

OPPRESSION



IN SOCIETY



AUSTRALIA IS A FREE COUNTRY, OR SO MOST AUSTRALIANS BELIEVE, BUT, IN FACT OUR BASIC INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS ARE UNDER ATTACK, AND MANY HAVE ALREADY BEEN LOST.

OCCASIONALLY SUCH OPPRESSION IS SEEN OPENLY AND DRAMATICALLY WHEN OFFICIAL VIOLENCE IS TURNED AGAINST PROTESTING STUDENTS OR WORKERS, AS SEEN ABOVE. MOSTLY, HOWEVER, IT TAKES THE FORM OF AUTHORITARIAN RESTRICTIONS THAT TOUCH ALMOST EVERY ASPECT OF OUR DAILY LIVES.

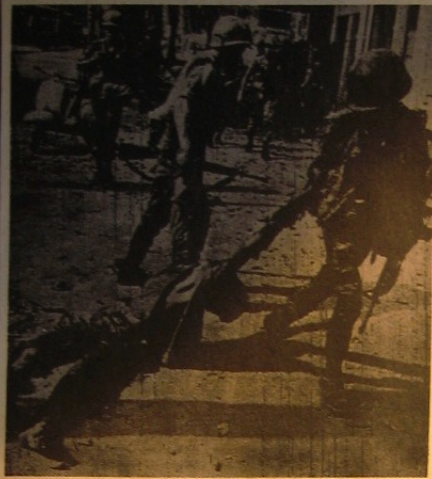
EVERYTHING FROM THE WAGE YOU ARE PAID TO THE BOOKS YOU MAY READ AND THE FILMS YOU MAY WATCH IS CONTROLLED BY SOME REGULATION OR SOME AUTHORITY. IF YOU ARE A PUBLIC SERVANT YOU RISK DISMISSAL IF YOU CRITICIZE THE DEPARTMENT IN WHICH YOU WORK OR TAKE AN ACTIVE PART IN POLITICS. IF YOU ARE A WORKER YOU RISK CRIPPLING FINES AGAINST YOUR UNION AND YOURSELF, AND IMPRISONMENT OF ITS OFFICIALS IF YOU WITHHOLD YOUR LABOUR FOR A JUST WAGE. IF YOU ARE A TWENTY YEAR OLD YOU MUST RISK IMPRISONMENT IF YOU CHOOSE TO FOLLOW YOUR CONSCIENCE AND REFUSE TO FIGHT AND KILL A PEOPLE WHO WISH YOU NO HARM. YOU MAY EVEN BE REQUIRED TO GIVE YOUR LIFE, AS OVER 310 AUSTRALIANS HAVE DONE, IN A WAR THAT CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED.

IS THIS THE DEMOCRACY WE HOLD SO DEAR?

SURELY EVERY AUSTRALIAN WHO BELIEVES IN DEMOCRACY, WHO DESIRES TO LIVE IN PEACE AND FREEDOM, MUST STAND WITH HIS FELLOWS TO END THE STEADY EROSION OF FREEDOM IN OUR SOCIETY.

FREEDOM DAY : JULY 4

COMMENTS



Australia is not free while the Federal Government conscripts voteless young men to kill and be killed in Vietnam.

Australia is not free while the Government goals for two years those who, in obedience to their conscience, refuse to fight or to register for military service.

Australia is not free while citizens who support the young non-compliers can be imprisoned under the Crimes Act.

Australia is not free while freedom is denied to a voteless minority, forced to sacrifice their careers and their lives in a futile war of aggression.

Australia is not free while the National Service Act remains in force. It must be repealed.

In May, 1965, the Government announced that Australian troops would be sent to Vietnam to fight against people who have never threatened Australia.

We were told the South Vietnamese Government had asked for them. BUT in August, 1965, Prime Minister Menzies admitted he had never seen such a request.

We were told Australia's action was an obligation under the Seato pact. BUT on June 13, 1966, Mr D. Price, Chief Information Officer of Seato, said, "South Vietnam has never asked Seato for help."

We were told it was to prevent a Chinese invasion of Australia. BUT Prime Minister Holt said on June 12, 1967: "We are not troubled about the possibility of Chinese Communists invading Australia."

The Australian entered the war with the United States... French imperialism... but could not fight... Vietnamese people... Since then... Australians have... Each week the... Meanwhile... year-old Australian... to fight... immoral war... are refusing to... sought (and been... ion from... object to fighting... with the United... sely refused... tional service... serving two... refusing to... others, unwilling...

PENAL POWERS

The Australian arbitration system has been hailed (by the employers and government) as one of the most advanced in the world.

But when examined objectively the penal clauses of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act are amongst the most advanced forms of repression.

When the Menzies Government amended the Act in 1951 to provide for heavy penalties on union leaders and union members who were involved in "illegal" strikes, he caught the Labor Opposition napping.

But since then, the full implications of the amendments have been realised.

Union leaders and barristers have variously described the penal clauses as iniquitous, vicious, pernicious and obnoxious.

Overseas industrial experts, when discussing the Act, draw uncomplimentary parallels.

So it is really surprising that trade unionists turned out en-mass to support the Victorian secretary of the Australian Tramways and Motor Omnibus Employees Association, Mr Charlie O'Shea, when he was gaoled for six days by the Arbitration Commissioner's punitive arm, the Commonwealth Industrial Court?

The late Dr Evans referred to the Commonwealth Industrial Court as the "court of pains and penalties".

Charlie O'Shea described it as a "sausage-mincing" machine.

Metals workers in particular have a soundly based grievance. For striking to hold onto pay rises granted by the Arbitration Commission, the metal trades unions were fined more than \$100,000.

The issue was whether the employers should have the right to absorb wage increases.

Trade unions cannot be blamed for seeing red when they look at statistics of the alleged "impartial" arbitration system.

These statistics tell their own story: between 1956 and 1968, the Court fined the unions a total of \$282,410. In the corresponding period, employers were fined a meagre \$2,514.

Are the defenders of the system to be so bare faced as to contend that in every 100 industrial disputes in 12 years, the trade unions were wrong 99 times? Fair thinking people would realise the force of this.

The fines a union can incur for striking are completely out of proportion to the "offence".

Under the penal clauses, there is no scope for a just case for the unions. Irrespective of the right or wrong of their case, unions are committing a "crime" when they strike.

For this, they can be fined \$1,000 a day for each day a strike lasts. And the Industrial Court's definition of "strike" encompasses bans on overtime, and working to regulations, as well as a total withdrawal of labour.

The trade union movement is gradually realising the penal clauses must go - that the strongest possible mass action must be directed towards their repeal.

At a recent meeting of the interstate executive of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, a decision was taken calling for the complete repeal of the penal clauses.

The ACTU authorised a delegation to confront representatives of the Commonwealth Government with the demand. The discussions are still taking place.

And trade unions will not settle for anything less than total repeal.

A dominant feature of the struggle is the belief that the right to strike should be maintained.

The ACTU advocate and research officer, Mr Bob Hawke, has been a vocal proponent of the conference of the FEDFA, said the right of the trade unions to withdraw the only commodity they had to sell - their labour - was as basic as the right of employers to get the best price for their products.

Mr Hawke strongly attacked the double set of values of the national employers, who demanded the right to seek high prices, but refused the unions the same right.

Mr Hawke told the conference a trade union had no alternative but to withdraw its labour if the price was not right.

A report prepared for the American Church of Christ, also stressed the need to retain the right to strike.

The report, which was prepared by protestant churchmen and laymen, said: "It should be noted that the right to strike has historically been one of the first casualties wherever totalitarian regimes have taken power."

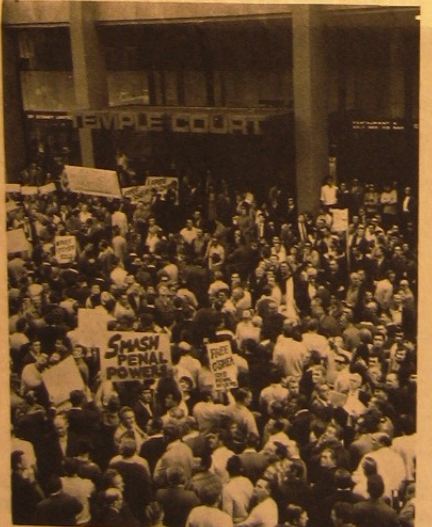
"The individual who is a slave has little or no influence over the conditions of his employment."

"The right to strike should be preserved. Any broadside limitation of this right would mean either that industrial disputes would generally be resolved by default in favour of management or that the equitable resolution of disputes would fall on the shoulders of Government."

This report was prepared for the American situation, where labour relations are slightly better than Australia's.

But in Australia there is a definite swing towards what the report says are "totalitarian" measures. A continuous attack on the rights of individual workers and their organisations.

The trade union movement, for long the sleeping giant in matters of restrictions on its freedom, must become more conscious of its need to survive.



Unionists demonstrate outside the Industrial Court in Sydney against the gaoing of Charlie O'Shea and the penal powers.

IN AUSTRALIA THE STEADY ERO

RESIST

Government... their conscience, now await the legal consequences of their defiance.

These young men are the heroes of our time. They are observing a duty imposed by the Nuremberg Tribunal on all men everywhere for all time - a duty to accept individual responsibility for one's actions in warfare and not seek shelter in orders from above.

private conscience should be allowed to become dulled or inoperative... The Australian Government violates this principle - and thus puts itself in the dock with the Nazi war criminals.

But the carnage drags on. And already the Australian Government is cooking up further adventurist schemes - promising Australian forces to uphold dubious regimes elsewhere in South-East Asia.



Student Anti-Vietnam war demonstrators in Sydney.



We conscientiously object to student violence - not violence in general.

the control of public opinion OR MEDIA MANIPULATIONS

How do you know the situation in Vietnam? ... how many Australians or Americans were killed there last week ... what is being said by Nixon, or Gorton, or the Saigon regime or the NLF ... what do other nations, or the United Nations, think? How do you know about the prosecutions in Australia under the National Service Act, or industrial penal clauses, or the Crimes Act?

higher. Dailies controlled by the Melbourne Herald combine have a total circulation of around the two million mark, and are influencing probably five million people, nearly half the nation. Dailies run by the Fairfax (Sydney Morning Herald) interest sell about a million a day.

Add to this the fact that in TV and radio, the majority of the channels are commercially owned and the majority of these are either owned by the big press monopolies or carry their news and news-comment services and that the ABC network has been operated under a Liberal-Country Party regime for 20 years (including the entire development of Australian television).

Thus virtually the entire news and information system of this country is dominated by four private companies and the Government which they support. Their international news is based mainly on the British-Australian news service (AAP-Reuters) supplemented by the two biggest American services and the BBC-ABC tie-up.

Australia being so geographically isolated, its people are far more at the mercy of its national media than are those in European countries, for instance. Hence, the conditions for centralised control of public opinion through selected information and published opinion are almost perfect in Australia by comparison with other developed countries.

But IS there, in fact, any voluntary collaboration between the mass media proprietors and the Federal Government and its military intelligence and political "Security" services, to suppress information about matters "not in the public interest". This has operated for years in almost complete secrecy, with no responsible democratic control or checks.

You depend on one or other daily paper, or TV or radio station. Before the 1939-45 war, many Australians were not effectively reached by the press or radio and there was no TV. There were perhaps two daily papers with circulations higher than 200,000; today there are at least eight dailies above 250,000 and three of those in Melbourne and Sydney are around the half-million mark or

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No one has ever officially denied the charges made in Parliament by Mr L. Devine (Lab., NSW) that the D Notice system was being used to cover up issues that might seriously embarrass the Government.

All the mass media in Australia consistently supported the American position in the Vietnam war and Australian involvement; all have supported conscription. All

opposed the May 1969 strike wave for complete abolition of the penal clauses of the Arbitration Act - indeed, they invariably oppose strikes of all kinds, and support the employers, irrespective of the causes and issues.

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VISION OF FREEDOM GOES ON

JULY

4 FERRIEDOOMI DAY



PROTEST AGAINST OPPRESSION AT HOME AND ABROAD

conscription, penal powers, censorship, vietnam war...

5.00 CHIFFLEY SQUARE

DEMO

SPONSORS

F. O'Sullivan, P. Clancy, T. McDonald, E. Boatman (B.W.I.U.), R. Rickard, F. Hillier, B. Shesby (M&L Ice Carriers); A. McVeigh, B. Roser, Jim. Clarke, S. Kelly, B. Kerr (Liquor & Allied Trades); K. Wheeler, A.C. Keen (Bridge & Wharf Carpenters); J.E. Anderson, J. Foster, S. Vaughan, B. Howell (Painters); R. Taylor, L. Ross (A.R.U.); E.V. Elliott, J. Benson, F. Sweetenson, P. Geraghty (Stewards); J. Berra, D. Scott, R. Arnold, H. Grant, C. Brown, K. Engert, J.

Sponberg (Boilermakers-Blacksmiths); J. Munday, B. Cook, B. McGill, D. Pendergast (Builders Labourers); D. Fergusson, D. Keen, J. Cambour, G. Edwards (FEDFA); F. Bryce (Firemen); D.C. Henderson (Firemen & Deckhands); W.M. Rigby (Misc. Workers); T. Gordon (Painters & Dockers); J. Heffernan, T. Wright, H. Hatfield, F. Bollins (Sheet Metal Workers); T. Nelson, T. Bull, B. Bolger, H. Gilmour (Waterside Workers); M. Nixon (W'gong Labour Council); D. Jobling (Teachers).

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