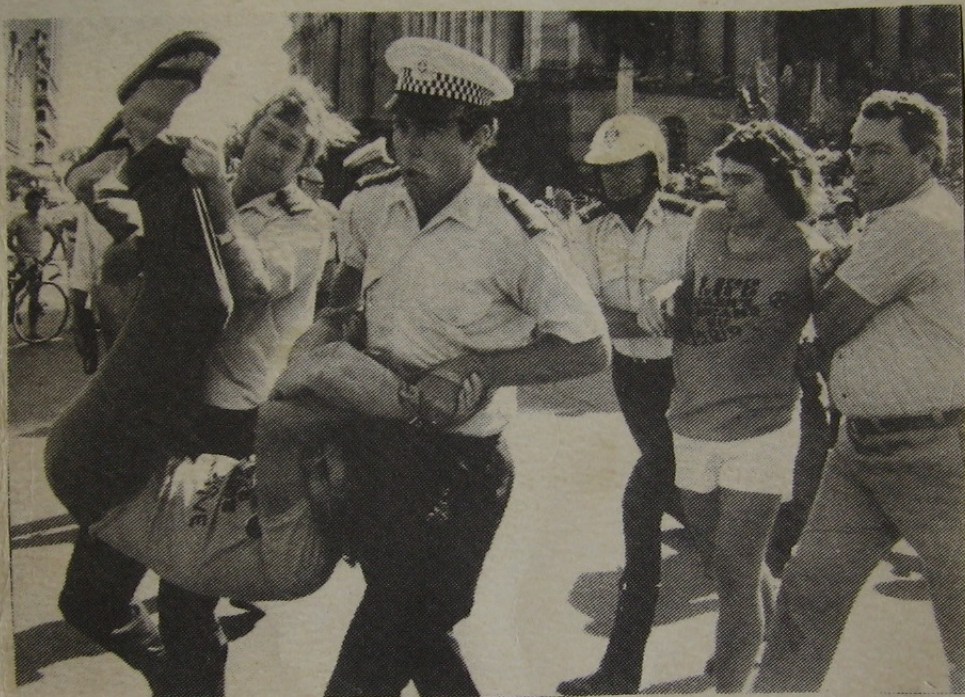


504
**LET'S NOT GET
CARRIED AWAY...**



POEMS FROM QUEENSLAND

- CIARON O'REILLY

#7

The cover photo of my brother and I was taken on October 22nd. 1977. 418 people were arrested that day in the streets of Brisbane in the exercise of free speech. We were in our teens and reluctant recruits to the world of illegality. The angels of order swept down striking suddenly. It was an introduction to the world of cell, locked door, court, magistrate and eventually assault, prison, frame up, raid and ridicule. The curtains on Queensland had been drawn for us, the tourist brochures of suntanned psyches and dazed vision were rent asunder. A taste of what others - aboriginal people, the poor, street-kids, women - had had thrust upon them from birth.

After a period of protest reaction and erratic response we settled down to face the long haul. We dug deep into the compost heap of Catholic tradition and came up with the christian-anarchist vision of Peter Maurin, the hospitality of Dorothy Day and the nonviolent resistance of the Berrigans. Worthy models of the possible in a church and society of apathy, affluent passivity and petty tensions.

So these poems are from that period of living as the Brisbane Catholic Worker community. There were four of us, Angela, Jim, Sean and myself. We were a student, a wage-slave, a seasonal labourer and an international traveller. We gave those occupations up, refused the dole, to pay taxes or to vote and attempted to worship God and make our living through self-managed industry. In the vision of Peter Maurin we believed that all our needs, and society's needs, could be met by nonviolent self-managed work co-operatives. We held all our finances in common, built a fruit dryer, a soap factory, a neighbourhood bakery, an urban garden and a worm farm.

We opened our doors, lives and community to the poor who dragged us screaming to points of vulnerability where God has room to move. From this liberated zone we went to actively say no with our bodies and lives at the places of death - wharves mines, clinics, malls, courts, jails.

These poems and images are from that time.

Ciaron O'Reilly
Sept. '86.

JURA BOOKS

417 KING ST., NEWTOWN,
SYDNEY, 2042, AUSTRALIA

West End: Two Years On

It gets darker earlier in West End,
The shade is cast
From people living on top of each other,
in luxury and loneliness.

Down on the corner of Vulture and Boundary,
No more black kids sniffing glue
Or communists selling their papers.
Deified - Purified - Trendified - Petrified.

The high tide of rent increases,
Crept up Boundary Street,
Filling up the side streets,
Flushing out the blacks
students of life,
and stale old men.

The police patrols increased
and the takeaway Pizza Joint
became a restaurant.

The people's taxi - its blue light flashing,
Has come to takeaway the homeless.
The graffiti on the wall says it all
"High Rise is For Suicide Attempts
Not for Community Living!"



After the Demonstration
(Commonwealth Games Protest 26/9/82)

The Australian sun is hard on us all,
Two days of "Rocking against Racism",
Sweating for Land Rights,
Left us sitting around the kitchen table,
Bearing the scars.

Sunburnt scars, open pores
and threats of skin cancer to come.
One of the hassles of imperialism,
Putting all us white-skinned folks
in dark-skinned heat.

Sitting 'round the table,
Margies, Anarchoes, Moloneys and Christians.
- A mixed bag,
But with reddened faces and peeling shoulders,
Paying the penance for pre-birth sins,
Fuck this heat,
But the vibes are high!

Sitting 'round the table,
Pissed off with the bureaucrats - black and white,
And their back-the-front-inside-out rallies,
You make us wanna scream, "Race against Rockism".
Pissed off with the media - with their killing snapshots,
Dubbed pans and search for the sensational,
You make us wanna scream,
"Media Schmedia: The revolution will not be televised".
Pissed off with the white liberals,
With their sweltering sychophancy,
One-day-of-the-year-breast-beating,
And trample-on-me-charity,
This ain't human it's unreal and plastic,
Shaky foundations for any liberation.
Fuck this heat,
But the vibes are high!

The vibes are high.
Rock and roll had come back home.
Prised from the grasp of the millionaire dinosaurs,
And their smalltown sub-cultural proteges -
Who treasure the distance between artist and audience.
Set free by Babu Mamoos
and the makeshift bands,
To flow in Musgrave Park
and ease this heat.
But the vibes are high!

And when Reg the Mamoos roadie
Comes knocking on the door at 12 tonight,
We'll bawl him out 'cause this is our home,
We'll respect him and make demands.

And we'll give him his land rights
on the lounge room floor.
Because the vibes are high!



From a Campaign of Gesture to a Politics of Life

People live multi-dimensional lives (hopefully),
For them to join a movement (against nukes or whatever)
The movement/ protest/ resistance has to be seen
In the context of resolving the multi-dimensional problems
which infest their lives.

These guys aren't dumb,
They know the world's a pretty bad place,
With or without nukes!
And throwing a heap of dimensions of their lives
into the fray,
Only to achieve a non-nuclear oppression
or a non-nuclear powerless life,
Doesn't seem worth the trouble.

The reformists,
Who share the Hiroshima Day marches,
Tell us to put away
Our black flags, our talk of revolution, our dreams of freedom,
- Dreams of a nonviolent, self-managed
(yes, AND NON-NUCLEAR) society
of blossoming humanity.

They say
that these things alienate ordinary people,
- And if only we could get these people
involved

in the anti-nuclear issue
'cause this issue is THE issue.

They say
you don't get'em

involved
by sharing a vision
which challenges their lifestyle, their complicity.

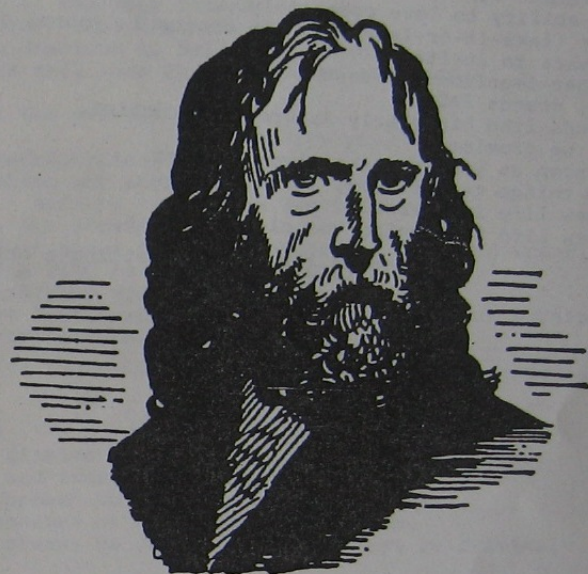
But by convincing them
that they don't have to change
their lives at all/ that much
to be

involved
in THE issue.

So there we are,
clutching our black flags in the rain,
with our talk, our dreams, and oft'aborted attempts
not only telling'em
how difficult it's going to be to stop nuclear mega-death
- because we clasp to few illusions 'bout what we're up against -
some of us go on to tell
of the one who became
when there weren't any nukes,
when ONLY non-nuclear oppression reigned
in the Galilee area.
And merely non-nuclear powerless lives were lead.

REWARD

For information leading to the apprehension of —



JESUS CHRIST

WANTED—for Sedition, Criminal Anarchy,
Vagrancy, and conspiring to overthrow the
established Government.

Dresses poorly. SAID to be a carpenter by trade, ill-nourished, has visionary ideas,
associates with common working people, the unemployed, and bums. Alien — believed
to be a Jew. Alias: 'Prince of Peace, Son of Man', 'Light of the world' &c, &c.

PROFESSIONAL AGITATOR, red beard, marks on hands and feet the result of injuries
inflicted by an angry mob led by respectable citizens and local authorities.

IF YOU SEE THIS MAN, notify the K.G.B., C.I.A., A.S.I.O., or your local "SPECIAL
BRANCH".

We tell of the Savior,
who comes to tell us,
that we must be willing,
to suffer rather than to cause suffering
to retain our humanity,
our ability to love completely.
This (take-it-or-leave-it, the choice is yours) directive,
appears to invite
danger-imprisonment-death.
Yes, sounds SAD
Sounds like Singularly Assured Destruction.
But we promise,
As soon as you open the clenched fist,
New things can be held,
A new life in Christ.
A new life in opening the clenched fist,
even at the risk of getting a nail through it.

Screws, Blues and Suicides

SCREWS,

Working class accents
Cockney, Scouse, Geordie,
Leftovers of the British Raj!
Imperialist ideology intact,
The muscle that has been flexed,
From Khartoum to Belfast to Aden
Is flexed once more in this pocket of fascism.
From all the pervasive sneer
that greets you,
To the necrophylic Scottish guard,
Oohing and ahing over the new badge
Warn by the Police Special Squad.
They are the necrophiles,
They lust after the world of badge, rank and order,
Of one step forward and salute,
When your name is called.
They have little appreciation of the beautiful multiplicity
of humanity caged before them,
(Of the multiple combinations of human experience
waiting to be shared).

All this
they dismiss as CRIMS,
and treat like shit.
Their approach to social problems,
Resonates of Auschwitz determinism,
"You'll always be Jewish: You'll always be criminal".

From the moment they cut your hair
Dress you in blue.
To their last card in their pack,
The soundless, windowless cell of the detention unit,
Called by all, the disco,
Where they make you dance before a beating

BLUES

Terry leans back in his chair,
Raises his hand in an intense gesture
and whispers,
They don't want you to rehabilitate
To pick yourself up.
This place is designed
so you reoffend.
Cells full,
Are good for the industry.
Take the reoffenders out of here,
You've got a place as big as a bus stop.

Too lazy to work: Too gutless to rob,
16 to 22 grand a year, for what?
Turning keys and sitting around.

They don't want you to leave
Coming near the end of the sentence,
They'd rather you threw a punch
They get compo,
And you get time!"

SUICIDES

How many self-induced here?
Met old Paddy back in '79,
"If they put me in there again
I'll kill myself!"

Stokesy said,
"He hit the ground,
Like a watermelon.
Thought he was trying to escape,
Over the top, you know.
Jumped, suddenly, forward,
Splat like a watermelon.
Oh no!"

Who killed Paddy?
Structured premeditated violence,
Far cry from the action of anger,
the crime of passion,
That most of the lifers are here for!



Bernie Moloney

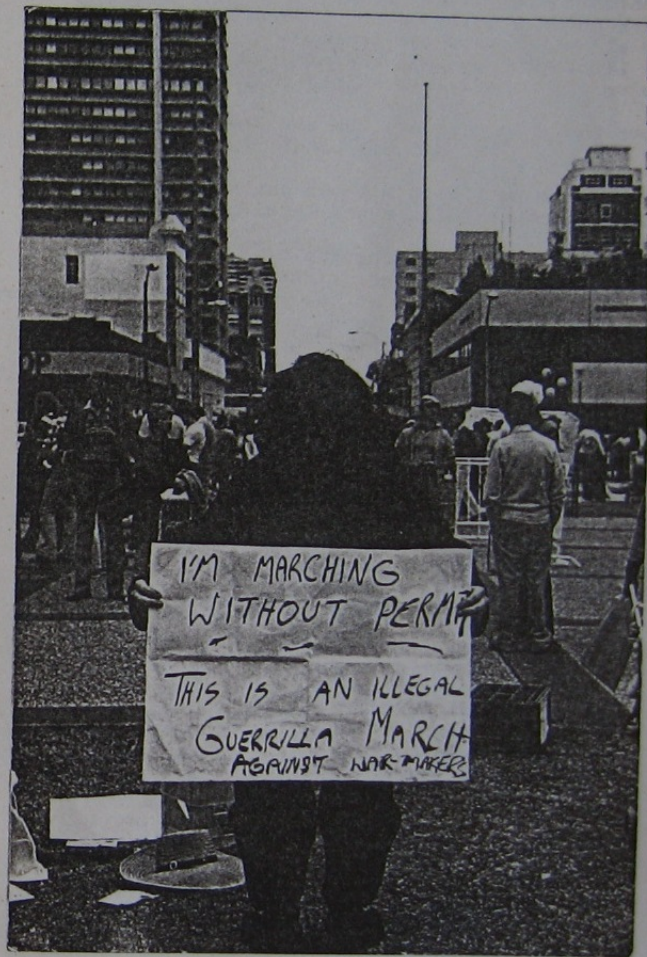
Bernie makes ya see
The connections
Where none exist.

Bernie makes ya feel
If all else fails....
Life on the dole
Can't be all that bad,
8½ years can't be wrong.

Bernie makes ya realise
How layed-back, hung-up,
down-right, uptight,
ya are!

Bernie makes ya whisper
"They shoot Moloney's
don't they?"

Chinese chow cattle dog cross,
Ten years in a Catholic
Boarding School
Mate!



Jail

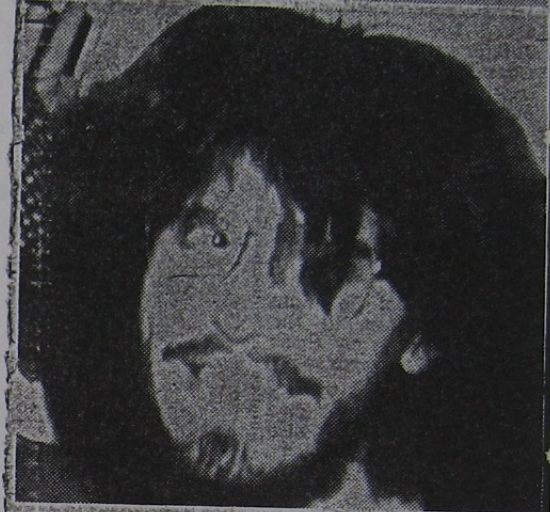
Sharon comes out and tries to knife Angela,
Mark comes out and opens up Sean's lip.
We all sit 'round the table,
Lindsay's done 6½ years there,
We've all done 2-week stints.

Tomorrow they pick up Dave and take him back to
to Modicate Land!

Freedom means living without jails,
Living without jails means letting a few
crazies loose,
and sharing the heat.
Instead you have jailed us all,
crazies, kids on the wire and freedom-lovers!
Instead you put them there,
Centralise the heat,
Focus the frustration.

You put them there,
to burn,
to burn,
to burn,
to burn,
to burn,
to burn,
to burn
to burn them today,
And upon release,
You tomorrow!

BEFORE JAIL



Marcher in with crims

A JAIL term for marching in a Brisbane street was "the longest two weeks of my life," Sean O'Reilly, 24, (above) said yesterday.

The West End university graduate took part in Free Speech day in the Queen St Mall on September 15, which started with busking and street theatre and ended with 22 arrests.

His experience left him minus beard and shoulder-length hair — and critical of Boggo Road.

"As far as jail goes, being in for two weeks is bad enough," he said.

"But some guys are in there for 10 or 12 years and there seems to be little in the way of rehabilitation."

Prisoners were "sent to

bed" at 4.30pm every second night.

"The prisoners are given no sense of stability. Every day they have to unmake their beds before they go out of the cells because they may be moved around."

Sean chose jail to paying a fine.

AFTER



Raid

An early morning alarm goes off,
The door, suits and fresh faces,
No bicycles, can't be Mormons.
Bleary eyes, but a reflex sidestep,
as the C.I.B. frontrowers
scrummage in the hall.

People wake to collectivise the nightmare.
They rape our rooms,
We catch'em offside,
But no ref,
They play the advantage,
Whose homeground is this anyway?

Kieran Joseph O'Reilly, 23, returned to Brisbane from Melbourne after detectives raided a West End house where he once lived, and interviewed friends as to his whereabouts.

The Boundary Street home is the headquarters of the Catholic Workers Community Group, which has been active in agitating for Queensland prison reform.

The extortionist demanded certain reforms in state jails in return for not releasing foot and mouth virus into Australia.

Mr O'Reilly is a founding member of the Catholic Workers Community Group.

Statement

The original extortion letters bore Melbourne postmarks. Mr O'Reilly moved to Melbourne on January 8, eight days before the first extortion threat was received.

He presented himself at Makerston Street police headquarters yesterday in the company of a lawyer and delivered a written statement to investigators.

Doing Time

An Open Letter to Those Who Pass Our Prison Pickets
(With Vacant Looks or Abusive Gestures)

You do it in the office,
We do it in the jail
You do it with air conditioning and regular pay packet,
We do it with the screw on the gate and rifle in the air
and all for free.

Few illusions here,
This is our anti-vision, no price could tempt us here.
Back at the office you speak of doing your duty,
pulling your weight,
and maybe paying the ransom for future freedom.
Acts of conscience have landed us here;
doing time - an occupational hazard,
Doing time is your occupation, prisoner of security,
It keeps you there without a screw on the wall,
The screw is in your head and the wall is of your choosing.

Few illusions here,
We know this wall keeps us in, we know it as enemy.
You've convinced yourself that the wall is for protection,
You know it as lover,

So when your BUS - WORK - SLEEP - Bus - WORK - SLEEP
is interrupted by our prison pickets,
know that imprisoned dissidents have no monopoly on doing time
or freedom lost!



Briz Sterility

Brisbane streets numb with affluence,
Gutters lined with poverty.
Brisbane air loud with hype,
Silent of thought,

A cry here,
Quickly muted in a sea of blue,
Bundled into the people's taxi,
Passivity restored.

Watch-house desk seargent,
Opens the book of the dead.

Magistrates Court,
Dissident!
Take your place in this processing plant,
With the vagrant, the poor, the native.
Hollow ritual.
Predictable result.

Brisbane Jail,
Enclosed order of terror,
Contemplative revenge,
Monastic misery.

Brisbane Christians,
With voices that do not speak,
Untold messages, **unlived** promises.

Brisbane Anarchists
Grandiose plans
and short attention spans.



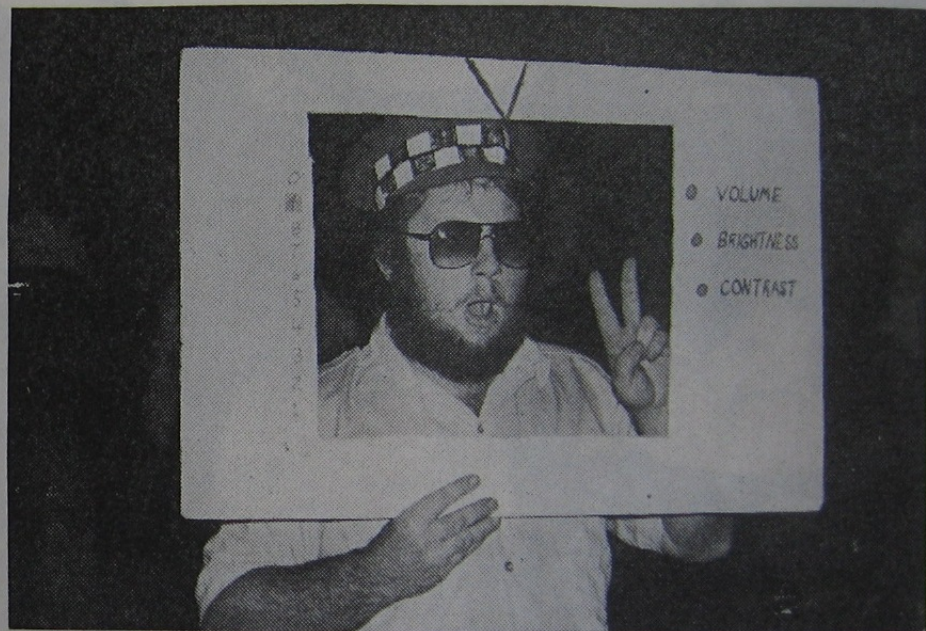
The Revolution Will Not Be Televised

The revolution will not be televised,
Can't guarantee the barricades will be sterilised.
Can't guarantee the boys won't have pimples,
And the girls will have dimples.
'Cause the revolution will not be televised.

The revolution will not be televised,
'Cause the script can't be memorised.
It's only you and me and the folks next door,
So the scenes will have to be improvised.
'Cause the revolution will not be televised.

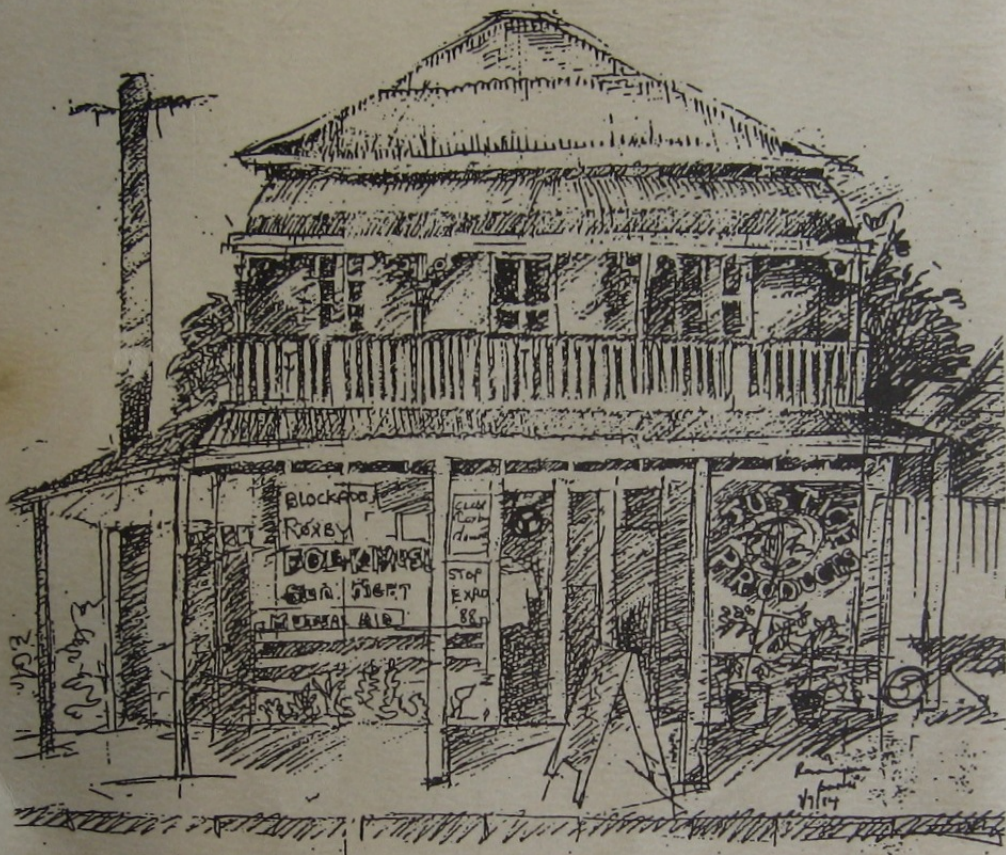
The revolution will not be televised,
There'd be too much trouble with the vertical hold,
The picture would come and go,
As our hearts and will, ebb and flow.
'Cause the revolution will not be televised.

The revolution will not be televised.
So beware armchair revolutionaries, gunning for mass appeal
with televised consciousness,
Beware breaks in reality, distortions of truth
covered with cosmetic finesse.
'Cause the revolution can't be televised.





The cast, crew and fruit dryer
of the Brisbane Catholic Worker.



0103
Sep 23

BLOCKADE
ROXBY
POLYMER
STAIN FIGHT
MURDER AIR

CLUB
Lobby
down
STOP
EXPLORE
88

PRODUCE

1/17