

ALL SCRAP

No.1 DEC.1995-JAN.1996

SPEEDUPS CAUSE BREAK DOWNS



SUPPORT THE BREAKDOWN OF YOUR CHOICE

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INTRO TO ALL SCRAP

EDITORIAL

Welcome to ALL SCRAP.

ALL SCRAP is a metal workers' paper whose aim is the creation of a new union in the metal industry in which there are no union bosses and all decisions are made at factory meetings of members and are co-ordinated by union delegates. Such delegates would be strictly mandated by such meetings and can be instantly recalled by them.

Such a union would be independent and opposed to reliance on political parties. It would be committed to "direct action" on the job - forms of industrial action decided upon and controlled by membership factory meetings. Such action would be aimed at stopping the rot in conditions, improving them and achieving workers control of the metal industry. In various workplaces such a union is called "anarcho-syndicalist", a "people's union," or a "worker controlled union."

THE NEED FOR FACTORY COMMITTEES

To assist the formation of such a new union, we are committed to help building delegate factory committees organised along the above lines, and the federation of these committees - making voluntary agreements between different factories to form a new union.

THE BOSSES' UNIONS & ENTERPRISE BARGAINING

We view such unions represented in the metal industry as the AMWU and the AWU-FIME as bosses' unions, whose union bosses through enterprise bargaining are doing tremendous damage to metal workers through the give back of hardwon conditions and cave-ins to the bosses' speed up drive. This descent into disaster has to be stopped urgently. The new union we have in mind will be a major step in halting that descent.

APEC & THE FUTURE OF THE METAL INDUSTRY

As many metal workers are aware, the free trade agreement associated with the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) Forum will mean the massive lowering of tariffs. The latest APEC meeting has agreed that such tariffs should be minimised for the "rich" APEC countries by 2010 and 2020 for "poor" countries.

An obvious implication of this tariff lowering will be companies moving manufacturing operations from Australia to Asia to take advantage of lower wages and worse conditions there. They will then export manufactured goods from Asia back to Australia to make fat profits.

A gauntlet has been thrown down to metal workers in Australia - accept plant closures associated with the transfer of company operations offshore, and the sack or fight back. The most effective and feared by the bosses means to fight back is WORKERS CONTROL co-ordinated throughout as many factories in the industry as possible. ALL

SCRAP will work tenaciously and tirelessly to build a new union and associated factory committees and their link up between factories to enable the pursuit of such a fight back.

ALL SCRAP welcomes contributions in the shape of poems, cartoons, songs, articles, by metal workers. Please send to ALL SCRAP PO Box 678, Hamilton 2303 NSW. We are currently organising a contact address in Melbourne. We will let you know about it next edition. However, in the mean time please contact our NSW address.



MELB:HOLDEN ENGINE PLANT NEWS



"After attending a strenuous negotiations session where an agreement was made to impose 12 hour shifts on Holden Engine Plant workers, Holden and AMWU bosses, conscientious as ever, attend a very late night "performance based" union/management consultation "workshop" instructed by female "management/union consultants".

ALL SCRAP: What's happening at Holden Engine Plant?

Holden Worker: The latest and most disturbing news has been the dectieful role played by the AMWU (Metal Union) union bosses and the company bosses in introducing 12 hour shifts for so called new sections in the plant.

AS: What's the background to this move to increase shifts?

HW: A while back there was a move by the company bosses to introduce 10 hour 4 day shifts as part of an enterprise deal. The white collar and younger workers favoured these shifts, but the older workers opposed it, due to its detrimental effects on family life. I

was surprised to see how rapidly networks of people formed to campaign against the new shifts. At a mass meeting the new shift proposals were defeated. Although we still received a pay rise which was supposedly connected with acceptance of the new shifts. The union bosses have learnt a lesson from this experience. They have refused to call mass meetings to discuss the 12 hours shifts. They have used the fraudulent argument in support of not calling mass meetings, that the new shifts don't affect current workers. This is a blatant lie. The company is constantly re-tooling and most sections will be replaced by new sections where the 12 hour shifts will be imposed.

AS: What do you make of the company quality networks/workers participation?

HW: Some people have the idea, we can elect our own supervisors. This idea is crap. If there are 2 equalified leading hands we can get to vote on which one gets the job.

AS: What's the situation with the delegates at the plant?

HW: The election of the delegates is all rigged and based on patronage - we really don't get to elect them, let alone supervisors.

THIS MODERN WORLD by TOM TOMORROW

IN SYDNEY, THE STATE SUPREME COURT HAS JUST RULED THAT ANY PEDESTRIAN UNABLE TO PROVIDE POLICE WITH SOME FORM OF IDENTIFICATION CAN BE SENT TO JAIL.

PERHAPS TO FURTHER ALLOW POLICE TO KEEP TROUBLEMAKERS AND NONCONFORMISTS IN LINE, CITIZENS SHOULD ALSO BE REQUIRED TO CARRY A CREDIT CARD AT ALL TIMES... TO PROVE THAT THEY ARE PRODUCTIVE CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS OF SOCIETY...

BUT OFFICER--I LEFT MY PURSE AT HOME!

THAT'S WHAT THEY ALL SAY, LADY. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT--

ALL RIGHT-- YOUR CREDIT RATING CHECKS OUT. SORRY FOR THE INCONVENIENCE.

NO PROBLEM, OFFICER! YOU CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL!

FOR THAT MATTER, A LEGALLY-ENFORCEABLE DRESS CODE MIGHT ALSO BE HELPFUL TO POLICE OFFICERS-- SINCE, AFTER ALL, CRIMINALS ARE OFTEN POORLY DRESSED...

HECK, PERHAPS IT WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF SOCIETY IF POLICE COULD SIMPLY ARREST ANYONE AT ANY TIME FOR NO APPARENT REASON...

HEY, YOU WITHOUT A NECKTIE-- FREEZE OR I'LL SHOOT!

YES--THEN WE WOULD ALL BE MUCH SAFER!

EXCUSE ME-- CAN I SEE SOME IDENTIFICATION PLEASE?

T.M. TOMORROW



DOWN "THE CHUTER" OR IRON HEEL AT ALCAN, GRANVILLE

ALL SCRAP: I understand you have been the victim of serious harassment and racial discrimination by the ALCAN bosses?

KB: That's right. It commenced when I transferred to the Plate Saw section in March 1994. The manager of this section at the time, Glen Chuter who has now transferred to the Cabramatta Alcan centre, has many bad attitudes, played a major role in this harassment.

On a number of occasions, he made false accusations about my work. In 1994, on one occasion, when I was using the forklift outside the factory getting a bin, my offsider and a new inexperienced offsider were using the saw and it jammed due to a blade problem. Glen Chuter blamed me for this, although I had nothing to do with it. In June 1994, I was called into a counselling session with Chuter and he falsely accused me of deliberately causing machine breakdowns.

Chuter has also been responsible for denying me training for the crane and forklift jobs. The plant manager David Doves had given Chuter a note stating I should be given this training. Chuter ignored it and Peter Sharp destroyed this note.

AS: What have been the most serious aspects of this harassment?

KB: In August '94, a gas leak occurred at the plant releasing the chemical Trichloroethylene, which is extremely dangerous and can cause heart attacks and death. My self and Mark Bradley were forced by Chuter to go into the section of the plant where there was residual gas and dust like powder - a residue of the gas. We both suffered various effects of this gas exposure such as watery eyes, dizziness, etc. Chuter disregarded health and safety procedures by ordering us into this area of the plant and didn't reveal the hazardous nature of this chemical to us. We have only learned recently of its dangerous nature. He also refused to call a doctor to check us given our symptoms. In demanding that we work in this area, Chuter said if we didn't work there, we would be looked on as disobeying instructions.

Chuter has also tolerated racist attitudes amongst his stooges, in particular Peter Sharp, the then foreman of the section. I once mentioned to Sharp that I had difficulty communicating with my offsider, Simon, a Turk, Sharp responded, "You won't get through to him, he is a wog." I was also approached by a worker in the section, another of Chuter's stooges, John Sharpe, to become involved in the Nazi Party, which I refused.

AS: In what ways has this racist climate been used to harass you?

05/08/94 n/s.
Peter the wood on saw table
made us dirty, (G. Chuter confirmed) this he said the pine smells.
could something be done about this

Peter could you please write me a meal ticket
for Thursday 24th August 94.

NO

K B.

no meal ticket
for a way liber you.
you deserved
10¢ only

K B.

NO



KB: I have noticed in and around the section, huge amounts of racist graffiti. There was also racist send up pictures of me in Peter Sharp's office window, which Chuter tolerated. One involved a drawing of a dog cut out of a magazine with glasses drawn on it and a cigarette and "Hitler" written on it. Around that time I learnt that I had been nicknamed "Hitler".

AS: In what ways did Chuter try to provoke and frame you up for the sack?

KB: On 12/8/94, Chuter falsely accused me of damaging 16 blades. In fact, the 16 blades he referred to, had already been damaged one year ago. Subsequently, Chuter sought constantly to provoke me into fierce arguments with him. On one more recent occasion, he refused to pay me for a day I had worked. The union eventually settled this dispute, but prior to its settlement Chuter had wanted me to draw on my holidays to cover the time he owed me. His explanation for this idea was that if I drew on my holiday pay I would get a loading on it, and if I moved to another section I would lose the loading. He was threatening that I would be moved and I would lose the loading. He also said if I didn't like things around here I should get out.

A common feature of this harassment campaign was for Chuter to constantly disrupt my rest breaks and even my cuppas before work by enquiring about my work. In mid 1994 I injured a finger in a machine and had to take time off. It was not until 1995, that these days were paid. Whilst Chuter robbed me of payment of overtime I did, to help out with his budgeting of the section.

AS: How did this harassment campaign come to a head?

KB: It came to an explosive head over changes to my roster made by Chuter without consulting me. An argument erupted between Chuter and I, when I was on smoko. A screaming match developed between us, with Chuter pursuing me into the lunch room and into Peter Sharp's office. Subsequently I took stress leave and I was suspended from duties.

Over the years many people, have left the company to escape from Chuter's and Peter Sharp's harassment.

AS: What has happened since you were suspended?

KB: The company bosses have continued to harass me. They have been determined to have me sacked.

AS: What forms has this harassment taken?

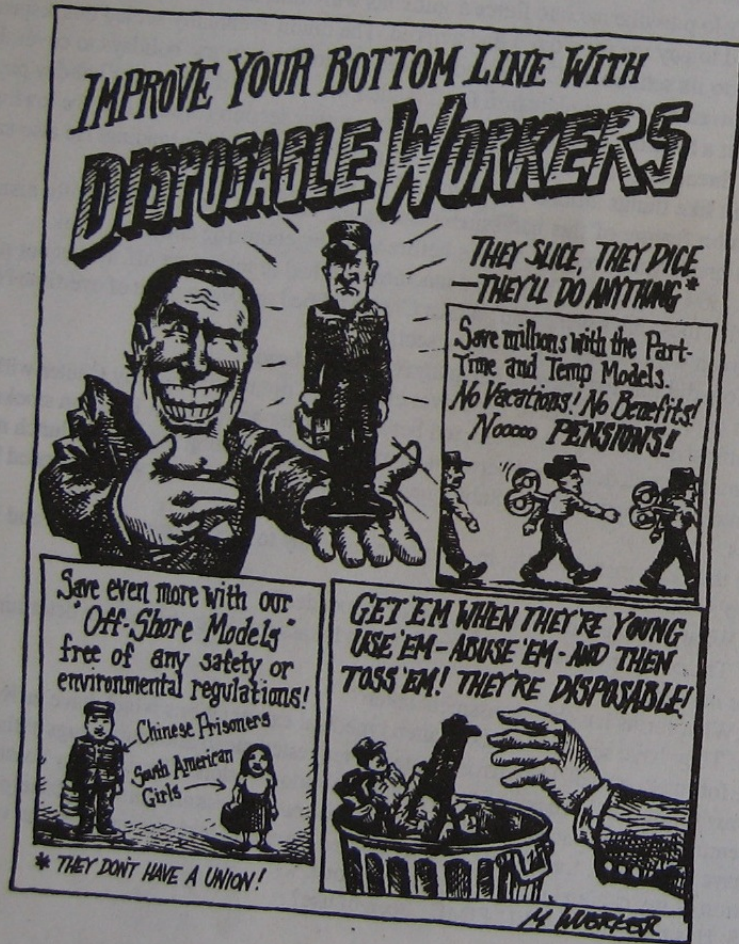
KB: They have sent me letters to attend medical examinations which have arrived too late for me to attend. They have constantly requested me to attend meetings at the plant on my future, but have refused to allow my solicitor to attend. The company bosses have attempted to have Social Security refuse to pay me sickness allowance by falsely saying I have a business. Lately this harassment has worsened and has involved the vandalism of my car, and phone calls to my phone.

AS: Has the union - AWU-FIME been of use?

KB: It has been useless. They referred me to approach the Anti-Discrimination Board, as a form of further delaying tactics.

AS: In what ways could your fellow workers at Alcan help minimise this climate of prejudice and harassment engineered by the bosses and their stooges.

KB: An "un-official" union meeting could be held and votes of no-confidence could be made regarding the union reps who are bosses' stooges. New "unofficial" delegates could be elected who are strictly controlled by workers meetings to further their fair interests at work.



ALCAN GRANVILLE NEWS: A VISIT TO "JURASSIC PARK"



ALL SCRAP: How are things at Alcan?

ALCAN WORKER: We call the place, "Jurassic Park". Much of the equipment at the plant is old and quite dangerous. For years we have approached the bosses about replacing/modernizing this equipment. However, they have refused to do anything. Their approach is to constantly restructure the plant's operations involving constant staffing level reductions and an associated speedup. We are in the midst of such a restructure now.

AS: What have been the effects of this hazardous equipment?

AW: A number of workers have been seriously injured over the years. A bloke had been many years on the job was hit by a fork lift, driven by a new bloke, causing internal injuries. In one section a bloke was cutting some wood and he was injured. One bloke was nearly killed by the crane due to the neglect of its maintenance. Other problems have been noise and dust/fumes. Through on the job action, we have forced the bosses to put a box, the size of a bedroom around one noisy machine. Whilst in regard to the sawing section, which has had serious problems with dust, fumes and smoke, there is now regular monitoring.

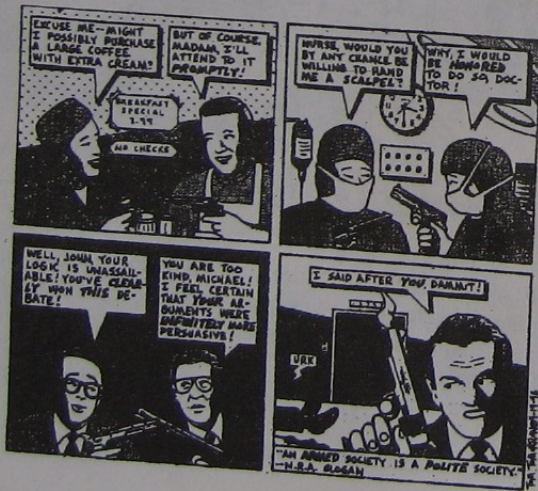
AS: What do you think of the union delegates at the plant?

AW: Many delegates don't do their jobs properly and some are definitely bosses' stooges. The senior delegate, Joe is definitely a bosses' stooge. He has a very cosy relationship with them. We have absolutely no confidence in the delegate for our section. He is also on the health and safety committee. Joe the senior delegate and our delegate help the bosses with their dirty work and not the worker. Currently there are monthly delegates meetings. However, many delegates don't report back to the members about the discussions at these meetings. The delegates should be neutral and not take initiatives by themselves and in collaboration with the bosses. They should act as the mouthpiece of the union members.

Contributing to this problem with the delegates is the lack of knowledge of English of some and a lack of information amongst the membership.

AS: What do you think of the AWU-FIMEE?

AW: It is definitely a bosses' union. We need a new union without union bosses controlled by the members in which delegates have a strict mandate from membership meetings.



NOISE: A GENERAL HAZARD

Exposure to excessive noise can cause a condition called Tinnitus, a permanent ringing in the ears. We've all experienced the temporary ringing in the ears that loud noises cause, but with tinnitus IT NEVER STOPS. You can't get to sleep, can't hear properly, can't concentrate...it can drive you right up the wall, making life a misery for you and your family and friends. People with tinnitus can become cranky, depressed or even suicidal. Persistent sudden and loud noises, such as rivetting or boilermaking, cause tinnitus.

Noise also acts like any other stress on the mind and body, causing a general tiredness and irritation. And studies have shown that people who work on noisy shops, have more mental illness than those who do not. The more noise, the more neuroses. Eyesight is impaired by noise, so that focussing, clarity, and colour perception suffer. This can make it dangerous to work or drive, and can also have bad mental effects.

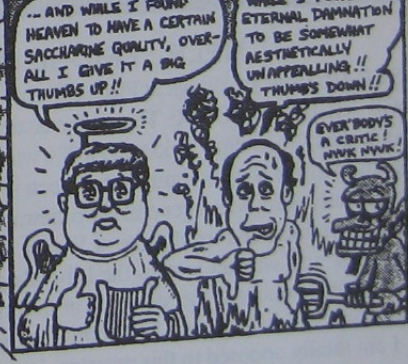
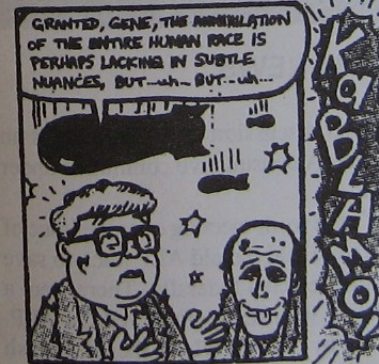
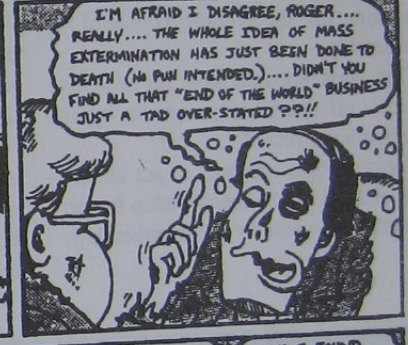
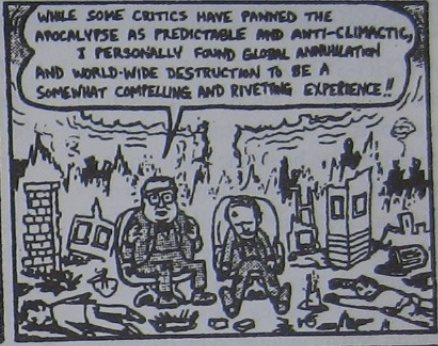
The organ that controls balance can also be damaged, so noise can make people feel unbalanced and giddy. Obviously this is dangerous too. Another problem is that noise causes strain on the heart and other internal organs, especially the digestive tract. So hear attacks and ulcers can be attributed to it, and so can premature ageing.

NOISE CAUSES ACCIDENTS

If noisy machinery and partly deafened workmates mean that you have to be shouting all the time, the throat and mouth can become damaged and infected. And the communication necessary for work and safety becomes impossible. In this way noise can be the cause of accidents which are blamed on careless workers or bad luck. Loud noises drown out warnings, and deafness gives you even less chance of escaping danger. Noise also distracts you when you're trying to concentrate, and so increases the accident rate.

OTHER FACTORS?

These harmful effects of noise can also be said to be the result of other aspects of a worker's life. Long hours, rotating shift work, perhaps poor housing or diet, for instance. Scientists, insurance or company doctors and employers can be expected to refuse to blame noise alone. But the point is that all these areas are areas of struggle, and the lack of agreement on causes and effects must not stop the push for improved wages and conditions, or the fight against work hazards.



ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM means anarchist unionism. This is as opposed to trade unionism. We advocate all workers in one industry to be in one union so as to remove artificial divisions amongst workers. Such a union must be fully organised and controlled by the membership.

To achieve this we want a union organised along the following lines:

1. That no person employed by the union earn more than the average income of the membership;
2. That spokespeople have no executive power - all decisions are made by the membership affected;
3. Spokespeople are only to act as delegates elected by the membership to carry out decisions made by the membership;
4. That a mechanism be instituted for the instant recall of spokespeople/delegates who break the above rules.
5. That all positions within the union be held as a limited tenure, i.e., two years (unless no one else stands).
6. There is to be no body of full time paid officials. All loss of earnings are to be paid by the union to the extent of the lost wages.
7. That a programme of decentralised decision making be implemented within the union structure, so that we won't need full time paid positions.

Only in this way can we see a democratic, united, fighting organisation be created which will stand up for the rights of workers and their families against all governments, political parties and all bosses.

Any questions please ask.

MELB.: FRIDGE RIGHT NEWS

ALL SCRAP: How are things at Fridge Right?

FRIDGE RIGHT WORKER: The major issue under discussion at the moment, is an enterprise deal for 16 days sickie and a 2% wage rise. A consultative committee under the direction of the shop committee has been set up.

Whilst recently there was a general shop stewards' stop work meeting over the issue of individual contracts and the dispute at Weipa. We were told the old ALP line - to save us from contracts we had to stop the Liberals getting elected federally. There were a few ALP hacks amongst the stewards at the meeting who really promoted the ALP. A major concern I have is that \$100,000's are given by the AMWU to the ALP slush fund. I am totally opposed to this practice. It should be stopped immediately.