

Housewife

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WAGES, PRICES DRIVE LAUNCHED BY HOUSEWIVES, UNIONS Conference Drafts Plan To Lift Living Standards

The rising cost of living threatened our national economy and called for determined action by the Australian people, New Housewives' Association Secretary, Mrs. Daphne Gollan, told the Prices and Wages Conference on October 9.

One hundred and thirteen delegates from trade unions and women's organisations attended the conference, convened by the New Housewives' Association.

Mrs. Gollan said the smashing of the price control system meant that housewives' budget costs were now rapidly reaching impossible heights.

The responsibility for this situation lay with:

- Manufacturers, who were determined to maintain and increase their record profits.

- Commonwealth and State Governments, which had not protected the people from these "profit-hungry bandits."

"Excuses given by manufacturers for soaring prices are higher wages and the 40-hour week," Mrs. Gollan said.

"There is no law of economics that

says increased wages must be followed by higher prices.

HIGHER PRICES MEAN PROFITS.

"On the other hand, there is definite proof that higher prices mean bigger profits.

"Profits of Australian industry have risen from £367,000,000 in 1939 to £530,000,000 in 1947.

"Prices have risen 80 per cent. since 1939, wages only 40 per cent.

"The trade union campaign for a 30/- increase in the basic wage must be linked with a demand for price reductions and controls.

"CAN'T MOVE JUDGE'S HEART."

"The cost of a 30/- increase in the basic wage would be £114,000,000.

"After paying this, employers would still show a profit of £416,000,000—well over their profits for 1939."

Mrs. Gollan said trade union advocates in Court had presented cases "which, for justice and logic, would move the stars from their course."

"But they don't move the heart of an Arbitration Court judge," she said.

"It is the pressure outside the Court that determines the amount of the increase.

PEOPLE MUST ACT

"Pressure from the people applies to the struggle for lower prices also," Mrs. Gollan said.

"This is a struggle not only for trade unionists and members of the N.H.A., but for the tens of thousands of Australian housewives who are today struggling to buy the necessities of life.



MRS. D. GOLLAN

Federated Ironworkers' assistant national secretary, J. McPhillips, said the basic wage was the "greatest swindle ever put over the workers," because it did not meet even minimum living costs.

"This campaign calls for the support of all progressive organisations," he said.

Mr. McPhillips seconded, and conference carried, a resolution, moved by Mrs. Gollan, which demanded:

- A minimum increase of 30/- in the basic wage.

- Altered method of assessing the wage to provide a higher standard of living and a wage covering all living costs as a national minimum.

- Equal pay for women and juveniles doing men's work.

- Strict Government control of prices and re-control of items recently de-controlled.

- Immediate action by the State Government to prevent proposed increases in fares, meat, clothing, groceries and items recently de-controlled.

- Pegging of prices at June, 1947, levels.

- Establishment of effective Government price-fixing tribunals, with trade union and consumer representation, to investigate prices in public.

- Enforcement of heavy penalties for infringement of price control regulations.

- Government control of meat distribution, and establishment of municipal fruit and vegetable markets.

City to see Big Demonstration for Low Prices

New Housewives Association will hold a giant prices demonstration in Sydney on December 8. The demonstration will be the culmination of a two months campaign of street meetings, deputations, factory meetings demanding lower prices.

Housewives Pay 1/- Week More in First Days Of De-controlled Prices

FOOD, CLOTHING COSTS UP— OPEN GO FOR PROFITEERS

Sharp increases in prices since the State Government took over controls, on September 21, and threats of new increases bear out warnings issued by "Housewife" last month.

They make implementation of the N.H.A.-Union blueprint for effective price control essential if Australia is to be spared devastating inflation.

A survey by "Housewife" last month showed that soaring prices in two weeks added at least 1/- to average housewives' weekly shopping expenses.

After September 20 the following household items became dearer; Biscuits (increase 2d. to 3d. a lb), ham (5d.), bacon (4d.), coffee (7½d.).

Other increases which will affect the housewife directly or indirectly were for: Suitcases (one brand, 10/- each), motor oils (1d. a gallon), used care (100 per cent.), land (33 per cent.), meals in some restaurants and boarding houses, and hundreds of unannounced goods.

Threatened price increases include: Meat, fruit, vegetables, bread, potatoes, gas, electricity, tram and bus fares.

Household bills increasing at the rate of 1/- a fortnight would add £1/6/- a week to the average family's cost of living by September, 1949.

But, without rigid price control, a free market,

living costs would jump higher still because:

- Housewives this month would begin paying more for goods formerly subsidised by the Federal Government.

- More goods will be de-controlled this month.

(Mr. Finnan and other State Ministers in charge of prices will meet on October 29 to consider de-controlling a long list of goods, including meat, fruit and vegetables).

- Higher prices already granted for commodities at the source of production will later be passed on to the retail purchaser.

Mr. Finnan must carry out his promises to:

- Review the profit margins allowed to retailers of price-controlled articles.

- Clamp down on traders making extra profit on sales tax paid to wholesalers.

- Prevent unscrupulous manufacturers and merchants stealing taxpayers' money by hoarding subsidised stocks to sell at higher prices on a free market.

Women's Claim For Equal Pay Gathers Force

By TOM WRIGHT.

The success of the trade unions' campaign for equal pay for the sexes will rid us of one of the worst survivals of the general subjection of women.

Excuses are made by employers and arbitrators that the payment of lower rates for women is due to the fact that men have the responsibility of maintaining a family, but women have not.

This excuse does not bear close examination.

It does not explain why a working woman with dependents (which large numbers have) should receive a lower rate of pay than a single man.

One of the chief reasons why women still receive wages below those of male workers doing the same or similar work is that, until recently, they were not organised strongly in trade unions.

"CONDITIONS CHANGED."

Many unions neglected the women in their industries, and women had little or no bargaining power compared with that of male workers.

But conditions have changed, and the claim for equal pay, submitted by five metal trade unions last month, shows that women in industry have a more effective voice than ever before.

Many women in the metal industry are now doing work which before the war was done only by male workers.

These women benefited from wartime legislation, introduced under pressure from the trade unions, and received 90 per cent. of the corresponding male rate, instead of the low award.

"NEW AWARD SOUGHT."

But this legislation is coming to an end. To replace it, the application by the metal trade unions aimed at getting the award increased to equality with male rates.

Apart from these women, however, there are many in the industry who receive only the low rates, because they are doing work which women did before the war.

Recently there have been instances of these women, too, taking action to secure higher wages.

This is the best guarantee that substantial advances will soon be made on the road to equal pay for the sexes.

Mr. Tom Wright is federal president of the Sheet Metal Workers' Union.

How do you look?



Here's a simple tip that will keep your eyes beautiful—as well as strong.

Doctors have lately been recommending a few simple exercises to improve the muscular tone of the eyes, and those who have practised them have found, to their surprise, that the skin around the eyes has also improved to a wonderful degree.

The lids have grown smoother, any tendency to lines has disappeared, and the eye-whites have become noticeably whiter.

So begin by rolling the eyes slowly round, first in one direction, ten times. Then reverse, and roll them the other way, also ten times.

Look up and down as far as you can, straight and diagonally.

Now blink furiously, opening and shutting the eyes quickly and vigorously for two or three minutes.

Finally, relax them, making a deep darkness for the eyes by placing the palms of the hands over them, the fingers pointing upwards.

These few movements should be done two or three times a day, each time not taking more than five minutes.

Don't look for quick results, but you may look for very sure and beautifying ones!

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