chance to speak anyway. In past performances, the executive does most of the talking and dominates the congress.

boosting the bosses' profits (by re-negotiating prices). It strengthens their resistance to being bought out, and with the money to make their options count is going to put the money up for him to buy back the coal mines for the government.

The only way the mines will be nationalised is by the struggle and agitation of the rank and file miners, by occupying mines under threat of closure and demanding their nationalisation without compensation.

The only way miners can guarantee that the mines will be run in the interests of both coalminers and the miners is for the rank and file to run the mines themselves, under workers' control.

Re Connor is not going to lead that kind of struggle for those kinds of demands. Why then does the Miners' Federation leadership grovel at him?

## What We Think

THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT is talking about closing down the West Moreton coal field next year, when the new fields at Gladstone begin production. Yet, at the moment, the industry is relying heavily on high amounts of overtime. It's criminal that in an industry relying so heavily on overtime, jobs are so insecure.

The miners are committed to calling for nationalisation, but there has been little done about it. In fact, the leadership of the miners' union is solely praising Rex Connor's price of coal and trying to 'buy back' Australian mineral resources.

Yet it is precisely Rex Connor whose plans are the greatest obstacle to nationalisation. While he concentrates on



Miners in Queensland preparing to go underground. Photo: Common Cause

## 'Battler' Fighting Fund

The July fund raised \$126.60. Not bad, but not good enough.

"The Battler" needs \$200 a month to stay afloat -- which means we need a special effort during August.

If you like the "Battler", if you agree that socialist papers don't have to be boring, then why not take up a collection at work?

Or give your Battler seller a little something extra? Or take out a supporting

subscription for \$10? All donations, great and small, help us to keep coming out. Thanks to the following: M.A. \$40, M.M. \$8, M.G. \$41.20, G.P. \$20, L.C.G.P. \$10 (supporting sub). You can post your donation to: The Battler, Box 187, Fitzroy, Vic. 3068.

# INSIDE: police attack printers, butchers

## On the Spot Report from PORTUGAL p4,5



## HAYDEN'S BUDGET:

# The Great Tax Fraud

THE BUDGET IS A ROBBER BUDGET. It was written by Treasury, the official trustees of big business and it's a direct attack on our living standards and our jobs. The Budget is aimed at restoring billions of dollars in corporate tax cuts and company allowances. However, this year, the government expects to collect 85 less in company tax (for 305 less after inflation) and \$2,000,000,000 more in income taxes.

The so-called reform of the tax scales is a fraud. Single workers and those without families will pay more tax, those on high incomes will pay a lot less. But the worst fraud is that your tax rockets when you take wage increases into account.

You end up paying a higher percentage of your income in tax.

Then there's the slug from indirect tax. It doesn't matter whether you're on \$100 a week or \$1000 a week, you pay the same tax for beer and cigarettes. And you pay the same increases in stamps, telephone calls and petrol.

The government's whole strategy is to rob the pockets of the working class. The government is pushing the wage indexation guidelines so hard, And there's why the government is prepared to do anything, even unemployment to "right" inflation.

What do we get in return. A larger sum to put down rebellions on Bougainville and break strikes, less money for pensioners who are expected to starve to help pay for it. And less for school building and housing and urban development... all problems that hardly touch the rich but his hardest at life in the working class suburbs.

Crushing the AED scheme will cost 30,000 workers their jobs. There is another solution to the economic crisis. A solution that says the economy should be run in the interests of all of society, and not just the wealthy few who own it. A solution that says that everyone is entitled to a job, that companies who sack workers should be nationalised and run under workers control in industry.

With militant union leaders and labour government co-ordinating the workers' attack, we have to organise our defence ourselves. We need to win the fight for our wages and our jobs. It just happens to be more profitable that way.

The government has rejected solutions that attack the bosses. It was "forced" to because its own half-hearted attempts to reform worsened the economic crisis. Profits dropped, the bosses got scared and refused to invest, unemployment soared.

The record of this labour government proves the weakness of "parliamentary socialism". It attempted to improve the lot of workers by raising wages and to improve the economy without involving the workers in parliament. And that's why it failed. When the economy got into trouble, it had to go back to the workers' confidence. And that's why it failed. When the economy got into trouble, it had to go back to the workers' confidence. And that's why it failed.

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THE NEW TAX SCALES are a utter fraud. They pretend to reduce income tax for workers and low-income families. In fact, your tax will tax much higher percentage of your pay next year. We've drawn up a table for you to show exactly how much showing what they'll pay next year compared to this year.

EXAMPLE 1. Worker with either a dependent spouse or two children

1975 tax	tax per	% of wages	1976 tax	tax per	% of wages
debt'n	week	week	debt'n	week	week
\$80	\$4.00	5%	\$84	\$4.20	5.25%
\$100	\$10.04	10%	\$104	\$10.40	10.4%
\$120	\$13.68	11.4%	\$144	\$12.00	10%
\$140	\$17.28	12.3%	\$172	\$12.40	8.86%
\$160	\$19.96	12.48%	\$196	\$14.00	8.75%

EXAMPLE 2. Single worker, no dependents

1975 tax	tax per	% of wages	1976 tax	tax per	% of wages
debt'n	week	week	debt'n	week	week
\$80	\$4.08	5.1%	\$88	\$4.40	5.5%
\$100	\$6.60	6.6%	\$112	\$7.00	7%
\$120	\$8.64	7.2%	\$136	\$9.00	7.5%
\$140	\$10.68	7.6%	\$160	\$10.00	7.1%
\$160	\$12.72	7.95%	\$184	\$11.60	7.25%

The talk about tax savings is all based on incomes not changing during 1976. We've assumed that everyone's pay goes up by 22% during the next year (the government's own estimate). But if your pay does not during the year (and it doesn't you'll "real" real), then your tax rockets. So much for the reform!

## What We Think

There is ANOTHER SOLUTION to the economic crisis. A solution that says the economy should be run in the interests of all of society, and not just the wealthy few who own it. A solution that says that everyone is entitled to a job, that companies who sack workers should be nationalised and run under workers control in industry.

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CRT: Revolutionary councils of workers, soldiers and sailors. Committees through which the working class organises itself to deal with political issues.

CF: Workers' committees. Elected committees of workers primarily engaged in trade union activity.

COFOP: Continental General Command, sometimes called the Internal Security Force, set up by the MFA predominantly left wing.

PPF: Portuguese Party of the Proletariat. One of the two organisations on the revolutionary left with an important base in the working class. Initiators of the '68'.

UPD: Popular Democratic Union, the other important revolutionary organisation with a working class base. Marxist. Prore to sectarianism.

MFA: Armed Forces Movement. Group of mid-level officers responsible for the coup in April 1974. Present government consists of 3 MFA officers.

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# Who's Who in Portugal

COSTA GOMES: President of the Republic. Leader of the right wing of the MFA.

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ADRIANO VAS GONCALVES: Revolutionary Government Minister. His appointment prospects a victory to the right.

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## INSIDE THE REVOLUTION: Fighting the bosses

Does your employer think he's good for something? To give "education" to the workers in the Carcam Engineering Works, which I visited, how kicked out the boss and are doing fine without him.

The chief engineer, who was earning \$2000 a month - far more than the others - was kept on for a time. But when it became clear he was opposed to the workers, he too was kicked out. He no longer has a job. "All he did was coordinate," they say. "We were in a few discussions and got along without him."

By April the workers decided their employers' shady business practices were endangering the firm. They seized the factory and asked the government to investigate. When the boss tried to slip the country, they caught him at the airport and physically prevented him from leaving. Now his name is on the blacklist kept by the airport workers and he cannot escape.

A workers' commission was elected to run the plant, along with an administrative committee composed of three workers' representatives and one representative of the government. They promptly "forgot" the boss' debts!

"These are his problems," they said. "I know that the firm has been in the black every year."

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Of course there is a hitch. The company has customers. A firm in France, the owners of that firm are unhappy about a worker-controlled company. What an example for their own workers! Fortunately they can't afford to cancel the existing contracts, but new contracts will be hard to get.

So in the long run they need a change in the society around them. They know that. That is why they told us, calmly and matter-of-factly, that they are for a socialist revolution.

## INSIDE THE REVOLUTION: Fighting the landlord

Libson University in spacious, modern and well equipped. But if you climb through a hole in the wire fence behind the sports area you enter another world. Here you will find one of Lisbon's shantytowns, inhabited by workers, often peasants forced to come to the city by rural unemployment.

All this time, the owner of the land could see the houses on from his window. But what do do - call the police? (Many still own ex-landowners and ex-Portuguese.)

Shanty town houses vary in standard from shacks built temporary to shacks made of cardboard and straw. Most houses do not have water or any services. The area is surrounded by six lane highways - a priority for the former fascist army. Large traffic of land stands used nearby - suitable for houses but privately owned.

The neighbourhood committee of Bairro da Quinta da Calçada decided enough. Two months ago they served notice on a local landowner to hand over land for houses. On August 4th the situation is unsettled to say the least. As long as a Portuguese situation is unsettled to say the least. As long as a Portuguese situation is unsettled to say the least. As long as a Portuguese situation is unsettled to say the least.

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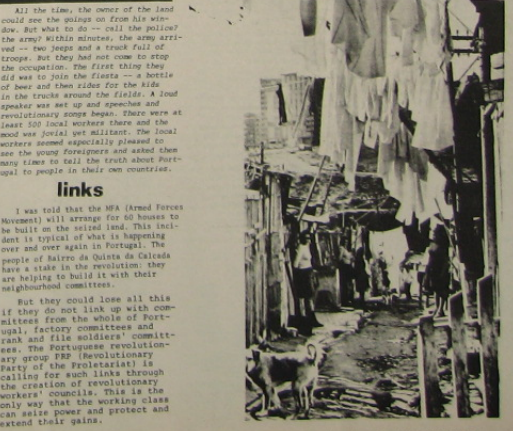
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**SEND TO: Show Column** Send your reports to: Box 187, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065 or phone us on 654-2414.

**Grounded**

Union officers threatened from eleven Communist Ministers and Public Service Officers. They work for Quantas, TAB and other public enterprises. The government has moved to obstruct the airlines from flying over the straits for the next 125 days.

**Cyclone**

Two hundred and fifty metal workers have started a strike for a 25% raise. They are trying to continue their strike till Monday 9th.

**Killed**

A demolition worker was killed when he was struck on the head by a brick which collapsed at the site of the old Canon Terrace. There was a mishap called "off between the brick and the worker" which should work on the underground site, but there's a real one that claims building workers' lives. It's called the class-war and safety conditions are one of the main reasons.

**Showday**

Telecommunications workers planned a day of support of their claim for a showday holiday. The Telecommunications Commission were prepared to meet the workers' demands. Minister for Labor "Blamey" Jim McLeish was not. But he showed his true colors when Telecommunications started losing \$250,000 a day operating on the old telephone system.

**Chrysler**

Meanwhile, in South Australia, Chrysler is having its share of fun, but as usual, it's the workers who are expected to pay. VMI members at the Holden Springs in Queensland are on strike for a claim of \$9.30. So-Tag supplies Chrysler's plants in South Australia. When they heard of the strike, Chrysler immediately threatened to lay off their 4,500 workers. And the response of the VMIU? The Acting Assistant Secretary in South Australia asked the workers at So-Tag to allow the company to supply Chrysler with springs from its stockpile, thus undermining their strike. That's solidarity, VMI style. What's more, it was in the \$9.30 claim is a follow-on claim from rises won at O&M and Ford. The So-Tag

**LaTrobe**

LaTrobe University blue collar workers are on strike. They were on strike last Tuesday, September 2. There were two issues outstanding to their old award, and SIPS (State Income and Superannuation) was being paid to all workers. A strike over the same issues was ended with the same issues. The "discussions" at the workers' claims were rejected. They will be another stoppage on Tuesday 9th, with the possibility of an indefinite strike.

**Renault**

Renault have threatened to close down their West Heidelberg car plant and such 1,000 workers if the government doesn't reverse tariffs on cars imported for assembly in Australia. So far, we haven't seen anything from the Vehicle Builders Union about how Renault workers can defend their jobs. The VBU has been a disaster at defending jobs through the whole industry. The car companies have hired and fired at will using car workers' jobs as an excuse. They are in their hands. The Princes Park Unification Tribunal and the Government.

**Railways**

RAILWAY WORKERS in Melbourne held a stoppage meeting on September 10 to discuss their claim for 40 over-award payment and a 35-cent hour. The meeting in Unity Hall started quiet, but became more and more angry when the railway workers heard that their claim had been rejected out of hand by the bosses. The union proposed initial action - sending the mass claim back to the wage tribunal for reconsideration. If they refuse the claim, the officials said there will be a strike and other job action. This is an improvement on the Communist who when the union first submitted its claim and the leadership had no plans to cope with a rejection.

**Al my friends are getting Battlers**

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Editor, published and printed by Socialist Workers' Party, Box 187, P.O. Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065.

8 THE BATTLE September 13 1975

8 THE BATTLE 6 April 1976

**Letters**

Dear Sir,

Your report on the Coal and Colliery (later) Aug 16 Mining award is a very good one. It gives a basic explanation of the current award campaign, and also to have a full appreciation of the present situation it is necessary to refer to the award passed in 1974 and the campaign against the combined "mining award" that was introduced at the end of the year. The stated aim at the commencement of that campaign was to establish a new award by direct negotiation with the employers. As a result of a wage increase of 540 for every ton in the 1974 award.

The necessity to achieve a 540 increase was brought about by the mining unions' previous blind acceptance of arbitrated awards, almost without exception over the past 25 years. As a result of the award, mining unions have confronted the Coal Industry Tribunal and after lengthy hearings were given small wage increases in return for allowing the owners certain rights in respect to increased production.

The 540 campaign was successful due largely to the solidarity of rank and file and the independent industrial action taken by miners in the Wollongong area.

One aspect of the 540 campaign was the demand for a new award. The outcome of the present struggle is that last year an industrial agreement was reached by the Coal and Colliery Unions and the Clutha Development Co. which operates all seven mines in the surrounding Valley of M.C.M. This agreement provided for the payment of the 540 together with quarterly cost of living adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index, and applied to the maximum rate of pay. However, in return the unions agreed to a cooling off period of 60 hours before taking any future period of industrial action. This has had the effect of creating within the industry a two-wage structure. Clutha employees, by virtue of the cost of living increases, now receive \$61 per week as against \$126 per week paid to the remainder of the industry.

With the settlement of the 1974 campaign, it was agreed by Colliery Unions and the union that when the award expired in February 1975 the unions would put forward a log of claims only after the award had been reached on a substantial number of points, and the results would be submitted to arbitration.

From the outset of negotiations in January, it was immediately apparent that the owners had no intention of negotiating a new award but rather to offer the unions back to the tribunal. A counter claim was served up to the unions by the proprietors, in which they sought the right to refuse to work for 7 days per week, 52 weeks per year, together with a 7 day roster system for maintenance employees. A series of 24 hour stoppages and district

aggregate meetings took place during the following month, a feature of the meetings was the continued rank and file to put up the case. The Liaison Committee for rank and file the campaign, declined to negotiate with the employers and continued to hold talks with the employers.

When the "Moore decision" on arbitration was handed down in April, the owners stated that they would continue to negotiate with the unions and Colliery Unions. A telegram was received by the Minister for Labor, Senator Franks, indicating the government's attitude to arbitrated wage setting, stating that he could not support the miners' claims.

The unions have since modified original claims and have stated the they are prepared to withdraw their demand for wage indexation in preference in the Clutha agreement.

The owners have withdrawn an offer to increase their offer to no return to negotiate.

An overtime ban and closing of the mine has had a dramatic effect upon the level of production.

The owners sought and were granted a 14 day cooling off period for their employees to work overtime as they are required to do. These were inserted in the miners' award.

The rank and file at that stoppage meeting on 20.8.75 restrained their previous decision not to allow the claim to go to arbitration and to accept the 540 award. It is a great pity the strength and unity shown by the rank and file throughout the 1974 of the various mining unions which formed the negotiating committee. An example of this is the liaison meeting on the 18.8.75, two days prior to the last stoppage meeting. After meeting for 7 hours, the rank and file could not agree on a recommendation put to the meeting and in fact went to it with two alternatives: one was to lift all bans on limitations and to allow the claim to go to arbitration, the other was to intensify the campaign. It is little wonder that at meetings throughout this campaign the rank and file have demanded greater representation on the Liaison Committee. This concession so far made by the union is one organizer from each union at the same level to be used for discussion purposes only.

At the time of writing the most serious step to use the new award provisions of the award, stop mining are closed and almost all workers stand down for refusing to work overtime and accept the leadership party's support. This will force a strike in the industry.

BRIAN PHIPPS, (Non-Secretary), Huntly Colliery

**Battler Fighting Fund**

The August Fighting Fund raised \$281.48, a good effort. The generosity of our supporters has enabled us to publish this special 12-page and 1000 copies. We need your contributions. We depend on your generous contributions. Help us by giving a special contribution for September. My money will be collected at work.

Our thanks for last month's totals go to:  
R.C. 200 \$10  
R.A. \$10  
M.C. \$2  
R.E. Fraser, Trash and Soil, 20.48  
Donations from individual sales \$3.60

You can post your donation to:  
The Battler, Box 187, Fitzroy, Victoria 3065.

**How does the Law give the Orders?**

by Jeff Goldhar

LAST MONTH THE POLICE WERE USED at two strikes in Melbourne. At the abattoirs in Brooklyn, seven workers were arrested. In the printers' strike, fifteen people were arrested. The police smashed the printers' picket and did so with great

before the bashing, several printers took the attitude that the police were neutral. They saw the cops as workers doing a difficult job. After their picket was crushed they felt that what is the real role of the police? The operation of the law is certainly in favour of the police. Mr. Regale, chairman of the British Police Federation, stated a few years ago: "Such frankness with regard to the law and the cops that uphold it is uncommon. It is not surprising. For the best way to make the police (and even the army) effective agents of oppression is to give the impression that they are impartial; that they are neutral."

**Chairman Rod - Profit is his God**

THE STRIKE WERE BROKE up a demonstration at Melbourne's Monash University which tried to prevent the honouring of Bob Carnegie - chairman of Co-lic-Indo-Rinto of Australia (CRA) and a director of its parent company, the multinational Rio-Tinto.

Adopted students members of UAM's student group, the Revolutionary Students group were dragged off stage. An Australian member of that group (Carnegie) could deliver the ninth annual award to the miners' representatives charged slogans like, "hey, hey, C.A. my black kids die you kill today" and "Chairman Rod, Chairman Rod, profit is his only god". Ironically, the students were not in business. Ironically, because Carnegie this year smashed a strike by British miners, areas of the award received that (Carnegie) could deliver the ninth annual award to the miners' representatives charged slogans like, "hey, hey, C.A. my black kids die you kill today" and "Chairman Rod, Chairman Rod, profit is his only god". Ironically, the students were not in business. 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# Strike and Victimisation

"THE POINT HAS BEEN REACHED where a decision must be made which will put the responsibility (for the dispute) where it lies... in the park of the AMMU."

No, it wasn't Phil Lynch, nor Bob Santamaria (though it might as well have been). That's Brian Harrodie, secretary of the Tasmanian Trades and Labor Council, talking about the ten week strike by 200 metal workers in Hobart and Launceston. No wonder AMU members are trying to get him expelled!

The metal workers at Johns Phoenix in Launceston and Hobart, and Steel Mains, Russell Allport and Co., and Purden Engineering (all Hobart factories) are claiming a \$20 rise in their over-award payments.

In Launceston, the apprentices at Johns Phoenix went out in support of the tradesmen. The company then put pressure on their parents by applying to the Apprenticeship Commission to cancel their indentures. But the apprentices remained solid and the company was forced to respect the bans they'd imposed on scab work. Then the Apprenticeship Commission threw out their application.

As one apprentice said in an interview with Labour Voice (Bulletin of the Socialist Labour Club), "there shouldn't be any production work at all when there's a strike on."

The strike stopped work on repair components for the fallen Ocean Bridge in Hobart. As the work on the bridge slowed to a halt, the Labor State government, the Liberal Party and the TTC tried to whip up every ounce of hysteria possible in opposition to the strike.

The President of the Tasmanian Chamber of Industry called on the Federal government to use troops "like Chifley did" to treat the strike. The Labor Party's Minister for Labor called on the community to "whip up a reaction which will make it clear" that the strikers do not have public support.

The metal workers received support from the Electrical Trades Union and the Transport Workers' Union and nothing but hostility from the TTC. Harrodie made lots of pious statements about the justice of the metal workers' claim, but used every opportunity to condemn and undermine their action.



When the TTC decided to intervene in the dispute, the ETU threatened to blackban all work on... the new Trades Union building in Carlisle.

On August 29, all work was stopped on the bridge, and the main contractor, John Holland, spread rumours that it might withdraw from the job. Throughout the dispute, the metal workers demanded direct negotiations with the bosses. They refused. The men were even prepared to allow someone from the Arbitration Commission to conciliate. The bosses refused. So the dispute dragged on until the bosses did make an offer: a \$6 rise now and \$3 more in January, and a hearing in front of the Arbitration Commission to decide what they should get.

The metal workers went back last Monday. The first thing the bosses at Johns Phoenix

did was to sack prominent Federated Ironworkers' Association militant John Tully. He was the only FIA member to support the strike by the AMMU.

At Johns Phoenix, there was an immediate stop work meeting and it took a lot of arguing by the shop stewards to get the men back to work. A stop work at Steel Mains supported the stand by the Johns Phoenix workers.

Tully's house has been broken into (nothing stolen), as has the house of another SIC member. The mail of Tully and the SIC has been intercepted, and there has been other harassment of the SIC and John Tully. The management has refused to reinstate him, despite the fact that "no victimisations" was a condition of the return to work.

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# THE Battler

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS' ACTION GROUP

Number 11, October 11, 1975 10 CENTS

# INFLATION SCANDAL

## "NO!" TO THE UNIONS



'It is not pleasant to take the unpopularity... but... it is about time we learned to say no.'

'If by doing my job properly (achieving wage restraint) it means I must make enemies, that is exactly what I have done.'

— Senator "Diamond Jim" McCallan

The Herald  
Melbourne, October 6, 1975

## PRICE OF STEEL UP 8.75 p.c.

## "YES!" TO THE BOSSSES

- \* That was BHP's eighth price rise since January 1973.
- \* It came from the Price Justification Tribunal (which is what the government uses to say "Yes" to the bosses while the Arbitration Court says "No" to the workers).
- \* It means BHP's prices have risen 73% in TWO YEARS.
- \* Any rise in the steel industry flows right through the rest of the economy. A rise to BHP is even more devastating because of its near monopoly position and because of its sheer size.
- \* It will add about 2% to the Consumer Price Index (e.g. cars will cost \$50 more).
- \* It will mean massive price increases in the costs of machinery and more metal workers will be laid off.
- \* It will be worth about \$2 million a week to BHP and its directors like Sir Ian McKean.

### INSIDE:

- Tinoco, page 4
- Election threats, page 3
- Mexico pamphlet campaign, page 2
- Report from Tasmania, page 11
- Wage Indexation, page 6
- ACTU Congress, page 5

This is what Labor Minister McCallan means when he talks about wage restraint. More profits for BHP! Meanwhile the courts are bring in wage restraint through the Wage Indexation Guidelines. (See inside page 6) and the ACTU is accepting it (see inside page 5).

The Government is only serious about fighting inflation when that means lower pay for us. They only worry about unemployment when it means that the workers can't afford to buy enough to keep business booming.



# Metal Workers: Guerrilla campaign explodes

## CLYDEMMASTER

"WE'RE NOT FIGHTING CLYDEMMASTER - but the Chamber of Manufacturers," says a spokesman for the CIO's metal workers' strike. "It's not us who are attacking the strike."

The workers at the Clydemaster factory in Baywater (they are silver trains for the Victoria Railway) have been out over a log of claims for 4 weeks now. The Chamber of Manufacturers - which includes metal trades employers not in the MWU - covers most of the metal shops in the Baywater area, including Clydemasters. They've provided the best metal shop claims in the Arbitration Court.

The claim, for a 1st pay rise and a 30 hour week, were first submitted in July. The company screamed, "It's outside the Industrial Guidelines."

But pay rises have been smaller elsewhere. Metal workers in the Clydemaster for 9 months now. Meanwhile, production has increased.

The workers decided to wait for the Industrial Council. But on Tuesday it happened that the company director came down from Sydney to inspect the factory. The men decided to pressure the boss on claim on the spot, and the walkout of the 500.

The bosses stalled for two days, then said "No!" So the men went on strike indefinitely. The strike meeting voted to extend the strike an extra week.

### Clydemaster strike meeting

At the strike meeting the next day (October 1), the workers were having it.

"We should stay out and go for the over-award payment," said one. "We would get satisfaction without leaving the factory. We've been out for three weeks now, we shouldn't go back."

"We're not going back - but if you know, you know that," said another.

The vote was 76-30 to stay out. Because of the AMU's industrial shops, which is based on individual shops, the vote was 76-30 to stay out. The player group covering the whole area.

### STOP PRESS

At the Battle stop to press (Oct. 8) the strike meeting voted to extend the strike an extra week.

## EVERHOT

JUST UP THE ROAD from Clydemaster, metal workers at Everhot didn't even get their severance pay! Last week, AMU organizer Frank Cherry came back from a private conference in the Arbitration Court and suggested that it would be a good thing for them to go back to work. He'd been told by the company that 23 men would be sacked, and he thought that they should go back to work so that the 23 would get their back week's pay and severance money.

The same offer was to 3000. The company said they had the sackings. But didn't pay their severance money. (Since then it has been re-employed.) So Cherry's advice not only

ruined the strike - it completely failed to protect the men's AMU officials have been striking over a log of claims. After their strike last week, AMU organizer Frank Cherry came back from a private conference in the Arbitration Court and suggested that it would be a good thing for them to go back to work. He'd been told by the company that 23 men would be sacked, and he thought that they should go back to work so that the 23 would get their back week's pay and severance money.

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## DUNLOP

METAL WORKERS at Dunlop factories in Montague and Baywater have been attacked in the same way as Everhot. They had a lot of claims in, and staged a four hour walkout of the Montague plant as part of the "guerrilla campaign" for the 100.

So, as at Everhot, the company decided to divert it into a battle over sackings. They brought in each factory a black-banned equipment that the Dunlop bosses ordered four fighters (including the shop steward) to work on the "black" equipment. Naturally they refused - and got the sack.

Then the management offered to re-locate the four - if the black-ban on the equipment was lifted. A mass meeting of Dunlop workers accepted this deal.

But next morning came the double-cross. The company took the four workers they were still sacked - until all have had their names on the list. The Dunlop bosses would send giving up the "guerrilla campaign" for the over-award rise.

So the Dunlop plants went out again - and stayed out. On September 21, the workers decided to hold their own mass meetings all the company. The AMU organizer told Kevin that this could get his sacked. Last Wednesday, his boss escorted him out of the gate to make sure Kevin didn't get the chance to explain his case to his fellow workers. He is now negotiating with the management to get Kevin his job back and there is also the possibility of support from the metal workers.

Victimization like this must be fought by the workers. But so-called Dunlop's campaigns and over-award rises are black-banned equipment that is easier to weed out the militants and rest of them.

## Socialist Workers' Action Group

S.W.A.G. is a revolutionary socialist organization, open to all who accept our basic principles and are willing to work to achieve them. Some of these principles are:

- WORKERS' POWER as the solution to Australia's economic and social crisis. Only the organized working class has the power to achieve a society free of exploitation and oppression, based on workers' control of industry and the state.
- RANK AND FILE ORGANISATION. We work through mass organisations of the working class, such as the trade unions, and fight to bring them under rank and file control. To be able to do this we must have a mass of unswerving, workers need to be rank and file organisations.
- REVOLUTION NOT REFORM. This means we do not support any reforms unless they transform society, the building on that is important to Reform can bring their term gains to workers and the oppressed. We want the working class needs to build a revolutionary party to smash the capitalist state and replace it with workers' councils.

UNCOMPROMISING STRUGGLE AGAINST

THE REASON WHY I think I've been sacked at the moment is because the company's got a log of claims for the first time in eleven years from the workers. They've also had a number of times when I've approached the shop steward about anything like wages much more introduced, about other people being sacked and whether or not he knew about it and had seen the manager.

### Kevin Bain, AMU member

Kevin Bain turned up for work at last Wednesday fifty minutes late. He says he got up at 4.30, the manager told him that he had been sacked previously for being late and was therefore being sacked. He says he had been sacked two months earlier and nothing more had been said. He was clearly vindicated.

The previous Friday a meeting had been held with officials from the Federated Ironworkers Association and the AMU. AMU has just announced its eleven month consecutive profit in the last quarter. They had a lot of work included a 200 rise and improved toilet, locker-room and canteen facilities. Kevin spoke at a meeting at that meeting, the FIA shop steward did not come to the meeting.

When Kevin asked his afterwards whether he'd been, his only reply was: "No, he's got a log of claims for the normal lunch-hour so you should I know." The shop steward said that spent half an hour talking with the personal and industrial relations officer. Kevin spoke at a meeting that afternoon speaking in private with the manager. It is quite possible that he was asked not to attend the meeting.

Two years ago in the absent-member meeting of the plant, about 100 members demanded that all workers in Kevin's section join a union. The union was set up in the 70s and in those two years no-one had been asked to join a union. Therefore there were large numbers of non-unionists in Kevin's section. The shop steward knocked off work 24 hours before anyone else.

After the Friday meeting, Kevin spoke about fifteen minutes to more mass meetings all the company. The AMU organizer told Kevin that this could get his sacked. Last Wednesday, his boss escorted him out of the gate to make sure Kevin didn't get the chance to explain his case to his fellow workers. He is now negotiating with the management to get Kevin his job back and there is also the possibility of support from the metal workers.

Victimization like this must be fought by the workers. But so-called Dunlop's campaigns and over-award rises are black-banned equipment that is easier to weed out the militants and rest of them.

## Alec Kahn reports the ACTU Congress

## Standards the employers

THE CONGRESS DEBATE on economic policy was a farce, and the executive's resolution a mass of contradictions. That's why the Congress was completely incapable of doing anything about unemployment.

The first sentence of the resolution "recognises the inherent difficulty of achieving price stability with full employment in a market capitalist economy." So what do you do? The need to smash capitalism and to protect the rights of everyone to a job! No! The executive's conclusion is that we need "the co-operation of all groups in the community."

Translated into plain language this means that to solve the problem of unemployment and inflation, the union movement had to co-operate with the bosses, the very people causing inflation and unemployment, people who take a delight in attacking unions every time they stand up to defend their members.

Then we get two pages of waffle stating that employment has gone up and demanding increased government expenditure, and a number of other nonsense reforms.

Then comes the punch line. The supreme decision making body of the Australian unions, representing nearly 10 million unionists and all the major militant unions, the most powerful body of one of the strongest unions movements in the world cannot call the Congress a "public expression" that is responsible for action to restore full employment and reduce inflation. It is primarily on the Australian Government, but it is well known that the ACTU is not a word about the

The bosses, their newspapers and the labor movement are all screaming for us to restrain our wages and pay for the the... They will have caused 400,000 workers to be unemployed. And as the Executive... covered in McMurree last month... covered its attack on Australian workers with the Industrial Commission.

IF YOU THOUGHT THAT THE ACTU would give us a PLAN FOR OUR OWN FIVE DAYS OF BETTER COLLECTIVATIONS, YOU WERE WRONG.

The Congress refused to fight for our wages and failed in an attempt to impose a wage freeze on workers. Another by-argument consists of a pious hope that the utterly inadequate RDO scheme would be retained and Government spending increased.

But while the Congress was in session, it was a triumph for Bob Hawke and his mates on the executive.

He'd been faced with a tricky situation. The Press and his "good friend" the Minister for Labour, Jim McCallum, had launched a barrage of brilliant demands "wage restraint" if Hawke could have persuaded the ACTU to adopt this. He would allowances.

But Hawke had to keep the "left" union leaders on-line. Any attempt to impose a wage freeze on workers, whether by way of "wage restraint" (per names) or other sophisticated methods. The fact that their members would be wage restrained, so they might as well get ACTU backing against their own best interests.

Hawke had to open for second best. In his Presidential Address, he openly supported THE NEW RDO STRATEGY. He openly notified that "in the short term, full employment can only possibly be achieved by an increase in investment in the private sector" - not only false, but a claim to protect the interests of the capitalists.

But he was not so much trying to get support for a policy of restraint, he was aiming to rally the center and right-

wing unions behind the left-wing attempt to reject wage restraint.

Hawke and the Executive went as much room to manoeuvre as possible, not making a position on wage restraint. They avoided having the Arbitration Commission saying "yes" and "no." We can't act. They could also turn to militants and the left wing of the ACTU. After all, the Congress refused to act.

It turned out, Hawke was. Congress voted down the left amendment and showed through a policy which was neither wage nor against wage restraint. It merely talked about the Union having a "reasonable role" in wage fixing.

Not having the support of the center-right with his call for restraint, Hawke then set about heading bridges with the left wing of the executive. It took a strong line in support of collective bargaining.

"Wage increases above the minimum award rates represented positive gains for collective bargaining... are an essential part of the Trade Union wage policy... this activity will be continued by affiliates where wage laws are not consistent with wage justice."

Despite appearances, this is a rejection of Wage Restraint. It merely legitimises, in the eyes of the ACTU, wage fixing on an industry-wide basis. It ignores that our real weapon of the Trade Union movement... unity, which Hawke tried to set up wage restraint.

The Metal Trades rep on the Executive, Jack Devereaux, explained at the end of the Wage Policy Debate. "We want the right to move in the direction of collective bargaining." Collective bargaining is really a long-term aim. It doesn't threaten anything in the immediate future.

The ACTU refused to come up with a strategy for a national wage campaign. It was incapable of arguing that we had a job. The right and center unions will "restrain" themselves and "left" unions will "restrain" themselves. The ACTU did not seem to formally support a policy of "wage restraint." It's own lack of any strategy is already a victory for the bosses.

For a competitive public enterprise. Being government-owned doesn't stop TMA fighting wage demands and attacking its workers' conditions. It has to be competitive! The most progressive thing these organisations have been to have the ACTU and Trade Union heavy like Jack Devereaux and George Slater a seat on their Board of directors.

However, the AMU has a large membership and covers the back-and-forth on its delegation. They could not let the Executive and Communist Party have a say in the ACTU. AMU speakers were ruled by speaking against the Executive, not in front of the ACTU. And the Executive was putting up any more speakers. They just bureaucratically killed the whole debate.

So it was tricky trick. After Charlie Fitzgibbon had moved the Executive motion, and Communist Party had moved the AMU amendment, Bob Hawke called the ACTU. AMU speakers were ruled by speaking against the Executive, not in front of the ACTU. And the Executive was putting up any more speakers. They just bureaucratically killed the whole debate.

Since the 12 hour week is already ACTU policy, this wasn't anything drastic. And since "The highly productive" was not a new product, they might as well not say anything. It was a new product that they didn't want to say anything about.

The AMU has itself failed to fight effectively for the 10 hour week for effectively for as a defence against the 10 hour week. It was put up in individual lay-offs, but never fought a national campaign. It was ruled to believe that they really wanted the ACTU to take it to a national fight.

The AMU amendment carefully avoided a couple of the ground issues. It did not insist that all nationalised industries be competitive. It called for freedom of membership to be replaced by a system of "wage restraint" and "wage restraint" membership.

ACTU NOTEBOOK - PAGE 7











# THE Battler

THE OIL DISPUTE

## CALTIX CRUDE THREAT



AMU Assistant Secretary, Laurie Carmichael, the fearless opponent of wage indexation who led metal workers to the Arbitration Court!

## QUEENSLAND: New laws threaten unions

The Queensland State Government has rewritten its latest Industrial Relations Bill. The Bill is a sophisticated attempt to suppress strikes and on-the-job action by workers in Queensland. At the same time, it attempts to buy working class support with a few overdue progressive measures.

Amongst the changes it proposes were articles to greatly increase the power of the State Industrial Commission. The SIC is to be given the power to...

- \* Order a secret ballot at any time during a strike.
- \* Intervene in Industrial Agreements to "eliminate the more unsavoury aspects of sweetheart agreements". That means the right to stop higher wage agreements between companies and unions.
- \* Order all workers at a factory back to work if a majority balloted vote to go back. Any workers who do not return within seven days are fired.
- \* Decide a person's eligibility for union membership.

As well, the police may be present at a union ballot to make sure that pickets are not formed. They can arrest picketers without a warrant and arrest any persons "obstructing" the vote in any way.

These regulations were hardly written to attack the bosses! And there is no comparative legislation threatening them.

### carrots

The progressive "carrots" thrown at the workers include the abolition of some penalties for going on strike. (At the same time, other penalties were doubled.) The definition of equal pay has been widened to women performing work "of a like nature or equal value" to that of men. Claims for wage arrears can now be over twelve months,

Australia was threatened with a petrol shortage for most of last month. The first threat came from "Diamond Jim" McClelland, who was determined to smash any pay claim outside the Indexation guidelines. The second threat came from Caltex, who deliberately provoked a strike by standing down workers for no apparent reason. In a fitting finish, the NSW Minister for Energy invoked 1949 legislation to take control of all petrol supplies in NSW, provoking mass panic buying of petrol. He later denied having made this threat.

At the centre of the situation is the claim by the metalworkers in the oil industry for a \$55 rise in their award. The claim clearly falls outside the Indexation guidelines. The oil industry is highly mechanised, multi-national and filthy rich. That's why the AMU has been trying to use it to break through in the campaign for a \$20 rise in the metal trades.

Unions in the oil industry are well-organised and the AMU is on record as fighting the indexation guidelines. Any breakthrough would spread like wildfire through industry. So an attack by the AMU in the oil industry became a major threat to the wage freeze that McClelland is so determined to enforce.

That's why McClelland and Joe Jordan, his assistant in Parliament, descended like the US cavalry. They dragged Bob Hawke along because they have committed Hawke to "wage restraint" and the Indexation scheme.

The AMU campaign was being organised by National Assistant Secretary, Laurie Carmichael. Workers struck at Long Island in Victoria and imposed overtime bans in Lurnell, NSW. Two weeks earlier, Carmichael was urging metalworkers to be more militant. He has regularly called for direct negotiations with the bosses.

So why did he go to the oil

instead of six as previously. Long service leave must now exclude public holidays.

Set against these minor, token reforms (which we'll probably have to fight to keep) is a vicious attack on the right to strike. The police and the State Industrial Court between them could just about choke off any workers' struggle.

The Bill presented to Parliament was well written, sophisticated document. Yet it was withdrawn for "redrawing" in consultation with the unions and employer groups. It appears that they have only made minor changes and these make it tougher.

## 'Battler' Fighting Fund

The September Fighting Fund brought in a total of \$219.49 for thank everyone for their support. Our thanks for last month's total go to H.McC. \$10 G.P. \$20 M.M. \$10 M.A. \$120 S.E. Branch Party \$26.20 Donations from individual sales \$4.10 Other Donations \$25.19

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# THE Battler

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS' ACTION GROUP



### Melbourne

- \*Shopies held a 24 hour stoppage, and marched to the ALP rally at City Square.
- \*Tug crews stopped work on Friday and again on Sunday night, pledging support for a general port stoppage.
- \*The Westport industrial area stopped work for 24 hours, including refinery and maritime workers.
- \*More than 30 metal workshops for various lengths of time, including 1,400 Naval Dockyard workers.

### Adelaide

- \*7,000 workers from factories, building sites and factories rallied against Fraser.
- \*Workers from Islington Rail Workshops stopped work, and rail and metal unions encouraged workers to go to the rally.

### Brisbane

- \*A meeting of 33 ALP-affiliated unions adopted a Meat Industry Union resolution recommending that the struggle should mobilise the full strength of unionists.

### Perth

- \*Brewery workers stopped work and marched to a rally at the Town Hall.
- \*2,000 railway workers stopped for the afternoon.
- \*The Fremantle waterfront stopped for 24 hours.

### Hobart

- \*Waterside workers walked off the job to give Fraser a hostile reception.

### Wollongong

- \*Fort Koubla Maritime Unions Port Committee organised a 24 hour stoppage on Tuesday. Watchmen who worked during the stoppage will donate their pay to produce a leaflet about the government crisis.

### Newcastle

- \*Waterfront unions, tug crews and PMG linnemen stopped work between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. on October 30. This was followed by a rally and a sack of 500 people.

### Sydney

- \*Sydney waterfront workers stopped for 24 hours on Friday.

**Mr Fraser may make it impossible for a conservative party to govern in Australia with any measure of co-operation with the unions.**

THE NATIONAL THESIS: NOVEMBER 3-9, 1975

Inside: More News on the Crisis



THE CONSTITUTIONAL crisis was an attack on all the Australian workers. It was not an attack on Fraser's supporters alone, but on the bosses and Fraser. It was not just a victory for Whitlam's political tactics, nor was it the same politics as the strike.

We saw a real victory against the bosses when we forced them to abandon Fraser. But it could have been a bigger victory. The same day (week) reports from Fraser's bastion and how he was using his own workers to force the issue. This document explains why the labor politicians tried to set limits to their own defense, and the 10-11 explains why the role of democracy was really an attack on Fraser.

# Why the bosses unleashed Fraser ....

Conservatives like Fraser and the Liberal Party have one weakness and constitutionally rules they use to rule us, rules that undermine our democracy and force us to play a game that the bosses can't lose and that we can't win.

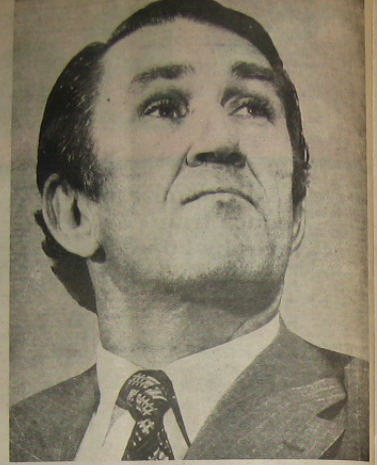
So you can see that Fraser did not attempt to break the "rules" which he thought he had more to lose by not breaking them. And you can see that he did not attempt to deny "Supply" without losing confidence that the ruling class was right behind him.

In fact, before Fraser announced that the Liberals would "Vote Supply", he rang the daily press barons who run the Liberal Party to ask for their permission.

The Whitlam Affair, of course, had

# ...and then dumped him

But for Fraser's attack to succeed, he had to be facing a social and defeated working class. What Fraser failed to realize was the extent to which most workers saw his attack on Whitlam as an attack on themselves. In the face of Fraser's attack, the labor movement united as it has not for years (see page 10 in spirit of the politicians (see article this page)).



The bosses and their newspapers saw the implied threat and by that evening they were backing away from Fraser. Whitlam, McCallum and Hockley repudiated the strike tactic, but workers were calling limited strikes already (see last front page).

Over the weekend the fight intensified over a series of rallies at which Whitlam attracted bigger and more militant crowds than Fraser. It peaked on Monday when a huge militant rally supported the Government overruled Melbourne's City Square.

It had become quite obvious to the bosses and the press barons that they had miscalculated and a Fraser victory was no longer worth the cost. The working class had shown its strong support of the Labor Government and its refusal to have them removed by dirty tricks. If Fraser has gained power by trickery and manipulation, workers would have been far too militant and bitter to accept any of his attacks.

The National Times summed it up.

# We could have had more

Havke's threat to cut supply, from which he backed down, very quickly, was taken by many as a didn't mean it, but the very threat scared the bosses into accepting Fraser's tactics. But what if there had been a general strike?

Whitlam is still Prime Minister because the employers realized that an angry united working class could do to them. He was because that implied threat in the solidarity of the labor movement, but because the threat was only implied, Whitlam does not have to answer directly to the labor movement for his victory. He can continue to pretend that his victory was a victory for proper parliamentary procedure.

Had there been a general strike, Whitlam could have found his victory

# Festival Hall Holding Operation

WELL OVER 600 shop stewards from all over Victoria turned up to a rally called by the Victorian Trades Hall Council. The secretary, Ken Stone, said it was the largest meeting of stewards he'd ever seen.

The meeting was called to pass a resolution put up by the ABC Executive giving unconditional support to the Labor Government. Fair enough, but where does this support lead?

First speaker was none other than "damned Jim" McCallum, master of wage restraint... who said that as a cure for inflation, "massive unemployment is not acceptable to a social democratic government." Most don't like 400,000 people out of work! But it goes further. The main thrust of every speaker... McCallum, Senator Butte, Ralph Willis (MRG Gellibrand) and Clyde Holding was that our current form of democracy had to be maintained

# soared

McCallum made this quite clear when he said that "if the crisis continues most people in this room would say to hell with parliament... the masses of Australia will take things into their own hands... we will not let Fraser get away with it! McCallum and his friends know quite well that there is no democracy in Australia. What they are really scared of is the threat of a general strike. They don't want workers on the streets because they know they will be fighting a lot of their policies. Ken Stone put it quite clearly when Billy Hare of the PFA asked why the union movement wasn't doing anything about it... 'at this stage we don't want it because it's previously union. Fraser is the labor traitor, we don't want to do it unless we have to.'

Clyde Holding also put it in a nutshell when he said, "that the Whitlam government was not being fairly judged... it's constituted a few cowards... reform but some of them have controlled the economic system who control the world of Australia." He went on to say that Fraser would be better to do the same against organized workers. True, but who brought in the law against striking school teachers in 1949?

This meeting demonstrated quite clearly that the ALP has been using this crisis to shake the union movement even more. Ken Stone and John

# HOW THE CRISIS DEVELOPED

Wednesday, 8th October: The Herald starts from Whelan's exposures. Friday, 10th: Whelan arrives. Tuesday, 15th: Common sacked. Mining share prices rocket on Australian and London stock exchanges. Fraser signs newspaper banons. Wednesday, 15th: Supply "defers". Fairfax and Herald and Weekly Times group change position and call on government to resign. Whitlam refuses; threatens half-senate election... and says he won't do anything until Supply is rejected. Friday, 16th: Hockley threatens that unions might withhold supply. Late editions of the Herald show the first signs of back-pedalling. Friday, 17th: Papers start to back off. Strikes start - wharves, AMU. Fraser has had laborist rally. Saturday, 18th: Murdoch's "Australian" devotes editorial to union threat. Monday, 20th: Labor's Melbourne City Square rally, 20,000 people. Tuesday, 21st: Press backdown becomes stamped. Thursday, 23rd: CPI figures announced. Despite cooked figures, inflation actually slowing. Friday 24th: Kerr refuses to resign Fraser. Monday 27th: Whelan returns to "clear his name". Hawke Budget: took blow up by Financial Review. Tuesday, 28th: Hawke scandal fires. Fraser forces Elliott to revise statement. Wednesday, 29th: Whelan issue dead. ACTU-Solo scandal fires. Thursday, 30th: Gallup poll shows drastically reduced support for Fraser. Age/Sydney Morning Herald poll: 70% say "Vote Supply". Monday, 3rd November: Fraser offers deal which will save his face. Whitlam refuses. Tuesday, 4th: Whitlam offers "compromise" which offers Fraser nothing. Papers urge Fraser to accept. Wednesday, 5th: Age/OMH poll suggests Labor would win Senate election.



Tirath Whelan... would you buy a used toilet from this man? Doug Whitlam with Governor-General John Fairs, who had enough sense not to intervene.

Whitlam moved the resolution for the Executive. It spoke of the possibility of "some selective withholding of supply within the industrial movement"... but only after consultation with the State branches and the parliamentary leadership.

When workers from the naval dockyards moved an amendment calling on the ACTU and the ALP to organize a national autoworker to mobilize workers in defence of their rights and



Hockley, Whitlam and supporters at City Square.

# Stop Press

FOR THE LASTEST EXPERTISE in open government, the Labor Party is publishing a booklet outlining the UNDISCLOSED TRICKS for Open Government.

Minister for Labor, "Blaise" (Jim McCallum), doesn't want us to get out there from the month of October. There was a rise of 15,000 in the number of unemployed (nationally adjusted). He didn't want the fact that the employment rate was a record 5.8% to be splashed all over Monday's papers. So, as we go to press, he is thinking of holding the figures back a few days... till the middle of next week when the papers will have other scandals to occupy the front pages.

The trouble is that the Battle is heavy on keeping secrets. We think everyone has a right to know that the number of seasonally adjusted vacancies fell by 3,000 during the month.

We think that the Government's Magn Whitlam policies are causing the higher unemployment and loss of jobs available.

And we think that the Labour movement should know the hypocritical, lying Minister who greases the wheels in exchange for his Magn Press and then wanted to hide what he couldn't deliver.

# Whitlam and Democracy

AS THE STORM RAGED around him these past weeks, the Minister chose one theme to fight around: the defence of "democracy". He meant defence of the constitution and the parliamentary system. This is a system where the Ministers support to rule. The House of Representatives is the "people's house", said Douglas.

But the parliamentary system does represent an element of democracy, but not very much.

For most people, democracy means voting. That involves writing names beside the name of candidates, with the mark of the ballot. In general elections every three years, you might get to witness a democracy in your lifetime.

It is virtually impossible to elect candidates who really represent the interests of working people. For a start, the mass media are controlled by the rich, so they favour the candidates of the rich. The press and the urban business community pour huge amounts into their parties, the CP and the Liberals. It's a wonder Labor ever got elected.

The ALP is a working class party, based on the trade unions. But it is far from being controlled by rank and file workers. Most workers are not even members (not surprising, given how boring ALP meetings are), and the trade union vote is the party is controlled by a collection of union officials. As a result, the ALP has never one seriously challenged the power and privilege of big business while in power.

If it did try, it would no longer be a working class party. There are a million ways the rest of the state apparatus can be used to frustrate reform.

Lionel Murphy, for example, was not a flying revolutionary. All he wanted to do was crack down on the fascist (to right movement, which was opposed around bombing people's houses and running a police force against the union movement).

And order, perhaps to act as a check. Murphy had to visit their office to look at the files, and finally the government had to replace the head of the agency to get some minimal control.







# QUIT

LAST YEAR WAS THE YEAR of the metal workers getting a 52¢ rise. This is the year of the Chamber of Manufacturers, while in the bosses' union versus the metal trades unions and nothing is being done about it. Nothing at all. But if you're in Bayswater is a test case for the Chamber of Manufacturers. What they're trying to do is there is throw out the union. It's got to be understood that if they're allowed to get away with it here, they're going to get away with it in other places.

In January-February of this year, Everhart-Everhart in Bayswater fired all their own workers. Instead of sitting back quietly and taking it, the women fought back in a picket that lasted over five weeks. They stopped trucks delivering to the factory, had rallies with the police, and managed to get another factory in the area, Clydemaster, to come out in support. For an afternoon, their union, the AMU, did little to help them, or to get the men still working in the factory to come out in their support. In the long run, in spite of the extensive coverage on TV and in the press, without the real support of their union, the women lost the fight and had to accept the sackings.

The woman shop steward, Edith Turnewitsch has not given up. Since then, she has done everything she could to help with the continuing struggle of metal workers in the area, particularly at Everhart.

## picketing

In late September, there were more sackings at Everhart. They found that ever since the sacking of the women at the beginning of the year there has been trouble at the Bayswater plant. So what they did, probably deliberately, they put a foreman on to the old job. So they all donned tools and came out. Some of us women that got sacked earlier went down to support the men, and we were picketing down there for a week.

We even went up to Dopy Everhart's house and picketing there which got on TV. This got our message through. The following day outside Everhart's, Cheryl, the union organizer for the area, told us that 23 sections stopped trucks to the gate already. We said go back in and we'll see what severance pay we can get.

## "Just a union official"

But instead of offering real leadership he put it to the workers this way: "I can't tell you what to do... I'm just a union official. I want you to tell me what you want to do." "So a man who wasn't even a union member put forward a motion to return. Afterwards, they fired two newly elected lines and he worked on one of them, but he kept his job!"

"Now I think myself that that's very wrong of the union to accept that change. The union had been kept well-informed that they were taking work from Bayswater back to their Port Melbourne factory, yet nothing was done. They didn't even get severance pay in the end!"

## The Everhart factory in Bayswater, February 1975.

The picket lasted over five weeks.

## Edith Turnewitsch talks to Joyce Stone and Alec Kahn



When you look in front of that firm, you look how that place has been built. It's got amber-coloured glass, the offices are up the front, air-conditioning, it's heated, it's carpeted. Everything's quality. Then you come to the carpark. Just behind the carpark there's a glorified over-sized shed with a big furnace down the centre, no windows that open, two doors one side, two doors the other. That's what the workers work in.

"We had no lighting outside that place. We had terrible trouble with the toilets and the smells from the toilets. We had one little canteen... we did manage to get a bigger canteen built."

Edith used to do the first-aid work there, and had to treat many people for dermatitis. "This is only caused through the floors not being swept where the workers are working, and the heat and the sweat down to your ankles."

Management at Everhart have been using these tactics to lower the wages. While firing people from the Bayswater factory they have been hiring at the Port Melbourne plant. But the new workers, with the had unemployment, are in a difficult position.

## halt-indent

"You get a young man with a couple of kids and he's paying off a car, or his house, and he's on the dole, he's in difficulty. It's his wife who's got his car or his house and he's going to lose a wife that's a bundle of nerves. And his woman's half empty. You can't afford to feed yourself properly, so what's he going to do? He's going to not looking for a job, he won't be in the plant. He's not going to be someone who will listen to me. You're here because you're here, you don't pay that much, we only pay the award." Don't say that, you're not a worker, you're a manager. You've got no choice, he's got to take the job and he's going to bring the worker's money down to what it was. So there's going to be no over-awful payments."

*"I'm a worker  
and I'm  
fighting for  
the right of  
all people  
to work!"*

"I've been a shop steward nine years. The reason I became a shop steward and ever got involved in unions was when a brake press took off a twenty-two year old man's two hands and part of an arm in a big electrical factory in Burnwood. For that reason I joined a union. I named a machine with that company where I said there'd be another big accident, out of fifty odd years, within the next three to six months. He said, 'I suppose you can name it, and I said, 'For your sarcasm I can.' And I named that machine."

A month and a day later a girl lost four fingers of the left hand. I was with that firm for six years. But now after being let down in the struggle the firm was accepted... for such a long time, I was retrenched. I was the only one retrenched. But I was and being retrenched - you know what? Because I went in with two hands and I came out with two hands."

## leadership

Through her experience in factories over the years Edith has become a strong militant and union supporter. But now after being let down in the struggle the firm was accepted... for such a long time, I was retrenched. I was the only one retrenched. But I was and being retrenched - you know what? Because I went in with two hands and I came out with two hands."

"I think the leadership absolutely stinks. I mean what's the leadership doing for people who are very strong union people? It's not giving you the encouragement to be in the union. We are in the union, they're supposed to be the leadership. But we're not actually getting any leadership. People are being put off in different factories and the union are allowing it to take place."

"Her militancy has made it impossible to get any job. Because she's on TV, and in the newspapers. It's like she's found that employers won't touch her. So I think to myself, the cleaner you get, you get no work."

"Some signs think that she ought to give up. But Edith has not given up in her fight to get the union to take her seriously. 'I believe in one thing... because I'm not going to let it finish like that. The message is that you're fighting for... myself as a shop steward. I'm a worker and I'm not going to let the right to work... the right to all people to work, whether they're male or female.'"

## Bosses threaten Penal Powers

METAL INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS are using the full penal powers like the ones we smashed in 1969.

Over 50 delegates from all metal unions demonstrated outside the Arbitration Commission on Monday. John Halfpenny, State Secretary of the AMU, explained that the penal powers were meant to be used. He would have the right to stand down a worker for the lighting a strike, stop-work meeting or a stop-work order. He would have the right to sack a worker who didn't finish a piece of work, that wasn't properly done and not pay the worker for the time spent. This would make the end of the guaranteed wage and a stop back into the 19th Century. The end to the union as a whole.

The threat became clear when we all moved into the court to hear the case. We discovered that since the 1969 case had first come up, two major decisions had been set at small gain and another had quietened down considerably. The bosses are obviously holding these threatened penal powers over the unions' heads. They've already gained out of the whole situation, whether or not the judge grants them the powers they're demanding.

The lawyer for the boss made no pretence about the attack on the union. All the bosses wanted, he said, was to be treated fairly. Only those workers who attended work with the deliberate intention of engaging in penal powers would be affected. Only those workers who supported the union, he claimed, would be affected. "I'm not going to pay a fair day's work for a fair day's pay." The audience laughed into unconcealable laughter.

The best comment came from the delegate sitting next to me, "Anybody who'll work about a fair day's work who's never done a day's work!"



John Halfpenny addressing protesting shop stewards outside the Arbitration Commission.

As the Clyde Master strike entered its fifth week, it was clearly losing support. The claim for a 14% over-award increase and a 35 hour week had got a flat "no".

The only concession the management had offered was wage indexation on the shop-rate which the M.T.A. had already accepted. Clyde Master is a strong shop steward union. But even so, the success of the picket campaign they were isolated and something had to be pulled out of the fire or else they would have lost everything.

So along with John Halfpenny and A.M.U. organizer Frank Cherry, the shop committee came up with a proposal which was accepted... for such a long time, I was retrenched. I was the only one retrenched. But I was and being retrenched - you know what? Because I went in with two hands and I came out with two hands."

According to Cherry jobs at mass meetings earlier this year spoke in favour of a national campaign, the deal was accepted... for such a long time, I was retrenched. I was the only one retrenched. But I was and being retrenched - you know what? Because I went in with two hands and I came out with two hands."

And she's the trouble with the penal powers situation and you've got small victories, a few flowers and nothing for the branch to demand mass meetings to reconquer the penal powers. What else can you expect when the union fails to unite its forces?

## What We Think

CLYDEMASTER, EVERHART, BAYSWATER, JOYCE PROBERT and struggles in hundreds of other metal shops which round Australia all show up the dangers of the Metal Trades' "Shopville" campaign.

The idea behind the penal powers campaign was that individual shops would take action for over-award claims and when that strategy failed, it would flow on to others in the area. That's how the leaders told us it would work. But has it?

For the most shops it's done a disaster. Places like the AMU (with 3 AMU members) are left right in the cold. They have to hope that another shop in the area puts in a claim that they can't take it and they have to hope that they will get a flow-on. But you don't persuade the boss!

For the larger shops it hasn't been such better. When you're in a large shop, you've got a large employer and large union. You've got a long time... just ask the workers at John Phoenix or Clydemaster. Large employers can absorb the cost of penal action.

And if the penal action does start to irritate the bosses, like it did at Dunlop, they can shut the whole issue with a few sackings. The whole struggle turns into one of reinstatement.

With a national campaign, we can resist this. The weak and the strong are in there, fighting together, the weak support the strong and the strong benefit from their strength. The large employers are not over-reliant on their strength. They can't contract out work to other plants. They can't sack and re-hire. They can't give in. The struggle cannot be so easily divided with layoffs.

And successful shops will give a few of them have spoken in favour of a national campaign. On July 1st, the AMU Commonwealth Council even called on members to regularly attend in effective state and national campaign to force the employer to negotiate and achieve our original demands.

So why, a few days later, did the AMU leaders recommend the penal powers campaign? They claimed there was too much opposition to a national strike, yet 50% of mass meetings voted for it in spite of their leaders' demoralising comments. In fact, the Metal Trades officials had to fish out a couple of hundred votes from outside Queensland to swing the decision their way!

## effective

If the AMU leaders really wanted to rapidly reverse the national campaign, they would have done what the Shop Stewards' Council in Melbourne did in Newcastle. It... they called area meetings to organise area campaigns. If they were serious about the official campaign they would have built these area campaigns into state-wide actions.

In those areas where penal tactics are being proposed to undermine struggle and weaken union action, the coal miners took STEVE MORTON to win a claim they should have got in seven weeks with mass action. In the Ballarat, the AMU has been fighting for 2700 hours using ineffective penal tactics and lightning strikes. In the newspaper dispute, the right wing PMU leadership recommended penal tactics to get the official action on the job. The most ridiculous example we know of was AMU in the metal industry. They've been using it for so long to back to work and "use penal tactics... just like the heroic Westman people to fight for their claim."

There is no future in the penal tactics strategy. The AMU must take the lead in the Metal Trades and immediately rebuild the national campaign. The AMU officials must help their members in the shops to union members. They must be allowed to elect and change their union's position. If the AMU does not take this lead, it is opposition to the wage issue and its talk of action are empty talk.

Rank and file metalworkers can build pressure for the national campaign by fighting for it in the shops and in the union branches.

Every strike must be linked up with other shops in the area to try and spread the struggle. In its area and link up with other areas. And every over-award struggle should include a demand that the employer rebuild a united, Australia-wide struggle.

## Rebuild the National Campaign!

Metalworkers can fight for a national campaign through the AMU branches. Ask for a report on all over-award struggles in the area. Demand that the organisers link them up. Prove that all branch delegates fight for a national campaign. Demand that the branch to organise for area stoppage until the national campaign is rebuilt. Demand the branch to demand mass meetings to reconquer the penal powers.







# to and nade

It takes one to know one....

## Nixon to visit Mao

Frank

Chairman Mao has invited former President Richard Nixon to visit China. Mr. Nixon has accepted. The invitation was dispatched by Rahn, Barry Koff, a close friend of the former President and a member of the Nixon-San Clemente home.

Mr. Koff said Mao's invitation, by letter, described Mr. Nixon as "one of the greatest leaders of our time."

## Gross Pay

A so-called technical aide is keeping hundreds of young Victorian women on slave labor wages. The women, working as attendants in child-minding centers, can legally be paid as little as \$11.50 at the age of 15, rising to \$41 for a 20 year old.

The women are members of the *National Employees' Federation No. 1* branch. These officials exploited the fact that wages boards do not grant a pay rise because it would function without an employers' contribution and there has not been one recently. Also the law gave them to admit to work but not be directed to work juniors.

Meanwhile the national and state secretary of the *NEF*, Jim Loughan, suffers no pay out through technical means. His gross weekly pay is \$19. It would take a 15 year old child minding attendant nearly SEVEN months to earn what the secretary of her union earns in one week.

Power Without Glory talks about a family named Lassiter who were the builders' laborers' Union fifty years ago and the 'Haltone' Council much more recently. Here is what Hardy says about one Lassiter:

"He went from the sonatory into George Turner's (Lassiter Taylor) gang and became the blip of the Catholic Young Men's Society, being expelled from that organization when he took the lights out at a church dance with well aimed revolver shots. After George Turner, Lassiter had joined the labor party to seek political honour and was re-elected to the Church after meeting a special general conference to Archbishop Melone (Mannix), and won a seat for Labor on the 'Haltone Council.'"

Haltone was supposed to be Richmond, Lassiter was Loughan. Carlingbush is a good name for the regional library, but Jim Loughan is a strange name to suggest it. Perhaps he thinks we're all forgotten in the history of the "Lassiters". Or perhaps he's so out of the loop of the corruption of the State Labor Party (the Richmond machine is controlled by State Parliamentary leader holding) that he can't see.

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## Spanner man's plan

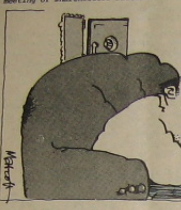
by Dave Nadel

John Sidons is the national secretary of the *History Australia Party*. They're the ones who advertise "put Australia before Party". They want more support for Australian business and government action against foreign multinational. That's why they usually give their preference to ALP candidates in elections. What leading lights are mostly businessmen running locally owned companies like TPC's, Gordon Barton and Sidons himself.

John Sidons is also chairman of Sidons Industries (They make various tools). At this year's annual meeting of shareholders Sidons

announced that his company was to stop using locally produced steel. He says that in the last two years he has used 7% in the last two years. He also announced that his company is launching a "strategy of hand-outs, under the name of TPC, which will be done as well as made locally. The joint company will plan to establish a joint company long long for the Asian market, starting early next year.

The argument that Barton and Sidons use for their "economic nationalism" is that Australian companies create jobs for Australian workers. There's a dubious argument. Most of the time but it appears John Sidons doesn't believe it himself. He says he put Australia before Party. He puts profits ahead of both.



like any profit that's close to home!

## Ironing out the Staples

On September 2 this year, Mr Justice Staples, a deputy President of the Arbitration Commission, heard a dispute between BHP and the Seaman's Union over meal allowances for the crew of the iron crawler.

Staples' recommendation was in favour of BHP, but the company wasn't happy. It wanted the judge to reject the union's argument. The union refused to accept the Judge's recommendation, so BHP stood the entire crew down, cancelled their transport and turned them out of their lodgings.

Staples criticised BHP, but continued to recommend that the seamen accept BHP's offer. They did, and took the iron crawler out to sea. BHP were happy. Although they had won, BHP resisted the dispute and this time asked for arbitration. This would give the member judge and a chance to wipe out Staples' criticisms of them.

In his judgment of October 16, Staples was even more critical of BHP

for playing petty games with the Commission. The next day he was sacked from his job as head of the Maritime Division of the Department of Labour.

Question No. 1: How independent is the Arbitration Commission?

Question No. 2: Is there any limit to BHP's power?

Mr Justice Staples was appointed by Clyde Cameron while he was still Minister for Labor. The appointment was criticised by the Liberals for being "political" and they implied that people appointed by the Government for "political" reasons might find themselves out of a job when the Liberals came to power.

On the day that Mr Justice Staples was "moved" by his boss Justice Menzies, the Liberals moved in the Senate to block supply, trying to bring on an election they thought it'd win.

Question No. 3: Does Justice Menzies use Liberal?

to all the bureaucratic manipulators, including all the Ministers, hatch jobs inside the party - they were responsible for the lot. The anti character had himself attended the trial of Baharin in the USSR in 1939, and had agreed with the gaily veridical Baharin that he had earlier been his hero, and Baharin's book, "The ABC of Communism" had been his guide to his becoming a communist.

When those backs finally got wet with the *News*, it has been a political, the *overriding* reasons would seem to be purely personal. Childhood experiences, religious background, sexual capacity, ability to handle money matters, and most of all, how your father and political stance seem to be the main influences on the character one can expect party strategies.

## personal

Hardy makes no attempt to find a political solution to the political problems he raises. His main aim finds relief only in the highly political act of outside. Presumably he doesn't propose this as a social solution, but nor does he do what he does in his first novel, *Down without Glory*, where we are left with no doubt as to what he has in mind. He follows it with what's a curious, a little socialist Hardy has nothing to say to any.

A novelist is not, of course, bound to make a political statement in every book, but this book is about politics. It is a political statement, and it's actually advocating something: that the CPA and fight for a really good party, *Hardy himself is doing*, and his friends are carrying out the work. *Hardy's book shows an clarity in worthlessness.*

## SPAIN

# Juan Carlos inherits a crisis

by Bruce Foster

AS WE GO TO PRESS France, the dictator of Spain lies on his death bed. His eldest Prince Juan Carlos has assumed power but won't be crowned until the fascist murderer Franco is buried.

The papers have expressed hopes that Carlos will liberalise the brutal fascist regime which has terrorised Spain for forty years. However he faces tough opposition from the armed forces and reactionary elements in the state bureaucracy. Franco managed to purge any potentially "liberal" elements from the regime. He founded himself with men like General Angel Canpo, head of the vitally important Civil Guard, who volunteered to serve with Hitler's troops on the Russian front.

The "liberal" opposition to the regime has been covered by the years of repression and offers no viable alternative to Francoism. Even the Spanish Communist Party has united with the Christian Democrats and Socialists in support for a pro-imperialist Spanish republic. The C.P. has publicly disavowed the Portuguese C.P. for taking too militant and backs the C.I.A. funded Socialist Party of Maria Soares.

The fascist regime has backed itself into a corner. It has automatic resistance to any popular resistance, either from the working class or the Basque nationalism. It has been forced to intensify the repression. This has served to alienate even those elements inside and outside Spain who would have sided any excuse to lend support to Francoism. Only the U.S. and its extensive military bases throughout Spain, and the military garrison in Chile remain essential.

At the same time, the recent repression which has culminated in the murder of revolutionary ministers has alienated the Spanish working class. The Spanish fascists are locked in a self-destructive race course and are likely to be overwhelmed by a popular revolutionary explosion which will even overthrow the Portuguese workers' regime.

Big MAC laid off 13,000 city workers and froze all city wages for a year. New Yorkers greeted their teeth and accepted it. After all, it was better than complete unemployment.

But complete disaster came anyway. In October, 15,000 more layoffs were threatened. And New York's own crisis failed with bankruptcy.

## New York BROKE

by Tom O'Loughlan

LAST JUNE, New York became the first American city to go broke since the Great Depression. To commemorate the occasion, the banks and big businesses took over - outright - and set up a agency called Municipal Aid Corporation ("Big MAC") to run the city's finances.

Big MAC laid off 13,000 city workers and froze all city wages for a year. New Yorkers greeted their teeth and accepted it. After all, it was better than complete unemployment.

But complete disaster came anyway. In October, 15,000 more layoffs were threatened. And New York's own crisis failed with bankruptcy.

default

A loan from an "undisclosed Arab Country" was turned down as too expensive to repay. Republican President Ford, will swear that he would never get votes in Democratic New York. Rockefeller cheerfully suggested that the city default on its debts. He ruled out any federal aid to help New York afloat. A default which is inevitable without federal aid, would increase unemployment in the USA by 200,000, 200,000 in New York alone.

How did New York get into such a mess? You won't be surprised that the Rockefeller are behind it. For 70 years ago, the Rockefeller family sold part of the town privately-owned underground railway to the city.

The city had to borrow money to buy it. From the Rockefeller owned banks. Over the years, other loans have followed, and the debt plus the interest, now is \$1600 million a year. Of course, far more than the original value of the loan has been repaid.

If the city stopped paying interest on these loans, all city workers could be kept employed, wage raised and cuts in services reversed.

But the loan sharks control the Government. In fact it is the American workers who pay.

## As Indonesia invades Timor

# SILENCE IS CONSENT

For a while it looked as though the people of East Timor were going to have the opportunity to be wanted without too much fuss. Indonesia had attempted an takeover was frustrated when Fretilin beat the shit out of them. But before they could get down to the job of cleaning up the country, Indonesian soldiers, supplying arms to UDT and taking an active part in the conflict in some areas. So the war goes on.

Indonesia cannot afford to have an independent East Timor on its doorstep. It might give others the horror of the murder of the East Timor journalists is only one of the horror stories of the last few weeks. There can be no doubt of Indonesia's role.

UDT claims that the Australians were assisting Fretilin with military advice. Communist T and F aren't exactly renowned for their communist sympathies but anyone that disagrees with the Indonesian regime is called a communist. You can imagine what's happening to the Timorese.

The fact that they can get away with it is astounding. If it was anyone but Indonesia, the government would be in a mess. As, through the whole Timor affair, Australia has just stood by and watched it happen. It may be clear all along that, if Australia didn't publicly support Fretilin, there would be nothing to stop the Indonesian moving in.

During the Vietnam war all politicians used to march against the war until they were "filled with consent". But that was when Labour was in opposition. It was also very rare where Australian companies did not have large-scale investments and assets.

In the midst of their massive constitutional confrontation Whitlam and Fraser have a common point in one issue - Timor. A deliberate move on the part of Whitlam and Fraser to silence more than ever in this case, means consent.



Marjorie Barbara

## What will happen if FRETILIN loses

Shubarto has a bit of practice in interfering with governments. He started back in 1951, when he managed to come out top after the confusion surrounding the anti-Sukarno coup.

Shubarto predicted to wipe out the Indonesian Communist Party and there were wholesale massacres, not just of party members, but of anyone suspected of sympathising. It is estimated that one million people were killed in the course of the biggest purge in history. Those who weren't murdered were thrown into concentration camps, about 50,000 are still there. Some of them are still 25 years old - they were arrested as members of the Communist Party youth section.

Fructose is an everyday part of life for those who oppose Shubarto. For a few of his well-documented, yet nothing is done about it.

The Labor Party that staged concentration, opposed the Vietnam war, expelled Horner over Chile, has not said a word of protest. Hancock is no worse than Shubarto, yet Shubarto is more of Whitlam's best mate. He's been seen with Shubarto in the past. Now he is in effect saying that he's prepared to see the Indonesians do the same thing in Timor that they did in 1965.

If the government won't do anything, we can. Protest action, supported by the workers, has put black bars on Indonesian ships. The Victorian branch of the ALP has called on the government to recognise Fretilin. But Whitlam won't budge unless he's forced to by the whole labor movement. He must be allowed to close his own government.

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# The Railways caused this....

OVER THE LAST COUPLE of months Victorian railway workers have intensified their campaign to win their 14 point log of claims. They are fighting for an across-the-board \$40 over award payment and the 35 hour week. Other claims include long service leave, overtime payments, retirement gratuity and public holiday leave. Many overdue improvements in safety and working conditions are also being demanded.

Major action has included a 24 hour strike on 22 September, a 24 hour stoppage by shunters, stopwork meetings, and guerrilla actions by signalmen, shunters and guards. As well, there are bans on industrial sidings and certain goods trains, and work-to-regulations at South Dynon loco depot.

# The Unions got the blame

Despite the intensification of the campaign, the Railway bosses have not yielded. Railway's chairman Gibbes talks about a "minority of irresponsible" causing "unethical stoppages". He doesn't mention that he has just taken a \$3000 salary rise for himself and yet has flatly refused to give his employees any pay rises in the past two years. In that time, the only pay increases railway workers received were two meagre and phony wage indexation rises.

In periods of rapid inflation, the Hamer government and the Railways Board believe the minority of fat cats are worth regular \$60-a-week increases while, "in the interests of decency", 30,000 railway workers should be content with seeing their wages severely eroded.

## insults

To add insult to injury, Transport Minister Meagher recently said the action taken by rail employees was "the sort of action you would expect from Hitler's brownshirts!". The Union responded with an immediate ban on the "Royal Train" scheduled for Princess Margaret's visit. Railway workers' campaigns are always subjected to hysteria from the Press. With the ban on Margaret's train, the Age and the Herald had a field day. "Or rather, days...in the following 3 days no less than twelve articles appeared attacking selfish rail employees for imposing the ban. Her Royal Minority is, of course, more important than the restant of railway workers who provide the services.

And compared with the dirty tricks of the Railways Board, Malcolm Fraser just isn't in the same. When Flinders St. signalmen held a lightning

stoppage on October 14, the press went hysterical about passengers having to get out of trains stranded in the Joll-mott yards and walk along the tracks. At 7.40 a.m. the signalmen gave notice they would walk off the job from 8 a.m. till 9.15. Trains not able to reach Flinders St by 8 o'clock would be held at preceding stations.

But at 7.55, before the signalmen stopped work, railway officials ordered trains about to depart from Flinders St to remain stationary. This meant that trains which had just left Richmond for the city were unable to get into Flinders St. Commuters got stranded in the Joll-mott yards because the railway officials intended them to be. They knew the press would blame the union.

The campaign "officially" began with a stopwork meeting back on April 14....after the union had failed to do anything about the 1974 log of claims! (The union official admitted the 1974 campaign "died a natural death" after the various state branches of the union couldn't agree on the log of claims!) And it seemed the officials were going to go the same way. The militancy of the April meeting had little effect on them. For the next 5 months they just talked about "negotiations".

By September 10 angry rail unionists had had enough. At a very militant mass stopwork meeting, they forced the union leadership to give the campaign teeth with a series of stoppages, bans and guerrilla action. But the officials are still hesitant. The hysteria from the press plus a plea from Federal Transport Minister Jones was enough for them to call off the ban on Margaret's train. Union officials told me they were concerned that Margaret would go by train which would be a "loss of prestige" for

public transport!!

And it's clear the union leadership has no real strategy to combat the stubbornness of Hamer and his mates. Following their meeting with the Railways Board last week, the union leadership argue they have achieved a "breakthrough". Apparently Railways Commissioner Walker stated the Board could not "bury its head in the sand" by ignoring the dispute and should consider it as a "matter of urgency".

A matter of urgency -- in what respect? Meaning the government sees it as urgent to step up its attack on railway workers? This is certainly what they have done. Two weeks ago legislation to improve the retirement gratuity for rail employees was suddenly stopped. And Meagher attacks the workers as being "Nazi".

The guerrilla campaign has proved counter-productive. Isolated stoppages can be used by employers against workers. The underhand trick played by the Railways Board against the signalmen on October 14 clearly illustrates this.

Union officials have argued to me that the lower paid grades could not afford the loss of pay of an all-out stoppage. What about a strike fund? This also ignores the fact that prior to the officials' own ineptitude of the last two years, most railway pay increases were won with all-pay strikes. It's the bosses' dirty tricks against guerrilla campaigns which will divide workers. When all are out, solidarity boosts morale.

As the Hamer government steps up its attack on rail unionists, an all-out stoppage is needed until the demands are met. The recent militancy of railway workers - 1,400 enthusiastic, cheering unionists at the two recent stopwork meetings - shows it can be done.



## FIGHT THE SACK

CHRYSLER WORKERS in Adelaide are working a four-day week to fight the sacking of 23 of their mates. They decided to take this action when the company refused to negotiate over the timing of the sacking. They give assurances that there would be no further layoffs in the next twelve months.

The workers are demanding full pay for the 4-day week and have set up an action committee to co-ordinate their campaign. They are picketing the Chrysler factories in an attempt to stop scabs.

The campaign was organised at a meeting of 5000 car workers called by the Vehicle Builders Union and the AMU on October 20. Members of the Australian Society of Engineers and the Electrical Trades Union are continuing to work the five-day week.

In speaking for his proposal to work the four day week the AMU said: "We have got the power to decide what the company will do and what it will not do, provided we all stick together and that is the essential point."

It's a pity he didn't take his own advice and support rank and file moves for 40-hour and 24-hour occupations. The demand for a four day week the five days pay can stop the sackings. But only if it is forced on the company by occupations and militant picketing.



# Defend the right to Work

HALF A MILLION UNEMPLOYED NEXT YEAR. That's the price we'll pay for a Liberal victory. One hundred thousand more jobs will be lost if Labor is kept out by the polls. Fraser who's planning the most vicious job cuts. Public spending is to be cut. That means less money for teachers, public service clerks, building industry workers and others. More than anything, he wants to control the inflation that threatens the bosses' profits. He has seen Gerald Ford cut inflation in the US by throwing 9 million workers onto the dole. If he gets away with his grab for power, he'll do it here. Stop him.

# Defend the right to Strike

THE RIGHT TO STRIKE is our basic weapon of self-defence in a system we don't control. Fraser has drawn up legislation to break strikes, ban them altogether in some industries, jail union officials and outlaw picketing. If he is elected on December 13, his first act will be to pass these anti-union laws. (See page 4 for more information on Fraser's industrial policies.)

# Defend the right to Vote

THE RIGHT TO VOTE is one of the few democratic rights we have in this society. Now they are trying to take that away from us. If Fraser is elected, it will mean that the Senate got away with blocking Supply and Kerr got away with sacking an elected government. It will mean that no matter how many times we elect the Government of our choice, we can no longer rely on it taking office. If that happens, we may still have elections where we write numbers on a piece of paper, but they will have no more meaning than the elections in countries like Spain and Russia, where the results are known before the election. If Fraser wins, we may have more elections, but we will have lost the right to vote.

# FIGHT THE BOSSES' ATTACK...



# VOTE LABOR!







# Controlling the unions...and attacking our wages

# FRASER McCLELLAN

## The Union Is The Velvet Fist

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE to have your union run by a Liberal-appointed Judge?  
This Fraser we can look forward to if Squatter Fraser gets elected on December 13, Fraser - the man who's never worked in his life - will want to force us to take the job if an Arbitrator says "Don't strike" and "Just listen to this place from his Liberal Policy."

"These methods of the Coercion and Arbitration Act that define...unfair industrial practices will be reworked...such practices could include...undertaking a strike which would be against an Arbitrator's decision."

If the Arbitration Court says "keep working" and we "unfairly" vote not to, what then?

"There must be consequences to those who are not prepared to abide by the rules... Examples of the kind of consequences which could be available to the Court would be demeritisation, suspension or revocation of funds, fines, exclusion from office of...office bearers of an organisation for a specified period...."

So unless we buckle under to the Arbitrators, and give up our main weapon of defence - the strike - whenever we will, we get hammered. Our unions can be deregistered, which means we lose our assets and the bosses can set up scab unions. The courts can impose fines - which they can then hand over to the bosses as "damages for losses suffered". They can also smother us organisationally by suspending union officers. Or they can seize property or funds (suspension, garnishments) to smash us financially.

Under the Liberals, the Arbitration Court will be empowered to state at work, regardless of how we vote at strike meetings.

In some industries, the Liberals want to ban strikes altogether.

"The Liberal Party and National Country Party equally believe that the community...is entitled at all times to the maintenance of essential services...."

So if you work for the railways, hospitals, State Electricity Commission or similar, you simply lose your right to strike. You pay and conditions are completely at the mercy of a coalition that wants to cut government spending. "Restrict" wages and redistribute wealth to the bosses. ("The private enterprise sector needs a longer share of the gross national product" - Fraser, 22/7/75)

You will not be allowed to defend yourself with a strike. The Liberals will simply make you keep working.

### Slavery

There is a name for forcing people to work. It's called slavery. The Liberals support to have illegal since 1833.

It's not only the right to strike that is threatened. The Liberals also want to take other rights away from us.

According to Fraser's policy, "re-ignition in primary or secondary beyond activity" is "unfair practice". This means black-bans are out.

"If the boss calls in scab labour, we can't declare the goods unsalable. "Black" we can't ban an unsafe machine until the scab labour from Arbitration allow us to. We can't resist speed-ups or "efficiency checks".

The Libs also want to attack the right to picket. They want to punish "picketing that in any way involves violence or intimidation".

So when scab truck drivers nearly kill us as they run our picket lines, we place with "violence or intimidation" for trying to stop them. Now, the stop was able to stop up all sorts of offences against the motorist and the pickets. The Liberals want more law to hit us with.

Fraser wants to outlaw solidarity between workers, to stop wharfedis support.

ing Chilean workers with bans on handling cargo. He wants to smash the ban on the Newport Power Station. So his policy amounts to "the exercise of the power of industrial organisations for non-industrial purposes is not legitimate".

Wonder how the Caribbees justify multinational exercising their power for non-industrial purposes - like their huge donations to the Liberal Party.

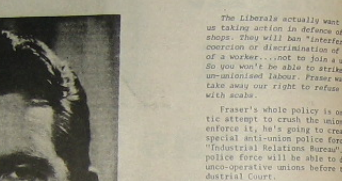
### Interfere

Naturally, the Liberal Party wants to interfere in internal union affairs. They also try to set a precedent for this by using a "reasonable" pretext - government-run postal ballots in union elections. They claim this would strengthen rank and file control of organisations.

When the Liberal Party comes out in support of workers' control on industry, we'll start to believe they're interested in the rights of the scab and file.

What the Liberal Party wants to do is stick its finger into union business. There is a long history of postal ballots in union elections. It'll start demanding that we have postal ballots for strike decisions - a sure way to cripple union activity.

There's nothing wrong with postal ballots for union elections - if that's what the rank and file want.



Fraser's whole policy is one of the Liberal Party's attempt to crush the union. To enforce it, he's going to create a special anti-union police force - the "Industrial Relations Bureau".

### Penal Powers

We castrated the Industrial Co-Operative Act in 1969 when we smashed the Powers with a General Strike. The bosses have been snarling ever since Fraser - who's been visiting publicly - wants to prove he's "the worker friend" - really to restore the Penal Powers.

This time, the penalties are compulsory. Remember that it said "It must be consequences for those not prepared to abide by the rule" and Fraser says "We will obtain decisions and authority of the industrial Court".

This can only mean one thing. The Liberals intend to jail unionists. Don't knock under, just like the did with Clarrin O'Connell six years ago.

Fraser foretold ahead all this in speech on January 22 this year to ANZAS Conference. The sitting silver talk argued: "In the case of every other law, to disregard the consequences of one sort or another. This profound observation was supported by the Penal Powers Bill to enforce Arbitration Act 1972."

Of course, Millington had forgotten to mention that Fraser had got it squashes us when we try to get out of the wealth we produce. We're trapped in a capitalist society, things are distinctly unequal.

### Bosses

Just in case the Liberal Party hasn't heard, there are creatures -- not very pleasant creatures -- known as bosses. And these creatures are very good at exploiting divisions among workers. So when they see a few workers not in the union, they use this -- they use them as scab labour during strikes. So the unorganised minority becomes the bosses' weapon against the majority.

Besides, the fewer union members you have, the fewer wage rises you get. If some workers stay out of the union, everyone suffers, not just the scabs themselves.

CLIVE HOLDING SUMMED UP FRASER'S INDUSTRIAL POLICY well when he told a rally of shop stewards at Festival Hall: "If this overweening prefect ever gets it, he'll give you a caning that will make Madam Lash's massage parlour look second-rate."

But Clive holding didn't say: "How come the Liberal Party - and more importantly, the businessmen holding it - feel confident enough to put forward such a viciously anti-union policy?"

Clive holding didn't ask this question because the answer is too embarrassing. For the last year, the Labor government has been doing its own union-busting - muted at first, but steadily increasing. It's now got to the point where "disbanding" McCallion can make comments like these last week.

"I had to wear all my endeavor while a Minister to stop the unions leaving the country."

"Parents who say 'No' get tantrums from the children and Labor Ministers who say 'No' get tantrums from the unions. But, little children, the union will learn too."

Apart from suggesting that James McCallion has some pretty screwed-up kids, all this shows the depths to which the Labor government has sunk. The Labor leaders make great play of the fact that there is the party of the workers.

So when the crunch comes, do they defend us with a genuine wage indexation scheme? Do they fight unemployment by striking to their election promise of the 33-hour week, thus creating more jobs? (You're kidding!) They turn around and boast to the bosses about how good they are at controlling us.

### Doubts

No wonder Fraser reckons he can get away with his Industrial Policy. McCallion is just going to defend us from it. The only opposition "diamond" has expressed are his doubts that Fraser can pull it off.

"I believe if Fraser was in power there would be a major social confrontation. I believe there would be more strikes and pressure for wage rises of the dimensions of 1974."

In fact, if Fraser gets in, McCallion has promised to try and defend ourselves. He has said he would use his influence to persuade unions "not to wreck the show". But what about Fraser's attempts to wreck our unions?

Why are the Labor politicians doing this?

demoralised many workers by blating the unions for the economic crisis. Their wage indexation will allow us to attack you, or the Frase will whip up fighting against us and the liberals will get on."

Clive, isn't it? But it doesn't work - you know the Liberals are in any case with a very good chance of staying re-elected. Liberal list about unions causing inflation and unemployment. A lot of workers who look to the Labor Party for leadership were confused. They had no way of fighting the idea that the Liberals and the papers were pushing, because the Liberal politicians were saying the same thing.

So the Whitlam-Hayden-McCallion approach was a double blaster. Our wages were eaten away by the false indexation scheme, union action was undermined, and Labor just support any way.

During the recession, the bosses want an all-out attack on wages. They want to stop indemnity payments, which are adequate as they were. They wish to stop pressure from the unions. If they're always to give them some concessions, it can't attack them with the same vigor at the Liberal. It can't cut back on wages and social services at really.

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So the bosses intended Fraser. A few had some qualms about the method of grabbing power, but they are right about the ends.

What is the Labor Party response to all this? Have they admitted the futility of trying to compromise with the bosses? Have they tried to rally the union movement in a general strike to stop Fraser? No.

Instead, McCallion is trying to convince the socialist left that his policies were effective at taming the unions when Fraser's Labor Party continues in its divisive strategy of attacking its own supporters.

Having rendered such excellent service to the bosses, Whitlam, McCallion and all expected a reprieve from the Frase. Instead they get the sack.

They had done their job - weakening the unions and movement - now they were expendable. It was Whitlam and McCallion who cleared the way for Fraser's coup.

They had done their job - weakening the unions and movement - now they were expendable. It was Whitlam and McCallion who cleared the way for Fraser's coup.

### UNEMPLOYMENT and INFLATION

#### Who is to blame? Who is to blame?

reached intolerable heights, it has black-pedaled (like other governments) and tried to produce a recovery by pouring money back into the economy.

In other words the Labor government has acted much like your Libs. It might have. This means Fraser has no real complaints about us, and attacks on us are purely opportunistic.

Are that doesn't mean we don't want any regulations at all. What a Labor government doing to stop inflation? This will remain as James if we re-elect Labor.

We certainly need to re-elect Labor. The reason is simple. While Fraser's approach to the economy is such that the same as Labor's, it will be much more ruthless about it, and harder to fight inflation. After all, it's not on our votes, our trade unions, our membership of money. Fraser is dependent on the Melbourne Club. Where Whitlam has attacked us, Fraser will try to massage us.

It is simple self-defence to re-elect Labor. But is it self-defence to rely on people to solve our economic problems. That depends on our own struggles.

Whitlam's government simply did not support when they took the reins of the party. It was a disaster. It was a disaster. It was a disaster.

These two set about restraining our wages with a vengeance. They

by ALEC KAHN  
Industrial  
Editor



# GENERAL STRIKE CUP

AS SOON AS THE NEWS HIT of Britain's defeat, a wave of anger swept Australia, who first and foremost at every major port round the country walked off the job.

Within three hours, demonstrations were occurring in every capital city. In Canberra, 4000 angry workers and students gathered outside Parliament House. In Sydney, 3000 marched on Liberal Headquarters calling for a General Strike. In Brisbane, 1000 people attended a demonstration while 4000 rallied in Perth's Forrest Place.

In Melbourne, the AMU called a rally in the city square for 5.30PM. Three thousand people turned up... wharfies, metalworkers, clerks, typists who rushed in after their exams. Small groups of office-workers marched through the city with hastily made placards.

## marched

Ignoring Bob Hawke's call to "cool it", the crowd marched on Government House, and then the Liberal Party Headquarters. After the cops attacked the demonstration, glassworkers refused to repair the Liberal headquarters' windows, broken by angry marchers.

Six o'clock, the SWP, Dominion, MUI, FEPAU, AMU and AEU, issued calls for a national stoppage.

The next day the pressure built up. Wharfies and seamen stopped for twenty-four hours. NSW miners joined them. In Melbourne, thirty unions got to discuss action. SWAC circulated 5000 pamphlets at factories and on housing commission areas calling for a general strike. In Sydney, a march on the Stock Exchange by Garden Island and Gosford Dockworkers was joined by seamen and office workers. They occupied the exchange briefly and forced the cops to release arrested marchers.

At this stage, the march's leaders tried to call the whole thing off. Clive Holding and John Halfpenny urged people to go home. They then 20,000 people were left standing around wondering what to do next.

A large number of demonstrators did not want to go home. At the urging of SWAC members and other militants, fifteen thousand marched up to Parliament House where Phil Griffiths from SWAC called for a march on the Stock Exchange, the nerve centre of big business that was behind the Kerr coup. The SWAC banners led off and fifteen thousand militant, angry people marched through the city chanting "Strike Fraser Out" and "We want Douglas".

## chants

At the Stock Exchange, there were more militant speeches and chants of "General strike". At 5PM, the crowd marched back to the city square to disperse.

For the first time in many years, fifteen thousand people had rejected the respectable tactics of the Labor leaders. In favor of a militant demonstration of their feelings.

The next week, the ALP began to divert the movement back into Parliamentary channels. On the Monday,

On the Friday, we saw the peak of working class action.

One hundred thousand workers stopped in Brisbane and 20,000 rallied in the city square. In Townsville, 3000 demonstrated. In Gladstone, 1000 workers stopped and 1000 marched.

In Melbourne, thirty-five major unions stopped work for four hours: 400,000 workers in all. The city came to a standstill as 40,000 gathered in the city square and marched on the Old Treasury.

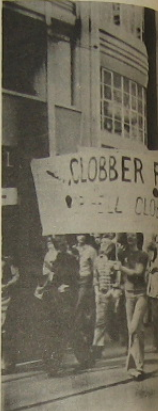
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Garden Island Dockers stopped again and marched in Sydney on a Labor Council rally. The ACTU threatened action against any TV stations which tried to freeze out air air workers. But industrial action was on the way. The massive spontaneous movement had not been organized... in fact it had been discouraged. It started to die. Fifteen hundred job delegates in Melbourne heard Cameron, Havel and Ken Stone come... and then propose nothing.

On Monday, there were stoppages by Glassworkers, seamen, teachers, wharfies, building workers and Garden Island dockers who walked off the job to attend Whitlam's policy speech in Sydney.

We are now into the election campaign, fighting over who will run the economy best for business. We could have stopped Fraser two weeks ago with a General Strike. The feeling was certainly there. Only the organization was missing. Our next fight will be to smash the anti-union policies of the new government.



## Where were the Tribunes of

"In a crisis situation such as we face today, only the mobilization of the workers can rally all sections of the people to defeat the coup. Already, the spontaneous response has shown that the will is there...the working class expects action and is taking action...the Communist Party calls for workers' action to continue and rise still higher."

Fighting words these. The Communist Party clearly can't be criticized in the way they criticize Bob Hawke. Interviewed in Tribune, Laurie Carmichael, Assistant National Secretary of the AMU and president of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), welcomed the "week of magnificent working class action that swept out the Bob Hawke inaction". Tribune called for a national stoppage and the formation of united action committees to campaign against Fraser.

Tribune's articles are very nicely written and seem to be calling for the same things as we are in The Battler. We called for a general strike and they called for a "national stoppage", but the difference is not really important. But there are other important differences between the CPA and us. They are much larger with much more influence among workers than us. So what has the CPA actually done to put these fine sentiments into practice?

John Halfpenny, a prominent member of the CPA, has been in a unique position in the last couple of weeks. As a popular public speaker, he is always closely listened to. As a leading member of one of Australia's most important unions, he is in a position to influence workers. That has been his record.

At the rally in the City Square in Melbourne on the afternoon of the takeover, which was actually called by the AMU, Halfpenny got up and made a very nice speech. He called for action, for workers to take to the streets... for all sorts of militant things. And he didn't call for a general strike or a "national stoppage". After listening to the speech, you know me more than at the start... that what had happened was a terrible something, that it was necessary to do something, that we were extremely angry. Halfpenny didn't suggest what

more we could do than we had already done, he provided no leadership, nor did he help to focus our anger.

Perhaps Halfpenny and the Communist Party hadn't yet had time to think out a plan of attack? Tribune came out the next day with statements like this:

**John Halfpenny**







# THE Battler

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS' ACTION GROUP

**Defend the right to Strike**  
**Defend the right to Work**  
**Defend the right to Vote**

# STRIKE FRASER OUT









# KICK OUT FRASER!

## A statement from the Workers League

ALAN FRASER, acting on behalf of the bourgeoisie and fascist Australia, has been prepared to break the rules of the system - his system - in order to seize political power.

The bosses are backing Fraser all the way with open arms. A class-led liberal Government would attempt to smash the power of the trade unions and to make us pay for the crisis of their economic system.

A Fraser-led Government would give the green light for the bosses to carry out sackings, wage-cutting and lockouts as they please. And Fraser will create a special industrial police force to make sure the bosses get their way.

It is that the National Times had to say about Fraser's industrial relations policy:

"It has the ability to punish unions, and punish them severely, will be restored to the industrial force, the second is to give the responsibility to prosecute unions, which now exists with employers, would be taken over by

The Workers' League can be contacted at PO Box 86 Moonah, Tasmania.

# WHITLAM'S TRICKS UP by Tom O'Loughlin

ONCE there was a mineral-rich country in the southern hemisphere. The country was ruled by a social democratic government supported by the workers. It had been elected by the people and given solid re-endorsement at an intervening election.

It was not revolutionary, but it took certain steps the capitalist class did not like. For example, it tried to control over some of the country's natural resources which were owned by foreign interests. This involved some government ownership.

The capitalists, domestic and foreign, tried to obstruct the government. They were successful in placing the capitalists, the government tried to restrain and control their own workers. It had to take the point of striking strikers as "irresponsible."

This wasn't good enough. To the end, the government was overthrown. To overthrow it, the capitalists used a government institution that was supposed to be neutral and above party politics.

The country was called. The Alliance government was overthrown in 1973. The overthrow of Whitlam cost only two more votes. Since November, 1973, everyone has been pointing to the similarities between the two days.

The similarities are interesting and significant. But the differences are also interesting and significant.

### CONSERVATIVE

Fraser is not a fascist, even if it makes us feel a little better to write the same with a flourish. He is just a conservative. His government, if elected, would not do what the fascists did in Chile. It would not murder 20,000 workers, torture countless more, completely crush the trade unions and outlaw working class political organisations.

That's not because Fraser is a clone but because the Chilean fascists, it's clear that the capitalists in this country are not so disparate. They can rally through any means.

The capitalists will do literally anything to retain their jobs, but anything to rule without open government. Terror, dictatorship, labor-repression, the efficient functioning society. If it makes the capitalists richer, even revolution as the only way in which it is possible for the capitalists would prefer to avoid.

Should the economic crisis reach a point where the capitalists are unable profitable in Australia or if the working class is utterly crushed, then the media have a plan to take the country to a fascist labor dictatorship. Finally Kerr took in the hint.

Who was justified in being angry about it. Whitlam is justified in opposing it. But there is one thing which Whitlam is

not justified in doing, which has no right at all to stand up and say to us that we should put our faith in parliament. He has no right to ask us for restraint, and wait for him to solve our problems in parliament. It should be made public that the whole capitalist state machine is rigged.

The top public servants are well placed to frustrate important measures. The Senate is well placed to obstruct. The government remains in there to die in the half, and if it really gets desperate enough, the army is ready and waiting to put a bullet through the head of an elected leader.

From this hard fact of life he should draw the lessons. That it is useful being in parliament, but not if you have no strength outside parliament to defend your government. That only the strongest and most militant members of the working class can defend the Labor government.

That the only Labor government that could survive anything really substantial would be one that was able to mobilise the workers for an all-out assault on the power of the capitalists.

Instead, Whitlam follows the road of Alton, it is also the road of Popondere in Greece, whose social democratic party was robbed of electoral victory by a military coup. It is the road of the social democrats in Germany

before Hitler, and in Italy before Mussolini.

It is a road that leads to a deadly trap. A Labor government that will mobilise their supporters to fight an all-out assault on the power of the capitalists. They claim that this is the only way in order to avoid the right wing, and to call the capitalist state machine is rigged.

And if it seems necessary to them, they will use the state machinery, which they have built and carefully rigged, to toss Labor out on its ear. At that stage, only a fighting response will do any good.

Isn't it far more sensible to start out fighting, so that we can win our way to that we can stop defending ourselves for once and take the offensive?

Of course that means revolutionary politics, and Whitlam will never be won to that. But the Australian workers must be won to revolutionary politics, otherwise one of these days fascism really will come to Australia.

IN DECEMBER and January there will be a massive increase in unemployment as over 200,000 school leavers start searching for their first job. The prospects are dismal, banks and insurance companies have almost no vacancies, public service recruitment is at a standstill, and industry won't be hiring and there will be few apprenticeships offered.

The employers will swell the ranks of the unemployed by sacking thousands of workers to avoid paying them for the Christmas holidays, knowing full well that there will be a massive pool of unemployed from which they can pick and choose next year.

On top of this the car industry and the building industry are about to collapse and there will be a massive unemployment. In other areas there will be no increase in employment as employers will attempt to reduce costs by cutting labor to the bone and introducing labor saving devices.

The Reserve Bank estimates that by March unemployment will have peaked near the half-million mark (about 7% of the labor force) and then gradually decline to about 400,000.

If the Liberals get returned to office and Fraser makes massive cuts in public expenditure, the unemployment would really go through the roof. At the moment the public sector is the only growth area of the economy, public expenditure is supporting whole areas of private demand such as the building and construction and the retail trade. If this spending stopped

socialists' role in enforcing a freeze in real wages through the industrial scheme, or Hayden's Budget, or the direct taxes, the 'flowing down of social spending'.

The rights of working people - the right to a living wage, and a decent life - are under attack everywhere. Our rights cannot possibly be defended through our own struggle and unity on our own.

It is useless for rank-and-file workers to rely on self-proclaimed 'leaders'. We must rely on our own.

## KICK OUT THE LIBERALS

### RE-ELECT THE LABOR PARTY

### BUILD A RANK-AND-FILE MOVEMENT TO DEFEND OUR RIGHTS

SINCE JOHN WALCOTT FRASER TOOK OVER the Liberal Party, and subsequently the country, various people have rightly stressed that he's not exactly your average run of the mill politician. Liberal and his supporters see in him a return to stagnation of a kind not strictly lacking in Holt, Gorton, McMahon and Deedee, a leadership figure who will bring style back to the Liberal Party. What's more (though this isn't as important to the libs) he isn't as blatantly stupid as a couple of recent efforts have been.

What the bosses most like about Fraser is his willingness to attack the working class and the union movement. He has openly declared himself on the side of their profits. And why not? he comes from a long line of profit-makers.

Fraser prefers to keep his enormous wealth a secret. After all, he wants to woo all those voters trying to get home loans. He never made a home loan. In fact, he's never even had to work a day in his life. He covers a 8,072 acres of plush grazing land. Not all that many people can identify with this.

The Fraser fortune really got off the ground with Mal's grandfather, Simon Fraser. He swung into action shortly after the gold rush of the 1850's. Most of the money came from contracting (building bridges, roads and railways) and later from land speculation, a favorite past-time of the very rich (no-one else can afford it). Simon was lined with many of the really big names of the business world, including the founders of BHP.

Having made his pile, he went into politics, first as a member of the House of the first Senate in 1901. He was elected to a grand total of the Royal Orange Lodge (another ruling class past-time). This organisation is the

most powerful in the world. It is a secret society, and its members are sworn to keep its secrets. It is a secret society, and its members are sworn to keep its secrets. It is a secret society, and its members are sworn to keep its secrets.

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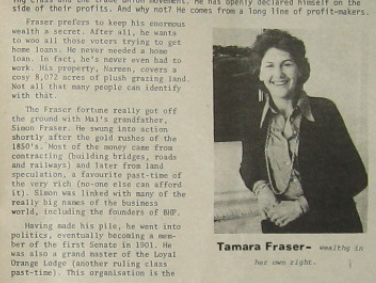
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# THE RICHEST IN THE WORLD ARE GETTING RICHER

by Tess Lee Ack



Tamara Fraser - wealthy in her own right.

the Labor Party. He lost the first time, but finally got it in 1955, after the MLP split.

Simon Fraser, he never looked back, it's a pity some of his Liberal Party colleagues didn't - they might have seen the wife. He was healthy. Of the last three Liberal Party leaders, he was the only one who was not a member of the Liberal Party. He was the only one who was not a member of the Liberal Party.

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## Who's lying?

From our leak in Dept. of Labor

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As the workers at Lucas said - "Billy who?"

...they all are!

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## tooth and nace

by Dave Nadel

It couldn't happen here? Consider the following two pieces of evidence:

1. On November 11, the day of Whitlam's sacking, New Year was celebrated in Australia. He was put on "Greg Arler."

2. There has been a document circulating recently around business circles, by about 40 middle ranking officers. It says that they would see a fight in Australia, only overseas. Obviously someone has been suppressed so that they might be asked to fight in Australia. It was suppressed so that they might be asked to fight in Australia.

Oh yeah, and even at election time, we must have a costly campaign. We must have a costly campaign. We must have a costly campaign. We must have a costly campaign.

It was bad enough to have former player and wren machine man Fred Macfarlane endorse the Liberals, but a cockles party member endorsing the Libs and white is unforgivable.

Still, we should have picked Tully over Country Party. He's been holding his hand out for large subsidies for years for a few large subsidies.

THE MATTLER NOVEMBER 29

if you can't use a trooper, use a grouper.



# WITNERS

## Write to the Battler, Box 7, Richmond, 3121.

Dear Comrade,

I would like to explain to your readers that the war that is being waged in Beirut is not a religious war.

It is a war between the people who live in big houses, and the people who live in camps and tents. It is a war of greed, and democracy. In a word, it is a class struggle between oppressors and oppressed.

In May the diplomatic supplement to the French newspaper Le Monde exposed some secrets about who is behind the right wing Phalangists in Lebanon. (Israeli weapons have been discovered on the bodies of Phalangist soldiers, and some Israeli advisors have been working with them.)

In addition, Israel has been arranging for huge arm supplies from many countries. Their intelligence agents have been active in several European countries, including a city in Italy, where they met with some of the Phalangist leaders. Their efforts have been successful!

Early this year three cargo ships, one from the United States, one from Italy, and one from Japan, were transported by trucks to Phalangists in the north. Later, in April, another ship visited the same area, bringing a French plane. The Lebanese government ordered the port lights to be turned off and the ship to be kept away. According to Le Monde, help has been coming from Spain, West Germany and Italy.

Phalangists are also being trained in Jordan and Spain.

In Israel supporting the Phalangists. The answer is simple: we need to use them to destroy the Palestinians. In the north, later, in April, another ship visited the same area, bringing a French plane. The Lebanese government ordered the port lights to be turned off and the ship to be kept away. According to Le Monde, help has been coming from Spain, West Germany and Italy.

We should all support the democratic forces in Lebanon against the Phalangists and their Israeli and imperialist backers.

Sam Amir

## SAFETY LAST

Comrades,

I recently had a job on the shakedown on the turnaround at the Australian Petro-Chemical plant at Townsville.

Right from the start we were led to believe that safety was the number one priority. They even gave us lectures and instruction cards.

But anyone with any experience at all knows that danger lurks around most corners and inside most pressure vessels and chemical process units. It is that kind of job that can only enforce these convictions.

I used a computer to estimate the thickness demands and to make sure that its timetable it often meant having to take a chance. As for the valves, I was concerned there was no way they were going to get away with this.

We asked for some engineering notes on your work safe and they told us we weren't going to get any. We were, however, going to get a new set of electronic tools, engineer tools on what was safe and what wasn't. It was a nice steward and a co-delegate.

We had a meeting which gave 100% support for the 1 hour stoppage on the day of the big labor rally. While the big risks didn't turn up to work at all, this got the bosses' backs up very much.

A couple of days later, I was dismantling some large valves (9 1/2 inch) which were installed high above ground level. The crew had been working in the area for some days and the proper work safety permit had been issued. But one piece of paper is no safeguard against danger even though assurances were made that everything was safe.

After several valves had been dismantled, one proved to be the bomb. It looked like a rocket. Water above broke down for several minutes and the welds working on it almost had its head knocked off. It was certainly the experience of myself and the other fellows which prevented a serious accident from occurring.

I immediately tried to get hold of Mr. Morgan, the safety officer, but he couldn't be found. I asked a senior operator to inspect the area but he said he wasn't responsible for it. He even said that he couldn't be sure that the situation wouldn't occur again.

We centers received the preliminary report just where their responsibilities lie. So the day was cast and the next day the area fell silent. I was shocked.

I demanded to see a senior representative but none of them would talk to me. I turned up the next day to try and see the shop steward but security guards wouldn't let me in so I had to wait his outside the gate. The only good thing about it was that a lot of new blokes got to realize that it is unity lives strength and with that strength - safety. In unity, lies the preservation of life and limb.

Dave Russell  
— A.H.W.U. Dandenong Branch

ground for Australian companies going multinational.

In Papua New Guinea, independence has been carefully manipulated to preserve the future of Australian and multinational companies. Even now, the military remains committed to support the domestic government if Bougainville secessionists threaten Bougainville Copper. (Owned by CRA).

On the Middle East, Labor has maintained an "even-handed" stance on Israel, but has handed Parliamentary representatives from the country. The answer for Labor's inability to take a clear stand at all, but especially now, along with rightwingers and appeasement to the British Privy Council, both at home and abroad, Whitlam was recognizing himself as a staunch imperialist.

But the real test of a progressive, anti-imperialist foreign policy is when you stick to your principles even when it isn't profitable. Here Labor fails every time.

The promised review of US bases turned out to be a joke. Jim Cairns refused to withdraw Trade Commissions from South Africa. Labor pursued the build up of Australian investment in South East Asia and the South Pacific. Not notably, and most despicably, clear that it would do nothing to stop an Indonesian invasion of East Timor all the brutality it would involve... because on such that Australian investment is in Indonesia. BP and the rest of the large private trading banks are using Indonesia as a leading

danger of more wars in Asia looking in the background.

As for the liberals... they have no real foreign policy. No doubt they will be more openly pro-American and pro-Israel than any other political party. But in terms of policy, a wide range of international questions, they will probably be forced to accept what Labor has done.

In their twenty-three years in government, the Liberals were always in a hurry to support imperialist wars. They rushed to join the American side in the Vietnam war and the British in Malaya. Labor's support for foreign wars is the threat to the Liberal's peace platform of military involvement.

It is the Liberal's peace platform like Fraser and Killen, that threat is more like a temptation.

We don't want any more Vietnam!

On the whole, the response to the called stoppage was pretty weak. On my line, I was the only worker who took the afternoon off, but I was told that the rest of the workers who took the afternoon off were on other lines. A lot of workers, in the plant have become so cynical about strikes and they just accept what's going on.

One worker (who I thought would be a militant) told me why he was against the union. A few years ago he asked a shop steward for some help with a compensation problem. But the steward had moved him on the dust removal so he was unaffiliated and naturally couldn't get any help. Nowadays our shop stewards collect the dues for the union every week but we still see nothing of our shop stewards.

Because I went to the rally I've been labelled as a "labor nut" and told that I was wasting my time. I haven't had the chance to explain that with a much wider industrial campaign we could actually change things. We have 2 had the chance to explain how the officials tried to stop the rally early.

A few days later, I phoned the union to see what they were planning. It was told that the Trades Hall had produced some pamphlets but that I would have to collect them myself if I wanted them distributed. At that stage they hadn't even planned a factory gate meeting nor (of course) any further industrial action. I then started working in a shop called the Trades Hall which a friend later described as a hole.

Writing "right unionism" letters that week, some pamphlets came down the line in a newspaper on the next day with that organizer - but will nothing of the Canberra situation.

So I went to the U.S.A. office and asked them to let me see what they were going to do about it, and they told me they were looking at a factory gate meeting on 10/20/76. I was so sure that they were going to give up that I had to wait all the bloody way to the 20th gate meeting. I was near losing my mind over it. I was sure that they were going to give up that I had to wait all the bloody way to the 20th gate meeting. I was near losing my mind over it.

## Carworkers

by Tom Freeman, VBU

The V.B.U. MAYE were virtually shouting to drive Malcolm Fraser... we're surprised when they spend most of their time at their local offices and not on the production lines. But the other teachers' unions called for the abolition of stoppage. November 19 and most of the active union members who went to the demonstration marched under the Ford banner.

On the whole, the response to the called stoppage was pretty weak. On my line, I was the only worker who took the afternoon off, but I was told that the rest of the workers who took the afternoon off were on other lines. A lot of workers, in the plant have become so cynical about strikes and they just accept what's going on.

One worker (who I thought would be a militant) told me why he was against the union. A few years ago he asked a shop steward for some help with a compensation problem. But the steward had moved him on the dust removal so he was unaffiliated and naturally couldn't get any help. Nowadays our shop stewards collect the dues for the union every week but we still see nothing of our shop stewards.

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## Teachers

by Tess Lee Ack, VSTA

LAST FRIDAY NIGHT, a branch Representatives' meeting of the VSTA voted to support the Labor Party in the coming elections. This followed a similar vote at a mass meeting of about 2,500 teachers' week earlier.

The four-hour stoppage a fortnight ago was described by some here in Phillip in Clayton voted not to go out, but 100 happy workers ramped up and went into the rally. Unfortunately it was not quite what we actually instructed our to attend the four-hour stoppage. Their response to this was not what we had hoped for. The rally, but also to ensure the "solidarity" of the teachers' union in support of their "brotherhood".

The right-wing of the union is fighting Australian Society of Engineers are of course doing the maximum possible to prevent any action by their members.

We called for strike action in the territorial part of what is the Australian and Clerical Officers Association has backed the Labor. The extreme right-wing of the union, Norm Campbell has criticised what the Federal Government has done in support of Fraser's government and has called for more action to attack the rebellious Teachers' officers.

## Who's taking care of Timor?

ONE of the Battler's predictions has been realized... but we sure as hell wish it hadn't. To the April Battler, John Sullivan wrote: "What they the Indonesian care are really saying is that when Indonesia takes over any part of Timor, they will be savagely dealt with." Even when the Indonesian are convincingly beaten GUT and APODRI, we weren't too optimistic about the chances of Indonesian keeping their grabby and bloodstained paws out of East Timor.

We were right. On November 25, the Indonesian, giving up completely their incompetent allies in East Timor, started openly backing the Aussie army. The Indonesian's recent appointments to the last Battler's press conference already starting. But Timor is already starting. There isn't a day in the Indonesian get through with this.

So, has Indonesia attacked East Timor and taken it over? The first is that

The Australian government's record over Timor is the extent of what has been and is being done. The Australian government's record over Timor is the extent of what has been and is being done. The Australian government's record over Timor is the extent of what has been and is being done.

## LEBANON: not a religious war



One of the victims of the fighting in Lebanon.

# LABOR'S FOREIGN POLICY

## It Looks Good, But...

THE LABOR GOVERNMENT has developed something of a reputation both at home and overseas for its radical foreign policy. Part of this is due to speeches and actions. Some of it is due to real actions. Labor has done some good things. But mostly where it didn't cost much.

In areas far away, where nothing much was at stake, where change was in the interests of Australian businessmen, Labor has brought us into the twentieth century. It recognized China and established diplomatic relations with it. It recognized Cuba and established diplomatic relations with it. It recognized the People's Republic of China and established diplomatic relations with it. It recognized the People's Republic of China and established diplomatic relations with it.

But the real test of a progressive, anti-imperialist foreign policy is when you stick to your principles even when it isn't profitable. Here Labor fails every time.

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RETLIN soldiers

# What our unions are doing about Fraser

and parliamentary orientation who will be getting a review of the Libe... with their false view...

a member, which is the point of going to a meeting if you want to go. In going to a meeting, you are taking a risk. You are taking a risk for labor in the last two elections.

In 1974, 35,000 of your money was used in a campaign. This year, the VTA is putting up \$20,000. The campaign will be less effective. The time since the VTA raised the money has been a disaster. The other teachers' unions...

## Metalworkers

by Kevin Bign, branch secretary, Dandenong

THE LABOR COUNCIL met on November 24 to plan a campaign of action in local areas and the State as a whole. The Union has appointed a full-time campaign organizer and printed many leaflets for distribution. An abundance of the union's holding shop stewards' meetings to organize the distribution of material and activities such as stop-work rallies. The Federal Union is donating \$25,000 to the ALP campaign.

The four-hour stoppage a fortnight ago was described by some here in Phillip in Clayton voted not to go out, but 100 happy workers ramped up and went into the rally. Unfortunately it was not quite what we actually instructed our to attend the four-hour stoppage. Their response to this was not what we had hoped for. The rally, but also to ensure the "solidarity" of the teachers' union in support of their "brotherhood".

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## Public Servants

by Mick Armstrong, ACOA

ONE OF THE ADVANTAGES of being in government is that you have 300,000 public servants to use. In 1974, 35,000 of your money was used in a campaign. This year, the VTA is putting up \$20,000. The campaign will be less effective. The time since the VTA raised the money has been a disaster. The other teachers' unions...

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# KICKING UNTIL WE WIN

"DO WE WANT Labor's chances if we strike during the election campaign?"

Railway workers faced this question this week. Should they suspend their struggle for a \$17 over-award rise, 35 hour week and a 14 point log of claims?

A.R.U. secretary Jim Fraser told 700 unionists at Loco Hall, "You must consider the guerrilla campaign in the light of the present political circumstances."

He said sections of the Labor movement felt continued strike action could prejudice the return of the Labor government.

This old myth crops up every election. It should have been dispelled in 1974, when Labor defeated the Tories in England straight after the 4-month coalminers' strike.

In fact, the Labor movement should fully support strikes over wage claims at this time.

If the union members decide not to strike before the elections, to help Labor win, then we are half way to accepting McClellin's arguments that all industrial activity and wage rises are damaging to the Labor Party. If we strike during the election campaign, we make it quite clear what sort of Labor government we want -- one that fights for the wages and conditions of its supporters.



ARU Secretary Jim Fraser

# Chrysler jails worker....AGAIN

AT THE CHRYSLER Tonsley Park Plant (S.A.) another militant has been threatened with jail for defending the right to work.

On April 9 this year, Peter van Arend was jailed for contempt of court -- his real crime was that he refused to be sacked at the whim of the Chrysler bosses.

The only people prepared to defend him were the Chrysler rank and file group. Later this

year, Peter Howes (who just happened to be active in the rank and file group) was also sacked. Security guards wouldn't let him back in the gate.

Now Will Heidt, shop steward on the Tri-Line section, has to face the courts. On November 20, he was sacked for protesting about proposed cut-backs to his section.

The line stopped, security guards were called in and Will

# THE Battler

Instead, the leaders of the 5 rail unions pushed through a resolution which agreed "that the wages element of our claim be taken up at a later date". In the meantime -- negotiations on conditions. The resolution asked the railways for positive recommendations on six condition claims by December 9. Needless to say, this cuts out the possibility of any action before the elections.

Jim Fraser told The Battler that he supported national stoppages against Whelan's sacking. But at the meeting he put forward no new initiatives. While stressing, "We cannot give it away", he added that in the short term the political crisis "has cost us victory in this campaign".

## Afford

Rail workers can't afford to lose this one. Due to poor union leadership, they haven't had an over-award rise since 1972. Instead of ALP and Communist Party heavies holding them back in a misguided attempt to win votes, the Labor Party should give full support to their campaign. Fitters in the railway workshops currently get a maximum of \$137.40. Compare this with \$147.50 in the SEC, \$162 in Gas and Fuel and \$150 now commonly

paid in private industry.

So far the rail unions have fought a guerrilla campaign with a series of short stoppages, 106 buses and limitations. The guerrilla campaign has failed to crack Hamer's Transport Minister -- arch-bastard Jay Whelan. In fact, he's now refusing to grant indemnation on current awards till all industrial action is dropped.

## Refused

First the rail unions refused to call an all-out strike. Then they've suspended their "guerrilla campaign". The only road is the Trades Hall Council and the TUC bureaucrats are unsympathetic to the railworkers claims.

But there's still plenty of fight left in the rank and file. Alluding to the bumper wheat harvest in Northern Victoria which can only be moved by one rank-and-filer said, "Whether Fraser or Whitlam is in after December 13, we are going to kick'em and keep kicking'em until we win this campaign."

by KEN STEVENS

## Will Heidt



was assaulted -- then the cops were called. On the advice of a VBU official, Will left but re-

turned that afternoon after a lunch-time mass meeting had voted overwhelmingly to support his action. The company refused to let his section operate but threatened to sack anyone in the other sections who stopped work.

They were so certain of the cooperation of the VBU officials that they issued a press release claiming that the VBU completely supported the strike. The union failed to prove wrong. The union failed to support his reinstatement.

Heidt was arrested that afternoon at the Tonsley park. He was charged with assaulting a security guard, resisting arrest and unlawfully on Chrysler's premises. On December 16, the charges will be on the wrong side of the bench.

by MIKE GREWCOCK

# STOP PRESS

As we go to press, the Judges have issued a summons for Will to appear in court at 2.15 on Thursday. He had gone back to work on Monday and Chrysler are now alleging contempt of court. It appears that he will be jailed unless he can show cause why he shouldn't be. This victimisation is aimed at smashing rank and file resistance to sackings and speedups. The bosses and their courts must be stopped to get away with it.



# THE Battler

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Number 14, December 17, 1975

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post-election special



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HOW TO FIGHT FRASER pages 4 and 5

and inflation. But Fraser's so-called solutions for the economy will be to force us to make more sacrifices. Only a minority of big business parasites voted for that. And when Fraser tries to do it, he can be stopped and beaten.

Labor's defeat was a disaster, but it isn't the end of the world. We have to learn the lessons from it, and go on to build a fighting workers' movement that can turn the tide against Fraser. This issue of The Battler is mostly devoted to learning those lessons and building that movement.

WIPE THE SMILE OFF FRASER'S FACE

The Libs still think they're born to rule. But we can wipe the sneering smile off Fraser's face.

The Labor Party has lost the elections. That doesn't mean that the Australian workers are beaten. Many people voted for Fraser out of desperation over unemployment















# CARLTON LOCKS SUPPLY

"THERE'S NOT A bloke in the place who isn't prepared to work 40 hours, the breweries just won't let us." That's what we were told outside the arbitration court by two workers from Carlton and United Breweries (CUB), but pubs throughout Victoria are still running dry.

Since 1964, the unions have negotiated every two years with CUB management over wages and conditions. In September, they put forward a log of claims calling for a \$25 rise, 35 hour week and an extra week's holiday. Most of the 11000 trades workers only get about \$120-30 a week, but even that's too much for the bosses of CUB who kept stalling over further negotiations. They wanted to provoke an all-out strike because they thought they could sit tight for longer than the unions. They didn't get their wish -- overtime bans were imposed instead. That was a month ago.

The bans didn't achieve much. They meant that a lot of drivers who normally be working till midnight at this time of the year knocked off at the normal time, but production was hardly being affected. So on December 3 a mass meeting was called, well over 1000 turned up. They overwhelmingly rejected the company's miserable offer of \$1 and also banned CUB's lucrative exports, most interstate transport and 50 contract drivers who'd broken union agreements. The company opened fire.

## Lockout

The next day 800 workers found themselves locked out -- all the liquor traders, the drivers and half the clerks. Only the Yorkshire maintenance section in Wellington St. was left open. On the Monday, another

# THE Battler

by Mike Grewcock



## Friends

But pieces of paper are easy to tear up and that's just what CUB did. It's made even easier when you've got good friends -- like the "neutral" Justice Sharp of the Arbitration Commission who gave them permission to lay off the remaining 500 transport workers and clerks without pay. At the same meeting on December 9 he'd suggested an agreement which the unions were prepared to consider, but which CUB were not. It was yet another example of a judge preferring to throw workers out of jobs rather than penalize

bosses who refuse to negotiate.

Why is CUB taking such a hard line a week before the election? The answer's pretty obvious. They are trying to blame the shortages on the workers at a time when the ACTU has wrongly convinced unions not to strike. They're creating a dispute out of nothing to give Fraser and the press another excuse to bash the unions. The ACTU's ill-low attitude has opened this course to them. They're doing their bit to try

and justify Fraser's insane policy of making export tax illegal. They want a general crackdown on the unions and abolition of the Prices-fixation Tribunal.

As we go to press the workers at CUB are determined not to let them their way. In the mean time a lot of us go thirsty, the CUB directors have always had an unquenchable thirst -- for profits.

# THE Battler

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

NUMBER 15, February 7th, 1976 10c

# 6.4% NOT A CENT LESS!

EVERY WAGE EARNER in the country needs the 6.4% rise. It isn't a question of greed, it's a question of need. The 6.4% figure comes from the consumer price index and most economists admit that the CPI underestimates price rises. In other words prices have risen more than 6.4% in the last six months. We need the full indexation rise just to catch up and then we'd still be behind.

To live as well as we did two years ago, we would need the 6.4% rise, the 3% productivity rise and then a bit more. Even if the judges reject Fraser's attack on us, we should still wage a fight in our unions for more, because, let's face it, the way we were living two years ago was brilliant either.

Fraser's attempt to cut our wages (and that's what his attempt to deny us indexation is -- a wage cut) is part of his general attack on the working class. It's based on lies -- he said he supported indexation during the elections. It's based on distortions -- lower wages do not mean more jobs. It attacks those least able to defend themselves; both through the pension cuts and through the attempt to throw the unemployed off the dole. There are articles on each of these parts of Fraser's attack on pages 2 and 3.

We can stop Fraser's wage cuts. We can stop all his attacks on us. We don't have to accept any decision the court may hand down... if we're prepared to organise and fight back.



JOHN HALFPENNY, VICTORIAN SECRETARY OF THE AMALGAMATED METAL WORKERS' UNION: "We will get the 6.4% whatever happens here. We'll get it even if we have to write it out of every employer in the country. Mr Fraser seems hell-bent on making sure his road to economic recovery is paved with the pay packets of Australian workers."

JIM ROLLSTON, VICTORIAN PRESIDENT OF THE AMALGAMATED METAL WORKERS' UNION: "Workers cannot be made to bear the burden at both ends. If we see the attitude of the government, the unions will be forced to win increases in the field."

PAT CLANCY, FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE BUILDING WORKERS' INDUSTRIAL UNION: "I use the ACTU to consider a series of rolling national strikes on an industry-by-industry basis. The unions want nothing short of full wage indexation and the government's action will mean a pay cut."

ALF ZEENO, VICTORIAN SECRETARY OF THE BUILDING WORKERS' INDUSTRIAL UNION: "The building trade workers have copied indexation, but if they don't get what they want in the Commission, they will be right in the scrum for what's due to them and more."

THESE FOUR MEN lead two of Australia's more militant unions. There are other union leaders who have made similar statements. The Executive of the Australian Railways Union threatened to stop all train services in the country. The Waterside Workers walked off the job on the

day the hearing began. So did some Builders Labourers. What Halfpenny, Clancy and the others say is right. If they are prepared to back their words with action, then we can win the 6.4%

# No matter what the Judges say!

# Labor Councillors make lousy bosses

by Alec Kahn

WHAT'S THE POINT in electing the ALP to local councils? There are probably a lot of council workers around who are inclined to say "None". Here are a few of the battles with Labor-controlled Councils that Municipal Employees Union members had recently:

- \* A three-week strike by Footscray garbage men for State Incremental Payments (SIP's).
- \* Richmond council-workers' fight for a better sick pay scheme -- which has been going on for over a year.
- \* Two stop-work meetings and the threat of rolling strikes last year to win a modest upward rise from \$15 to \$21.
- \* Lay-offs of casual municipal

workers due to Whilliam's cut-backs in the Reb scheme. The most recent was the Footscray garbages' strike, which ended last Monday. This was after the log of claims committee -- which covers all ALP councils -- threw out the claim for SIP's worth about \$7 a week. Footscray council was the chief opponent of the payment, which goes to many public employees. MEU members have found that their employers are more sensitive to strikes by paragonism than any other council workers. So Footscray garbages went out, with other workers putting in towards their strike pay.

After three weeks, the Council backed down -- partially. They agreed to the SIP's, but the rise was to be phased in over 10 months. They also agreed to hold off 21 retro-payments. Like all local Councils, the ALP-controlled Councils comprise mainly businessmen. As one

municipal worker told us, name they're Labor, but by spirit they're Liberal. The MEU has one important advantage over ALP Councils: they can bring any dispute before the ALP State Council. So Labor Councils are safe to pressure because of cut-trade union base. Partly as a result of a Council labourer at Risk gets about \$135 a week, in the country the average around \$90 a week!

But this huge discrepancy is also a condemnation of right-wing MEU leadership. While serving claims on Councils, they've utterly ignored their members where. As one militant put it, MEU bludgers on other workers' awards. They should draw their own award for every bar in Victoria. Instead of leaving everyone to fight themselves."

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