the battler

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MORE URANIUM NIGHTMARES p.5

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S.A. Special Branch Scandal

GOOD RIDDANCE TO "THE THUMPER"

David Combe

Bill Hayden

Labor goes soul-searching

by Alec Kahn

"WE'VE got to be concerned to support and encourage the private sector, because that's where three out of four jobs are."

Sounds like Philip Lynch, doesn't it?

Or maybe Don Chipp stating the nearest thing the Democrats have got to an economic policy.

But in fact it's good old Bill Hayden – fresh from some relentless soul-searching into why Labor lost.

echoed

And his sentiments are being echoed right across the Labor Party leadership. They've all come to the same conclusion – "We have to move to the right to recapture the confidence of Australian voters."

But their soul-searching has gone a lot deeper than that, mind you. National secretary, David Combe, has admitted that, "There is a feeling that being a member of an ALP branch is not always the most satisfying experience. We feel that ordinary members at branch level don't get activity which is as satisfying as it might be."

Well done, David! You must have just attended your two compulsory branch meetings for the year to come to that stunning conclusion.

As any ordinary member or ex-member – could have told you, there's very little for ALP members to do at all.

You go along to branch meetings and listen to endless reports, the occasional guest speaker, and at election time you hand out how-to-vote cards.

There's not much else you can do in a party that's committed to parliamentary reform ... let alone one that's now committed to "supporting and encouraging" the private sector.

But hold on. Clyde Holding's got an idea. He thinks that party units should be "fully involved in community activities".

And co-ordinating campaigns in conjunction with the union movement to fully inform the community on Labor policy.

Unfortunately for Clyde, there's not too many Labor pollsters left worth informing the community about unless he means the one about backing the private sector.

involved

And branches "getting involved in community activities" isn't exactly going to galvanise the Party either.

Though it does take a bit of the heat off leaders who are already retreating from every worthwhile reform that Labor ever stood for, if branches are burying their heads in local council intrigues and dogfights.

Anyway, the national executive eventually decided to launch a membership drive.

With their new respectable image, they should recruit very well in Malvern and St. Ives.

BYE – BYE Harold Salisbury, we're glad to see you go.

Being martyred by the Dunstan Labor government caps a glorious career in the service of the Establishment.

Salisbury was recruited to the South Australian Police from Yorkshire, Britain, where he was head of the Yorkshire Constabulary.

His men had notorious reputations as bully boys. Harold Salisbury's nickname was "The Thumper".

The Yorkshire cops would stop and search anyone on the streets at night; often allegedly for drugs. They were implicated in the murder of a homeless black man in Leeds. They dumped his body in the river.

Salisbury took over the S.A. Police after a similar scandal – the murder of Dr. George Duncan, a homosexual, by two Adelaide detectives.

paranoid

Salisbury is paranoid about views not as prehistoric and conservative as his own.

He told one church group in 1976 that *"agents of darkness"* were destroying marriage and that *"free thinkers and liberals/ecists"* were a threat to the family way of life.

So it comes as no surprise that he deliberately lied to his elected boss, Premier Don Dunstan. No doubt Salisbury would have regarded Dunstan himself as the kind of "free thinker" who would threaten society.

And it's no surprise that all those concerned with the Australian way of exploitation, including the Liberal Party, the Police Association and (would you believe) the Jaguar Owners Club all enthusiastically joined ranks to defend Salisbury.

The cop who lied

HAROLD "THUMPER" Salisbury: "No Trade Unionist would be sacked the way I was."

Right. Most workers have it much worse. Take the 300 sackings at Chrysler in the New Year.

They won't be getting $85,000 severence money. And just to make sure they didn't cause any trouble, he sent a large squad of fellow "thumpers" down to the plant.

We wonder if that's what Dunstan had in mind when he appointed Salisbury.

At the time he said, "While there were some people with valuable experience in Australia, none quite measured up to the standard we had from Mr Salisbury.

"I'm sure that when the people of S.A. have met him, they will realise what a good choice we have made."

And then once upon a time there was a Labor Prime Minister who was sacked by an unelected Governor General. He wasn't caught lying, or spying. Just standing up to the Liberals.

But then, what greater crime is there?

NOW LET'S SACK ALL THE SPIES — p.3

between the lines

WITHOUT Comment

"It is better to negotiate as high up the union tree as possible.

"One is more likely to achieve a rational and intelligent give and take with the Bob Hawkes of the industrial world than a minor shop steward.

"But regardless at what level negotiations are held, the prime objective of all industrial negotiators must be to keep our (!) factories working."

From Rydges magazine.

THE new chairman of the Victorian Stock Exchange is a Mr. D Tricks. Wonder if he has anything to do with a Mr. R Nixon?

AT last an answer to those migrants facing problems when they settle in Australia. The Liberal government's Minister for Immigration, Mike MacKellar, summed it up last week.

"Don't Come" was his advice.

UP yours, Fred Nile. Britain's largest white collar union, NALGO, is planning to move its 1981 conference away from the city of Scarborough.

The town's big-shots last year refused civic hospitality to the Campaign for Homosexual Equality. Now they'll pay the price.

SIR James Forrest is chairman of the National Bank and last week, he announced that the directors were raising their fees from $80,000 to $120,000 a year. That's a cool 50% in this year of wage restraint.

And what to they do for their $85 a week rise? They actually attend one two-hour board meeting (over lunch, naturally) every two weeks.

The strain must be incredible!

But when a shareholder protested that the directors were the only people making money, Sir James was able to point out how the owners of the National Bank have made a 120% profit on the value on their shares in just seven years. Plus their regular dividend cheques.

WITH this, the first Battler for 1978, we're pleased to announce a new award . . . the Battler Plastic Straw for Australia's greatest Suck.

This week it goes to the board of VicRail for inviting Premier of the Freeway State to dedicate the new transport mural at Spencer St. Station. The day after fares went up 15%.

BY PHIL GRIFFITHS

PUBLIC TRANSPORT... OFF THE RAILS COMPLETELY?

THE big car companies ought to be delighted.

The Victorian Liberal government has once again raised fares on trains, trams and buses.

The average rise is around 15%. But minimum fares go up by a third, from 15 cents to 20 cents.

Already experts have predicted that this will lead to another 9% drop in the number of people using public transport.

And it could add another 15,000 cars battling their way into the city each day.

It's no co-incidence that the Chairman of VicRail is the former Managing Director of General Motors in Australia.

The lunatic policy of "making public transport pay" is causing the deliberate destruction of our railways system.

But it won't ... ever they do. Th... passengers will ... increase in their ... Meanwhile, those ... rely on public tra... even worse conditions.

Along with the ... VicRail announced ... in their services. ... time services will b... to one train ... minutes.

NOT everyone is taking the fare increases lying down.

Last Monday, thirty demonstrators gave Dick Hamer a fright when they protested at the showpiece "Cavalcade of Transport" held at Melbourne's Spencer St. Station.

One anti-freeway group, fresh from the battle against the F19 Freeway, put up public transport banners on a Melbourne bound tram.

support

And despite the continuous rain, the Spencer St. demonstration got some support from the crowd and reminded everyone that soon our entire public transport system is really going to be a museum piece.

Unfortunately, the demo is just about the only activity to have taken place.

The rail and tramway unions are side-stepping the issue. They helped pay for some leaflets, but have dodged the real issue; direct action to stop the fare rises.

Although the public is hit by cuts in rail and tram services, it's the public transport worker who suffers most. Last year, over 700 jobs were lost on the railways, and as the services become more run down and expensive, so more jobs will go.

....not if we can help it

big shots

And with bigger and bigger losses, the big shots running the trains and trams will keep the screws on transport workers wages.

As it is, the average railway worker is on pathetic wages and has to work inhuman shifts to make enough money to live decently.

"The number of officers that have cars available to them to go back and forth – that's outrageous. If these people had to travel to work by public transport, there might be some improvements."

Tramways Bus Driver.

Working six and seven days a week is common on both trains and trams. Yet the unions are reluctant to fight for lower fares and better services.

Transport workers also get abused for decisions made by their bosses.

As acting tramways delegate Sandy Pritchard told The Battler, "I know one thing, we'll be the ones who get abused."

In Sydney, railway workers put pressure on the Wran government by refusing to collect fares. There was free public transport for a day.

popular

The railways had signs up apologising for the "inconvenience". But they were a joke.

It was the most popular "strike" for years!

"I'm opposed to ... increases. The high... fares, the fewer pa... gers we get.

"I don't think ... Government is intere... in public transp... They've had ... Ministers in the las... years – Rafferty w... be the worst.

"It amazes me th... person who live... Caulfield never ... public transport . .

Railway Signal...

Wilkes wilts over Newport

FRANK Wilkes has thrown in the towel on Newport.

Labor's Wilkes: Painfully frank over Newport.

The Parliamentary leader of the Victorian ALP has announced that *"By the time the next State election comes around, the power station will be economically past the point of no return."*

Wilkes added that, *"The unions have lost the opportunity to stop it – the capital investment at Newport can no longer be ignored."*

We're not sure how the human investment at Newport – the thousands of workers who live and labor in the area – feel about that comment.

But it's not so long ago that State ALP President Peter Redlich was urging for the ban on Newport to remain. Why the aboutface?

The answer is that all along the Victorian ALP leaders have been caught between two forces. On the one side, their own rank-and-file, which is dead against Newport.

For example, last year eighty-five local ALP branch secretaries and executives supported a statement against the Power Station.

And on the other side are the union officials and parliamentarians who have been wishing that the whole Newport issue would disappear beneath the murky waters of the Yarra for ever.

The issue that has probably tipped the balance has been the land deals. Now that the ALP looks like it can bring down the Hamer Government over its land scandals, Wilkes doesn't want to be caught in any messy controversy over Newport at the next election if he can help it.

We all know how easily Labor can compromise itself when it's in power.

An early morning picket of the Newport site. With official THC support, they could have stopped construction of the power station.

respectability

Well now we see that even in opposition, Labor politicians put respectability ahead of the interests of their working-class supporters.

There is one element of truth in what Frank Wilkes says, however. The unions are fast losing any chance they ever had of stopping the power station.

The Trades Hall ban on Newport has been so ineffectively policed that there are now 340 scabs working on the site.

And despite quite a few contractors being pressured out with the threat of black-bans, enough scab equipment is getting onto the site to do the job.

Ever since the scabs started at Newport, even the most left-wing union officials have held on to two fond hopes.

First, that Hamer wouldn't be able to get enough skilled tradesmen to scab because tradesmen are covered by militant unions like the ETU and the AMWSU.

And second, that vital major components such as turbines could be black-banned because they would have to be built in large, well-organized factories where the unions could stop them.

wishful

But this is nothing more than wishful thinking. Not even the wildest optimist believes that every single skilled tradesman in Victoria is a loyal and militant unionist.

Hamer only needs a couple of hundred to do the job – and there are always scabby unions like the A.S.E willing to lend a hand.

Not to mention the inducements that Hamer can offer if he needs to – like guarantees of future employment with Government Departments and cushy staff positions.

And black-banning the building of turbines is a fine idea in theory. But the Victorian Government can always make out they're ordering them for somewhere else like Loy Yang – then just happen to ... their mind" after the... built.

And anyway, it's ... to be pretty hard ... one workplace – ... how well organised ... take the brunt for ... the Newport blackban... the rest of the labor m... ment is doing nothing ... like Frank Wilkes, ... the cause.

No, there is only one ... of really stopping ... – and that's through ... trade union-org... pickets of the site.

tried

Demonstrations of ... 200 residents, unionists ... leftists have tried to ... and failed.

With the sort of ... strength Hamer has at ... disposal, it's obvious ... only the unions and the ... have the ability to ... pickets large enough to ... the job.

It's about time ... union officials and the ... pulled their fingers out ... Newport.

Otherwise every person in Melbourne is going ... have to live with the consequences.

NOW LET'S SACK ALL THE SPIES

DESPITE the Liberal Party's hysteria, Don Dunstan's purge is barely the start of the job that needs to be done.

THE SPECIAL BRANCHES protecting us from subversion. Top Left: at an anti-Vietnam demo in Canberra; Bottom Far Left: taking snaps at a uranium demo, White Bay; Centre Left: thrown out of a meeting of the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs, November 1971; Left: Photographing last year's Mayday in Melbourne. photos Tribune.

For a start, he only sacked Salisbury, the Police Commissioner and none of the Special Branch staff.

He has ordered the restructuring of the Branch, and the destruction of a lot of files, but there will still be a special branch in Adelaide and it will still keep files on left-wing people.

The report by Justice White makes it clear just exactly who will continue to be watched.

"violence"

And that includes anyone he thinks might use "violence" against the state.

He specially marks out two groups; the Worker Student Alliance and the Communist Party.

The Communist Party is absolutely no threat to the security of the ruling class. In fact, the latest issue of Tribune boasts about how legal and safe they are.

The real point is that many rank and file militants are members of the Communist or Labor parties.

They are immediate threats to the boss because they are more likely to stand up for their rights.

And sections of the Communist Party membership, such as the NSW Builders Laborers have given the bosses a real fight.

On the other hand, the Worker-Student Alliance is a large and militant group in the Adelaide left.

We think there's a lot wrong with them (they are heavily into China and Australian patriotism), but it was the WSA that played the most significant role in the Chrysler rank and file group.

And the WSA that led a lot of actions on the Flinders campus.

It sounds terrifying when you think of political groups using violence, but what exactly does that mean?

For the police and his venerable obsequiousness, Justice White, any attempt to defend yourself can be called violence. Like the Chrysler pickets. Like a University occupation.

Giving eight hundred workers the sack isn't violent, even though it may mean hunger, poverty and suicide. Victimising students who stand up for their rights isn't violent . . . it's maintaining order.

Sending thousands of young Australians to die in Vietnam isn't violent because that's fulfilling our obligations.

But demonstrating against Vietnam, marching for peace, these are all violent because they threaten the established order.

Despite the hysterical outbursts of desperate Liberal politicians, Dunstan has done nothing to threaten the Establishment in Adelaide or anywhere else.

He isn't going to end the relationship between ASIO and the state Special Branches. He's merely going to regulate it.

In fact it was Labor Prime Minister, Ben Chifley who set ASIO up to spy on the Communists after the Miners' strikes of 1949.

What we'd like to see is the disbanding of all Special Branches and ASIO. We think all files should be shown to the people concerned before they are destroyed.

But the Labor Premiers in Tasmania and New South Wales, great defenders of the oppressed that they are, will not even go as far as Dunstan and "restructure" their spying operations.

That's because the police are there to protect the rich and powerful. And the rich and powerful will tolerate no interference with their hired thugs.

And that's despite the fact that the cops themselves have shown their total disregard for the law they are supposed to uphold.

And despite the fact that there's no way these cops can be controlled. They are a law unto themselves, as Murphy found out when he raided ASIO, as all investigations have proven.

crisis

As the economic crisis gets worse, as more and more workers and young people become unemployed, as the capitalist system grinds to a halt, the police become more important to the ruling class.

As wages are cut more and more, the cops are "needed" to keep strikes and pickets ineffective.

The cops themselves know they have the full weight of the establishment behind them, if they decide to fight any interference by a Labor government.

Dunstan's purge was a brave and positive act, no matter why he did it. He has made it just a bit harder for the spies to get their way.

But underneath it all, nothing has changed. The spies are still there, the cops are still there and all who fight for a better world are still regarded as "dangerous" "violent" elements.

And so it will be until we sweep the whole festering system aside.

Liberals close halfway house

ON November 2nd 1977, Peter Johnston — the Federal Liberal member for Brisbane — came banging on the door at a Halfway House at Kelvin Grove which is run by the Children's Services Department.

HE tried to force his way into the house past a supervisor but was successfully blocked off.

He had come to investigate allegations made by a handful of wealthy residents, about loud music, etc. The supervisor told him he had no right to be there, and to "push off".

closed

A few hours later, the Department closed the House down.

The experimental home had been going for three months. It began with Edward (the full-time supervisor), three boys and two part-time assistants.

The Home was going to be a place where boys from disciplinary institutions like Westbrook could learn to survive the system. Places like it have been operating in the US for about ten years with very effective results.

The place is a new idea in Queensland. A handful of residents signed a petition to have it closed down – not many of them lived anywhere near it.

It's not exactly clear why the house was closed. It may have been the petition and the way that Peter Johnston was treated. Or the Queensland Government might have been worried that since the House was proving successful, some people in Children's Services would start pushing for more.

Political victimisation is another possibility. Edward and his assistants have been taking part in the recent Right-to-March demonstrations, and this was an opportunity to sack them.

There was no official reason given for closing the House, and no investigation into the complaints. But the Department has reassured the Press that an investigation did take place, and that the close-down was quite reasonable.

Meanwhile the boys – all from deprived working-class backgrounds – lose again.

by Kerry Gifford

Private Health Funds IN FOR THE KILL

PRIVATE health funds like HBA are lifting their contribution rates at least 30 per cent in the coming weeks — if they haven't already.

They wish they could have done it earlier, but that was a bit too much for Fraser during an election campaign.

But now that they have their rise, they are not satisfied. Medibank rates will be cheaper.

So they want the Medibank levy increased to 3%.a. And you can bet a few dollars (which you'll surely lose) that Fraser will readily agree.

We fought the Medibank levy in 1976. We lost because our union leaders didn't want a confrontation and killed the struggle. Now we'll all pay.

Meanwhile, Medibank costs are increasing, the health funds are making a packet, and doctors' income will double again next year.

One man who likes the new health insurance rates – HBA chief John Shewers.

Editorial
(03) 33-4142

POPULATE OR PERISH

WE'RE pleased to announce the arrival of a new, thoroughbred I.S. person, Morag Clara Ferrier Grassie.

Both father and mother are reported to be doing well.

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BATTLER 5 April 1975

ITALIAN CRISIS

by John Wollin

Above: PCI leader Enrico Berlinguer. Below: Rome Police uprighting an overturned car after a fascist riot.

THE Italian parliament is undergoing a serious crisis once again.

That's not unusual because the political situation has always been complex and unstable. Since 1947, Italian Governments have lasted only an average of 10 months.

But this crisis is different. The Italian Communist Party (PCI) may come to power.

In the last elections, in 1976, the PCI won 228 of the 630 seats in the Chamber of Deputies. The Christian Democrats gained 262, and the Socialists (PSI) 57.

For the last 18 months the PCI has allowed the Christian Democrats to govern, by abstaining from voting in the parliament.

PCI leaders call this betrayal of rank-and-file communist demands the "Historic Compromise".

Unfortunately for the PCI the most important events don't happen in parliament. The parliamentary crisis is the result of a series of strikes, student protests and urban guerilla attacks.

Last December there were three major strikings. In one, a million car workers and metal workers struck for 24 hours, and 250,000 of them marched through the streets of Rome.

Union leaders called for a national general strike late in January but later called it off in the face of the parliamentary crisis.

Behind the strike wave is Italy's economic crisis. Inflation is high, and unemployment is 1.7 million people, a million under 30.

The PCI are Eurocommunists, they don't want a workers' revolution and are happy to cooperate with big business. Even so, the U.S. is very frightened of any leftwing move in Italy.

Before the 1976 elections, Henry Kissinger warned Italians not to elect a Communist government. The threats continue.

When the new crisis began, Jimmy Carter summoned his Ambassador to Italy, Gardner, for talks at the White House.

closer

The next day, the U.S. State Department said, *"We do not want to see any further step bringing the Italian Communist Party closer to the governing process."*

Of course they don't – the CIA has been giving money to the Christian Democrats for 30 years.

The International Monetary Fund is also concerned. Early last year the Government, with PCI cooperation, was trying to obtain an IMF loan.

The IMF demanded that Italy balance its accounts, which meant that wages had to be cut and government workers sacked.

Some capitalists think that the PCI are the only ones who can stop the workers coming to power in Italy.

But more and more young communists are leaving the PCI because they have more faith in the revolutionary left.

Italy's crisis won't be solved in Parliament, but in the streets and the factories.

A letter from Bari

Thousands mourn Benadetto Petrone a young communist murdered by fascists in Bari last December.

"I'M staying in Triggano, a small town near Bari, in the south of Italy. Most of the people have some land and they grow olives, grapes and artichokes. These days the income for agricultural produce is very low.

Unemployment is very bad, especially in the south, where whole families are supported by one income earner.

Young communists in Bari are active. They organise meetings to discuss unemployment and they hold rallies and demonstrations.

Even children from the age of 10 are becoming politicized and often band together to demonstrate. Last week 10 and 11 year old school children were on strike because the teachers hadn't turned on the heaters.

Last Monday night, Benedetto Petrone, a young communist, was murdered in the streets of Bari by fascists of the MSI (Italian Social Movement).

Immediately demonstrations were held all over Italy. In Bari, cars were burned and shop windows smashed.

The streets were deserted and all the shops were closed. All the young people of Triggano were filled with anger and emotion and many tears were shed for their lost campanion."

SADAT SIDELIGHTS

SOMF fascinating background information has emerged to Sadat's recent "peace initiatives" in the Middle East.

For years, the 16 Arab nations have run a boycott against companies that trade with Israel. But Egypt's economy is in a desperate state, and that is the biggest reason that Sadat's government has moved steadily toward accommodation with the United States and Israel over the past few years.

And recently, Egypt has knocked a hole a mile wide in the Arab boycott. The Ford Motor Company has been invited to invest some $10 million in Egyptian industry.

Ford has never done much business in Israel, and was always willing to invest widely in the Arab world – but the Arabs demanded that it first pull out of Israel.

Ford refused, not because it would miss the Israeli business, but because a principle was at stake. Who was boss, the Arab governments or the multinationals?

Egypt has now accepted that Ford is boss. And Sadat is about to knuckle under to Coca Cola too. Coke could sell some 100 million cases of drinks to the Arabs – but refuses to stop selling to Israel. Now the bottling company is about to move into the Egyptian market – on its own terms – and will also invest $50 million in citrus groves.

In the 1950's, Egypt set out on a proud march along the "Arab road to socialism". But the country could never really hope to escape the pressures of the world economy. Today, its economy is in tatters and unemployment has reached crisis proportions.

So Sadat must give up the dreams for independent national development, and the country is being thrown open to western capital. And it is this hard reality, not any sudden burst of pacifism on the part of Sadat and Begin, that is behind the realignments in the Middle East.

Remember Vietnam?

by Andrew Milner

REMEMBER the Moratoriums?

Remember those days not all that long ago when the struggle for national liberation in Indochina inspired the whole of the left?

Remember the final victory, only three years ago, and the conviction we shared that peace had come finally to south east Asia?

war

Now Vietnam and Cambodia are at war. They have been at war since last October. Both sides are reported to be using tanks and aeroplanes, and Cambodia claims that the Vietnamese are using napalm.

Casualties are estimated at 10,000. Both sides have accused the other of starting the war, and both sides have the support of a big power: the Vietnamese have Russia, the Cambodians China.

But it doesn't really matter which side started shooting, or which side is getting the most foreign aid, or from whom.

What does matter is that, after all the horrors of the war with America, the Cambodian and Vietnamese people are facing yet more suffering and misery.

Many believe that the victory of the Vietnamese NLF, the Pathet Lao and the Khmer Rouge meant the introduction of socialism in Indochina. They believed, too, that it would mean peace for the region. That hasn't happened. Why?

There is only one answer: although Vietnam and Cambodia achieved national liberation in April 1975, they did not achieve socialism.

Both countries are ruled, not by the workers and peasants, but by local ruling classes based on the state bureaucracies.

Both countries are desperately poor because they are both firmly locked into the world capitalist system.

logic

The "logic" of that system is inescapable. To survive, these nationally liberated but economically subservient countries have to compete with each other to buy grain from America and Australia. To do that they must have money.

That is why Vietnam has approached the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for loans, and is inviting capital investment at rates of return that are close to being the best available in the world.

As yet the Cambodian government hasn't done this. Instead they've tried to force down domestic consumption by cutting the living standards of an already miserably poor people. That has meant a wave of bloody repression.

Cambodian head Pol Pot.

And war has followed. In any situation in which two neighbouring ruling classes struggle to maintain their positions in the middle of an ocean of poverty and misery, war becomes a way out.

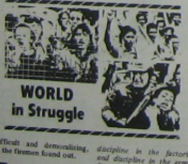
And the likelihood of war is increased when both countries are backed by rival big powers.

The Australian left has been shamefully quiet about this war. It shouldn't have happened, and so many socialists are pretending it hasn't.

protest

But when we marched the streets in protest against the American and Australian war efforts in Indochina we marched in solidarity with the peoples of Indochina – the peasants and the workers. Not with their governments.

Those same peoples are faced with war again. We must condemn that war, and the governments who are waging it.



BRITISH firemen have returned to work (with nothing) after 8 weeks on strike.

The gutless Fire Brigades Union executive recommended a return on the basis of a promise from the Callaghan Labor government of increases over 2 years.

The firemen's reward included scab clauses, High Court writs and no-strike penalties.

Now Britain's oil tanker drivers are threatening to take on Callaghan's 10% wage limits. With rank and file organization they may win. Though having to fight your union executive and a Labor government is difficult and demoralizing, as the firemen found out.

■

The Portuguese Government of Marios Soares has fallen, voted out of office by a majority of MP's.

Soares is a "moderate" socialist, much like Gough Whitlam or even Tom Uren. He came to power two years ago spearheading the attack on Portugal's revolutionary workers.

Soares appealed for discipline in the factories and discipline in the army. Yet after two years of court martials and wage cuts, the country's problems are worse than before.

■

130,000 US miners are on strike against attempts to outlaw the right to strike – their only defence against appalling conditions.

In the leading coal producing state, Kentucky, thousands of miners have been roving around closing non-union mines.

Two miners were shot dead by company guards and another 1,000 were attacked by police with teargas.

The miners union officials have sold away their right to strike on the job, calling such strikes "wildcat" strikes, and are doing so on a national level, too.

This cowardice is costing miners their lives and the rank and file are now fighting.

■

Fretlin forces are holding 85% of East Timor against the might of Indonesia in spite of Australia's recognition of Timor's integration.

The United Nations last November called for the right of self determination. Australia abstained from voting.

Indonesia claims Fretlin has been reduced to a few "bandits", but it refuses to allow entry to journalists or the Red Cross.

A French journalist who penetrated Timor said that though Fretlin fighters were facing starvation they saw themselves as "simply East Timorese who would rather die than submit to Indonesian slavery."

WE CAN STOP URANIUM

but will Bob Hawke let us?

BOB Hawke's Uranium Ballot has collapsed.

And good riddance. It was only ever dug up as a device to give the ACTU "moderates" time to manoeuvre for a deal to handle Australian uranium.

But it proved unworkable. After all, who were the unions to ballot? How could they decide who might be concerned?

cop-out

Anyway, it was a cop-out. The mining and export of uranium are a threat to all workers. The further spread of nuclear power and nuclear weapons is dangerous to us all.

And slowly, but surely, the rank and file unionist is being convinced that we should stop uranium exports.

But Bob Hawke and the union bureaucrats aren't so sure. Now that he's become national superstar, the darling of the capitalist press and everybody's Mr Fixit, Bob is taking a "wider view" of things.

He doesn't want a confrontation with the Fraser government because he's scared the unions would lose.

But if we don't confront Fraser, we'll lose even more through the spread of nuclear energy.

The truth is that Bob has no confidence in the power of the Australian working class and its ability to fight.

And why should he? Can anyone ever remember when he actually supported a strike? The one and only example is Medibank, where he gave into rank and file pressure for a strike, limited it to a token one day stoppage and spent the day playing tennis.

We're still getting over the setback of having a magnificent action treated so cynically by its supposed leaders.

At the last ACTU congress, it was clear that most of the delegates were against uranium mining and export.

So the special unions conference should vote for an immediate black ban.

But it won't. Chances are it will come up with yet another negotiating formula, designed to avoid doing anything and leaving everything up to Bob to sort out with his mate, Mal.

decide

If the ACTU did decide to take a lead, that would be the end of uranium. Fraser would fight it, probably to the end – his end.

Because Australian workers would support an ACTU ban and we have the power to stop both uranium and Fraser.

But until the rank and file have the power in the unions, these decisions will continue to be taken by careerists with their eyes on the opinion polls rather than their members' interests.

Seamen's union member Jeff Willis being arrested by plain clothes cops last August at an anti-uranium picket at Hamilton Wharf, Brisbane.

200 picketers were bashed by police with three being hospitalised. The wharfies stopped work in solidarity with the protestors but were later forced to load yellow cake by union officials.

This was so unpopular amongst the wharfies that they drew straws to decide who would load it.

HUNTERS HILL — ANOTHER COVER UP

SYDNEY'S Hunter's Hill is destined to be the radioactive capital of Australia.

Before Christmas The Battler reported the death of three residents at Hunters Hill because of contaminated soil remaining from a forgotten radium processing plant.

Since then the issue has hotted up much to the embarrassment of the government and NSW Health officials.

The NSW Labor Government has offered to buy two of the houses in Hunter's Hill. One will be demolished and 1500 tonnes of radioactive soil removed.

The Premier, Neville Wran, in a letter to the Green Bans Movement has said that he is considering a public inquiry into the handling of the Hunter's Hill waste affair by government departments.

Secret government documents reveal a huge cover up.

Dr. Alan Bell, the director of Occupational Health and Radiation Control, directed his subordinates to keep the Hunter's Hill Council in the dark.

One of the residents in Nelson Parade, Justice Mary Gaudron of the Arbitration Commission, asked the Health Commission to send her children to Melbourne for special radon breath tests.

Bell's memo to his staff on 9 February 1977 said that "no action has to be taken on this matter until further advised. In the event of Judge Gaudron wishing to discuss the matter further, please stall and be non-committal."

Six weeks later Justice Gaudron received a letter which said that "the visit to Melbourne for (radon) breath analysis will have to be delayed on technical grounds. . ."

Dr Bell and another radiation control officer advised the Health Minister, Kevin Stewart, that the investigations in Nelson Parade be kept secret.

However, they added "that if the matter is raised, he (the Minister) confirm that all measurements made indicate that exposure rates were found to be considerably below permitted or recommended levels for members of the public."

Three people have died from cancer and leukemia which is often associated with radiation poisoning.

claim

The Health Commission claim that the type of leukemia is different from that caused by radiation. But with radiation 16 times higher than permitted levels, and the blatant lying of health officials, their claims are hardly reassuring.

Meanwhile, more cases roll in as Centenary Avenue and Vernon Street are added to Hunter's Hill's radioactive club.

Houses in these streets were built on soil contaminated by Associated Tin Smelter, Alexandria, the same company that poisoned areas in Kelly's Bush in Sydney.

WELCOME TO OUR NIGHTMARE

JANUARY 1978 has been a month of uranium scandals and mishaps.

Hardly a day passes without a report from overseas or in Australia of radiation endangering our lives.

And this is happening when the nuclear industry here and elsewhere is still in its nappies.

Canadian technicians install radiation detection equipment in aircraft to locate satellite debris.

Canada

CANADA'S remote North West Territory is alive with radioactive poisons from a crashed Soviet satellite.

Latest reports tell of a mass of radioactive substance lethal to a radius of 1 kilometre. Reports quoted the Canadian Defence Minister as saying it was "extremely dangerous".

But officials are now denying these reports; hiding behind technical jargon claiming it will take days of analysis before the extent of the hazard is known.

Meanwhile, a cloud of nuclear waste 50 to 70 kilometres high and 400 kilometres long is spreading over North America.

It is likely that the whole northern hemisphere will have radioactive rain in the coming months.

America, which boasts of its ability to safely store nuclear waste, and been tracking the satellite for weeks.

losing

They knew it was losing altitude and would surely crash, but they didn't know where.

The crashing of the nuclear powered satellite on 25 January is another reminder of the limits of our technology.

Philippines

THE Philippines $US1 billion nuclear power project to which Australia is being asked to supply uranium, is reeking with bribery scandals.

The US giant Westinghouse Electric won the lucrative construction contract after paying as much as $US 35 million to companies headed by Mr. Hermine Disini.

Philippine's President Marcos

Disini just happens to be the first cousin and personal physician to Philippines most powerful woman, Imelda Marcos, wife of President Marcos, and a regular golfing partner of the President.

A Westinghouse spokesman is reported as saying that a commission was paid *"for assistance in obtaining the contract and for implementation services."*

The corporate conglomerate headed by Disini has enjoyed a huge boost in business fortunes since President Marcos declared martial law in 1972.

From a small tobacco company in 1972 his group has grown to a $200 million operation with 5 Disini controlled companies involved in the Westinghouse contract.

It seems that Philippine officials ignored a more detailed and less expensive proposal from General Electric. Also the Westinghouse reactor was overpriced by $US75 million.

Australia is the preferred source for uranium fuel. The Fraser government has proposed bilateral agreements as a prelude to opening negotiations on a long term uranium supply.

We wonder just what bribe there will be on the "safeguards".

Fern Bay

Radioactive contamination could have affected anyone in the Sydney area with a taste for seafood.

A wharf jutting 600 feet into Fern Bay which was used for loading radioactive materials years ago, is contaminated.

Fern Bay is a source of Sydney Harbour prawns and other commercial fishing.

Readings show a level of radioactivity 12 times the normal level.

But the contamination may well be higher. Alan Roberts of Monash University said that the readings may be inaccurate as there isn't any way of knowing how much silt lies above the radioactive material.

There is evidence of Governmental bungling or cover up.

Dr McEwen of the Health Commission was reported in The Mirror of January 19th as saying that there was no evidence of radiation danger in the area.

However The Herald on the same day ran a statement from the Pollution Control Commission, who are responsible for testing all forms of pollution in the river, that they had never been asked to test for radioactivity.

U.S.A.

TWO explosions have damaged a nuclear power plant in Connecticut, USA.

A reactor's chimney door was blown off releasing radioactive gas.

Two workers were injured and one was exposed to escaping gas.

TRADE UNION representatives inspected this nuclear waste dump at Hunter's Hill on January 24th.

The inspection of waste lying in decaying bags near Sydney Harbour was organised by Sydney MAUM.

The AMWSU, WWF, FEDFA, AAESDA were among the unions represented. The ACTU executive and the NSW TLC were invited but did not attend. Apologies and excuses were sent, but many seemed embarrassed by the issue, fearing that it may force them to take a clear public stand.

A MAUM representative remarked that this small amount of low-level waste has been ignored by governments and health authorities for 60 years.

And yet the pro-uranium politicians proclaim that large amounts of high-level waste will be safely handled in the future.

The only concrete official response so far is the preposterous suggestion by NSW Liberal leader Coleman to "Dump it at sea."

Bairnsdale Tech.

BAIRNSDALE Technical School is built on a radioactive dump.

The waste is the same as that at Hunter's Hill. It emits radon gas which concentrates inside buildings. W[illegible] inhaled it can [illegible] ca[illegible] and leukemia.

The contamination was revealed last year before the Hunter's Hill affair became public.

Victoria's shadow [illegible] minister, Ian Cathie, in January called for the removal of the waste.

But the Liberal government is refusing to say how many pupils are exposed to radiation hazards, what dosages they are exposed to and for how long.

"I FIND that I am losing my memory. I repeat myself and can't concentrate. I find that I can't write letters because absolutely nothing happens to write about.

"Everyday in this place is identical. The only thing different is what is on the television. I am very depressed about the fact that I can't see any part of the outside world."

"In the cells and the shop it is not possible to tell whether it is night or day. The yard is far too small. It is not possible to see out of it and it would make an enormous difference if it had a window.

"I miss very much seeing things like cars, roads, trees and flowers. One prisoner asked for a bird as a pet and it was treated as a joke.

Russell Cox

"MY first impression of Katingal was barred. All that we could see was a lot of cement and no windows. I was taken through an electronically operated door which clanged loudly.

"I was placed in a cell on my own. This cell contained a cement bed with a mattress, a cement table, a steel toilet. There were two fluorescent lights at the front and back of the cell with heavy glass in front of them.

"There was a spy hole in the back wall; meals were passed in through a steel trap at the back of the cell."

"There was no work of any kind at Katingal. Whilst at Katingal, I suffered hallucinations and nervous spasms. I was told I had to see Dr. Shea.

"I saw him once and he asked me to try a new drug and tell him what effect it had on me. I tried the drug for a day and then I refused to take it after that."

"I found that when I took the drug I could not rest and I had to keep moving. I did not want to take any type of drugs as I did not think that drugs would do me any good."

Paul Stanley Simpson.

"Sir,

since I'v[illegible] the above address (Katingal), the prison staff are [illegible], trying to brainwash me.

"Yes, at Gra[illegible] they used to flog me. But I would sooner be there th[illegible]e above address.

"I, myself, feel [illegible] be insane within 18 months to two years at this place [illegible]t feels like I am buried deep down in a cave [illegible] no-one, do nothing all day long. Day after day."

Geoff G. Brown

"AFTER they fired about five or six (tear gas canisters), they opened the gates, and we started to abandon the yard. There was a gauntlet of officers with batons and shields and they made us run through them.

"They knocked this prisoner down in front of me, knocked him out.

" . . . They knocked me to the ground with their batons, and started kicking and punching me with a lot of other officers.

"One said: 'Get up, you dog, I've been waiting for you for a long time. . .

" . . . and he started kicking and punching me again while about six or seven others hit me with their batons. . .

" . . . they flogged us again; made us get up against the fence.

"They told us to take off our clothes. Then they told us to face them, and don't look at them . . . Three of them then knocked me to the ground with their batons. I tried to get up, but they kept knocking me down.

NSW PRISONS

END THIS HELL ON EARTH!

Report by

JANET VAUX

Former Liberal Minister John Maddison surveys the wreckage after the 1974 Bathurst Prison Riot. Neville Wran has promised to rebuild this hated jail.

NEVILLE Wran has decided to spend $14m re-building Bathurst Jail and building a new maximum security prison near Sydney.

He has decided to cling firmly to the tradition of brutally repressive treatment of prisoners in NSW prisons.

In the past, Wran has flirted with suggestions of prison reform. In the ALP Legal and Constitutional Committee of 1973 he seconded a motion that the prison population should be reduced by 60%.

And he was quick to capitalise on criticism of Maddison after the Bathurst riots.

In his introduction to the showpiece Seminar on Victimless Crimes, in Sydney last February, Wran floated ideas of de-criminalising victimless crimes.

Victimless crimes include drunkenness, vagrancy, suicide, prostitution, homosexuality and drug abuse.

drop

A policy of descriminalisation, along with de-penalizing non-payment of fines, could lead to an immediate drop in the prison population of as much as 40%.

The Prisoners' Action Group, started by prisoners and ex-prisoners, which calls for the full abolition of prisons, has, in the past, derived some false hope from Wran's posturing.

They had thought that at least measures such as decriminalisation were still up for discussion.

Tony Green, President of the Prisoners' Action Group, told the Battler: *"The biggest bitch we have at the moment is with Wran.*

"Re-building the jails is just a way of winning seats. Bathurst in particular needs only a 3% swing. The jail is the single largest employer in Bathurst.

"If the State Government introduced de-criminalisation, then rather than needing new jails, they would have jails to spare and they could start ripping some of them down.

"Of course, Wran puts himself forward as being the leader of a socialist government, interested in the working class of the State. But by his own admission, the jails are full of working class people.

"Whereas his friends, the people that he moves with and his circle of employment as a lawyer, is almost exclusively the ruling class of which he is now a member.

"He's given his seal of approval to the screws to continue their policy of brutality against these working class people."

Wran came back from his Christmas holidays on Lord Howe Island to deal summarily with prison disturbances at Long Bay and Parramatta Jail.

He accepted without question on exaggerated version of the prisoners' demands in Parramatta.

rebuked

He rebuked Commissioner of Corrective Services, Wal McGeechan, for negotiating with prisoners, and then sacked him.

And he accused prisoners of wanting to live in "luxury hotels".

Tony Green commented: *"How dare the bastard come back and start mouthing the very same sorts of things that he screamed about loud and long when he was in opposition!"*

The Prisoners' Action Group is also very critical of Wran's sacking of McGeechan.

Not because they have any love for McGeechan, who deserves to be sacked for ten years support of a policy of brutality towards prisoners.

But McGeechan was sacked *"on the one instance that he did something right, the one instance that he went and talked to prisoners."*

Wran was able to use McGeechan as a fall guy after McGeechan's uncharacteristic handling of a sit-in by prisoners at Parramatta Jail soon after Christmas.

The sit-in was sparked off by one of the screws who removed the television points allowed to prisoners who have served more than five years.

This did not affect most of the prisoners, but they took action in support of the long-term pr[illegible] talked to the [illegible] McGe[illegible]ere demanding [illegible] prisoners [illegible]n of the TV [illegible] the [illegible] there be no [illegible] points [illegible]ners as a result [illegible] transfer [illegible]e.

[illegible] of the [illegible]t of discussion, In the [illegible]ned the hard- [illegible] prisoners [illegible] week spending [illegible] ship of [illegible]Geechan offered money [illegible] cents. them [illegible]

This w[illegible]well within his authority as Commissioner for Corrective Services.

The prisoners demands were then reported in the press as being for TV points for all, fresh fruit and award wages.

It is not known who put out this version of the prisoners' demands.

"IN [illegible]en prisons, prison[illegible]e planting pine [illegible]. They're work[illegible] alongside union[illegible] but they only [illegible]50 a week. "[illegible] get no comp[illegible] a tree falls on th[illegible]s tough."

[illegible] Jewson, PAG

false

The Prisoners' Action Group, who have tapes to prove their version of the talks with McGeechan, say that the false version was not given by McGeechan and could only have been put out by screws at Parramatta Jail, or by Minister for Services, Haigh.

"THE other day when it was 40 degrees in Sydney, there were prisoners locked up for 17 hours in concrete cells 8 ft by 4ft with a shit-tub in the corner."

Tony Green, PAG

This absurd version of the prisoners' demands led to prisoners being accused of wanting to make prisons into luxury hotels and McGeechan was sacked.

Meanwhile the prisoners' real demands seem to have gone by the board. Eleven prisoners have already been transferred. So it is likely that they will never see their 25 cents, or the $6,000 worth of re-wiring promised by McGeechan.

It is not only Wran who is handling the situation in the State's prisons to his own advantage.

The screws are fast gaining the unwavering support of Wran, who claims that their authority must be upheld.

One group of screws in particular has a lot to lose if things go the wrong way for them in the Royal Commission on Prisons, which is due to report on March 31st.

These are the screws who are named in allegations of brutality in Bathurst. They are led by Atkins, "the angry ant", who is also the screw most often accused of brutality.

"WRAN has made the outrageous statement that prison officers have to be supportedin reasserting authority. Wran knows how they assert their authority, they do it by floggings."

Tony Green, PAG

Atkins is quoted in the Sydney Morning Herald of 5th of January, saying with apparent righteousness: *"I'm damned angry. Prisoners are demanding more and more concessions. Who runs these jails? Its got to the point where the prisoners are taking over."*

inciting

But Atkins and his like have everything to gain from inciting riot in the jails.

They can then say that prisoners are wild animals. They can say, as McGeechan did about Grafton jail, that brutality is the only way to maintain order.

For this sort of reason, prison officers do not deserve the support of the union movement in their recent industrial action.

As Bob Jewson, Secretary of the Prisoners Action Group, explained: *"They are in the business of man management, and they are using prisoners for their own gain."*

PAG halfway house, 128 Glebe Point Rd, Glebe

PAG ~ the group that's fighting back

"ONE thing we know about prisons is that they do no good for anyone, the people inside or the people outside."

Tony Green

Tony Green, president of the Prisoner's Action Group, was explaining their policy to The Battler.

PAG firmly believes in the abolition of prisons and the end of inhuman incarceration policies.

But PAG is realistic, Tony explained. Prisons cannot be knocked down overnight. That needs a massive change in the structure of our society.

Its origins were in trying to influence various governments towards reform measures.

Presently its energies are concentrated on more direct means because, as Tony Green explains, trying to influence the capitalist state is like pushing shit uphill.

However, PAG has three policy objectives it hopes will bring the abolition of jails a bit closer.

distortion

The first is to provide an alternative to the capitalist media distortion of news coming out of prisons. PAG is trying to destroy the secrecy that surrounds NSW jails.

They do not have much faith in reforming prisons. But they fight for any reforms that may bring their objective closer.

Especially reforms which improve conditions for longterm prisoners.

PAG also fights for the right of prisoners and ex-prisoners to self-determination. They realise that prisoners must organise themselves for their own liberation.

PAG is involved in several day to day activities.

The most substantial is the half way house in Glebe, for people coming out of NSW prisons.

The house is a rambling stone place which has recently been renovated. PAG rents it from the Federal Government (the lease was signed prior to 1975!)

The house has room for about 16 people. At the moment only nine are staying there because of lack of furniture; especially beds, mattresses, and chairs.

Another PAG activity is the publication of the "Alternative Criminology Journal" which raises the more theoretical questions of the PAG's activities.

PAG also conducts a legal service, which is used by prisoners inside who wish to challenge the prison system.

Martin Hirst

BATTLER 5 April 1975

Farewell to the Tramp

CHARLIE CHAPLIN is dead.

BY PHIL GRIFFITHS

The great comedian died on Christmas day, after thirty years in exile from the America that he loved.

As "the tramp" he played a character half aristocrat, half destitute. By mixing up the roles he made a lot of fun of wealthy and pretentious people running America.

The tramp crashed society parties where he would head straight for the food or get drunk, or otherwise embarrass his hosts.

When Douglas Fairbanks built an enormous castle for the filming of "Robin Hood" Chaplin remarked, *"What a wonderful opening. The drawbridge comes down and I put out the cat and take in the milk."*

At other times the tramp was a lost and lonely figure, wandering aimlessly through the deeply depersonalized world of alley ways, factories, tenements and even the arctic waste which made up America in the twenties.

Chaplin was a sentimentalist. He hated the way big industry had reduced the ordinary person to a cog in a machine.

As his films became more personal, he was attacked and vilified for his humanistic views.

"Modern Times" was attacked as communist. The American Legion of Decency tried to ban "Monsieur Verdoux", though they later accepted changes in it.

American Nazis organized demonstrations against "The Great Dictator".

In one of the most brilliant scenes ever filmed Hitler, played by Chaplin, locks himself in his office and starts playing with an inflated globe of the world. He gently tosses the world in the air, balances it on his finger, then his boot. Then gently kicks it back into the air and dances around with it for several minutes.

Although made long before America entered the war, this beautiful ballet, and indeed the whole film, was a scathing parody of Hitler and his plans.

Although politically naive, Chaplin became embroiled in politics. He became involve in calling for a second front to be opened up against Germany.

In the late 40s, the once beloved Chaplin had aroused so much hate amongst the American establishment, that he was called before the Committee on Un-American Activities.

On a trip to London he was barred from re-entering the United States and his last great film, "Limelight" was boycotted by cinemas across the States.

Chaplin was no socialist. From the slums of London he had become wealthy and enjoyed mixing with the rich and famous, though he always regarded himself as a tourist in their world.

It says something about the American establishment that it ended up regarding his films as a threat to their great society.

SPANISH TRAGEDY AND COMMUNIST FARCE

By Steve Morgan

TEARS came to my eyes some two years ago when the Spanish Fascist dictator General Franco died.

Tears of joy that one of the most brutal and barbaric epochs for Spanish workers had come to an end.

For 40 years the Spanish working class and its organizations had lived (and perished) under the iron heel of Fascism which followed the civil war in Spain.

During January, the ABC's program "Time of Change" televised brilliant and moving film footage of the events of the civil war, centering around the International Brigades.

volunteers

Thousands of volunteers from around the world joined the International Brigades to fight Fascism in Spain before it engulfed the world. Less than half returned. Home for many was an unmarked grave on a Spanish hill.

We were told of and saw the heroic struggles of the Spanish people against Franco who was heavily backed by Hitler and Mussolini. But we learnt nothing of the political struggles nor of the betrayal and destruction of the working class movement in its struggle for socialism.

According to the documentary the Spanish Republic's defeat by Franco was due to its military inferiority in the face of the massive support for Franco's Fascists from Italy and Germany, and the complicity of the western democracies.

At best, this is only a half truth which continues the lies spread by Stalin and communist parties around world since the civil war.

The birth of the Spanish Republic in 1931 was the first parliamentary type democracy in Spain's history.

Under the Republic reforms attacked the power and property of the privileged and the Church.

Within a short time sections of the ruling class formed the Falange (Fascist) party to counter the demands of the Spanish working class culminating in a Fascist coup and civil war in 1936.

The narrator in "Time of Change" howled about the travesty of an attack on democracy. But the war in Spain was more than that. It was a revolution.

Franco's coup was stopped in 1936 by the mass uprising of workers and peasants.

In many centres, like Barcelona, workers lead by the anarchists and the revolutionary party, the POUM, took over factories and farms. They formed a working class army (militias) made up of armed workers with democratically elected officers.

An anti-fascist fighter in the streets of Barcelona in 1936

defeated

But though the workers formed their own governments and armed militiamen, their revolution was finally defeated because their political parties, the socialists and the Communists, failed to wage a social revolution and were sabotaged by Stalin.

The Republican leaders argued that there could be no social program to meet the poverty of the peasantry until after victory.

But the government's slogan "Defend the Democratic Republic" was implicitly a reformist program supporting the control by capitalists and landowners of industry and farming – the cause of the oppression of the workers and peasants.

Spain was in the throes of a working class revolution like Russia in 1917. But it was undermined by the Communist Party.

Communist parties were formed around the world after the Russian revolution to spread and organize the fight for workers power. By 1924 they had ceased to be revolutionary, becoming instruments for Stalin's foreign policy.

After the success of Fascism in Germany Stalin launched the period of the "Popular Front". In an attempt to block the growth of Fascism Communist Parties would join in alliances with other anti-fascist parties even when they were explicitly bosses parties with long records of strike breaking.

The idea was to make Communist Parties and the Soviet Union appear "respectable" and no threat to capitalism so as to provide Russia with allies amongst the capitalist "democracies" in the event of a German attack.

support

So with considerable support from Russia through 1937 and 1938, the Spanish Communist Party set about trying to reverse the revolution that had stopped Franco's coup of 1936.

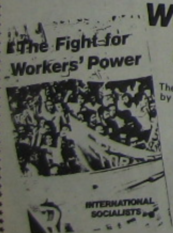
With a campaign ranging from manoeuvre to outright murder it succeeded in restoring the land to the landlords, factories to their owners and rebuilding a hierarchial army and police force, the best of which was used, not to fight the Fascists but coerce workers.

We were told none of this. In fact much was made of the few arms shipments sent by Russia to Spain. But these very shipments allowed the Communist Party to push through its policies by threatening that unless they were carried out Stalin would send no more arms.

The defeat of the Spanish Revolution made the defeat of the Spanish Republic inevitable. That is the real lesson to learn from the tragedy of Spain.

But the ABC documentary was obviously made by men and women who belong to the political party that has still not learnt that lesson.

The Fight for Workers' Power



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TROJAN HORSE FOR THE SYSTEM

by Tom O'Lincoln

THE past few years have brought a dramatic resurgence of malaria in some countries. But nowhere is it more appalling than on some islands in the southern Philippines.

After Muslim rebels in that region rejected attempts to buy them off, the Marcos dictatorship cut off its anti-malaria program.

"There is lots of malaria down there," said the local military commander, *"so we have stopped spraying. Sooner or later the rebels will be too weak to fight."*

'THE REASON there hasn't been research into sleeping sickness is because it usually affects very poor people and drug companies are hardly likely to spend money on research which will not produce profit.'

Dr. Walter Ormerod of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical medicine talking in the Guardian about the disease which threatens millions of people in Africa.

After the whole miserable Medibank episode in this country, we all understand that health care exists not so much to make the masses healthy, as to make a few people rich. In Capital, Marx pointed out that even essential social services become nothing but commodities in this society.

"A schoolmaster is a productive labourer when, in addition to belabouring the heads of his scholars, he works like a horse to enrich the school proprietors. That the latter has laid out his capital in a teaching factory, instead of a sausage factory, does not alter this relation."

We could speak equally well of the health industry as a "health factory" whose purpose is profits rather than meeting human needs. This is a fact that is obvious to anyone after watching Malcolm Fraser destroy Labor's health scheme.

But what is less well known is the way health care is used directly as a weapon in the class struggle. The Philippine events offer one example. Here are some others.

In the late 19th Century in the USA, there was a powerful protest movement among small farmers. In the wake of the rebellion, the big American monopolies set out to use health care to prevent any more revolts. They launched an anti-hookworm campaign in rural areas, followed by a campaign against malaria. They were motivated not by any humanitarian impulse, but by a desire to break down farmers' hostility to big business.

leaders

Among the leaders of this program was the Rockefeller family. They were so impressed with the results, that they later used it extensively in Latin America and Asia. A Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation later revealed the hidden purpose behind the Foundation's health program.

"Medical and public health men paved the way for agriculturists in South America and Asia. The work of the agriculturalists in turn gives credit to populationists, social scientists and others who follow them."

In other words, medicine was the spearhead for introducing other specialists who help imperialism to dominate the Third World. French colonialist Hubert Lyautey, speaking of his invasion of Morocco, made the role of medical teams even more explicit.

"Little peaceful troops, continually on the march, who penetrate into the most distant regions, into areas of the most suspicious groups, and to whom we owe so many contracts, sympathy, and even submission.

More recently, medical teams were used as Trojan horses for "counter-insurgency" activity in Vietnam.

But despite the evil motives, surely these programs did some good as well? Perhaps, but as long as they remain under the control of the imperialists and their puppets, they can be used as a club – as the rebels in the southern Philippines found out.

What's more, as the economic crisis has developed the health programs are being cut back. Malaria is coming back because the American and United Nations agencies haven't got the money to fight it. Building neutron bombs is a higher priority.

The only way to guarantee health for the world's people is to place control of the resources and facilities in their own hands, and out of the grasp of the capitalist class.

health

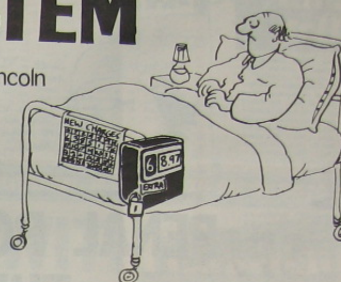
But does that kind of revolutionary solution, which is part of our socialist program, seem just a little remote for today? You'll be glad to know there's something more immediate you can do. Research suggests that the class struggle itself is good for your health.

In Germany, the suicide rate showed a massive decline during the popular risings after World War I, when workers' councils were formed. Once the bosses got back on top, suicides rose to new peaks and stayed that way through the Nazi period.

In Berkeley, USA, student psychiatric facilities found a drastic decline in "customers" during the Free Speech struggles of 1964. Then, as the movement died down, the usage rate returned to "normal".

Obviously, fighting back against oppression is good for your mental health. And in modern society, where so many killer diseases are related to stress and strain, that is mighty important.

The lesson? Join us in fighting capitalism. In the long-term, it will mean a health care system that really works for us. And even in the short term, it could save your life.



IN the Mecca of capitalist health-care, America, we hear that the government subsidizes hospitals on the number of patients they treat.

This has led the hospitals to pay ambulance drivers a commission based on the number of patients they bring in.

Recently a doctor leaving a New York hospital was run down right outside the hospital. Well meaning pedestrians called an ambulance in spite of the protests from the doctor.

The ambulance took him 5 miles across the city to another hospital.

BESSIE Smith found out about private medicine and politics.

Bessie was America's greatest ever woman blues singer. She was involved in a road accident while touring the Southern States of America.

One of her arms was severely cut, but apart from that she suffered no other injury.

There was a delay in getting a doctor, and then the doctor was involved in a minor accident. Finally she was taken to the leading hospital in Memphis, Tennessee.

Where, because she was black, she was refused treatment and bled to death unattended at the hospital.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

IF half a dozen building workers were killed in a trench cave-in on a building site we would all be bloody angry and we would expect our union to do something about safety conditions.

If the same six men were killed in car crashes over a couple of weekends we would take up a collection at work for their families, feel bloody sorry but figure that there was nothing else that we could do.

If a sixteen year old girl is bashed and raped by an eighteen year old youth acting out of a distorted sense of masculinity everyone from the feminists to the press gets justifiably upset and demands that something be done.

If the same sixteen year old girl dies in the passenger seat of a car driven too fast by the same youth, acting of the same distorted sense of masculinity, then that is four lines on page 5 of The Sun and no-one but her family and friends really care.

Given the rotten condition of public transport, the huge size of Australian cities and the distance between them, we need cars. And we have all been carefully conditioned into ignoring the dangers of road deaths and the real causes of road accidents.

Virtually every campaign against the road toll, whether it has been conducted by the government, the press or the road safety council, has been aimed at the individual driver. And the message has been – the road toll is our fault!

It's our fault if we buy the beer they advertise like crazy from their drive-in-bottle shops (immoral concept!) And then drive their unsound cars which travel at speeds far too high and have been sold chiefly on their speed and power.

It's our fault if we drive on two lane interstate highways which the government does not upgrade (because its entire road budget is spent pushing unwanted freeways through the suburbs), towing caravans which we do not know how to drive and do not need licences for. Because if we had to pay for hotels we could not afford to take our kids on holidays.

It's our fault, because nobody connected with Capitalism wants us to ask whose fault the road toll really is.

accidents

Just lately, for example, there has been some concern about drunken driving, not unreasonably as statistics show that half the drivers in accidents are pissed at the time. Vance Dickie, the Victorian Minister for land deals and Chief Secretary has ordered more police breathaliser tests but asked the cops to keep away from hotels. "We don't want to damage their trade" Terrific!

If the government really wanted to cut the road toll it could examine the quality of the cars being manufactured, the speeds they are built to drive at and the advertising methods used to sell them (Buy our car. It won the Bathurst 500 . . . you too can be Alan Moffat down St. Kilda Road at peak hour).

It could also examine the marketing and advertising of alcohol and why it is that pubs are allowed to have huge car parks, for example.

But to do that it would have to take on huge international motor companies and powerful local liquor and media monopolies. No government in Australia is going to do that.

They'd rather we died!

I.R.B.— Idiots Rerun Ballot

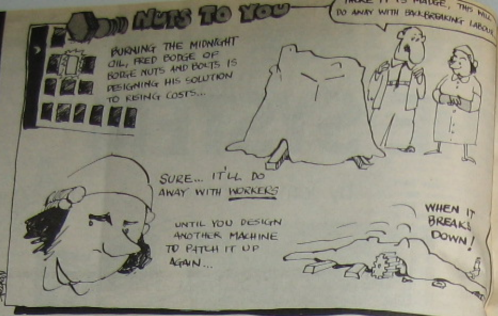
THE South Australian branch of the A.M.W.S.U recently had to rerun its election for State Secretary at the "insistence" of Fraser's Industrial Relations Bureau.

The ballot, run according to union rules, was declared invalid because it didn't comply with Fraser's amendments. In fact, Fraser's amendments are so complicated that it needs a lawyer to figure them out. As the ballot was being held during the period when the IRB was being set up, the AMSWU had not yet made the changes. (It took months to figure them out.)

Two candidates stood in the original election, and previous secretary John Scott was re-elected.

No complaints from any union members were received about the running of the election. The defeated candidate indicated he did not want to stand in the rerun election. But Fraser and the I.R.B. gave him no choice – the election had to be rerun with the same candidates.

An interesting result came out of the rerun election. Even though the union advised every member that Scott's opponent did not wish to stand, he still received 30% of the vote – indicating a strong anti-John Scott feeling within the AMWSU in South Australia.



STATE BANK SITE

Collins Place – 24 weeks out

BUILDING workers at Costains State Bank site in Melbourne are demanding the reinstatement of six workers sacked by the company just before the Christmas break.

Costains sacked the workers so that it could transfer six other long-serving workers there from a job that is finishing up the road at 400 Bourke St.

Workers at the site have banned all overtime, and the BLF banned subcontractors coming onto the site, stopping concrete pours.

State Bank workers will be meeting again immediately after an Arbitration hearing on Friday February 3rd to consider further action.

PENAL POWERS THREAT AGAINST PLUMBERS

PLUMBERS at Melbourne's giant Collins Place building project have now been out for 24 weeks.

They are fighting for full payment for a safety stoppage last August, and time lost since.

The 108 plumbers have thrown out two "compromises" – the first arranged by the union executive and the second by ACTU Secretary Peter Nolan.

This week they are due to consider a third compromise. If they reject this one, the bosses have *three* penal power actions poised to use against the Plumbers & Gasfitters Union.

The Master Builders Association have applied for a certificate under Section 33 of the Conciliation & Arbitration Act.

This certificate signifies that the Arbitration Court has failed to resolve the dispute, and allows the Master Builders to apply for penalties since the plumbers are defying a bans clause.

faulty

The Master Builders already got one of these certificates last November – but they received legal advice that the method of obtaining it was faulty.

This time they are naming state secretary George Crawford and organisers Gordon Smith and Kevin Jowett, as well as the union as a whole, as defendants.

Meanwhile the AMP Society, a partner in the Collins Place venture, announced on the day before the Christmas break that unless all union action ceased by January 17, it would apply to the State Supreme Court for damages against union office-holders.

Five full-time officials and five rank-and-file office-bearers in Victoria, and at least two officials interstate, are under threat.

If the AMP Society wins this action, they could have their homes, cars and other assets confiscated.

However, the January 17 deadline has expired with no further action from the AMP Society. They are probably waiting to see whether the plumbers accept the latest compromise.

millions

The millions of dollars that the AMP have available to invest in projects like Collins Place have mostly come from the pockets of working men and women.

The AMP is Australia's largest insurance company, with assets close to $5 billion to play around with.

But although the AMP is a "mutual" society, the people who run AMP come from the most exclusive clique in Australian ruling class circles.

People like Sir Wilfred Brookes, R.R. Law-Smith (from BHP and the National Bank) and Sir Vincent Fairfax who runs the Sydney Morning Herald.

ban

The final threat to the union is another lawsuit from the AMP Society – over a ban at the Knox Shopping Centre site.

The AMP Society has served the union and state secretary George Crawford with writs in the Federal Court under the Trade Practices Act.

So if the plumbers at Collins Place reject the latest compromise, Malcolm Fraser might have the chance to put his anti-union legislation to its first real test.

WHARFIES WIN $100,000

THIS is what international working class solidarity is about!

Wharfies at Portland in south-west Victoria have won $US119,000 back pay for nineteen Filipino crewman on the Eitoku Maru while it was berthed there last month.

The nineteen seamen were being paid under the minimum laid down by international agreement. Some had been cheated of as much as $10,000.

help

When their ship was in Melbourne, the seamen told social worker Brenda Pasamonte about it, and she went to the Waterside Workers Federation for help.

The WWF agreed to help and WWF officials took it up with the Eitoku Maru's Japanese owners. When the ship moved on to Portland to pick up a cargo of mutton for Korea, a Captain Tokumitsu arrived from Japan to negotiate.

Brenda Pasamonte had also gone to Portland to follow up the case. But when she tried to find out what was going on, the owners wouldn't let her aboard the ship.

less

The WWF eventually got her aboard, and she discovered that the negotiator was only offering $US36,900 . . . less than a third of what was owing.

What's more, the owners had tried to get the nineteen seamen to sign their agreement to the offer. The seamen refused.

Then the Portland wharfies stepped in. They held two stop-works and refused to load any mutton aboard the Eitoku Maru until the owners came good with the full amount.

Faced with the alternative of their mutton cargo slowly rotting on the dock at Portland, the owners caved in.

In fact, they caved in so completely that they even agreed to pay the money lost by the Portland wharfies during the stop-works as well!

BODYSNATCHERS

THE officials of the Australasian Society of Engineers are infamous for their cheap and low-down tricks to recruit members.

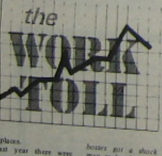
They're currently winning over many workers from the Vehicle Builders Union and the A.M.W.S.U. The method they're using is quite simple – they have set their rates lower than those of the other unions.

By doing this, they are refusing to follow ACTU policy, which is that all union dues should be set at 1% of the award rates.

Most unions want to follow this policy by gradually increasing their rates over a few years. But this is being made difficult by the A.S.E.'s insistence on keeping its rates low.

The A.M.W.S.U. has just increased its rates to slightly over 0.8% – and already some members have left, running to the A.S.E. to save a few dollars a year.

Of course, the A.S.E. doesn't need to increase their rates. Because they never do anything, they don't need the money!



OUR health and safety on the job are things we often neglect until a mate gets killed or the insurance company cheats us of our compo.

Yet every week in Australia eight people are killed on the job.

This year 90,000 people will be injured on Australian roads and another half million will be injured at work missing one or more shifts.

The bosses' newspapers, governments and police all lecture us on the road toll but road accidents don't discriminate between bosses and workers.

In Victoria there are 6,700 police protecting property and factories. There are only 70 factory inspectors and 10 safety experts in the Industrial Safety Bureau who are supposed to keep an eye on our working conditions throughout thousands of workplaces.

Last year there were 105 cases of dangerous machinery reported to the Victorian Department of Labor and Industry. Although 97 employers were convicted the average fine was a measely $100. And some workers were killed by those machines.

It's no wonder management don't give a damn about workers' lives.

□

BUT in Italy recently, the bosses got a shock that may make them take the health and safety of workers more seriously.

The dependants of 13 Turin dye workers who died of bladder cancer took the owners of the factory to court and won.

Instead of paltry fines, the two owners of the factory were sentenced to six years in prison each and two directors got 3 and 4 years.

The company doctor, who had told workers complaining of passing blood in their urine to smoke and drink less, got 4½ years.

The court ordered the company to pay $70,000 in costs to the dependants. Damages haven't yet been worked out but are likely to be in the millions.

The company was charged on only 13 counts of manslaughter . . . even though 132 workers died of bladder cancer.

Although a victory for workers fighting claims in court it's still a case of closing the gate after the horse has bolted.

Because no price can be put on the lives of people.

□

THE Workers Health Action Group is holding a two day national seminar on industrial health over Friday and Saturday 7-8 April.

The seminar will concentrate of "The Hazards" and "How to fight them".

Workers interested in attending can contact WHAG at 423 Lt. Lonsdale St., Melbourne (67 3047).

□

The Battler Falling Brick Award for Safety goes this week to State Insurance, Melbourne, for their collapsing wall (pictured above).

Last week, 3000 bricks showered the office block next door and pedestrians below in Collins St.

by Steve Morgan

The Police & the Government

by Alan Briggs Adelaide

THE sacking of Police Commissioner Salisbury highlights the relationship between the police and the elected government.

Forget about the destruction of the files, there is no doubt that the files of any real "subversives" have already been handed to ASIO.

The basic point is that the police force is a separate body completely beyond the control of mere elected government.

subversive

The moment that any government begins to be "subversive" – in other words to support the working class instead of the ruling class; then the state apparatus will act to remove that government.

This is illustrated by Whitlam's sacking in 1975. If the government does not present any opportunity to be removed, then the reactionary forces in society will be forced to act against the working class, without the official blessing of the government.

The police force, operating under a reactionary government, will therefore act for that government, as its servant to control the working class.

However, where a government shows pro-worker or reformist policies, then the police work over the government, to sabotage any working class struggles, to hinder their organisations and to deliberately deceive the elected government as to its activities.

The role of the police is, generally, to work for the ruling class and to oppose any movement against that ruling class.

As has been proven time and time again, Labor governments have been unable to bring in any reforms which threaten to change the present set-up of society.

The forces of the state are just too great and powerful for any slow change to work.

There are things radically wrong with this society – and the solution must therefore be radical.

seize

The only way forward is for workers to seize the means of production, crush the state apparatus and establish a dictatorship of the proletariat.

The only way forward is socialist revolution.

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society; based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If thats the sort of work you want to do-

JOIN US!

GONE WITH THE WIND!

International Socialists

THE weather could have been better, but 30 or so I.S. types from Adelaide, Ballarat and Melbourne had a great time among the seagulls and pelicans at Nelson near the South Australia/Victoria border.

Surrounded by all the comforts of a canvas home we had discussions on resident action campaigns such as the F 19 Freeway and Newport and also the current state of the Communist Party.

Between sessions there was plenty of time for hiking, caving, canoeing, swimming and of course visiting the local.

growth

Last year's summer camp brought together members from both northern and southern States. While it was unfortunate not to have seen all our comrades, it is a healthy indication of the growth of the I.S. in Australia that two separate camps were held.

I.S. comrades and friends from Sydney, Brisbane, Armadale and Canberra revelled in their rainy but warm summer camp at Kempsie on the NSW north coast.

Swimming, cricket, soccer and other activities were mixed with political discussion.

Talks were given on the post war boom and its collapse, Eurocommunism, and the history of the International Socialists as a tendency of the world revolutionary movement.

Everyone enjoyed the short plays on Marxism and the Nineteenth Century.

And we developed our public speaking skills through acting out situations like the uranium demonstration at White Bay and a court case on the sacking of married women.

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL
PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 — 33-4142
24 hour answering and message machine — 335-2783

I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE
PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031 — 335-2783

MELBOURNE
GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001 — 543-1081

SYDNEY
111 Enmore Rd., Newtown — 51-3665

ADELAIDE
PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061 — 49-7939

CANBERRA
PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601

BRISBANE
PO Box 111, St Lucia, Qld, 4067 — 44-7881

Fighting Fund

OVER the holidays, we received over $500 towards The Battler Fighting Fund, getting us off to a good start for 1978.

Thanks to:-

JN	$7.00
TH	$6.60
CC	$70.00
FC	$13.00
BH	$10.00
AN	$250.00
RM	$8.50
Adelaide Branch	$2.55
Adelaide BBQ	$14.95
Brisbane Branch	$7.20
Melbourne South Fundraiser	$63.30
Melb Nth Election Party	$11.70
Melbourne Cricket Match	$22.10
Canberra	$11.00
Total	$501.90

Challenge to the Left

THE Melbourne I.S. has thrown down a challenge to all the backyard Bobby Simpsons and frustrated Denis Lillees on the left.

We're ready to take on any leftwing group, ALP branch or workplace team in Melbourne in a 30 over a side game of cricket.

But be warned. We're pretty cocky following our stunning 7 wicket victory (3/113 to all out 111) over a team from the Independence Movement at Footscray Tech.

unimpressed

Admittedly, the game wasn't quite Test Match standard. In fact, a lot of under–14 cricketers would have been pretty unimpressed with some of the batting and bowling.

But it was all good fun. So if you can round up eleven players, and you can afford to take a Sunday afternoon off from the class struggle, why not take up the challenge.

After all, why should Kerry Packer have all the fun?

GOT A STORY?

GOT a story for The Battler?

Then you can phone it in if you prefer. We have a 24 hour answering machine. Just ring (03) 335-2783, wait until the recorded message finishes and then speak slowly and clearly.

Please remember to spell all names and complicated words.

And please leave your name, address and a phone where you can be contacted if we have any queries.

Battler Bundles

WOULD you like to pass The Battler around amongst your workmates, friends or neighbours?

To be sure of getting your Battler, you can take out a BATTLER BUNDLE SUBSCRIPTION.

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To order a bundle, write to **Battler Circulation, PO Box 46, Flemington, Victoria, 3031** or contact your local I.S. office.

What's On

Deadline for next edition: Wed 8th February.

ADELAIDE TUES 9 FEB Branch meeting, 7.30 pm, 34 Esplanade Semaphore. Discussion on George Orwell

ADELAIDE TUES 16 FEB Branch meeting, 7.30 pm 34 Esplanade Semaphore. Annual General Meeting to discuss activities for the coming year and to elect organisers. Members only.

ADELAIDE SAT 6 MARCH "The Better Late than McNever IS Burns Night." All the haggis, spuds and turnips you can eat. Followed by fine malt whisky. More details next issue.

ADELAIDE SAT 25 FEB C.A.N.E. special meeting to discuss strategy for the coming year. Contact the CANE office for details. Phone 223 6917

MELBOURNE WED 8 FEB Branch meeting, 7.30 pm, Moonee Bar, Moonee Ponds Hotel, Moonee Ponds Junction. Friends of IS welcome.

MELBOURNE SAT 11 Feb The first IS Fundraising dinner for 1978. A Lebanese feast at 24 Albert St Moonee Ponds. $4.50 includes food and wine. Reservations at 690 2650. 8.00 pm

MELBOURNE WED 15 FEB North Branch meeting at the Moonee Ponds Hotel. 7.30 pm.

MELBOURNE SUN 26 FEB Come on the first annual IS Car Rally. Not a speed test, but a two hour test of observation and patience. Meet outside 27A Guthrie Street West Brunswick at 10.30 am.

Bar-b-que afterwards at the mystery destination in the bush. Party in the evening as well. Only $1.50 per car, and $2.50 per person for the bar-b-que, meat and salad provided.

BATTLER 5 April 1975

WE'LL GET YOU THIS TIME, GALLAGHER

At last — a decision

LATROBE Valley power workers should at last be getting a decision in their work-value case at the end of this month.

Originally they were supposed to get an interim decision at the end of last November – four weeks after the end of the power strike.

But union submissions dragged on till mid-January. Now the case is adjourned while the SEC prepares its reply.

The SEC's reply is expected to last no more than six days. Then the unions get a final chance for rebuttals – this should be short, since much of it was covered during cross-examination of union witnesses in the last few months.

Finally Commissioner Mansini will consider his verdict. He'll probably convene a Full Bench to hand down the decision so there can be no appeals against it.

testimony

The union case has certainly been comprehensive, with testimony from workers in every section about changes in their work-value. ACTU advocate Paul Munro thinks they've put up a "meaty" case, and experienced shop steward George Wragg agreed that it was the most thorough examination yet of work-values in the SEC.

But as we saw in last year's anomalies case, the court is quite prepared to defy all logic and grant nothing to even the most deserving case.

And on the whole there is little doubt that the length of the union submission has played into the SEC's hands. Most SEC workers now expect to get little or nothing from the court. The SEC and the judges will be hoping that this black mood of pessimism makes them just shrug their shoulders and accept whatever gets handed down.

Norm Gallagher – the end could be in sight

ON Monday 23rd January, the Federal Court of Australia ruled that the election of Norm Gallagher as Federal Secretary of the Builders Labourers Federation was void.

Ever since Norm and the building bosses took over the leadership of the NSW branch three years ago, Gallagher's machine has gone to any length to exclude rank and file candidates from elections.

When Brian Rix, a member of the B.L.s for Democratic Control nominated against Gallagher in the federal B.L.F. election, he was excluded because he didn't pay an illegal $8 levy used to pay for the take over of the NSW branch.

This time Norm went a bit too far.

The court has ruled that the $8 levy was not in accordance with the rules of the union and that Brian was eligible to stand. Gallagher will now have to face a new vote.

breakthrough

This is a major breakthrough for the rank and file movement.

First, its good for the morale of our movement after a series of disappointments.

Second, the decision means that rank and file candidates were also excluded from the state elections in breach of union rules.

But most important, the coming election gives us a great chance to get a campaign for the real needs of building workers. For example: –

i) The $6 Rise

Increases in height money, fares and industry allowance were gained by other building unions last August.

Because the BLF officials refuse to follow a simple procedure in the arbitration commission of putting in a claim for parity with trades men, we are not getting $6 per week extra.

union hire

ii) Unemployment

We stand for union hire as part of the fight for permanency. Stop the run down of public works.

iii) Safety and Amenities

These conditions have slipped badly on some jobs. We need a campagin to bring them back up to scratch.

iv) Sub-Contracting

Pyramid subbying and all-in payment is growing every day. It must be stamped out.

v) Relations with other unions

An end to the BLF's policy of isolation from other unions. No more empire building against the AWU and BWIU.

We want unity of all trades on the job (through site committees) and at the official level.

The Rank and File Campaign in the BLF is not just anti-Gallagher.

We know we must put forward a positive programme as a fighting platform for the real needs of building workers.

BACK in the days when the NSW BLF was a decent union – before Gallagher wrecked it, Newcastle BLF members, protesting against the lack of showers at the Civic Centre site, took a shower on the Town Hall steps – and won their point.

Victimized – for stopping an accident

MEMBERS of the National Union of Railwaymen on the East Hills line in Sydney have defeated an attempt by the Public Transport Commission to victimize assistant station master, Glen Beaumont at Revesby Station.

Beaumont was the scapegoat after a near miss between two trains near Revesby Station on November 30th last year.

Action taken by Beaumont probably prevented an accident. But the PTC decided that instead of contacting the signalman at Riverwood, so averting a head-on collision, Beaumont should have run down the platform to interview the driver of a departing train.

The two unions involved, NUR and ATOF, supported the action taken by Beaumont.

The stationmaster at Revesby, Keith Carlton, assistant secretary of the East Hills Illawarra sub-branch of the ATOF, said "If Mr Beaumont had attempted to interview the driver, he could have been half way to the driver when the train departed."

The PTC, who have not laid down procedure for such an incident, rewarded Beaumont by demoting him and transferring him to another station for three months.

strike

A four hour strike was called in protest against the victimisation, and also demanding the installation of safety devices.

NUR members, ignoring union advice, also placed bans on signals operations from 11.00 to 1.00 each day for the rest of the week.

A week later Glen Beaumont heard that his appeal had been successful, despite having to beat the vague and pliable charge of "misconduct".

The PTC is also due to have a conference with the Union over improving safety measures.

Simmonds workers meet during the strike.

Simmonds bosses get a rude surprise

"WE took the bosses by surprise. They didn't expect any militancy," said Des Burke, strike committee member, after a successful strike at Simmonds printers in Sydney.

never

There has never before been a strike on a local issue at Simmonds.

The strike followed sackings resulting from a take-over by GL Productions of Auburn.

After they had been out a week, the firm offered to settle on all demands except the only one that would cost them any money, $200 each for short term employees and retrenchment under the State award after 5 years service.

The bosses thought they could get away with threatening immediate closure. But the strike continued, and the firm settled the same evening.

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the battler

20c

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Darlings Read my Diary Inside!

445,300 Unemployed....

SACRIFICED FOR PROFIT!

BY PHIL GRIFFITHS

WHEN Glenda Cook turned 20, her boss had a special present for her.

The sack.

Now Glenda is unemployed, one of 445,000 victims of the greatest crime in Australia's post-war history.

The Fraser government and the employers have decided that half a million Australian workers are to be sacrificed in the name of profit; for the greater glories of the free enterprise system.

looking

Glenda's case is typical. She did her Higher School Certificate at Melbourne's Argo St. Community School.

Just turned 18, she started looking for her first job. *"I had an incentive to work,"* she explained. *"I was very particular at first, but in the end I didn't mind what I got."*

Like so many people, what she got was nothing. *"I went to the employment office in the SEC building.*

"I rang up big firms." There were no jobs. *"But I'm on a lot of waiting lists."*

She soon became completely demoralised. *"I felt like committing suicide. What was the use? I couldn't do anything."*

"I decided a high rise building would be best. I even went up there once."

"Most unemployed people feel very depressed. I know I do. You feel, 'I can't stay like this forever'. *You get up and walk around at night."*

"My parents were pretty worried; they could see the state I was in."

"Being unemployed is hardest on married people. When you see older people in the unemployment office, they have a really drawn out look.

"They don't want to be there and they don't want handouts."

For Glenda, the worst part about being unemployed is the isolation. *"You really don't know where you're going. I do a lot of housework."*

"You feel completely useless."

It was nearly *two years* later that Glenda got her first job; as a clerk at Lawfords. When she rang up, she was told she wasn't old enough for the job.

"But there was another girl leaving, so they gave me her job."

Four months later, she was fired; *"terminated for economic reasons was what they said."* She got a week's pay and had to leave that night.

terminated

"A week before, I had turned twenty. Also, I wouldn't work any overtime without pay."

"I was pretty upset but I thought there'd be plenty more jobs."

But there aren't.

According to the latest figures, 445,000 people are competing for 25,000 vacancies. And most of the vacancies are for special skills.

Every boss in the country is boasting about how they've reduced their workforces, while half a million of our friends, workmates and neighbours languish on the dole.

Sacrificed to maintain the profits of the big business barons that are running this country into the ground.

ACTU URANIUM DECISION

WHAT WE THINK

A cowardly compromise.

That was the result of the Federal Unions Conference on Uranium held in Sydney last Friday.

The 200 union bureaucrats present backed down completely on the immediate challenge of stopping the existing contracts.

And they recommended a ban on future mining only until the ACTU Executive thinks "adequate safeguards exist".

If that vague phrase sounds familiar, it ought to. It's what Malcolm Fraser says he'll ensure when he goes hawking uranium around the world.

The union officials who voted for the compromise know very well that there are no safeguards against reactor core melt-downs . . . against radio-active waste . . . against war-mongering ruling classes and profit-hungry companies that have nothing but contempt for our safety anyway.

But for these union officials a false display of unity which leaves them room to back down in future is a far more important consideration than the health and safety of their members.

The Hawkes and Duckers and Fitzgibbons will now set about using this "democratic" decision to undermine the immediate struggles against shipments in the next few months.

We should be perfectly clear on just how undemocratic this decision was. Rank-and-file unionists had absolutely no say in it.

And every union – no matter how big or small – got two delegates. So we had the pitiful farce of small, generally right-wing unions like the Rope & Cordage Union (800 members) getting two delegates just like the AMWSU (120,000 members).

The decision was a cowardly compromise . . . but it is a tribute to the strength of our movement that we were able to force any compromise at all.

It took Bob Hawke scarcely a month to destroy the struggle against Medibank in 1976. Yet he has been trying to undermine the uranium movement for over a year now . . . and he still is nowhere near succeeding.

It must have really stuck in his craw to have to move a motion to his fellow bureaucrats which legitimized the whole concept of uranium bans.

If that was the worst that Hawke could do, then we really must be getting somewhere.

Bob Hawke at the MAUM table outside the Special Unions Conference

INSIDE WHERE TO NOW?

between the lines

IN an unprecedented burst of good taste, the editor of The Battler has asked me to take over Between The Lines. After last issue, I'm not surprised!

AND speaking of good taste, we'll be keeping you posted on what all the lovely good-taste people are up to.

This month's hit in New York is called Rent-a-punk. It's copying a successful "service" in London where for $10 you can hire a couple of rooms out of work punk rockers to "liven up your party."

You know, stand around, look strange, swear a bit and only spit at a guest if you're specifically asked.

We wonder what they'll think of next? Perhaps they can entertain high society with patients who can't afford hospital care, or evicted, unemployed families. Or maybe battered wives. They could stand in the middle of the room and be such fabulous conversation pieces.

OF course, only nice people with nice jobs are expected to have good taste and demand the best.

The NSW Public Transport Commission seems to think that toilets without seats are good enough for many of its manual workers.

But it seems that a particular group of trouble-making linesmen were a little sick of toilets without seats. So their shop steward decided to tackle the site engineer about it.

The steward demanded quick action, but the engineer was unmoved. You know what the railways are like; it'll take at least three or four weeks, even if they're approved blah blah.

Until the steward decided on a little direct action. The old toilet block will be banned; it's just not good enough.

But where are the blokes going to shit? In there, said the steward pointing to the engineer's push private privy; toilet seat and all.

Three days later, a truck arrived loaded with guess what.

THE Battler Plastic Straw Award (for the biggest suck of the week) goes to a young man with impeccable taste.

Peter Redlich recently stood as an unofficial Labor candidate (they didn't have time to organise a preselection) for the Melbourne City Council. Last year Peter was chairman of the Victorian State Labor Party.

But the Labor Party isn't particularly fashionable at the moment. After all, it's all tied up with those nasty unions. And a suave, tasteful man like Peter Redlich wouldn't want to alienate any Melbourne City Council voters.

So, in his campaign ads, he simply didn't mention that he was a Labor candidate, or that he stood for Labor's platform.

But Peter will have to suck a little harder. He lost.

— Darth Vader

My Diary by Jamie

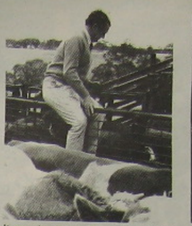
Tuesday February 7th.

Today Malcolm opened the farm to the people. Hundreds and hundreds of them.

It was awful. There were busloads of tourists and a load of senior citizens from Warracknabeal. They came all that way just to look at us.

The worst part was lunch. I had to … There I was "Anyone for tea? W… like a cuppa teea? There you are!" … said it would help break down the … story about us being aloof.

Anyway, those lovely ladies from the local Nareen Red Cross Auxiliary were wonderful. They made ever so many sandwiches to serve our visitors.



It was nice to have Malcolm home today, even if I had to share him with 800 blow-ins. We sold 25 of our finest bulls.

It was also nice for Malcolm to be home for Hughie's last day. Tomorrow he's off to Grammar. Malcolm is such a marvellous father.

Oh well, I suppose that First Ladies must do what First Ladies should. Now it's head down and back to the beastly cleaning up. I do hope the help doesn't drop too many plates.

PROBLEM OF A "DEBT" THAT GROWS

Heart Balm

MR. F is 47 and writes: My problem began at work. Sometimes I feel as if I'm haunted by the ghost of an older man and it's all because of an opportunity I took two years ago.

It all began many years ago when I joined this firm. I rapidly became involved in all the office intrigues and did my best to support those executives who I thought would do the best job.

Because I stood up for my opinions, I became a bit of a loner, but that didn't worry me since I am determined to get ahead.

About three years ago, people at work started speculating about the bosses' job. The man they had appointed was obviously only a fill-in and he was making a terrible mess of it.

CHALLENGED

When I challenged him for his position, all the safe careerists at work rallied against me and I was beaten. But he was so hopeless that a few months later they turned to me in desparation and I got the top job.

But that's where my troubles started. We were competing for a really big contract. If we could land it, it would be a real coup.

In fact, we used to have this job until our managers got a bit slack and an opposition mob came along and won it from us.

Well, the mob who'd taken over were making a bit of a mess of it. They were clearly out of their depth. I saw the chance to make a killing, so we mapped out our plans.

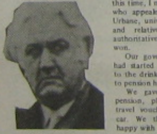
For the first few months, everything went well. We got hold of some incriminating telex messages and showed them to our clients.

We lost no opportunity to show how much better we'd be than the new mob.

Then, one night, I was invited to the home of a government official we occasionally had to deal with. He had an enormous mansion and had organised a sumptuous meal.

All his servants and his wife were out. Although he was sixty years old, he still had a commanding presence. I felt weak at the knees.

He told us he could get the contract back for us, by using his position to nullify the opposition's contract. The effect of the wine and soft lights were overpowering.



An older man's sure touch lead to an unwanted entanglement for Mr. F

He put his hand on my shoulder, and asked if I would take care of him in his old age. Weakly I agreed.

But soon after we won the contract, the clients started to realise that there was something a little fishy. But since we had them tied up to a cast-iron contract for three years, there was nothing they could do.

We let the government official pretend he was out "advisor" for a couple of years.

But he was becoming an embarrassment. And about this time, I met another man who appealed to me more. Urbane, university educated and relatively sober, his authoritative style had me won.

Our government official had started to take heavily to the drink, so we decided to pension him off.

We gave him $33,000 pension, plus a secretary, travel vouchers, and a free car. We thought he'd be happy with that.

But he wasn't. He started bitching that he wanted something interesting and prestigious to do. We couldn't have him around our offices, because our clients were just starting to forget his double-cross.

And anyway, he was such a drunk, it wasn't funny. He even managed to get himself picked up staggering all over Flemington on Melbourne Cup Day.

Now we've given him a agents position in Paris. He's moved into our company apartment, but I'm hoping the staff there will be able to keep him locked away with his Chateau Latour most of the time.

The trouble is that our clients have found out and now they are complaining. They want to know why we're paying him an extra $29,000 plus $11,000 allowances for his new iob?

SUSPECT

I think they suspect that there was more to our original deal than they thought. I told them I had originally offered the official a consultative position when he retired from his government job, but that only made them angier.

We're in no danger of losing our contract since it has nearly three more years to run now, but I want to keep our embarrassing emmigrant out of the way.

What do you suggest? Please help me.

ANSWER: You are obviously a selfish and ruthless man. You allow no-one to get in the way of your desires.

Your chief concern is that an older man has taken advantage of you. It's your pride that's hurt.

We cannot solve the problem of your "agent", that will require professional assistance. We can recommend a Dr. Vince Gair.

But unless you can curb your selfishness, it could be your downfall.

stop this kangaroo court

SIXTEEN students from Sydney University are facing fines and suspension as a result of a kangaroo court trial by the university.

They were charged for participating in demonstrations against the internationally famous racist, Professor Hans Eysenck last year.

suspended

Two students have been suspended for two years, one has received a "suspended suspension" of one year and twelve fined a total of $900. They were also severely reprimanded.

The trial was a farce. The Vice Chancellor ignored the usual procedure of appointing a Proctorial Panel of five members. Instead, he appointed the Acting Vice-Chancellor to hear all the charges on his own.

The result of the trial was never in doubt. The University supports people like Eysenck. They invited him to speak and then spent thousands of dollars in "security" measures, including hiring private goons.

The students have appealed against their trial and the sentences to the university senate.

But the success of their appeal will depend on the amount of support they receive from fellow students and other anti-racist groups.

Poor BH…

TAKE time if you … shed a tear for BHP … profits soared by … percent in the fi… months of this … year, from the previ… year result.

There are two reason… the profit boom, and … of them has to do … better service to … customer.

One is the decision … Fraser government to … prices rise to interna… levels. The other is … decision of the P… Justification Tribunal t… them TWO price rise… steel in the second h… last year.

In other words, … for the bright smiling … head office.

AFTER THE BOMB

NO-ONE could fail to … horrified by the bomb … that exploded outside … the Sydney Hilton la… week.

Especially since … victims were two Sy… Council workers.

But the political sign… ance of the bombing … another matter.

The police ha… announced that it was inv… tigating all groups who … demonstrated against … Commonwealth Heads … Government meeting … held at the Hilton.

There was a … attempt to pin it on … Ananda Marga, despite … fact it is simply not the… style.

Now they are speculat… that it's (get this) "a you… anarchist group with foreign… connections." And what … hell is that supposed … mean?

It could even descri… ASIO.

But beyond the hal… hearted attempts to sm… the left, it is not even cl… that the motive for … attack is political at a… The facts are that the… don't know who did it and … they don't know why.

It could even have be… an irate Isaac Hayes fa…

The government and … RSL, if there's any diff… ence, are both using … attack to call for stro… security forces.

But it's clear that wh… they're strengthened, … security forces apply the… limited intelligence and … total incompetence toward… harrassing left-wing groups … and unionists, rather th… any "protection" for … politicians.

Now let`s stop ALL uranium shipments

NOW that we know that the ACTU isn't willing to lead a fight against uranium, we're just going to have to carry on without them.

First and foremost, we're going to have to stop the existing contracts getting through Sydney with uranium from Mary Kathleen and Lucas Heights.

For the uranium movement, that's going to mean physical obstruction and civil disobedience tactics – a repeat of the actions at Melbourne's Swanston Dock that brought in union solidarity. We're going to have to organize pickets outside the docks to stop the trucks getting though and – if we can manage it – occupations of the wharves to stop the uranium getting out.

And in our unions, we're going to have to fight twice as hard for bans to be reinforced and extended – especially in the key unions like the Transport Workers Union, the Waterside Workers, the A.R.U. and the Seamens Union.

backsliding

Because every backsliding rightwinger and bureaucrat is now going to start waving "ACTU policy" at us to weaken our stand.

One of the keys to winning in the unions is going to be building M.A.U.M. – the Movement Against Uranium Mining – in the workplaces. That work has already started and is achieving important results … we have to keep it going.

It's going to be vital in getting the facts about uranium to our workmates.

And we have to keep building the mass demonstrations to maintain pressure on Fraser.

The turn-outs of ten and twenty thousand people have done a lot to shake the confidence of the ruling class. The next National Mobilization is in April… and we can't afford to let the pressure drop.

This year will probably be "make or break" for the uranium movement. And it could be the issue on which we break the government.

what they decided

"WE determine that affiliated unions should make labor available to facilitate the honoring of existing contracts from production at Mary Kathleen or from the Lucas Heights stockpile."

"Until we can be satisfied . . . of the adequacy of safeguards in respect to these recognised dangers, we recommend that labor be not made available for the opening or operation of new mines."

Those were the two key sentences in four pages of rhetoric and waffle that constituted the ACTU decision on uranium.

It took two hundred union bureaucrats, fresh from the pub, five hours of sterile debate before they endorsed this compromise.

In the process they threw out five amendments. The key one – which came from the Electrical Trades Union and the Australian Railways Union – called for an immediate ban on all mining, transport and export of uranium. It went down on a show of hands by about two to one.

Another amendment, conveyed by a Fireman and Deckhands delegate from a lunchtime rank-and-file meeting on the wharves, tried to at least take the final decision on "adequate safeguards" out of the hands of the ACTU Executive and leave it up to an ACTU Congress.

That amendment also got shot down in flames.

Apart from the ETU and ARU, other union delegates who spoke in favour of a total ban were from the NSW Teachers Federation, Storemen & Packers, Painters & Dockers, Liquor Trades, Social Welfare Union, BWIU and Waterside Workers.

Speakers for the Executive position were Hawke, John Ducker, Peter Nolan and Bill Kelty (Storeman & Packers) – all executive members, – and delegates from the Glassworkers and Shipping Officers Association.

Gietzelt from the Miscellaneous Workers and Maynes from the Clerks Union spoke in favour of dropping all bans immediately.

Peter Coleman`s ASIO connection

THERE is nothing new in the "revelations" about links between ASIO and the NSW Liberal leader, Peter Coleman.

The allegations have been public knowledge since Sydney journalist Robert Mayne wrote an article for the National Times in 1973, and then gave fuller details to the Hope Royal Commission into Security and Intelligence in 1975.

Mayne gave evidence that he had been approached about editing a right wing newsletter to be called The Analyst.

It would use information provided by ASIO with the aim of discrediting various left-wingers.

Others involved in planning meetings included Peter Coleman and an ASIO officer, Ernest Redford.

Mayne also said that Coleman showed him five files with the pencilled names – O'Neill, Medlin, Freney, Gould and Langer – all well known in left politics.

Coleman does not deny any of these individual allegations. But in NSW parliament he denied the allegations as a whole as false.

Coleman says that the information was not classified or secret, and so there was nothing improper in his seeing the files.

But that is not the point.

The allegations against Coleman reveal the special relationship that exists between ASIO and the right wing press and politicians.

ASIO provides the right with convenient material to attack left-wingers. And right wing publishers provide ASIO's dirty tricks department with channels for disseminating their propaganda.

Coleman calls it a "news service." But it's a news service catering exclusively for the Liberal-Country Party and beyond.

Meanwhile Wran is capitalising on the outcry.

His judicial enquiry into the ASIO-Coleman link helps discredit the opposition leader. It also draws attention away from Wran's outrageously soft line on the N.S.W. special branch.

LAST Saturday, 5000 Adelaide people attended a rally to support the sacking of police commissioner, Harold Salisbury.

Salisbury has admitted lying to Premier Don Dunstan about the work and files of the South Australian Police Special Branch.

Saturday's demonstration was in opposition to the rally held a week earlier by Adelaide's blue-rinse set to protest against the sacking.

The Establishment would die if they had to do without the protection of police spies.

Dunstan has since announced that he is establishing a Royal Commission to investigate the circumstances surrounding the sacking. Meanwhile, the Special Branch has still not been dissolved and the spies go on spying.

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I want to join the International Socialists

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE NO.

Postcode

TRADE UNION

Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, 3031

… April 1975

SMITH'S LAST STAND

A black family being forcibly removed from their home. Tens of thousands of blacks are now being shifted into fortified camps to try to prevent their helping the guerilla forces. The camps are often far from their traditional lands, in dry and arid country. The Americans tried the same tactics in Indo-China without success.

AS the fighting hots up in Zimbabwe the white Rhodesian government of Ian Smith is starting to panic.

All news reports leaving the country are now being censored.

Abel Muzorewa

THE BLACKS TALKING TO SMITH: *Abel Muzorewa* leads the United African National Council, which has widespread popular support in Zimbabwe.

Until recently Muzorewa toured the world preaching the need for armed struggle against the settlers – now he is negotiating a deal which would enrich white privileges.

Ndabaningi Sithole, leader of another faction of the African National Council, is the intellectual father of black nationalism in Zimbabwe. He coined the guerillas' slogan 'We are our own liberators'.

Today Sithole's main backing comes from the Western companies who have made him, according to the *Guardian*, 'a rich man with the power to disperse immense patronage'.

He recently used party funds to try and buy a house in the plush white suburb of Houghton Park.

Chief Jeremiah Chirau, like all African chiefs in Rhodesia, is a government official. Until recently he was a member of Smith's cabinet. His Zimbabwe United People's Organisation has no popular support and is largely financed by local white businessmen.

Ian Smith

This is an attempt to prevent such disconcerting news as the recent penetration of black nationalist forces to within 20 miles of the white capital Salisbury, leaving the country.

With the failure of the Anglo – American "peace initiatives" Smith is now desperately negotiating with those blacks who are as anxious as himself to head off the guerillas.

The settlement agreed by the 'moderate' black leaders protects white property and pension rights. The white 4 percent of the population will have 28 percent of the seats in the proposed new parliament.

veto

These white MP's would have a veto over anything that threatened the white interests.

The people that would really benefit most from this are the South African and western companies that control the Rhodesian economy. They are already pressing the British and American governments.

But everyone knows that any agreement signed in Salisbury will not stop the war. Both Smith and the western companies involved in Rhodesia are anxious to split the guerillas.

They are pinning their hopes on Joshua Nkomo, leader of one wing of the guerilla forces, ZAPU.

Tony Rowlands of the giant Lonrho Company even arranged for Smith to meet secretly with one of Nkomo's main backers President Kuanda of Zambia.

What is at stake in Zimbabwe is more than the colour of the [illegible] Minister's face.

If Smith's plans [illegible] then the Rhodesian economy will continue to run for the benefit of [illegible] African and western capitalism.

Oz boss sacks American workers

On the picket line

ALL Trans Express in Los Angeles, subsidiary of Australian multi-national TNT, sacked all its Los Angeles workers five months ago.

The TNT organisation wanted to shift all its work to a scab company.

The drivers and dock workers, members of the Teamsters' Union, set up picket lines.

They asked for official union support. They had only just got some support when I visited the line in late January, five months later.

I spoke to Doug Allan, a strike leader. Doug is on the national steering committee of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. There was a movie camera trained on us from the company offices while we talked.

"In the 20's and 30's, the way we got unionisation was that workers and officials went out on the streets and fought for their rights. Now the officials are money hungry, that's all they see. They're scared of lawsuits.

wrong

"But you don't win strikes by worrying about legal and illegal. You worry about right and wrong. When 40 workers are fired after 20 years with the company, that's wrong. We're showing them that the rank and file can stand up for themselves. Now it's up to them."

After 5 months on the picket line, things look grim. But the strikers are determined to make Sir Peter Abeles and TNT pay dearly for their union-busting operation.

A big dent has been made in TNT's income. They will think twice before they try another operation like this one.

Tom O'Lincoln

A Bugatti Type 44, built around 1930

WORKERS' MUSEUM

WHAT would one expect to find in the "Museum of the Workers"?

Machinery over which workers have toiled for generations? Models of the slums in which families lived and died?

No. This museum is not called the Museum of the Workers because it is dedicated to the working class, but because it has been taken over by the workers.

Fritz and Hans Schlumph built up an empire of spinning mills in France during World War 2. Fritz Schlumph was a car enthusiast, and he collected Bugattis in particular.

Not satisfied with one or two Bugattis, Franz managed to collect 150 of them, along with 430 other old cars. Of his 580 cars, he totally restored 450.

In 1977, just as they were preparing to open their museum, the Schlumph brothers' financial empire crashed. During the scandal, it was revealed that the Schlumphs had used the company's money to restore the cars.

Meanwhile 300 workers risked losing their jobs as the brothers went bankrupt.

When the workers heard that the Schlumphs had squandered company funds on old cars, they besieged their country house. Fritz and Hans were rescued by the police three days later, and fled to Switzerland.

The French government refused to allow the Schlumphs to take the cars to Switzerland because many of them were French, so they became part of the bankruptcy stock to be sold. But only for a short time.

The workers occupied the museum and held the cars as ransom for their 300 jobs.

Last Easter the museum opened for the first time, under the control of the workers.

The cars are now available for people other than the very rich to enjoy – and during Easter 100,000 people visited the museum.

Alan Briggs

WORLD in Struggle

BRITAIN'S Prime Minister Callaghan has been holidaying in India and Bangla Desh.

While he was out there a number of journalists in Dacca, deeply worried by the rise of the National Front, asked him several important questions including "What are you going to do to restrict the National Front?"

Callaghan's answer was "Mind your own business. Look after your own problems. You've got 80 million mouths to feed."

There are 140,000 Bengalis in Britain, many of whom have families still in Bangla Desh. Many of those in Britain have been cruelly assaulted by the Front in the past year – without the police or the courts protecting them.

Callaghan's lack of concern matches Margaret Thatcher's suggestion that the Conservatives will mount a "get the blacks" campaign in the next British elections.

▼△

THE entire city of La Paz, capital of Brazil, was closed for 2 days in January as the climax to a month long protest.

General Banzer, latest in a line of military dictators, refused to release political prisoners, to reinstate many tin miners sacked for trying to organise unions, and to evacuate the army from the tin mines where they have stood guard over the workers for two years.

By early January 1,300 people were on hunger strike in ten cities. The general ordered the arrest and beating of the hunger strikers.

As a result the tin miners called a two-day general strike.

▼△

PRESIDENT Sadat of Egypt is not as confident about his deal with the Israelis as he seems.

Speaking on American television he said, that if he were proved wrong about his efforts 'I have the courage to go to my assembly and say here is my assassination – – ah, resignation.'

▼△

AT last it's official . . . vicious discrimination continues against Catholics in Northern Ireland.

A report published recently by a government sponsored agency showed that catholics are more than twice as likely as protestants to be unemployed. And that those catholics who are in work get the worst jobs and the worst pay.

It is eight years since British PM Wilson promised equality of opportunity for all residents of Northern Ireland. It hasn't happened, and it won't, until the protestant ruling class apparatus of bigotry which controls Northern Ireland is dismantled.

So a membership card for the local Orange lodge will remain the qualification for the best jobs, maybe for any job at all.

Frayed blue asbestos hanging from windows in passenger carriage window frame.

Unshielded asbestos in drivers control box.

Vandals broke this panel, exposing passengers to large amounts of asbestos.

VICRAIL'S TICKET TO DEATH

REPORT: STEVE MORGAN

RAILWAY workers and commuters in Victoria are being exposed to deadly blue asbestos.

The asbestos is used to insulate some 200 blue "Harris" suburban trains which daily carry Melbourne commuters to work.

For twenty years the Victorian Railways, the Health Department and the unions knew of the dangers of asbestos.

Asbestos fibres when inhaled causes scarring of the lungs (asbestosis) which can lead to lung cancer. Small quantities can cause a rare cancer of the lung lining (mesothelioma) after 20 to 50 years.

The diseases are painful and incurable.

Fire in your lungs

ASBESTOS is a naturally occurring mineral fibre.

It has been used for over 2,000 years. But since the industrial revolution its heat and sound insulation qualities have led to its widespread use.

Asbestos is valuable because it's virtually indestructible. It is resistant to biological attack, strong, and easily worked, making it attractive to profit conscious bosses.

There are three types commonly used: blue asbestos (crocidolite), white asbestos (chrysotile) and brown asbestos (amosite).

Whilst blue asbestos is recognized world-wide as deadly, there isn't any medical evidence supporting business claims that the other forms are not as dangerous.

Asbestos causes several diseases.

Asbestosis occurs as a result of fibres scarring the lungs. This restricts breathing and can lead to death from emphysema, or from heart failure due to the extra strain in breathing.

The cancers caused by asbestos are incurable. The scar tissue formed around the fibres often causes the common lung cancer associated with smokers.

Another cancer, mesothelioma, occurs from 20 to 50 years after exposure. It strikes one person in a million amongst those with no contact with asbestos.

But the incidence is one in 250 for asbestos workers. It is a cancer of the lung lining, called the pleura.

Many workers who have been exposed to asbestos – laggers, boiler-makers, fitters, building workers and others – may well have died without their death being put down to asbestos.

The dangers are well known, but what is being done about it? The Victorian government has agreed to set up a committee to discuss the union claim but it could easily end up a repeat of the 1958 bungle.

Meanwhile, Melbourne commuters are travelling in trains with asbestos fraying from windows and also sifting in through the ventilation, and the government hasn't said whether it will even measure the fibre level.

accidentally

In 1957 the workers at the Newport railway workshops accidently found out that they were working with asbestos.

One of their mates attended a lecture given by the late Dr. Thomas of the Division of Industrial Hygiene. He later told the doctor about the workshops, asking if they were in danger.

On inspection Dr. Thomas discovered there were no safety precautions and the workers placed bans on the blue cars.

The railways were forced to adopt safety precautions and later stopped using asbestos for insulation.

Now 20 years later the workers at the Bendigo North railway workshops again by accident find that they have been working with asbestos for the past 7 years with practically no safety precautions.

The blue trains were sent to Bendigo to modify them for use on Melbourne's new underground rail loop.

I spoke to Allen Masters, secretary of the shop stewards committee at the Bendigo North railway workshops.

He told me that one of the men mentioned to his son, who is a metallurgist, that they were working with asbestos. The son said it was deadly so the men took some samples and found that it was asbestos.

But the thing that really got the ball rolling was when the manager tried to cut their dirt money.

"Everything that we have done extends from the action of the men on the job. And that would not have arisen only that management tried to cut our dirt money penny pinching on the job. That was 12 months ago.

"That's what mobilized it all because the fellas were pretty concerned about having their dirt money pinched on them.

"They put their case forward that asbestos was a rotten stuff and as they delved into it we find out that the stuff is deadly."

rotten

In late May 1977 ARU organiser Graham Bartram visited the workshops. The men drew his attention to the asbestos. He told them, *"That's pretty rotten stuff you're working with."*

When he returned to the ARU offices he mentioned the asbestos. Someone familiar with what happened at Newport said, *"No. Not bloody asbestos again"*, and dragged out the compensation records.

The union notified the Health Department's Division of Industrial Hygiene and a few weeks later tests were carried out.

The few men who were wearing respirators changed the filters every one or two weeks. The Health Department inspection told them to change the filters three times a day.

A few weeks after the inspection the job was closed down by the railways. But in spite of repeated requests the railways and health department refused to release the report to the workers or the union.

Allen Masters told The Battler that they have a safety committee run by management.

"But they're not looking at safety like asbestos. They're looking at blokes not getting injured, dropping things on their feet, that sort of thing.

"The railways have gone mad on safety to save them select money. You know, trying to cut sick pay, days off and compo to save money.

"They're running campaigns in major shops like contests for the best safety shop. And here we are sprung with this.

"And when we brought it up no-one wanted to talk to us.

"A job delegate, Russell [illegible], who worked on the blue cars asked the railways safety officer who came up each month where was the medical report.

"The safety officer said, 'Why do you want to know for, and what are you going to do about it if you find out.'

"Now for our representing the most safety wise on the job and there is the reply from the man in charge of safety in the railways."

Another worker, who didn't want to be named for fear of victimisation, told The Battler:

"It was very cunningly done sending the trains to Bendigo. But Carnal (the manager) made his mistake in taking the dirt allowance.

"Later he offered us half and we refused. One shop said it was a health hazard.

"Carnal told him, 'I don't care about your bloody health, I want the cars finished.'"

[illegible]

Bendigo's Snowstorm of Asbestos

THE Bendigo railway workers were working with inadequate protection in a snow storm of asbestos dust for 6 years.

They were cutting the asbestos and peeling it off the walls into buckets and carrying it to waste bins.

Boilermakers were sitting in confined spaces under the carriages unable to wear respirators while they received the rusted out panels.

The asbestos would be damped down with water, but quickly dried out spraying over the workers when they began using grinders or oxy torches.

When they pulled their hankies from their trousers their pockets were filled with asbestos dust.

Peter Ratcliffe, a boilermaker's help working on the blue cars until he left last June, told me that he would hose down his overalls before giving them to his wife to wash.

He said, *"The grinder would throw asbestos everywhere and with the welding fumes you'd need a knife to cut the air in the factory."*

There weren't any exhaust fans or partitions separating the asbestos area from the 380 other workers in the boiler shop.

Yet medical authorities have known that asbestos is lethal since the turn of the century.

In Britain the first asbestos regulations were introduced in 1931. Employers ignored these and government officials didn't take any action.

In 1956 the Victorian Division of Industrial Hygiene declared asbestos a danger. Regulations were drafted but nothing happened.

asbestosis

Following the union ban at Newport in 1958, 70 workers were tested for asbestosis.

Twenty-three workers had positive sputum tests indicating asbestos fibres in their lungs.

They were X-rayed. Whilst their chests were found to be clinically clean the railways and the union agreed to continue periodic testing.

This was not done. The men were forgotten.

Part of the report of the meeting between the railways, the union and medical authorities said,

"These men are not likely to develop asbestosis as the body can cope with very high concentrations and it is generally accepted that the men would have to be exposed for at least 12 years before developing this condition."

Ten years later, in 1968, two workers were dead from asbestosis.

But the most amazing thing is that medical authorities in Australia appear to be ignorant that small concentrations can kill.

In Britain, even the wives of asbestos workers have died from the cancer, mesothelioma. Their only contact was washing their husbands' work clothes.

Vicrail's asbestos negligence makes a mockery of the safety sign under which 300 Bendigo railway workers walk each day.

5 April 1975

They were shot at, beaten up, arrested [a]d ignored by their union...
But they just kept on fighting.

The Fighting Gra[n]ies of Elwood, India[n]a.

"AFTER I was shot at one afternoon and one night I was so mad and scared I thought — Well my grandmother marched for the women's suffrage and it was just time for me to pick up the flag.

IN southern Indiana, U.S.A., just near Chicago, there's a sleepy little town called Elwood.

But last year, Elwood came alive as two hundred workers fought the Essex Wire Corporation for a pay rise. They were sick of living on $US2-76 an hour.

Essex fought back with scabs, police, and guns.

The struggle, ignored by the union, ended in defeat. But the women who fought found a new sense of self-respect and solidarity.

An elderly woman named Georgia Ellis, one of the "Fighting Grannies" who led the struggle, told the story of the strike.

Here is her speech to the American International Socialists Women's conference held in December last year.

"As you I know we are from Essex and this thing has been going on since April the 6th. But none of us had ever been on a strike. We had never been engaged in any kind of struggle, other than probably taking care of our kids, or maybe fighting in the PTA; when you're in a small town you don't get involved in social issues, you don't. . .

"Things go on around you but you're so damned busy with the little network you build in your own life that you really don't think about it. We weren't even involved in our own unions. Our union meetings consisted of sitting around and arguing over who had the longest potty break, and whether the foreman patted who so they could have a special job. And very frankly most of us didn't go. We paid our dues . . .

can't

"Essex specialises in employing older women, and they build these little plants in a side route somewhere, and hire older women, women who can't get other jobs, divorcees, widows, handicapped and what young people there are, or they go to a college town where the turnover is fantastic.

"Nobody even thinks about them being a big corporation, you don't fight back. If it is union it's a very small union, it has no power, nor organisation, and you keep them fighting among themselves, and as a result, whatever you offer they will take it, or this is what they thought.

"And for 30 years they were getting away with it. Our people were making 2 dollars and 76 cents an hour, 35 dollars a week sick pay, $600 deductible for maternity, which the hospital thought was stupid because you might as well have the baby at home.

"You couldn't get your sick pay until after you were back to work, the temperature would get as high as 130 degrees, and when I went to work there was one window in the damn place. You'd get as high as 17 women would pass out in one day, used to have stretchers at the end of the aisle. And it wasn't 40 years ago, I've been there 9 years.

damn

"It's a machine that you must run because you can't leave it. It's very hot and if you go away it freezes off and it doesn't work anymore. So if you want to go to the bathroom or get a drink someone must be there. So you can stand 10 feet from the water fountain and pass out and nobody really gives a damn.

"But anyway last winter, when the fuel bills got as high as they did, and utilities what they were and food, our people couldn't pay their fuel bills and eat. There was no Christmas in a lot of our homes; and this was a proud small town. They didn't go to a trustee or the welfare, you just sort of did without.

"And many of our people went without an awful lot. We knew we could not take what Essex offered. They offered us 62 cents over 3 years, no increase in our sick pay, they said it was sufficient, $5 a day for 13 weeks; nothing on anything.

"They took away, that's all they did. Our people said, *"No, we can't live on this. We have to go out."* And we did.

forced

"They forced us out the gate, there was no alternative.

"We thought a strike mean't, if you were nice and you carried a sign, and you said, we're going to picket, the company would give in in a few weeks, we would get a little more money. Boy we were gonna do something.

"We went out and we tried to behave. That company put up an 8 ft barbed wire fence, they installed movie cameras. They had armed security guards with guns, the whole bit.

"We tried to stop a few company trucks that came out, and carried out our moulds and our parts, but there wasn't anything serious. And when they offered us the same thing again, we said NO.

"So they sent us all a letter, and they said, *'either you take this offer, or we will bring in scab labor, and take your jobs, and break your union.*

"We didn't believe it. They put quarter page ads in newspapers in 3 counties, 2 other states, paid as much as $2500 a month to newspapers, and they brought in the scabs. They came from states you wouldn't believe, North Dakota, Mississippi.

deliberately

"I don't believe people come that far for $2.76 an hour. I've often thought that they brought them in deliberately, they promised them permanent jobs, top seniority, top classification. These people work 7 days a week, 12 hours a day.

"They carry power tools, shot guns. They ran over our people, the county police came down, as high as 9-10 cars a day, and they escorted these people in and out of the gate.

"They parked in shopping centres with paddy busses, [illegible] Essex called [illegible] out, on the [illegible] say we were [illegible]ath; we were [illegible]ping in the street, in front of [illegible] trumped up charge[s] [illegible] a while they were [illegible] up! We got [illegible]

"[La]dies that had [illegible]thing! We got [illegible] [illegible]ew the damn thing.

"[illegible], we busted [illegible] [illegible]thing we had to. [illegible] [th]e point where [illegible] scabs in that plant [illegible] had people [illegible]thing from . . . [illegible] [yo]u name it.

"[illegible] shot at with [illegible] [we]'d been beat [illegible] over and we [illegible] [t]he end of it.

"The 88 people in [illegible] our union was [illegible] [wh]en you get 51 [illegible] you can hold [illegible] election, and [illegible] had a union, [illegible] going to let it [illegible] passed on the [illegible] [h]ad about 250 [illegible] people, any- [illegible] [illegible], and by god [illegible] [illegible]e.

"And [illegible] [th]ey came out [illegible] the first car, [illegible] we took it. [illegible] off, the sheriff [illegible] we told them [illegible] to happen. [illegible] [an]d he was beat, [illegible] quit, they had [illegible]

[illegible] pulled out and [illegible] said he would [illegible] [th]at just left 3 [illegible] guards in that [illegible] were out, all [illegible] [g]one. We told [illegible] [w]ould exchange [illegible] [ha]d foremen on [illegible] we would not [illegible] [th]ey would not [illegible] into that plant.

"We would not have it. They had appealed three times to the Governor, saying that we were violent people, we were organised criminals, we were wrecking their lives, and the Governor would not do anything. They wanted the State militia. And he wouldn't do anything.

funny

"Their sheriff came back and told them they could come out, he would escort them out. Again they refused. They claimed they were being held hostage in there. That we were going to murder all of them. Well we thought it was kind of funny, but we thought we had won the day. I mean we were foolish enough to think that the first time we had won anything, that we won the world.

"Of course, we didn't realise that it was only a very small battle. So we all felt very dominant, very militant, very UAW. We got out ball bats, we got our clubs, we marched the lot. We didn't do a damn thing really, but we thought we were great. And we decided we'd really take care of things.

"We piled stuff up in front of the gate. So they started shooting, back and forth, and they threw rocks, and they shot ball bearings, and beebees, and we just stayed back, we thought this was pretty much of a game, it was kind of funny at first.

"And then Thursday night — this was on a Wednesday night, and all day Thursday this went on, and Thursday night there was a lot of flak about it, but nothing really serious.

"By Friday they brought a helicopter in and dropped supplies to these people, and they kept them in there, they acted as if they couldn't possibly get out.

"Friday night quite late there was about 7 people on our picket line, this big mass of muscle we had, there was about 7 people there and they were up at the other end of the lot, about 3 in the morning they saw someone on the gate, and the thought the guy might be up to something.

clubs

"They went down there. The guard unlocked the gate, turned firehoses on our people and about 35 guys came out of that plant with plexiglass shields, and clubs, they fell on these people and they almost beat our people to death.

"One man suffered a heart attack, one was beaten so badly he couldn't get up, one of our girls was pretty badly injured, and 5 cars came in the plant, 3 went out, and they locked the gate again.

Those men had come over the back fence during the night, we felt all along they were probably professional strike-breakers. They came with the express purpose of busting our heads. We couldn't get them arrested. We couldn't get an ambulance to come out.

We finally got the people to the hospital. On Saturday they brought the helicopter in again. They shot one of our pickets' husbands who was working on the railroad adjacent to the plant. He was shot in the hand from the plant.

"Again we called the police and they came out and the company refused to send a man out. They said they needed a warrant. No one was arrested. They shot all day Saturday at us. We could sit in a bus and the shots screamed off the bus.

"They hit the trucks where we were parked. You have to understand, we were in an open lot, we had no building. We just happened to lease an empty field across from the plant. The only protection we had was a very big school bus, which was finally donated because we don't have any money to get one.

"We stayed out there, we did our shifts anyway, 8 hours instead of 4 and we damn well dared them to do very much about it. We still thought we were going to hold the fort. We stayed out there all of Saturday.

point-blank

"Saturday night they shot flares up in the air, they shot at us Saturday night and Sunday we came up there, and they brought in a helicopter again. We ran down and tried to get a picture of the helicopter and the man stood in the door and fired point blank at us with a shot gun.

"I was armed with a 117 camera, which doesn't fire too well. I'll tell you I didn't worry too much about the picture, I just frankly ran like hell. I've never been so scared in my life. About 3 of our girls were on the railroad and they were fired at by the shotgun.

"We had 5 people with backshot in their hair, and in their head. The foreman got on the ground, protected the helicopter dropping supplies. They fired upon people who were on the railroad and on the back road and very frankly some of our people were supposed to have fired back, I was not up there, I could not say.

"That was entirely behind the plant. I do know that we did see the man from the plant with the gun. By that night the flares were in full force. They would shoot regular like Vietnam flares up in the air, light up the entire area like a battlefield, and shoot at us when we ran.

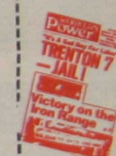
"It wasn't a very pleasant thing because most of us I don't think were quite ready for combat. We were just not the type. I realise women may be drafted, but I think I'm too old, and it certainly wasn't my cup of tea. But I did stay until 12.30 in the morning, and at that time most of us went home.

"We had heavy semi trucks parked in Vee's — this is a truck terminal lot — and the men took us back in those trucks.

ABOVE: Hired gunmen fire on pickets at the Stearns Coal Mine in Kentucky, U.S.A. Hired gunmen and the murder of pickets are now a regular feature on American picket lines.

RIGHT: Carol Frye, an Essex striker, reads to her children. Carol was shot on the picket line and is now paralysed.

Keep up with U.S. workers' struggles



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Revolutionary News from America

THE HISTORIC SELLOUT

THE surprising aspect of the recent manoeuvrings in the Italian parliament was the role played by the Italian Communist Party (PCI)

Kevin Bain reviews Italy – Information and Ideas on the Italian Communist Party published by Italian members of the Communist Party of Australia.

Since opportunism is still the name of the parliamentary game, the PCI's "historic compromise" strategy was jettisoned as it threatened to form a left coalition government.

The ideas outlined in this pamphlet help to explain the manoeuvres of the Italian CP.

The PCI version of Eurocommunism entails the forming of an "historic bloc" of the Christian Democratic, Socialist and Communist parties. These parties would form a government on a limited program of political, social and economic "renewal", not socialism: the "historic compromise".

The PCI seeks a government of national unity, a traditional right-wing ploy to "bail out" the bourgeoisie. Why is this?

General Secretary Berlinguer's article shows that the lesson the PCI has drawn from the Chile disaster is to retreat from socialism. The yearning to realign the country with the "anti-fascist Constitution" of 1947 and to "ensure that all the State bodies are increasingly permeated by a sense of conscious loyalty to the constitution and close ties to the working people", smacks of nostalgic romanticism.

It begs the question of what makes the Italian constitution qualitatively different (and socialist?) compared to the constitutions of other capitalist countries.

But fascination with the constitution is only one facet of the PCI's nationalism.

S. Serge, Central Committee member, says in the Australian CP's "Eurocommunism" pamphlet that "We must be able to indicate a positive prospect to all of the progressive forces of national society: the working class, the entrepreneurs, the small and medium size businessmen and big business . . . The problem that we have faced and are facing is the task of preventing a serious economic crisis from destroying the democratic system."

protecting

Apparently, defending democracy also means protecting capitalism!

In an article headed "Why the Relationship with the State is Changing", L. Gruppi argues the need for agreement and co-operation between the constitutional parties, and for programmatic accords between the 'democratic forces'. This leads to the "progressive transformation of the state" from within.

In the never-never land these people inhabit, socialist policies are not necessary because the crisis can be resolved within a capitalist framework, and to the benefit of all, even the big capitalists!

Berlinguer writes: ". . . none of our critics has succeeded in pointing to another valid prospect, capable of getting Italy out of the crisis . . ., of finding a solution to the immense economic, and social and civil problems now open, of guaranteeing the democratic future of our Republic."

One of Berlinguer's "problems" is the "high cost of labour"!

So the PCI in fact plans to "save democracy" by cutting wages. This is indeed an historic compromise.

Right: Italy's metal workers take to the streets last year to defend their pay.
Below: Rome construction workers staged a noisy demonstration with drums after building contractors locked them out following pay disputes last December.

Kerry's one-day wonders

HAS Kerry Packer's cricket circus finally turned the corner?

Packer's organizers have been almost rubbing their eyes in disbelief at some of the crowds they've been drawing recently. Twenty-four thousand in Melbourne, 19,000 in Sydney, 10,000 in Perth.

It's a far cry from the pitiful attendances Packer was getting early on. And the TV coverage is picking up as well.

When World Series Cricket started, it was overloaded with gimmicks . . . part of Packer's master-plan to "market" the game.

But despite all this Packer is still in desperate trouble. For a start, all his good crowds have been at one-day games. The crowds at five-day "Supertests" have been consistently lousy.

solution

So the solution – from a capitalist profit-and-loss point of view – is to play more one-day games and phase out the Supertests.

The only trouble is, the players get a lot less enjoyment out of one-day cricket. Fast bowlers don't particularly like bowling with no slips and getting seven runs hit off every over. Slow bowlers scarcely get a look in. And batsmen don't get a chance to build a good sound innings.

Obviously capitalists don't usually worry about the happiness of their employees. But Packer's problem is that he has to attract new players away from official cricket . . . especially to bolster his Australian side.

After all, Australian crowds aren't going to keep coming to games which only prove what they already know . . . that the West Indies and the Rest of the World can thrash the hide off Packer's current Australian team.

And he's already promoted all his up-and-comers – like Martin Kent and Rob Langer – into the Australian team. He has no new batsmen left to draw on . . . in fact, his Australian 2nd XI has been reduced to using Kerry O'Keeffe as an opener and retired wicket-keeper Denis Yagmich as a fill-in.

Packer is facing two other crises. First, the official Australian tour of the West Indies. If Australia beats the West Indians . . . who make up the strongest team in Packer's circus . . . then his claim to having the best players in the world will be squashed overnight.

And even if he survives that hurdle, he'll still be competing against the traditional England versus Australia battle for the Ashes next summer.

So Packer's whole venture looks a bit sick. But even if it collapses, that won't mean the end of commercial exploitation of big cricket.

Because while Packer has taken on the Cricket Establishment head-on, other big companies have been buying their way in more unobtrusively.

Gillette has sponsored one day competitions in England and Australia, and AMATIL – the food and tobacco multinational – has taken out a $1.2 million sponsorship of Australian cricket.

With the pitifully low level of Government funding for sport in Australia generally, this process is inevitable. Packer's venture is only speeding it up.

Frankly, we won't be at all sorry if Packer's little enterprise falls flat on its face in the next year or two. His whole aim is to turn the non-profit structure of international cricket into his own personal money-spinning fiefdom.

The only tragedy is that if Packer falls, he'll probably drag down a lot of good cricketers with him.

Rod Marsh brings off a fine catch to dismiss Viv Richards off Denis Lillee's bowling . . . Meanwhile, Kerry tries to pick next years winners.

by ALEC KAHN

FROM THE SHELF

The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists

I MUST confess that I have never read Marx. The very sight of a book by Lenin or Trotsky sends me running to the shelter of Steinbeck or Tolkien.

I guess that there are lots of people like me. Probably like me they also find it easier to read these theories in a fictional way. Unfortunately socialist fiction is rather difficult to come by.

'The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists' has been around since the first world war, but has lost none of its impact and importance. It covers twelve months in the building trade at the turn of the century — at a time when craftsmanship was being pushed aside for speed and profits.

The central character, Frank Owen, is modelled on the author, Robert Tressell. He is a socialist in a work gang whose members are predominantly anti-socialist.

Through Owen's eyes we see the town of Mugsborough, the capitalists who thrive on the poverty of their workers and the work of the Church in keeping 'the masses' in their place.

This aspect of the book is brilliant but there is so much more in it. It explains, through Owen, why the system is rotten. He has to explain and support his beliefs to his workmates who are doubtful and often even hostile to his views.

The issues range from arguing about the abolition of tariffs to explaining socialism and its benefits. In fact, most of the issues that modern day socialists still have to argue for in their own work places. Realistically, not all the workers are convinced.

But the readers sees Owen's views proven time and time again in the grimy happenings of the grimy town.

Jack Linden had worked for the building firm Rushton's, on and off for many years. He was growing old and Hunter (or Misery, as the workers called him behind his back of course) wanted to hire a younger, cheaper man. So Old Jack is sacked for smoking while working.

He then has to rely on his daughter's meagre income from her sewing. They have to sell off their possessions, and apply for assistance because they are e starving.

Finally, Jack and his wife are sent off to workhouse. Mary, the daughter is given three shillings a week to support herself and her children, plus an eviction notice. Used up by the system, and then thrown away when they were no longer profitable.

Another worker, Philpot is killed because Rushton's is too miserly to buy a decent rope, and because the other workers don't want to incur Misery's wrath and the sack by wasting time to get a rope that isn't frayed.

Tressell says in his preface " 'The Philanthropists' is not a treatise or essay but a novel." But, it is a novel written by someone who has experienced everything that he has written.

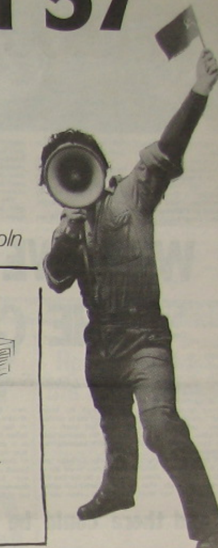
When you read the novel with its gruesome reality, you realise the horror of being able to say that Robert Tressell wrote 'The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists' from his own life.

Anne Lawson

Socialism ~ in 57 Varieties?

"Is it not almost heart-breaking to see the multitude of little cliques, each at the throat of the other? One wonders where the hell the working class are getting to."

by Tom O'Lincoln



THIS sad remark appeared in a Sydney socialist newspaper in 1918.

It would probably describe the feelings of many people today, who see the bewildering array of splinter groups on the left.

Why can't we all get together, since we're all working for the same thing?

But good will and broad socialist sentiment have never proved enough to unite people.

The Russian revolution of 1917 excited the enthusiasm of militant workers everywhere, and led to the formation of Communist parties. In Australia, it brought together a number of different currents, who voted to unite in the Communist Party of Australia.

Within weeks they had split apart again. Despite unceasing pressure from the Communist International, it took two years to form a united Communist Party in Australia.

The people involved were all for socialism, but they had different ideas of how to get there. Should they work inside the ALP, or stay outside? Once inside, should they co-operate with the right wing, or wage unrelenting war on them?

trivia

These were major issues, but it often seems to observers that left groups are divided over trivia. The fact is that what seem to be trivial points can conceal larger issues.

Take one of the most famous splits in socialist history. In 1903, the Russian socialists were divided between Lenin's Bolsheviks and the opposition Mensheviks over a single clause in the party rules.

Many observers were shocked that a split could occur over such a point. A factory worker wrote to Lenin: "is our party doomed to perpetual splits over such trifles?"

But what lay behind the "trifle" was the question of what kind of party was needed. The Bolsheviks went on to build a revolutionary party, and seize power. The Mensheviks created a reform party which finished by opposing the workers' revolution.

In Australia today some of the divisions are, alas, equally justified. For example there are the Silly Season sects, who fill their papers with page-long diatribes written in incomprehensible jargon.

Now for the IS a fundamental part of building a socialist party is to build a newspaper which rank and file workers can actually make use of in their struggles. To form a united organisation with these writers of gibberish would not advance us in that task at all.

tyranny

Nor is it necessarily true that we are "all working for the same thing." There are some 'socialists' who defend the monstrous tyranny in the Soviet Union and would like to create the same thing here. The I.S. stands for a path to socialism that passes through worker's democracy and workers' control. Have we really so much in common with them?

Communist Party leader John Halfpenny has said in an interview that his vision of socialism is a kind of mixed economy. However strong our desire for unity, we are forced to disagree with him strongly. We stand for wiping out the capitalist class, not co-operating with it.

Nevertheless, it is true that there are many serious people on the left who believe in the same things we do: a revolutionary course, workers' democracy, international socialism. They, like we, are for building a socialist party based on rank and file workers.

And here we come to the final problem. How is that party to be built?

Even taken all together, the left is small and isolated. How can we break out of that isolation, and win all the militant workers to our ranks?

It is a difficult task. Opinions differ greatly even among people of good will. And there is only one way to find out who is right: the acid test of political practice.

tested

Each line must be tested. And unfortunately that means separate organisations. If we were all in one group, we would spend all our time arguing over strategy, rather than trying it out.

There is no reason, of course, why all the left wing groups can't co-operate in a lot of cases. And we do. The movement against the Vietnam War, the struggle over Medibank, the fight against uranium mining – in all these situations everybody on the left joined in the strikes and mass demonstrations.

refuse

Finally, a word to our critics. You are right to worry about the fragmentation of the Left. But many of you refuse to join any group because of it.

Doesn't that make you each a little political fragment of one? And isn't that much worse?

Perhaps the first step towards Left unity might be for you to come out of your grand isolation (or perhaps just self-imposed isolation), and join us.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

I USED to work at Glenroy Library in Melbourne's working-class northern suburbs. About a year ago I was talking with five local kids out in the foyer of the library when a young rookie cop walked up.

assumption

You could tell he was looking for trouble by the sarcastic, hectoring tone of his voice. He asked the kids what they thought they were doing at a library: (assumption: illiterate louts like you would only come to a library to cause trouble).

As a matter of fact, four out of the five were high school seniors who had come to the library to study and had stepped out to the foyer for a smoke and a chat.

Next, the cop asked each of us our names and addresses and whether we had ever been in trouble with the police. I suppose I could have been flattered that the cop questioned me along with the others. After all I was 29 at the time and he obviously mistook me for 17.

But I suspect it was probably a reflection of his intelligence. They have a special intelligence test for posting cops out that end of town. If they can't spell Broadmeadows then they post them to Glenroy.

I put on my best "educated accent" and told the cop I worked there and that he had no right to question any of us. (Actually he did, and my boss told me off for chewing him out later, but that's another story). The copper got defensive and told me that the reports he took were just sent to Broady police station and not used for anything.

This was bullshit. Two of the boys had been in trouble with the police before for illegal use – which means joy-riding.

Joyriding is endemic in the area because there are no recreational facilities and nothing for kids to do. At least one of the two guys had been scrupulously law abiding since he had been put on probation.

But that report which would link him with another kid on probation rendered both liable for a charge of "consorting" and having their probation cancelled.

"Don't worry," said the loudmouthed young cop, "we just send the details up to our headquarters in Broady and they get filed away somewhere."

Last month, police in Melbourne shot dead an unarmed man named Graham Normoyle. One of the reasons they gave for shooting first and asking questions later was that "Normoyle had been known to police for almost 25 years." Graham Normoyle was 36 years old at the time he was shot.

That means that he was 11 years old when they first put him on file!

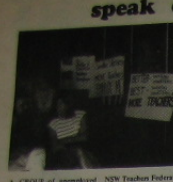
Criminals aren't born – they are made.

If a kid starts appearing in police files for children's offences, if instead of being encouraged to go straight he is hassled through his teens by over eager cops, then by the time he grows up he probably will be a "criminal".

Then the cops can feel quite justified in shooting him.

April 1975

Unemployed teachers speak out



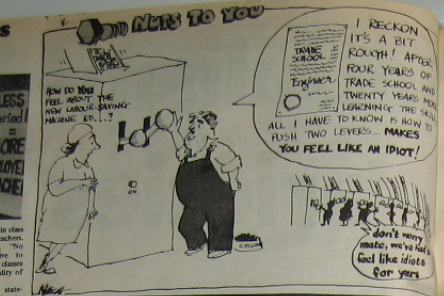
A GROUP of unemployed teachers in NSW are determined to make themselves heard.

On Wednesday February 8th, the Unemployed Teachers Co-ordinating Committee took their business to a meeting of the Central Coast Branch of the NSW Teachers Federation, in Gosford.

They are taking their message to employed teachers, who have the power to shift the NSW Education Department in its stand on unemployed teachers.

The Department will not support a reduction in class sizes to give jobs to teachers. Reason, they say, "No research is conclusive to show that smaller classes result in a higher quality of education."

This nonsensical statement is false according to recent Canadian research.



WHY WE USED THE COURTS

WAS it a valid tactic for Brian Rix and the Builders Labourers for Democratic Control to use the courts to force an election in the BLF?

by David Shaw, BLF

That's the question a lot of BLF members are going to be asking Gallagher's officials have already started throwing the term "bosses' stooge" around (see article below) – and as the election approaches, it's a safe bet we'll hear accusation after accusation tossed around.

Of course, for Gallagher's men to go squealing about courts is a bit of choice hypocrisy. Especially when you consider the way they connived with the bosses themselves – not to mention the cops and courts – in smashing the democratically elected NSW leadership four years ago.

But what Gallagher and his henchmen would like to gloss over is the fact that this was not a court case against them. It was a court case to force them to hold an election which was due – to face a democratic vote before the rank-and-file – in a situation where they have wiped out every vestige of democracy in the NSW branch and were well on the way to destroying the democratic running of the rest of the union.

Consider the facts. There has not been an election in the NSW BLF for four years.

Gallagher's men didn't even hold branch meetings for two years. Now they hold them in remote places, or with very little publicity.

That way, few members can attend and Gallagher's men can stack them.

And then Gallagher starts arbitrarily disqualifying all his opponents even in Federal Council elections, to prevent a vote taking place.

When you're faced with that sort of contempt rule within the union, then it does become valid to use the courts for the limited purpose of forcing proper elections to take place when they're scheduled.

Even so we have to recognise that there are dangers involved and we use them up carefully. For example, the court was quick to seize on the case as an opportunity to institute a court controlled ballot in the union, instead of the union independently controlling its elections like in the past.

But then, Gallagher's turned independent control of our elections into a pretty meaningless thing anyway when he's the only candidate allowed to run.

And on past performance, his henchmen would probably new the ballot anyhow.

The court case to force proper elections is in fact only a very small part of the struggle in the BLF. While one decision may have gone our way, Gallagher will still control the union no matter who wins the coming election.

And it's a safe bet that, as the challenge to Gallagher from the rank-and-file grows, the ruling class and the courts will start to swing in behind him more solidly.

That's why the real strength of the rank-and-file movement lies with all our activities outside the court.

meeting

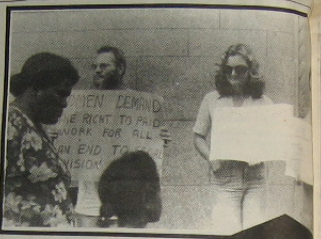
For instance, in Sydney Builders Labourers for Democratic Control meets weekly at a city hotel. After each meeting, we put out a leaflet to discuss issues in builders' labourers minds at the time – eg. wages, conditions, safety, and the position in the BLF itself.

On top of this, we hold job meetings and our own mass meetings after work in the Trades Hall.

At our next mass meeting in the Trades Hall on March 13, we will be electing our candidate for the coming NSW branch elections.

Builders Labourers for Democratic Control also holds social functions like barbeques and dances, for builders labourers and their families.

We are financed by collections and fund raising activities, like raffles, so we know our own membership tickets.



PROTESTORS picket Arbitration Court building in Brisbane during Justice Marshall's case against sacking by Rockhampton Council.

The Council sacked Janine when she made the Municipal Employees Association win substantial changes in the Town Clerk's Office. Awarding to women the right to keep their jobs after marriage.

The picketers are demanding job opportunities for all women, regardless of marital status.

...and there could be another election too

THE Gallagher leadership may be facing the dilemma of another election soon.

Jocka Burns, a Melbourne member of the BLF rank-and-file group, has just had his appeal heard in the Arbitration Court in Melbourne against his disqualification from standing for a trustee position.

Last year, when Jocka stood against Norm Gallagher for a Federal Council position, he was nominated by Bill Barras, an honorary member of the union. The returning officer accepted the nomination.

Yet when Bill Barras nominated Jocka a few months later for one of the four union trustee positions, the new returning officer in Matterson suddenly discovered that Barras had got his honorary membership "Falsely". Therefore, Jocka's nomination was ineligible.

This bureaucratic game – playing was especially laughable because it was the Gallagher leadership which "falsely" granted Barras his honorary membership in the first place.

At the court hearing, Gallagher officials tried to needle Jocka with accusations that he was a "bosses' stooge".

That's awfully cute coming from the men who collaborated directly with the Master Builders Association to smash rank-and-file control in the NSW BLF.

One official also took the trouble to photograph Jocka at the court. Jocka joked, *"I know I'm photogenic"* – but he expects he might see his picture in some sort of smear pamphlet fairly soon.

Justice Sweeney has reserved his judgement – but Jocka's assessment is *"I think we've got a good chance."*

Jocka Burns

the WORK TOLL

RETIREMENT is something that comes to all of us sometime.

For those who have rendered services to the bosses, like Sir John Kerr, there are large pensions and cushy retiring jobs.

But for most us the rewards for a life time of toil is a meagre pension and possibly a few bob from some superannuation scheme.

What's more it can be a health hazard as Rudolph (Rudy) Konitz found out last July.

Rudy was a VBU shop steward and fork lift driver at CMH Bradmills plant, South Australia. He suffered a heart attack while driving his fork lift, fell off and died at work from head injuries.

A short time before Rudy had been offered early retirement in line with CMH's policies. He refused because he thought he couldn't live on it.

Had them been a decent retirement plan Rudy may have still been with us.

IN Victoria there isn't any few protecting workers from high noise levels.

Last year only 23 factories were inspected by Victorian Health Department. They found 14 factories had excessive noise levels and another 5 were on the border line.

When the Labor opposition asked for the results and list of companies found they were told it was none of their business. Workers are denied access to the results which only government officials and employers know.

NOISE is dangerous. According to the Workers Health Centre workers exposed to noise exceeding 75 dba should have regular hearing tests.

If 80 dBA is taken as the safe level for an 8 hour day. For every 3 dBA increase you should halve the time spent in the noise.

But government officials and employers aren't enforcing any safe standards.

Mr. A.C. Evans of the Metal Trades Industry Association has said that a limit of 85 dBA "would impose enormous cost pressures and would mean the cessation of much manufacture by known measures."

Mr. Evans is prepared to see us go dead while he sits in his luxury air conditioned office insulated from the shop floor racket.

AT Reynolds China in Benalla (Victoria) last June the AMWU organiser found men working near to a riveting machine producing 105 dBA.

Safe exposure at that level is 110 seconds.

Union officials and staff from the Footscray Trade Union Clinic went to Benalla to test the workers hearing.

Of the 80 workers 68 turned up for testing on the Sunday. This resulted in 22 compensation claims for industrial deafness.

Now the AMWU in Victoria have bought their own audiometer for testing their members hearing and are carrying tests out each Sunday.

A CLEANER at a Sydney High School had a bad fall at work two years ago.

She then went through an even worse time with the health system.

The local hospital wouldn't admit her following the accident, although she had lost consciousness.

Six months later she was to be back on CP for continuing headaches. She put her on valium. Then suddenly turn around when he heard that it might be a compo case.

She hasn't received any compo.

Two years after the fall, more than two years after the Workers Health Centre in Lidcombe, She is still suffering from the wages disease. At the six monthly branch meeting in January, she mentioned calling for an immediate campaign on wages was only narrowly lost.

The motion passed and supported by the officials called for an approach to be made to the TLC and the ACTU for an immediate national wage campaign.

At last a wage claim

AWU members in SA are holding lunchtime meetings to drew up logs of claims.

State Sec. Alan Begg has eventually responded to a motion passed at last year's AGM calling for a campaign for a $30 wage increase.

But the main claim outlined in Begg's letter to union reps is for an improved superannuation scheme similar to the one operating in NSW.

There are a lot of strong feelings over the wages issue. At the six monthly branch meeting in January, one amendement calling for an immediate campaign on wages was only narrowly lost.

One bit of good news. They mended the leak in the school roof which caused her accident, after the headmistress had a fall in the same place!

That may be OK for officials on fat salaries, but as a laborer I take home $225 a fortnight.

But there has been a breakthrough. Carlton & Tree Gully have won the $8.10 plus$40 wage claim. This means an increase of $8.10 for runners and $4 for drivers. The victory came after a one day strike.

by Mike Grewcock, AWU

VICTORIAN Teachers' Association members will be striking on the day for 24 hours against spectrum.

The Education Department is introducing spectrum despite a survey which in the last year showing that it will pay cost of all teachers' work opposition.

Improving The Battler

I WAS asked to write an article on the Italian crisis for the last Battler.

Until I was faced with the problem of explaining what is happening in Italy in about 400 words, I hadn't thought very much about the International page.

by John Wollin Melbourne

A news item about the latest parliamentary crisis had to talk mainly about problems of government in Italy and how the capitalists are reacting to it. So, it was "top heavy", like most Battler international items.

There were no details of the wave of strikes and demonstrations which started the crisis. There were no details of how people live in Italy.

In local papers, the Battler always puts emphasis on the people whose actions make the news happen – ordinary rank-and-file workers. This rarely happens on the international page.

Let's face it, some Battler overseas news looks like a column from Newsweek magazine – but a few weeks old.

Some Battler readers follow international affairs closely and may have independent sources of information. Battler articles are often superficial and can't possibly convince these readers that the IS has the correct interpretation of foreign events.

Other readers aren't experts about what's happening in other countries. The Battler can't offer them anything unless it explains the social and political causes behind the news events.

So, let's have international articles which are longer and more descriptive, more educational about what it's like to be a worker in other countries. For example, the British firemen's strike could take a whole page instead of 100 words.

And let's raise the standard of our knowledge of the international situation. Maybe Battler international discussion groups could be formed. International files and background articles should be kept, so that a news story can be put in proper context.

Perhaps a team of writers could prepare international news together, and more time be put into preparation.

Improving the International page may not be easy – all Battler readers should be encouraged to participate.

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers control over the whole of society based on workers control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalists state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the working class. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the rank and file unions are unwilling. We work to bring these into the rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a fighting rank and file caucus in the struggles workers are engaging today. We want to build a grassroots industrial and social movement that will help strengthen the self confidence, organisation and social consciousness of the working class.

It does the sort of work you want to do.

JOIN US!

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

No Court Ballots

by Paul Rowlands Melbourne

"WE'RE going to get you Gallagher."

"On Monday 23rd January, the Federal Court of Australia rule that the election of Norm Gallagher as Federal Secretary of the Builders Labourers Federation was void."

Are "BLF" of the 1980s now to be identified with the Federal Court? You might think so after a phone at the first few lines of an unsigned article on the coming BLF elections in the last Battler (No. 44).

The Marxist current in the BLF, which Gallagher himself represents, has always accused us of being ruling class agents. This sort of carelessness can only be used against us.

And the election isn't any ordinary union election. As The Battler printed out, it has only come about because the last one was declared void by the Federal Court – we oppose state interference in our unions.

Secondly, the coming election will be run by the Commonwealth Electoral Office, a point which The Battler saw fit to ignore – we oppose court controlled ballots.

Gallagher desires to get chucked out, and a new election is essential, but we must not reserve our attacks for him.

The courts are not neutral. Especially in this case we must make perfectly clear our attitude to the state.

Editor's reply: Due to a typo our error, we omitted the author's name from the article – David Shaw, a member of the NSW BLF and Builders Labourers for Democratic Control. We apologise to readers for this slip-up. For a further article on this subject, see page 10. The Battler supports the position taken in both articles.

NEW SYDNEY OFFICE

THE Sydney IS has a new headquarters at 111 Enmore Rd, Newtown, just around the corner from the old office in King St.

It is only 400 yards from Newtown Station and at least 3 bus routes go past the door. We have still got the same phone – 513 665.

We have to do a bit of work to clean the new place up so if you can get cheap paint, carpet and so on, let us know.

Also we need some more furniture for the residential section of the building, including wardrobes and beds. The Prisoners Action Group in NSW are seeking mattresses for their new centre. Drop any in to us and we will pass them on.

International Socialists

I.S. Dinners

EVERY year, IS branches hold a series of fund raising dinners.

Each one usually has a theme. Last year's feasts included Italian, Chinese, German and vegetarian dinners.

IS Members and their friends cook plenty of food, so that for about $5.00 you get an excellent three course meal and wine.

All friends of IS are invited to come along and eat the good tucker and quaff the wine. So make your reservations now for the first two dinners of 1978.

MELBOURNE: Sat 18 Feb.

Lebanese Dinner at 24 Albert St Moonee Ponds. $4.50 includes a great meal written especially adhered to from the IS cellars. Phone 690 2650 for reservations.

ADELAIDE: Sat 4 March.

A "Better late than Oktoberfest Bavaria Night". A great Scottish feast, including haggis and malt whisky. More details in next Battler.

WOMEN'S DAY

A RALLY is being organized by the International Women's Day Committee in Brisbane for Saturday 11 March.

A march will be proposed on the day. Street theatre, singing and the wearing of suffragette fashions are activities included in the planned program.

Fighting Fund

This week The Battler fighting fund received money from:

CG	$15.00
RM	$8.50
MK	$7.00
Southern Summer Camp	$86.14
TOTAL	$116.64
Thanks to Farmers and Graziers for Battler sales	$2.98

BATTLER RAFFLE

We're glad to announce, better late than never, the winners of The Battler Raffle held last year.

First prize of a colour television went to N. (Sydney). Second prize J. Bray (Melbourne). Third prize to K. Swalling. (Adelaide).

What's On

Deadline for next edition: Wed 22 Feb

Melbourne Sat 18 Feb. Final IS fund raising dinner for 1978. A Lebanese feast at 24 Albert St Moonee Ponds. $4.50 includes food and wine. Reservations at 690 2650. Starts 8 pm.

Melbourne Wed 22 Feb. North Branch meeting at Moonee Ponds Hotel, 7.30 pm.

Melbourne Wed 22 Feb. South Branch meeting at Nunting Hill Hotel, 7.30 pm.

Melbourne Sun 26 Feb. For all you dack Brashers of the left this first annual "ex rally" hold a speed rally. Will take place in the Dandenongs. Bar-b-que afterwards at the Kangaroo Ground Hotel. Bring your own tucker. Brunswick at 10.30 am.

Sydney Every Monday night. Meeting for Democratic Rights. 7.30 pm. Trade Union Education Hotel, George St.

Adelaide Sat 18 Feb. Annual General Meeting of the Adelaide IS. Discussion on Activities for the coming year and elections for organisers, Treasurer, editor, committee.

Adelaide Tues 21 Feb. Public meeting on Women's Liberation Movement. Speakers will address the meeting for the campaign against the Bill to amend the Crimes Act. 8.00 pm at 12 Warehouse Street, Thebarton.

Adelaide Sat 25 Feb. Annual Meeting of the Adelaide IS. Discussion on Activities for the coming year and elections for organisers, Treasurer, editor, committee.

Adelaide Tues 28 Feb. Public meeting on Women's Liberation Movement. Speakers will address the meeting for the campaign against the Bill to amend the Crimes Act. 8.00 pm at 12 Warehouse Street, Thebarton.

Adelaide Sat 4 Mar. "The Soldier took their Machines". I.S. Drama night. Workers Theatre presentation. Food and booze for only 4 cents. $5. Bring your own food and booze for only 4 cents. $5. Bring your own food and booze for only 4 cents. $5. Bring your own

VICTORY

How four of us beat the sack

by Jeff Wallmann

FOUR victimized workers on the Cleland National Park (SA) Unemployment Relief Scheme have won back their jobs.

Here's how it was done....

On Tuesday, February 7 we were given notice at 1 o'clock by the ranger on the advice of the head ganger, Phil Hollow. We were told our work hadn't been up to scratch and that the money had run out.

When we took the jobs we were promised work until at least the middle of March. We had all signed a form agreeing to join the Australian Workers Union.

When we got to the job we found it was hopelessly disorganised. No-one was in the union and Phil Hollow was using S.U.R.S. labour for private work. He also had another job as a milkie while working on the Unemployment Relief Scheme.

knew

He knew that I had rang up the union the week before. Three out of the four he sacked were the most vocal supporters of unionism.

When we heard the news we were furious. There was no way we were going to accept the sack. We immediately stopped work and then contacted the union to start organising the fight.

We refused to accept our pay. The four of us and another Cleland worker met with Keith Plunkett and John Lewis from the AWU the next day.

Then the four of us plus three workmates started compiling a report to give to Deputy Premier, Des Corcoran, on Thursday.

The union promised they would send someone out to the site immediately to sign everyone up and gave us full use of facilities.

Unfortunately an organiser didn't get out there till Friday. During that time we were constantly in contact with our workmates whose morale was dropping because no organiser had shown ... through no lack of effort by us.

John Lewis saw Corcoran and gave him our report. By 3 pm Friday, we were re-instated.

Now we're meeting to discuss democracy on the job. We feel that if we had a say in how it was run, the scheme would show much better results.

(L to R) Jeff Wallmann, Rick Lower and Rick Lee work on their report to Deputy Premier Corcoran on their sacking.

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Malcolm gets a coat of paint

WHEN does a railway station need a new coat of paint?

Answer: Only when a posse of prime ministers is going to alight there en route for their luxury limousines.

Members of the National Union of Railwaymen have been pressing for twelve months for repairs and maintenance work at Bowral and neighbouring stations.

Nothing happened till Malcolm Fraser decided to take visiting Commonwealth prime ministers to a health farm near Bowral.

Then orders were given to paint the outside of Bowral Railway Station. As the prime ministers were not to go inside, that would be left untouched.

The NUR didn't accept this whitewash job.

They have given the Public Transport Commission time to set about arranging an increase of maintenance staff, including painters and carpenters or industrial action will be taken against Fraser's train.

Meanwhile in Sydney, N.U.R. members at Ashfield station had a two hour stop work meeting on Friday to discuss industrial action.

Ashfield is one of the worst stations in the metropolitan area, and is in desperate need of repairs.

Ramshackle roof and walkway at Ashfield station

Ron Risk, station master at Ashfield and State President of the N.U.R. told the Battler about the workers' grievances. They can be briefly summed up as: *"The station's falling to pieces since ..."*

The roof leaks on platforms three and four so if you want to use the ... loo you need an umbrella and a raincoat. The staff walkway across the tracks is in bad need of repair and that's not all.

The windows in the booking office are ... and a grille is missing. Local kids throw cans and rubbish in on workers. The Public Transport Commission promised to fix the windows — *but workers* claim they haven't a ladder long enough to reach them. But they ... claim after they had finally managed to get up there to take the broken windows down!

bad

Ron says that many stations in N.S.W. are in bad repair, especially the ones around Bowral. Officials from the P.T.C. have refused to acknowledge the bad state of the stations and refused to accept a petition signed by station employees in the majority of metropolitan stations.

Another issue is harassment by P.T.C. Traffic Inspectors. These ... officials have been spying on railway employees but ... nothing useful.

Station employees have been threatened and victimized for not wearing caps. While this is optional for train guards it is mandatory for station employees. The N.U.R. has threatened further industrial action if its members are victimized for not wearing caps on the job.

by Martin H...

THREATENED.... SEC workers face contract invasion

LATROBE Valley power workers now face a new threat from the State Electricity Commission.

The SEC is trying to use last year's eleven week power strike as an excuse to bring in contractors.

It is letting out 19 new contracts for work normally done by its own employees.

The SEC says it has no alternative because of the backlog caused by the strike. Why didn't they think of that last year when they dragged it out for eleven weeks?

The SEC's real aim is to cut back further on "day labour" (its own workforce) and shift over to contract labour.

Transformer, a rank-and-file bulletin in the SEC, makes the comment, "Contractors try to do the same jobs with fewer men. This leads to muck-ups like the lovely yellow contract-built lockers at CPM Yallourn ... where the doors fell off before they were a week old. And the SEC is very kind to some contractors ... a lot of them leave with better equipment than they started off with courtesy of the SEC!"

Between 1965 and 1975, the SEC cut its workforce back 16% at the same time almost doubling output and employing more and more contractors.

Now, in an attempt to stop the rot, the Central Gippsland Trades and Labour Council has banned eight of the contracts that have already been let.

SAVED.... six at State Bank

BUILDING workers at Melbourne's State Bank project have won their struggle to save the jobs of six members sacked by Costains.

Costains sacked the six just before the Christmas break. They claimed they wanted to make room for six other longer-serving workers who were finishing up at the Capital Towers project, just up the road at 500 Bourke St.

But State Bank workers weren't going to have Costains playing musical chairs with jobs. They banned overtime and sub-contractors coming on the site.

overtime

According to Vince Raffa, the BWIU steward on the job, the overtime ban was very effective. *"They need to work a lot of overtime on this job. If they don't work overtime, it'll go on forever."*

Now the company has agreed to reinstate the six, and is also keeping on the men transferred from 500 Bourke St.

Vince Raffa commented, *"If we hadn't taken action, the blokes wouldn't have come back. The blokes on this job are pretty militant. I think the company will think twice in future before they try anything."*

Vince also commended the hard work done by BLF organiser Ray Winstanley during the struggle.

Now it looks like the pressure would be off for a while. The company has agreed to no more sackings, and in fact they are now hiring for a new job out at Newport.

Don't rely on the dailies for your industrial news...

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WRECKED.... a young girl's dream

– by a nurse at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney

A YOUNG girl's dream has been smashed.

Jean had wanted to be a nurse since she was a ten years old. When she was accepted to work at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney, she was delighted.

Nursing, Jean soon discovered, is exhausting.

After six months of hard but satisfying work, Jean was so run down that she had to have four days off to recover.

When she returned to work, she was called down to the office of the matron, Ms Margaret Nelson, who demanded an explanation.

Jean did not know that she was meant to provide a medical certificate if the employer wants one. "Neilly" didn't even give her a chance to get one.

The matron told Jean that the hospital didn't want to give her the sack. But would she please resign immediately.

To top it all, matron had already booked Jean's plane fare home, and rung her parents to tell them the story.

Jean burst into tears and signed the resignation. In doing so, she missed out on two weeks' pay, 17½%, and became ineligible for the dole for six weeks.

rights

Jean wasn't in the union (NSWNA) and did not know her rights. Standover tactics work on young inexperienced women.

If Jean had known about the union and how to contact delegates, she could have refused to resign and got the union to help her fight the sack.

Unions have lawyers to help their members in court.

However the best way to fight the sack is to organise support at the workplace.

This happened recently at a hospital in Kurri Kurri (NSW) when nursing staff put a ban on assisting in all non-serious, elective surgery until the chief executive officer was reinstated after being wrongfully sacked.

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

MELBOURNE
March on Saturday 11 March at 10 am. Assemble Bourke St. Mall.

SYDNEY
March on Saturday 11 March at 10 am. Assemble Sydney Town Hall.

BRISBANE
Rally on Saturday March 11 at 10 am. Assemble Roma St. There may be an attempt to march. 11.30.

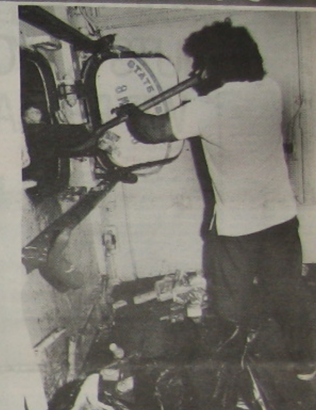
ADELAIDE
March on Saturday 11 March at 10 am. Assemble Rundle St. Mall.

FULL DETAILS OF ALL INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY ACTIVITIES ON PAGE 11.

Australian Women ~ our true history p6-7

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

SAILOR LEFT TO THE SHARKS!



Working conditions for the Asian sailors on the SS Canberra. They get $17 a week

SCOOP

NEWPORT: WE NAME THE SCABS

THE Battler has received a file of information on the sub-contractors being used to build the Newport Power Station.

A "Dial-a-scab" campaign by anti-Newport activists and trade unions managed to force a large number of Newport contractors to pull out.

However, the contractors remaining are either anonymous or blessed with weak union organisation.

Our list is on page two. If you work for one of these companies; if you work with their equipment, if they have any connection with your workplace, place a ban on all dealings with them.

They are scabbing on official trade union bans placed by the Victorian Trades Hall Council.

And they're helping to build the greatest danger to your health in years; a huge, polluting power station we don't want and we don't need.

EXCLUSIVE: On the Spot Report

SYDNEY: Sunday Feb 26

AN INDIAN seaman who fell overboard last week from the P&O cruise ship SS Canberra was left to drown in the Tasman Sea.

The Battler has obtained full details of the incident despite the silence of P&O officials.

A day out of Auckland, New Zealand, a passenger saw someone fall overboard and raised the alarm. The ship turned around while they checked the passengers and crew.

At first the officers thought a passenger was missing. But after an hour and a half of searching they accounted for all the passengers and sailed on.

They then discovered there was in fact an Asian crew member missing but the captain refused to go back and look for him. Under international law they are obliged to search for a minimum of four hours.

To the bosses of P&O the life of an Asian crew member is obviously much cheaper than a few tons of fuel oil that would have been used searching for him. The fine for breaking international law would be minimal anyway.

PAYING

The Asian crew members only get $17 a week, while the passengers are paying up to $830 a week to be on board.

The drowned seaman had planned to leave the ship in 15 days time when the ship got to Hong Kong to return to his wife and family in Goa, India.

Not only does his widow have nothing to thank the company for but the conservative British Seaman's Union (NUS) deserves no credit in the whole affair.

They could have easily forced the captain to turn the ship around.

The union prefers to take money from the bosses (the British Shipping Federation) for not recruiting Goanese to the union.

Once again, racist attitudes in the unions have cost an Asian worker his life. Yet the divide and rule tactics of the bosses hurt the English seamen as well.

Their pay is only a miserable $76 a week. And their union organisation is weaker as a result.

The bosses will sacrifice the lives of any of their hired hands in the interests of profit.

And the only way to stop them is to unite all workers, east and west, in the struggle for a socialist world.

Why should we care? We're not paying $830 a week to worry about the Asian sailors!

". . . the captain refused to go back and look for him."

between the lines

WHAT with Academy awards and Moomba Kings in the news, we thought we'd hand out a few awards of our own.

So, we decided to start off by giving the BTL prize for educational excellence to that crusader for high standards in the schools, Professor Harry Messel.

"Our schools are turning out an ever-increasing number of people which are semi-literate . . ." Obviously.

THE BTL-Tamie Fraser award for doing it in style goes to Doug Anthony. He got held up in Canberra, so those nice people from the RAAF flew him specially to Melbourne in time to tee off with his mates at the exclusive Victoria Golf Course.

THERE has to be a prize somewhere for that oasis of enlightenment in South Africa. So, to the Vorster regime, we present the Hermann Goering award for services to eugenics.

You see, a human head, with body attached, was found several weeks ago in South Africa. It was too far decomposed to determine its race.

Apartheid forbids burying dead whites next to dead blacks. So, a dentist was asked to try to identify the head's teeth, but could only shake his head.

The wife of a missing man was tried next. She could not identify the head either, but only broke into tears.

Now Mr. Johan Verwey, a magistrate, has sent the skull to a State laboratory to determine its race. The last we heard, it was sitting in a refrigerator.

And the BTL-Masters and Johnson award for good timing goes to the founder of the Irish League of Decency. He's in hospital, recovering from a heart attack which occurred after watching a nude scene on Irish TV.

FINALLY, our own award. The unique, coveted Battler Plastic Straw. Not even Norman Gunston has one of these (yet).

But Frank Wilkes has. Victoria's Labor leader is demanding an end to "the rapes, the robberies, the murders, the bashings and the vandalism".

Hear hear. It would be nice if the police didn't murder people like Graeme Nurmoyle, if they didn't smash up pizza parlours, if they didn't bash up people like Noel Collingburn and bust people in order to expand their lucrative dope dealerships.

This seems to have escaped Frank. His way of "stopping" the bashings, murders and vandalism is to demand more money for the police; more than the $118 million they already get!

Suck harder, Frank. At this rate, the Special Branch might just decide there's no point keeping a file on you.

—by Darth Vader

EXCLUSIVE

OUR LIST OF NEWPORT SCABS

BLACK BAN THESE COMPANIES!

AA Arc Welder Co
ANI Austral Steel
ARC Engineering
Allan and Stuart Transport
Alsco Linen
Ascom SA P/L
Anderson RJ & B
Aquila Steel

Baker Technical Services
Barnard Bros.
Barros Group
Benvale Excavations
Bilbuilt Fabrications
Boral Resources
Brick and Pipe Industries
Bride J & R
Brooks Plant Hire
Bucon Constructions
Builders Equipment P/L
Bulldog Hire Services

Clayton Mobile Cranes
Coates Hire Service
Coburg Fence and Gate Co
Cooks Construction

Concut P/L
Crow P/L

Dominion Reinforcements

Eglo Engineering
Elders Building Supplies
Epps D & L

Fabsteam Engineering
Finney, Simon B
Finnform P/L
Footscray Mobile Crane and Transport

GKN Mills
Gatic Aust P/L
Goldhill Plant Hire
Grossway Electrics

Highett Tip Trucks
Howard JB & S
Hume's Limited

Julius Transport

Karryall P/L
Kingston P/L

Leighton Contractors
Leyden Ray

McConnell Dowell Constructions

McPhersons Ltd.
Melbourne Patio Centre
Melbourne Rope Works P/L
Mobile Concrete Pumping
Moodie H & L
Morley, Sheridan
Mountain View Quarries

Ostler, Max Cartage

Paynter, FS
Perdon, W
Pioneer Mixed Concrete
Plessey Communication Systems
Portacom
Pronto Mixed Concrete

Redbar Plant Co.
Rex Paving Co
Rocla Concrete Pipes
Roda Transport

Ryan MS & JA
Rycroft R

Saric S
Schuffenhauer W
Steel Mains
Strauss Plant Hire
Strawn Plant Hire
Sunshine City Council
Terra Excavations
Tubemakers of Aust

Urbuniak, S.

Valance Welding and Wire Services

Vinidex Tubemakers P/L

Weston John M
Wreckair P/L

NUTS TO YOU, BJELKE WE'RE MARCHING!

BY JOHN MINNS

JOH Bjelke-Petersen's ban on political street marches in Queensland will be challenged once again.

We'll be rallying and attempting to march on Saturday March 4.

The campaign began as an attempt to force Petersen to lift the ban. Now it's broadened to also become a movement against the National-Liberal Government's laughably named "Right-to-Work Laws".

The campaign has spread throughout the state during summer, and Civil Liberties Committees have been set up at Cairns, Atherton, Mt Isa, Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Toowoomba, Nambour and several other towns.

Many of the provincial committees plan to march on the fourth in support of the main Brisbane march.

Petersen's action in banning street marches in September last year has not won him an ounce of political advantage.

For the first time since he became Premier in 1968, a strong movement determined to take action has arisen to oppose him.

The real swing against the coalition government in the October state elections was 14.5%.

Even the most conservative Queensland newspapers concede that Petersen's attacks on democratic rights, and the campaign that opposed him, were major factors in the swing.

For the first time, opposition to Petersen has begun to see a way forward.

Petersen's ban is a dead loss for the National Party. It would be a great mistake for the Democratic Rights movement to drop the issue now, or to abandon the militant tactics which have built it so far and put some life and unity into a tired, demoralized movement.

The slogans we'll be marching under on March 4 are:

The Right to March!
No to Uranium Mining!
Smash the "Right-to-Work" Laws!

March with us on March 4.

■

ON Monday March 6, there will be a rally in Melbourne to support the struggle for Democratic Rights in Queensland.

The rally will picket the Queensland Tourist Bureau in the MLC building (cnr Elizabeth and Collins Sts) from 2 pm to 5.30pm.

Below:– Carole Ferrier being arrested for demanding the right to march

FREEWAY FI[...]

INNER city freeways [...] chewing out citi[...] ribbons.

But things are chang[...] Last October the NSW [...]ernment scrapped a [...] million freeway plan, [...] 2,700 homes from [...] Department of Main R[...]

Local residents [...] campaigned for five yea[...] stop the freeway.

One demonstratio[...] 1972 involved the "[...]" of parts of Glebe b[...] painting group [...] including the [...] Leichhardt, Nick Orig[...]

Last week, Nick Orig[...] a veteran of the Austral[...] Left, was in Melbou[...] addressing meetings of th[...] Citizen Against Freewa[...] Group.

In our photo, Nick [...] pointing to houses only [...] feet away from the begin[...]ing of Melbourne's Easter[...] Freeway, recently complet[...] by the Country Roads Bo[...] under police protection.

Carole Ferrier speaks

Carole Ferrier (above right, being arrested) is one of the leading militants in Brisbane's campaign for Democratic Rights. She is also a member of the International Socialists, representing Brisbane on the I.S. National Committee. She will be speaking on the struggle in Brisbane at:–

MONASH UNIVERSITY — Wednesday March 8, Rotunda R1 from 1-00 to 2-15pm
MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY — Monday March 6, Graduate Lounge, Union Building from 2-15 to 3-50pm
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY — Friday March 10, Carslaw Lecture Room 1 at 1-00pm

U.S. MINERS SHAKE CARTER

BLACKOUTS are spreading across the grey cities of America's industrial mid-west as the U.S. Miners' strike enters its third month. At first, the bosses intended to use the strike to smash the union once and for all.

They built up stockpiles of coal, they opened up vast non-union strip mines. But the miners have stopped most of the non-union coal and the stocks are low. The rank and file have held on, despite the opposition of their leaders who were elected just three years ago on a reform ticket.

Now President Carter has threatened to break the strike

Unemployed teachers fight back

by Paul Rowlands

ALREADY a month into the school year, and there are still thousands of teachers out of work in Victoria.

And meanwhile thousands of kids are suffering under temporary time-tables and overcrowded classrooms.

Unemployed teachers are organising to fight this insanity. About two weeks ago, 150 teachers met to form the Unemployed Teachers Union, which will operate out of the Victorian Teachers Union office in Camberwell.

The VTU, along with the other two teacher unions, the VSTA and the TTAV, have provided money and office space to get the UTU off the ground.

At the meeting, an open steering committee was formed. Its immediate job is to organize a rally for unemployed and trainee teachers. This rally will be in the City Mall at 4.30 pm on March 15.

The steering committee will continue to meet every second Tuesday, starting March 7, at the VTU.

succeeded

Through similar activities, last year's U.T.U. succeeded in forcing the Government to employ all trained teachers. But the Liberals learned from last year's experience too.

They're now trying to cut down the intake of teachers into teachers' colleges — so they won't have so many teachers to employ.

This means that the unions of employed teachers must fight for improved conditions . . . so the Education Department is forced to train enough teachers to meet school needs.

If union conditions were met in all Victorian schools, there would now be a shortage of teachers.

Meanwhile it's the kids and unemployed who suffer.

The U.T.U. can be contacted on 828 081. All unemployed teachers should register with the U.T.U.

"ANGELA" was also scared of having her real name used. She told us, "I first realized I might be unemployed back in 1976.

"I started doing my course in 1975 — I was doing it over three years — and I thought I'd get a job. But I started getting the drum from the Uni the next year.

"I'd be teaching History and Migrant English if I got a job. There's a shortage of Migrant English teachers . . . you've got the ludicrous situation where schools have got special Migrant English classrooms but they're not allowed to get Migrant English teachers to teach in them."

"THEO" is one of Victoria's thousands of unemployed teachers.

"Theo" isn't his real name — but he told us, *"Don't put my name in. When I went to apply, I got into an argument with the staffing officer.*

"He was throwing out bait questions. He said, 'We've got enough teachers' and I said it wasn't true, what would he know, he hadn't been into a school.

"You see, I'd taught for about three years earlier on. I'm fluent in Greek, but can only get emergency teaching. Emergency teaching means you're cheap labour — almost a scab."

We asked "Theo" how he felt about being unemployed and capable of teaching migrant kids, when the ratio of migrant teachers to migrant kids is 1 to 89.

disgusting

"It's really disgusting. The Greek parents were brought over as fodder to feed the wheels of industry. They don't want the same for their kids.

"They're interested in what's going on at school but there's no-one to communicate anything to them."

Telecom's $99 million robbery

by a Telecom staff member

A RECORD $99 million profit in just 6 months!

Now Telecom should be able to reduce its charges, provide free phones for pensioners, more public telephones that work, and better conditions for its employees.

It can, but it won't.

We will still have one of the most expensive telephone services in the world. A service that caters exclusively for those who can pay; not for those who need it most — the poor, the sick, the elderly, the unemployed.

The $99 million will be spent largely on buying sophisticated new equipment of questionable need.

What lies behind this scandalous misuse of what should be public funds?

After the PMG was scrapped in 1975, Telecom was set up as a monopolistic public corporation, charged with making a profit.

Much is made of its "corporate image." It spends a fortune on advertising. Particular emphasis is placed on its support role in the (private) telecommunications industry.

For instance, Telecom estimates it will spend about $20,000 million on new equipment alone in the next 20 years.

Most of this will go to a small handful of multinational companies such as ITT, which trades in Australia as Standard Telephones and Cables. (STC).

At the moment, the big splurge is on computerised telephone exchanges. A recent contract went to the Swedish multinational LM Ericsson for $500 million worth.

Telecom is not so extravagant with its own employees however. The new technology will devastate technical trades careers in Telecom and render thousands of staff redundant within 10 years.

Alexander Graham Bell — what have you done to us?

BEHIND FRASER'S SECURITY BINGE

The lies of the press

...and the real terrorism they won't stop

"AUSTRALIA'S innocence has been lost" wrote one journalist.

Another told us that we should all wake up and see how important the security services are.

Meanwhile, Malcolm Fraser has announced that he is beefing up security and that we should all be grateful for ASIO.

The Liberals and the bosses could hardly be happier at the aftermath of the Hilton Hotel bombing in Sydney.

However truth is that the bombing was totally unexpected, and that there is absolutely no evidence that it was even politically motivated.

The police have no idea who did it and no idea why.

Yet the papers have been full of rubbish about "international terrorism".

No-one has claimed responsibility for the bombing, which is what usually happens if it's done by an international terrorist group.

The papers are all pretending that this is the first major bombing outrage in Australia. That too is rubbish.

The truth is that Australia has a long history of terrorist bombings and political violence. The only problem is that it's by the Ustasha, the Yugoslav fascists, and not the left.

There have been more than twenty bomb attacks associated with the Ustasha over the past fifteen years.

In some cases, people lost their legs; in another, a boy lost his hand.

The papers have pretended that the threat to the prime ministers made the bombing "international terrorism".

Yet the Ustasha used to regularly bomb the Yugoslav consulates and embassies and Yugoslav travel agencies. Weren't these "international terrorism"?

Was ASIO strengthened to deal with these? Was the Prime Minister (Holt or Gorton) outraged?

They could hardly be since the Ustasha were, are and have long been supporters of the Liberal Party. Liberal politicians have Ustashi as personal friends and they regularly appear on Ushtasha platforms.

To bring up Ustasha bombings would be very embarrassing for the Liberals. You'd almost think they'd never happened!

And ASIO has, of course, done nothing to wipe out Ustasha terrorism. In fact . . Lionel Murphy found that ASIO had withheld information on the Ustashi.

As a legacy of this tragedy, we will have a strengthened ASIO and bigger special branches, all ignoring the real terrorism and concentrating on the "terror" of trade union action and left-wing demonstrations.

RIGHT:– This is real terrorism. The Housing Commission flat of left-wing croation, Marian Jurevic, wrecked by the Ustasha.

BELOW:– Former NSW Liberal Leader, Willis speaking from an Ustasha platform.

SIR Robert Mark, the former top cop in London. He's being brought to Australia to advise on the Liberal Government's security forces.

But don't get the impression that it has all that much to do with the Hilton bombing.

Mark is infamous for his program against the Irish in London, masquerading as a campaign against the IRA.

His other contribution to the safety of London for capitalist exploitation was the Special Patrol Group, a kind of police commando unit.

Its job was to break up demonstrations (against the Nazis of the National Front), marches (the Right to Work March) and protect scabs from picket lines (Grunwicks).

The Special Patrol Group are always in the front line when it comes to bashing "lefties", in other words, all who seek to raise their voice in protest.

Fraser is no fool. He came to power committed to gradually wearing the unions down.

The use of Sir Robert Mark, who thinks that "industrial violence (picketing) is worse than murder" is just another step in that process.

Parliament crawls back

PARLIAMENT House was not only invaded by hung-over politicians crawling back to work this week.

A huge contingent of cops (including almost the entire ACT Special Branch) and even the Army and Air Force got into the act.

No doubt they would have got the Navy in too . . . if the could float a battleship in Lake Burley Griffin!

But the day was not all Fraser's way. About fifty people marched from the Civic dole office to parliament to protest the continuing attacks on the unemployed.

They held a rally demanding amongst other things: jobs not profits, an end to dole payment harrassment, a better deal for women and youth.

Speaking from behind the barricades and a string of 'security' cops, with the red carpet trailing off in the distance, the TLC Secretary stressed the need for the unemployed to organise.

He hit on the importance of co-operation between the employed through their unions and the organised unemployed.

The rally was organised by the Canberra branch of the Unemployed Workers' Union.

by Ian Jordan

Dockyards Women Strike

THE twenty women who work in the cafeteria at the Williamstown Naval Dockyards (Vic) have always supported other Dockyard workers when they struck in the past.

So it's not surprising that the Dockyard workers have now gone out in support of the cafeteria women, now that they have a dispute on.

The women, who are in the Liquor Trades Union, are on strike because their employer (the Cafeteria section of Commonwealth Hostels) delivered their pay hours after they finished work.

Under the award, they are entitled to a penalty in their wages are late.

Commonwealth Hostels refused to pay the extra wages and the women won't go back without them.

MURDOCH TELLS WORKING WOMEN 'GET BACK HOME'

ON Wednesday March 8th, there will be a demonstration at News Ltd., 2 Holt St. Surrey Hills, from 4.30 – 6.30 to protest about the current Murdoch press campaign against married workers.

What is the protest about?

The Murdoch press — and in particular The Australian — have been running something of a crusade to convince us that present high youth unemployment is caused by married women working.

The most prominent article was a full page feature in the Weekend Australian of January 14th, called *"If Mum quit work there'd be more jobs for the boys (and girls)."*

They say *"The first reason why the school-leaver is unable to get a job is his teacher."* (Radical teachers, it seems, put kids off working for multinationals!) *"The second is his mother – she has already taken the job."*

facts

They say they are only stating the facts. But here's a few facts they don't mention.

There's hardly been any increase in married women working over the last four years. But youth unemployment has risen drastically.

This is because there is a world economic crisis, and so rising unemployment.

Untrained, unskilled youth are the first to suffer because they are unskilled and inexperienced.

And all over the world, the bosses are looking for scapegoats for rising unemployment. In Britain, it's blacks. In Germany, it's immigrants. In the United States, it's Mexicans and Puerto Ricans.

And in Australia — if Rupert Murdoch has his way — the scapegoat is married women workers.

So come and add your voice to the protest on March 8th.

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME ....
ADDRESS .... Postcode ......
PHONE NO. ....
TRADE UNION ....

Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, 3031

HOSPITAL SAVED

WORKERS at Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, a women's hospital in East London, have won a resounding victory.

Three times in two years the local health authority has named a closure date.

Each time the workers and patients in the hospital, supported by workers from all over London, have beaten off the attack.

Finally, three weeks ago, the authority announced they wouldn't move the hospital to the intended new site.

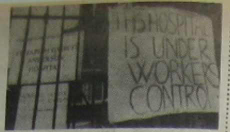
Vera Wagstaff, a dining room attendant and member of the EGA action committee, explained how they won. "If we hadn't picketted and taken over the hospital, it would have been closed by now."

The EGA is still not safe. The health authority have not promised to keep the hospital open. Only not to move it.

So there is a big battle yet to save the EGA once and for all.

But the workers and their supporters are undaunted. **As Vera said,** *"It's a wonderful feeling to have won even this much. Now we want to go ahead and win it all."*

by Janey Stone



EGA Hospital workers defy authorities

WORLD in Struggle

SPANISH miners ... down the Asturias ... fields last week. The ... supported by ... workers, was the bigg... the coalfields in ten y... The workers ... demanding a wage ... to keep up with the ... cost of living.

▼△

THE entire leadership ... independent trade ... in Tunis, North ... under arrest. They ... Calling a general ... break a social con...

A year ago, ... CIA-controlled ... signed the social con... with President Bourguiba ... dictatorship.

The General Union ... Tunisian Workers led ... campaign against ... contract, and the government promptly imposed a wage freeze.

The union then called a general strike. The government declared martial law, put tanks in the streets, let their troops loose on workers' meetings. ... 40 workers have ... killed, and 800 ... arrested but the strike is still solid.

▼△

THE man in this picture Ali Nowrouzi. He is sitting in a cage in the Teheran Zoo in Iran.

Visitors pay 60c ... come and stare at him. Nowrouzi is suffering from a disease that causes abnormally large growth. He is over seven feet and weighs 35 stone.

He came to Teheran to get medical treatment ... in Iran there isn't any ... farm labourers like Nowrouzi.

He found himself stranded in Teheran with his wife and four children. Eventually Teheran Zoo offered him a job – as an animal in the Zoo. The Zoo feeds him each day and gives him a little pocket money.

The Shah of Iran is one of the richest people in the world because of his enormous oil revenues.

▼△

THE first official dock strike in 82 years shut down all German ports last week. 118,000 dockers went on strike for a ... per cent wage increase.

In the Hamburg docks, the biggest in Germany, ... per cent of all dockers in Germany voted in the ballot. Hundreds of workers joined the union (the OTV) so that they could vote in support of the strike.

After four days the employers were forced to increase their offer from 5.3 per cent to 7 per cent and the strike finished.

There are now more than one million unemployed workers in Germany.

ETHIOPIA - BEHIND THE DERG

by Sue Cockerell

Reprinted from "Socialist Worker" in Britain.

MOST people now know that there is a large scale war going on in the north west of Africa.

What is the war about?

There are two wars. The first is in Eritrea. Eritrea was an Italian colony which has handed over to Ethiopia in 1972. It is very important to Ethiopia because it contains the only ports on the Red Sea.

It is also the most urban and industrialised area. For more than twenty years the Eritrean liberation forces have been fighting for independence from Ethiopia.

The second, in the South-East Ogaden region, is also a war of freedom from Ethiopian rule. The whole of the south part of present-day Ethiopia was conquered less than a hundred year ago and its inhabitants have suffered religious and national oppression ever since.

The population of the Ogaden fighting Ethiopian rule are led by the Western Somali Liberation Front, which is backed by Somalia.

The Derg is the name of the military junta which rules Ethiopia today. It took power after the revolution in 1974 which overthrew the feudal regime of Haile Salassie.

strikes

The revolution began as an army revolt – quite similar to what happened in Portugal at the same time – but it was the huge wave of strikes throughout the year, involving all groups of workers in the capital, Addis Ababa, which finally got rid of Selassie. In the south there was a peasant rising. They took over the land and got their revenge on the landlords.

But the workers who had led the revolution did not take power. Instead the Derg took over. At first it carried out some reforms, the land was nationalised and so were the major foreign-owned companies. But the Derg couldn't solve the major problems in Ethiopia.

Workers continued to strike, and the peasants demanded the right to control their own land through land-committees. The Derg began to crack down. Free trade unions were suppressed and puppet unions set up.

Thousands of workers and students have been shot and hundreds more jailed. The militant women's movement was disbanded. There were also bitter struggles inside the Derg itself.

The Derg has been hailed by the Russians as a socialist government. The British Communist Party describes it as 'progressive.' It is neither. It has nothing at all in common with socialism.

oil

Foreign involvement in the Horn of Africa is nothing new. The Americans backed up Selassie – training and equipping his army and police, as well as investing heavily in the country. The reason is obvious – Ethiopia lies across the Red Sea from Saudi Arabia – the largest oil exporter in the world.

The Russians used to have a base in Somalia and supplied the Somalian government with arms and money. The Somali regime isn't 'Marxist' either although it was labelled so by the Western press until the Russians were thrown out last year. (Somalia has its fair share of political prisoners too).

The Somali government is trying to extend its territory.

The Russians were thrown out because they wanted a federation of Somalia and Ethiopia, and that didn't fit in with the Somali Government's plans.

So the Russians concentrated on Ethiopia. They have provided enormous quantities of arms to help the Derg in the war against Eritrea. They have been shelling the east coast of Eritrea from warships and have supplied the napalm which is being dropped on Eritrean villages.

massacred

Russia and Cuba's role in Ethiopia is different to the role they played in the Angolan war. Then they were aiding a movement – the MPLA – which had the support of the Angolan people, against Portuguese colonialism. In Ethiopia they are propping up a vicious military junta and supplying it with arms to crush a struggle for national liberation.

Ethiopia is in full blown civil war. Almost every day workers and students are massacred in the cities. The repression has struck a heavy blow at their organisations but the strikes and the demonstrations continue.

The economy has only been held together over the last few years by the rise in the price of coffee, which is the main export. Military spending takes up huge amounts of the new regime's income and the forced mobilisation of peasants to fight in the wars has badly disrupted agriculture.

The Derg will not survive unless it crushes all opposition in Ethiopia and wins the war in Eritrea. Even with its Russian and Cuban backers it looks likely to fail. Its own army doesn't want to fight. Soldiers are deserting and there have been a number of mutinies.

The sooner these mutineers join with the people of the Ogaden and Eritrea to bring down the Derg government the better for all the Ethiopian people.

GET READY FOR THE WHITE BAY BASH !

AS the Uranium Mass Mobilization gets under the way for the end of March, Malcolm Fraser is preparing a mobilization of his own.

With the green flag from the ACTU, he is preparing to smuggle our uranium through White Bay in Sydney to "fulfil existing contracts".

And a confrontation is also looming in Melbourne with an American nuclear submarine arriving on March 3.

The first crunch will probably come in Sydney, when Fraser tries to move a uranium shipment out of Lucas Heights and through White Bay to "fulfil existing contracts".

by Alec Kahn and Mick Armstrong

The shipment was supposed to come out on February 18. But it was held back to wait for the trade unions to ratify ACTU policy.

Now that's over, and the Government is ready to open the floodgates.

We can expect the same massive security as last year as Fraser turns White Bay into a mini-police state to get the uranium through.

And we can expect the same bashings and police thuggery as last year if we try to lift a finger to stop it.

But if Fraser thinks police violence can stop our movement, he'd better think again.

Friends of the Earth members were keeping a watch on Lucas Heights so that action could be organized as soon as any loading commenced.

But now Fraser has had all the perimeter around Lucas Heights declared a "restricted area". That's put an end to the watch.

Now we will only know one or two days beforehand when a shipment is to occur. MAUM is organizing a phone tree to get people to the White Bay docks, and whether or not the shipment gets through depends on how many people can be got out at short notice.

The shipment is almost certain to be in the early hours of the morning – so if you live in Sydney, get ready for a long cold night at the waterfront.

In **Melbourne**, we're going to be graced with a visit from a nuclear submarine. No, it's not the USS Enterprise with a snorkel – it's called the USS Queenfish. It's planning to stay at Williamstown Dock for a week during Moomba – on a "goodwill visit!"

Last time when the Truxton came, the Melbourne waterfront stopped for 24 hours. But there were plenty of Liberal sucks on hand to make the crew feel "welcome".

This time hopefully we'll make their stay a little less pleasant. A week should give us plenty of time to tell them we don't like nuclear power and we especially don't like it in imperialist submarines.

SOME WORDS OF SANITY

THE ACTU backdown on uranium is now being used to undermine the stand taken by wharfies around the country.

Following the wishy-washy recommendations of the Sydney branch leadership, Sydney water-siders voted 4 to 1 to endorse ACTU policy.

This heavy vote will probably carry the motion for the whole union.

The Port Kembla "Wharfie" bulletin had the following scathing comments to make . . . comments with which we heartily concur.

TAKE YOUR PARTNERS FOR THE WHITE BAY BASH

Last week Sydney wharfies decided to resume movement of uranium yellow cake. So while the cases of demonstrators arrested during the last round of protests are still being heard, the whole grisly business is to begin again.

Once more we can expect to see Friends of the Earth out in front and getting their heads kicked for it. Once again we can expect the sort of police brutality which we have not seen since the early days of the Vietnam protests. And once again we must endure the tired old selfjustifications of those whose understanding of politics ends with the words "Unity and Moderation."

It is worth considering the effect that real leadership could have had if the Sydney waterfront had banned loading in the middle of last year. Because the tactics of the right wing in the ACTU have all along been to delay and put off the day of judgment for uranium mining. The ACTU Congress and two special union conferences have all been scenes in which the majority of trade unionists represented wanted to see a ban imposed. And only the power of Bob Hawke and the right wing have stopped such a ban.

It needs a confrontation to flush Hawke out of the woodwork, to sweep away the barriers of double-talk and delay and face up to the real issue.

That could have happened last year. It could have happened yesterday. But the leadership of the Sydney wharfies, being lukewarm at the best on the uranium question, have once again ducked the issue and a lot more people are going to get hurt.

Nuclear power is as peaceful as a lunatic with a machine gun. People are dying right now as a result of it. The Soviet Union may not admit that this is the case but the evidence is all too obvious. And those who dig in their heels and resist the progressive movement, who actively aid the government in the development of a nuclear society will neither be forgiven nor forgotten.

THE bashers at work at Hamilton Wharf, Brisbane (above) and Swanston Dock, Melbourne (below). Two of last year's low spots as police attack uranium pickets – now it's Sydney's turn again.

MORE NUCLEAR SCANDALS

OF course, we all know that uranium is *really* **quite safe.**

But just to reassure you, a few little incidents that have come to light in the last two weeks. . .

In **Bavaria**, West Germany, radioactive steam escaped when a pipe burst during testing of a nuclear power plant, according to the State Environment Ministry. Fortunately, no-one was injured.

revealed

In **Manila**, Philippines, American scientists studying US-designed nuclear power plants sold to Asian countries revealed that the plants were technically flawed. Demand for the plants, designed by Westinghouse, had fallen in the US because of the faults, and now they were being palmed off on underdeveloped countries. In Japan, fourteen of these plants had only produced 38 per cent of capacity because of breakdowns.

Within **NATO**, between 1971 and mid-1973, 1247 nuclear specialists were fired or transferred because they were possibly subject to blackmail or irrational behaviour. Up to 1975, there were two known incidents where US Government employees had smuggled sufficient nuclear material out of guarded facilities to make a nuclear weapon.

glossy

Pancontinental issued a glossy 179-page environmental impact statement (cost $21 a copy) on its proposed mining projects. Less than 12 lines were devoted to the effects on Aboriginal communities . . . despite the past disruption to Aboriginal life caused by other mining projects, and the continued anxiety expressed by black community leaders.

South Africa that bastion of democracy, is opening up a uranium enrichment plant. That gives it the capacity to produce enriched uranium for nuclear power plants . . . and of course, nuclear weapons, nuclear submarines etc etc.

Spreading the message on uranium

RECENTLY I accompanied Ann and Jenny, two voluntary workers against uranium, to screen the film "More is Less" to workers at Glendale Gowns at Footscray in Melbourne.

by Verna Matcott

The factory was not a large one. There would have been about twenty-five to thirty women working as machinists.

They only had thirty short minutes to watch and listen while snatching a hasty lunch.

However, this did not deter them from becoming attentatively involved.

"More is Less" is an American short on the effect of the energy crisis in that country.

It briefly outlines the wastage of petrol due to large private automobiles, the enormous cost of air-conditioning for modern multi-storey buildings with huge unshaded windows permanently closed, and housing design that fails to take advantage of sun and wind for generating power.

When the video had finished and the women were invited to comment, their response was vocal and informed.

They started by weighing each of the points made in the film and balancing the benefits of solar power against the hazards of uranium.

danger

Their awareness covered not only danger to present life but future generations. Thinking of immediate families, they were concerned at the danger of waste disposal and accident risks in nuclear plants.

Some mentioned they were opposed to large overseas corporations exploiting Australian resources and returning profits to parent companies.

Another lass felt it was totally wrong for Aboriginals to be deprived of sacred lands. She pointed out that they been dispossessed and discriminated against for generations already.

She was of the opinion we should help to fight for their rights along with our own.

Another worker was incensed at the lack of public debate and information through the media. She was at a loss as to why more promotion of solar power could not be used, and annoyed by the abundance of propaganda for uranium mining.

Only one person spoke up in favour of uranium mining.

The workers at Glendale Gowns were so interested in the whole problem that they requested a further screening and more information.

The true history of Australian women....

Convicts

CONVICT women had to be tough to survive.

They often shocked the officials and wealthy tourists whose letters and memories are the main record of the period.

"Convict women . . . to the disgrace of their sex, are far worse than the men, and are generally to be found at the bottom of every infamous transaction committed in the colony," said Governor Hunter in 1799.

In the early penal colony, there was not enough accommodation for women. Prostitution was the best way to get a bed, food and liquor.

From the 1820s on, many women convicts were housed in the notorious Female Factories. These were both prison and workplace.

Some Factories were also profitable brothels. The matron at Parramatta is said to have made thousands of pounds from running a brothel there.

The Parramatta Factory also functioned as a marriage market.

James Mudie giving evidence to Select Committee into Transportation 1837 describes it:

"The eligible women) are turned out, and they all stand up as you would place so many soldiers or so many cattle, in fact, in a fair, they are all rouged up . . . The convict goes up and looks at the woman, and if he sees a lady that takes his fancy he makes a motion to her and she steps to one side . . .

Punishment for women servants and prisoners for disobedience to their masters was severe.

In the Factories it ranged from head shaving to the tread-mill. At one time, particularly recalcitrant women had to wear spiked iron collars around their necks.

But the women sometimes revolted against this sort of treatment. At the Parramatta Factory, in 1827, there was a riot and a mass escape.

The women beat up the baker's and butcher's quarter. Most of them submitted to re-capture once they'd obtained food.

When the police tried to confine the leaders to their cells all the women rallied to their defence declaring. *"If one suffered, all should suffer."*

19th Century Industry

WITH industrial development in the late 19th c., women and girls were used as cheap, unskilled labour. Their wages were much lower than male rates. They were often excluded from unions and worked in overcrowded sweatshops.

The trade union movement was dominated by craft unions. Men had the short-sighted idea that if women workers were excluded from the workforce this would overcome the problem of cheap female labour undercutting the skilled workforce.

Nonetheless, some women undertook successful industrial action.

The most famous was the strike of tailoresses in Victoria in 1882. They formed a union which soon had a membership of 2,000. Their strike won a lot of public sympathy and strengthened the trade union movement.

Votes

THE struggle for women's suffrage was never as bitter in Australia as in Britain. But there were active groups of women in NSW and Victoria organised around the issue of votes for women.

They also had a general interest in women's concerns, from equal property rights to equal pay.

The suffragists were mainly upper class and there was a certain amount of mutual suspicion between them and the labour movement.

But they did achieve some reforms for working women. For example, by skilful use of her social contacts, Rose Scott was able to help the passage of the NSW Early Closing Act.

Miners' Struggles

THE Womens Auxiliaries of the Miners' Federation formed in 1934 were not a group of women who prepared afternoon teas!

It arose from 80 years of informal organization by miners' wives.

Women in isolated mining villages during the 19th Century won a reputation for militancy against scabs.

On at least one occasion the mine manager allowed unionists to address scabs, but not the women.

Yet the women had to struggle against their own men in the 30s to form an organisation.

"Lots of the men didn't like their women taking up public action . . . We used to go to Lodge (union branch) meetings and address them. Some of the men were embarrassed and so were we but we soon got used to each other."

Sometimes the men put up more of a fight.

"I remember I heard about a meeting being held that night and decided to go. We had built a little shack and it only had one door. My husband sat in the doorway so I couldn't go, but I was only about 6 stone so I slipped out the window and away down the road I went . . . he was all right after that . . . got used to it and always minded the children so I could be in all the meetings and demos."

The women picketted, demonstrated, organised petitions, raised money, held press conferences, spoke on radio. Even the soup kitchens and social activities took on a political character during the long strikes of 1929 and 1949 in NSW.

The Auxiliaries were fighting women's organizations. *"It wasn't that the Women's Auxiliary just supported men . . . It was our own survival we were fighting for.*

"I tell you it built character those struggles . . . Somehow when you're in your own little family everything just goes along and you can nestle in. When everything is an upheaval... it's different . . . everyone is together."

"They called us frozen hussies . . . it was unheard of . . . The outlfields women didn't take long to cotton on . . . basically they were fighters . . . they had to be."

Worki 11

MY NEW job was nice and clean, but very boring. There was nothing to do but sit sitting on high stools measuring bags and bossing for a supervisor. I weighing them. I was

I noticed many pass the rail smoking, so I produced my packet of Kents and lit up. The woman next to me pointed to a sign. I pointed to the sign "No Smoking". Apparently much resentment was caused by the women because the men could not smoke while they were not allowed to.

I must have been a nuisance because she leaned over to me and whispered "Go to the lavatory in the locker-room".

Suddenly the clangor of a large electric bell quite close to my ear. It was lunch bell . . .

The cafeteria was in the locker-room. I went and washed my hands and went to the cafeteria with my sandwiches I put down at a table. I had not even opened my lunch when the bell went. Time was up and we had to go back to the workshop.

I may say that I joined the rush when the lunch bell went and I got quite expert at washing hands on cotton waste, and I got quite expert at the cafeteria and back to the workshop, using the lavatory in the locker-room. Time, within half an hour, especially as I usually had a cigarette later and have a cigarette.

On the first pay day I was amazed at the amount of grumbling I went to factory there was a lot of grumbling on the window. This was repeated on the second and third pay-day the women began arguing with the supervisor and there were angry suggestions to go on strike.

When the Women's Employment Board had increased women's wages to the male rate from the pre-war rate of 54 per cent of the male rate from the pre-war rate of 54 per cent, Victorian Employers said they were going against this decision and meanwhile would refuse to increase.

This was done, and, though the women knew they would lose the extra money owing to them from the date of the award, they were angered by the delay.

On the following pay day I still had a pay packet of 54 per cent of the male rate and they decided to have a stop work meeting and discuss what action to take. The hall was packed with women.

The Secretary of the Victorian Branch of the Iron-workers Union addressed the meeting. He assured the women that they would get the money and urged them to return to work and wait.

He got no further than the trenches . . . . . of those in the room rose to their feet and shouted out of "We know all about the boys in the trenches . . . our husbands or sons. We won't break down and do the same work for half (as) pay."

They refused to work till the wage question was settled.

(Jessie Street: An Autobiography Truth or Repose)

Everhot

NOTHING political ever happens during summer in Australia — everyone prefers to lie around the beach with an eskY. But the long hot summer of 1975 was different.

The management at Everhot, Bayswater (Vic.) had fired all 17 of the women who worked in the factory, including the militant woman shop steward, Edith Turnewasch. The remaining workers, including another (male) shop steward, continued working after the women began pickering.

Large numbers of women's liberationists turned up to stand on the picket line. The union, AMWU, did little to help. But rank and file members from a nearby factory, ClydeMaster, stopped work for an afternoon, and marched to the picket to demonstrate their support.

The women also held a well publicised demonstration outside the owner's home in an affluent suburb of Melbourne.

Their picket was so successful that by the end of 5 weeks there was a serious shortage of supplies inside the factory. Up to this point spirits were high.

But then the union officials convinced the women to call off their pickets *"as a sign of good faith"* and promised results from negotiations. The end of course is predictable. Once restocked, the management had no need to give in.

The women at Everhot were defeated. But it showed the possibilities for united action between women workers and the Women's Liberation Movement, and of the need for women to organise.

Migrants

AUSTRALIA'S post war prosperity was built on cheap migrant labour.

In the food processing and clothing industries migrant women often made up more than three quarters of the workforce.

These women worked in sweatshops, often unorganized, ignored by the union and oppressed by old patriarchal traditions.

They and their families came here to seek a new life after the ravages of war. They often found callousness and brutal treatment in migrant hostels as this story from Tribune of 1950 tells.

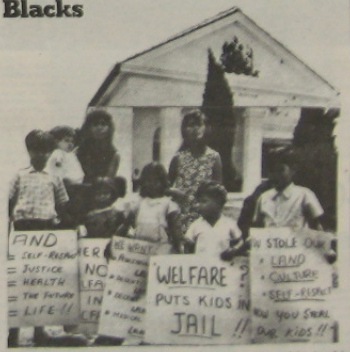
"Migrant women fought and won a pitched battle with a squad of police who came with black marias to drag them away from their menfolk at the Maribyrnong (Vic) Hostel .

"One migrant husband who had his wife at the hostel tried to hang himself when he saw the women being brutally dragged off by uniformed police.

"He was actually hanging when a women found him, called for help and had him cut down.

"The police had come to get the women and take them back to Bonegilla where they had run away to join their husbands.

Blacks



SHIRLEY Morris had her children taken from her by the welfare and imprisoned in police cells in February 1972.

Her crime was being an aboriginal woman and activist fighting the authorities for discriminating against blacks, and for community and health services at the Purfleet Reserve on the outskirts of Taree.

Shirley spent a weekend at the Aboriginal Embassy in Canberra, having arranged to leave her five youngest children in the car of her 23 year old married daughter.

When she returned she found the Housing Commission had removed her daughter from the house on a charge of overcrowding and that welfare had put her children in police cells on a charge of neglect.

Knowing Shirley was away the authorities pounced trying to intimidate and silence her.

She won her children back and continued fighting for such basic things as sewage which the white parts of Taree have.

"The men lost their identity too long ago. Quite often women bring up their children by themselves and keep the families together.

"We also have all the battles with the welfare, the housing commission, and the police. Now that we are not afraid to be black, perhaps our kids will not be afraid either."

PHOTOS

CONVICTS
Women convicts in the lazaretto and with their children at Parkhurst Female Prison.

19th CENTURY INDUSTRY
Crowded conditions in the clothing industry.

VOTES
Vida Goldstein, the Australian feminist who was the first woman anywhere to stand for a national parliament. When a heckler asked 'Don't you wish you were a man?' she replied, 'Yes! I wish you were!'

MINERS' STRUGGLES
Scarborough Miners' Womens' Auxiliary on the march. They marched seven miles to Sydney for dual recognition.

WORLD WAR II
Women at work in a munitions plant during the war.

MIGRANTS
One of the thousands of migrant women doing the dirty work of capitalism.

BLACKS
Threatened and intimidated by kidnappers, Lindsay Morris fought back.

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

FROM THE SHELF

CATCH 22

LAST issue this column reviewed "The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists" by Robert Tressel one of the all time Socialist Classics.

Joseph Heller's Catch 22 is hardly a Socialist Classic. It's not even particularly socialist, but just as Tressel's book helped win a generation of British workers to socialist ideas, Heller's book helped organise a whole generation of Australian and American students into the anti-war movement.

Joseph Heller is reported to have said that Catch 22 was written during the Korean War, set during the previous War about the next war. As a prediction that was not bad.

war

Thousands of young Americans saw the American war machine in Vietnam exactly as Heller had described it and refused to be involved with it.

Most of Catch 22 takes place on an island in the Mediterranean in the latter stages of World War 2. It concerns a group of airman forced to fly a seemingly endless series of bombing missions of no obvious value to the war effort but aimed at boosting the careers of their commanding officers.

If that was all there was to the plot it might be an interesting novel against the military establishment. But, Catch 22's strength is that Pianosa base is a microcosm of American society.

So that we have characters like Milo Minderbender, whose company M&M enterprises even has the same slogan as General Motors.

He hires out his planes to the Germans to bomb and strafe the U.S. base and is praised because the operation made such a good profit.

Heller uses a paranoid logic both to entertain and to show the structure of society in general, and the army in particular.

Thus, we have Catch 22 which says that if a man is insane he cannot be asked to fly combat missions. If, however, he asks to be grounded then this is showing a concern for one's safety in the face of real dangers and is evidence of sanity. Therefore he is not crazy and cannot be grounded.

society

Heller suggests that the whole of society runs on Catch 22. He offers only one way out. Yossarian, his main character, [illegible] end of the [illegible] thousands of [illegible] military [illegible] Vietnam [illegible] solution [illegible] one.

Heller is [illegible] socialist. The [illegible] solution. [illegible] revolution – [illegible] ing and [illegible] society that [illegible] kill you.

All the [illegible] 22 was an [illegible] book. No-one [illegible] it would ever [illegible] fight for the [illegible] (or Australia) [illegible] afterwards.

Tess Lee Ack looks at Punk Rock

JOHNNY ROTTEN ROOLS –OK?

IN the past ten years rock has become a Big Big Business, involving millions of dollars every year.

The "superstars" like Rod Stewart and Mick Jagger have turned their backs on their working class backgrounds and joined the Jet Set.

Meanwhile the promoter-parasites are cleaning up by cramming more and more people into concerts for higher and higher prices. Last year's Rockarena was a good example of that.

Punk rock is a rebellion against all of that.

average

Musically, it is an attempt to get back to the rock roots, to do away with technological excesses and make music accessible to the average kid on the street. By playing to much smaller audiences they stay closely tuned to their fans' reaction. As such, it is a healthy phenomenon.

But it is more than that. In Britain, where it started, it is a reflection of economic circumstances.

It is a rebellion against the lousy deal kids get. Youth unemployment in Britain is horrifyingly high, even worse than here.

The Sex Pistols song God Save the Queen sends up the Jubilee Year.

One lines goes: *"There's no future in England's dream"*. For thousands of kids on the dole, that's a simple statement of fact. No jobs, no money, no future. And it's even worse if you happen to be black, or a women, or both.

happy

The media here and elsewhere has been only too happy to jump on the anti-punk bandwagon. They promote the violence associated with punk rock as a way of bashing unemployed youth. After all, a fight at a punk dance is NEWS, while kids having a good time isn't.

Many of the punk bands have political views too, but since the Herald is only interested in how many times Johnny Rotten says "fuck", you don't hear about them.

In an interview with Rock Against Racism, Rotten talk about his hatred of racism and the National Front and *"anything Tory"*.

He sees punk rock as a means of self-expression for kids who haven't got anything else.

"I used to go around hitting people for no reason 'cos I was annoyed. There was nothing left to live for . . . When you dance a lot you're so tired you don't go and punch someone's head. Fights are started when people are annoyed or depressed or hate themselves. This (music) was my outlet. I really think that if I didn't join the group I would be inside now.

"That's the way it is for a lot of kids. Violence is the last thing left."

Because the Sex Pistols, the Clash and others have been identifying the problems of British youth, they have had a huge response. The Pistols' album "Never Mind the Bollocks" (a true punk statement) went to Number 1 on the charts without any airplay at all.

solutions

The punk bands don't offer any solutions, but they don't offer any illusions either. They don't so much preach violence as accept it as a fact of life in Britain today.

Punk music is not revolutionary. It could become so, but it could also become reactionary.

Racism is an obvious course it could take, so it is significant that Rock Against Racism can always find punk bands to play on an anti-National Front platform.

The same sort of music is taking off in Australia as our youth unemployment levels soar, and for the same reasons. It is to some extent music born of desperation, but there is a lot of anger there too.

And that's mostly why it's so unpopular with the Establishment that [illegible] wars and all sorts of violence.

fight

The kids might [illegible] angry enough to [illegible] fight the system [illegible] them on the streets [illegible] them no future.

Harlan County - A fight to the death

Tom O'Lincoln reviews the film 'Harlan County' produced and directed by Barbara Kopple.

AMERICA'S coal miners are now in the fourth month of a national strike.

They have shown astonishing courage and staying power in the face of violence and repression. They are defying the world's most powerful government as well as their employers.

This film shows the source of their strength.

"Harlan County" is a documentary about a strike for union recognition in Brookside, Kentucky. Brookside is a coal town in Harlan County – the "Bloody Harlan" celebrated in folksongs. In 1973 Brookside miners went on strike for representation by the United Mineworkers of America.

It took 13 months and the death of a young picket to win that battle. The film captures all the drama of the struggle.

It shows the picket lines, the organising meetings and the hardship of a long strike. We see the callous intransigence of the companies and the violence of armed scab-herders, who even attack the film crew.

But what makes the film so powerful is that it also gives us the social and historical background.

gangsters

Film clips sum up the history of the coal miners, from the miserable days before the union through the career of autocratic Miners' leader John L. Lewis, to the struggle for union reform today against gangsters and sell-outs.

In the late sixties, the notorious union president Tony Boyle clung to office by having his opponent murdered. In 1972 the Miners for Democracy reform movement deposed Boyle and eventually he stood trial for murder.

Under the new regime, miners were allowed for the first time to vote on accepting or rejecting a national agreement with the coal owners.

Yet the Miners for Democracy had a fatal weakness. Never much more than an electoral organisation, it dissolved itself completely after the election victory.

The film shows us how the new officers, no longer under any organised pressure from the rank and file, begin to accommodate to the employers.

The Brookside miners did not get the help they needed from the new leadership. The union officers brought bus-loads of miners from all over to a mass march at Brookside. They marched them through town and sent them home, but kept them well away from the picket line where their power could really have been felt.

grassroots

The strike had to be won at the grassroots level by the miners and their wives, by the mobilisation of the tightly-knit coalfields community. And win it they did, in the face of appalling violence by company thugs – culminating in the death of a striker.

One of the most inspiring things about this film is the role played by the women during the strike. As the strike wore on and things got rough, it was the women who moved into the leadership.

A young man comments in amazement that the women are standing in the open to confront the armed thugs, while men hide behind cars. [illegible] was amazed [illegible] Women's Auxiliary [illegible] were so well [illegible] the picket lines, [illegible] patient with the many [illegible] who stayed home in bed.

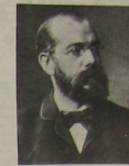
Harlan County [illegible] you feel like smashing [illegible] bosses. And it gives [illegible] some practical ideas on [illegible] to do it. If you miss it, [illegible] never forgive yourself.

The Fight for Worker's Power

The politics of the International Socialists in a nutshell [illegible] why we need to fight for worker's power. 40 cents [illegible] 30 cents post) from: Redback Press PO Box [illegible] Flemington Vic. 3031 or your local IS branch.

PRIVATE MEDICINE AND SOCIAL ILLS

by JANEY STONE



Dr. Robert Koch, discoverer of the Cholera Bacillus.

Cholera epidemics were widespread before modern sewage and water supply systems. Above, people queing at the public water conduit, Exeter, 1842.

THE catch phrase is "cost cutting" everywhere these days, and nowhere more than in health care.

The government is worried about the increase in costs from $1900 million in 1970-71 to about $5,500 million today.

Cabinet is soon to consider freezing benefits, and drastic measures have been proposed by various policy makers.

Dr. Paul Gross, an adviser to Federal Health Minister Hunt, recently came up with some ideas. He suggested restricting benefits to a limited time, raising the Medibank levy and increasing the present $5 gap between cost and benefit so that *"the patient pays more of his health bill"*.

Dr. Gross is not a medical doctor but an economist. His concern is not with people's health needs but with *"ensuring the continuation of the private health insurance system."*

He thinks the best way to deal with *"inappropriate demands made by consumers"* is to increase the $5 minimum so that the consumer *"will be more selective in using health services."*

health

Dr. Gross thinks we need increased individual responsibility for health. We should prevent disease by *"incentives to a healthier life style"*, he says. But above all, for his proposals to succeed, *"health costs must hit the individual's hip-pocket nerve"*.

Now there are some pretty obvious things wrong with these ideas. He's treating health care as a sort of luxury that you buy if you can afford it, instead of a right. But there is a more fundamental problem with them as well, which may be less obvious.

machine

Gross accepts the traditional approach that the body is a sort of machine, and the cause of disease is like the breakdown of an individual machine. Disease is treated as an individual problem, and the solutions are an individual responsibility.

It is true of course that individual treatment is needed once you've caught an infectious disease – and infectious diseases were once the main cause of death. Modern medical treatment today is based on the success of wonder drugs in combating infectious diseases.

But the truth is that the wonder drugs weren't the biggest factor in reducing these diseases. Changes in the social environment were much more important.

Over the last hundred years, it has been improvements in living standards – better housing, clean water, sewerage and so on – which caused the dramatic drops in infant mortality and the increase in life expectancy.

And today in the West, the main causes of death are chronic diseases such as cancer, and degenerative diseases associated with aging.

The famous "doctor-patient" relationship where one doctor treats one patient on an individual basis is unsuitable in these cases. A whole range of different doctors and other health workers are needed.

People fleeing from the London fire of 1666. The year before the populace were decimated by the Great Plague.

Today's major health problems are caused less by germs, which one individual may pass on to another, than by environmental factors. These are determined by the society we live in.

Take cancer. In the overwhelming majority of cases, it is caused by environmental conditions. And probably 50 per cent of these are related to occupational conditions.

cure

Yet researchers concentrate on finding a clinical cure, when what is needed is to remove cancer-causing chemicals from the environment.

Given this it's not surprising that those people who live in the most polluted neighbourhoods – the industrial working class – have a much higher death rate due to cancer.

Industrial accidents each year result in three times as many days lost as are caused by strikes.

Occupational diseases have been called *"the new plague"*. Yet industrial health and safety is almost completely ignored by the medical profession.

In the long run the only way to treat them is to remove the cause from the working environment. There is little point in concentrating treatment on the individual with asbestosis, for example. There isn't any cure.

Then there are the enormous number of problems which injure health but are not "diseases". Alcoholism, road accidents, psychiatric illness, malnutrition, drug addiction – these are major causes of ill health in industrial society.

All are social problems. They result from a society where people are unhappy and alienated, where feelings of powerlessness and frustration make people turn to stimulants to help them cope.

But the administrators of health care systems persist in treating all these things as individual problems.

Dr. Sax, chairman of the NSW Hospitals Commission said recently that *"much illness is clearly self-induced – by eating too much, drinking alcohol and taking other drugs, smoking cigarettes, failing to exercise, crashing cars. Emotional illness reflects faulty relationships between people."*

fault

So it's really all our own fault!

And the individual approach leads to individual methods. The government emphasises programs like health education, which aim at changing the individual, but not the economic or political environment.

Dr. Sax's medical approach links up nicely with Dr. Gross' financial. The financial, as well as medical responsibility for illness is to be removed from society, and placed at the doorstep of the individual worker.

If you've got the money for the doctor bills, you'll be right. If not – you've got only yourself to blame if you die.

Dave Nadel's

MY SHOUT

THE other day, I had to buy myself some razor blades.

I use a brand called GII; they are made by Gillette. They consist of a blade in a plastic casing, which is not a bad idea because you can handle it without any risk of cutting yourself.

They come in packets of four. The four blades in their plastic casings are in a clear plastic box. This is necessary so that you can see the blades that you are buying.

The plastic box is attached to a cardboard backing sheet with a name and description of the product.

It is held in place against the cardboard backing sheet by a clear flexible plastic bubble. This is so that you can see the plastic box. Gillette are very proud of their plastic box.

When I came to pay for the blades at the supermarket where I bought them, the woman at the check-out counter carefully wrapped them in a brown paper bag.

So I now had my razor blades in their plastic casings wrapped in:

1. a plastic box
2. a cardboard backing sheet and a plastic bubble.
3. a brown paper bag.

The whole thing cost me $1.45. I figure that was 60 cents for the blades and 85 cents for the packaging!

In the last few years companies such as Containers Ltd., Gadsdens and ICI, together with the supermarkets and the advertising industry, have managed to introduce useless packaging into almost every form of marketing.

For example, when you buy vegies at the greengrocer you get it wrapped in last weeks Sporting Globe which can either be burnt, recycled or read.

If you buy your vegies at Safeways you get them in a polystyrene tray with cellophane on the top.

Biscuits still come in packages but inside the packages are plastic trays, which means there is only room for half as many bickies. It's getting to the stage where newsagents will sell you gift wrapping paper in plastic bags!

For the last ten years there has been a concerted campaign to convince us that higher prices on our consumer goods are caused by our wage increases. Yet in precisely those same ten years companies have greatly increased their production costs by putting packages around packages around packages.

In the last five years Governments and the Press have become aware of pollution and the energy shortage. Their response is to try and make workers feel guilty about the few entertaining possessions we do have, like cars and T.V.s.

Yet never a word is said, or an action taken, against the major waste makers of the packaging industries.

Expensive packaging exists for one reason only: to distract the consumer from the shoddiness of the product inside the package.

Companies like Containers Ltd increase the cost of living and are about as socially useful as hair shampoo clinics for poodles.

Massey Ferguson Layoffs

HOW CAN WE FIGHT BACK?

MASSEY Ferguson at Sunshine in Melbourne is laying off 80 workers as the Battler goes to press.

At the mass meeting to discuss the sackings, the workers voted to condemn the company. But the main problem was how to fight back.

Working a four-day week was considered, but rejected. The company was likely to be quite agreeable to this – and there was the danger that it might even try and institute it on a long-term basis.

A strike was also considered – but people didn't think they were in a strong bargaining position.

slump

Bill Curwood, AMWSU shop steward and convenor of the Massey Ferguson shop committee, told the Battler that other agricultural machinery companies like Connor Shea and Ralph McKays were also likely to be laying off soon. But Massey Ferguson was the biggest and was being hit first by the rural slump.

In the end, the mass meeting was not able to come up with any tactics to fight back with.

Overseas, workers have found that the only way to save jobs is through bold and daring action. Sit-ins and occupations have forced companies to keep workers on. In some cases they have even forced Governments to step in and nationalise firms and hand over control to the workers.

That's the sort of action that we're going to have to take here if we're not going to pay the price for the bosses' problems.

RELIEF WORKERS UNDER ATTACK

TWELVE hundred workers out of 2200 on the South Australian Unemployment Relief Scheme may soon lose their jobs.

This is the rumour currently floating around some of the sites.

The Liberals claim the scheme is inefficient. This is true ... but the way to solve that is to give control of decisions to the workers on the sites – not to throw them back on the dole.

Meanwhile, the four victimizations at Cleland National Park (see last issue and at left) have triggered off an inquiry into the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Rick Lower, the AWU delegate at the Cleland National Park, spoke to the Battler.

"Fighting the victimizations gave us the chance to expose some of the faults and abuses of the scheme.

"The four men were reinstated on Monday February 13. All the gangers and rangers then started listening to us on how we thought the job should be organized. For the first time we started doing work which wouldn't have to be ripped down.

The real answer to inefficiency – workers' control!

grill

"Then Des Corchoran ordered an inquiry after receiving our report. Four investigators from the National Parks and Wildlife Service turned up on the Wednesday and expected to be able to grill us one by one.

"We said no way. No union member would appear before the panel without a union lawyer. Even the head ganger took a Public Service Association lawyer in with him.

"In the end none of us faced the panel. One of the investigators then wandered round the site asking us about graffiti in the water-tanks, and personality clashes between some of the workers and the gangers.

"It was quite clear they were trying to lay the blame for the fuck-ups at the feet of the workers in the Park.

"But as far as we're concerned, the workers in the park will continue to fight to put the blame where it belongs – in the Department."

Reinstated- then sacked again!

THE four of us reinstated to the Department of Environment last month did not get our original jobs back at Cleland.

And at least three of us have been laid off by the time this article has been printed.

Our union officials in the AWU say there is nothing more they can do. What's more, we haven't been paid for the time we lost while we were waiting to be reinstated.

After all, we're "only" relief scheme workers.

The whole dispute began because we were fighting for compulsory unionism at Cleland. Since then, there has been a demarcation dispute between the AWU and the Australian Government Workers Association.

The AGWA has apparently been given the right to first sign up members on the scheme. Workers on at least one site, the Blackwood Community Centre, have contacted them to ask them to send out an organiser.

No-one has shown up.

We had exactly the same problem with the AWU at Cleland. It's a disgrace that the officials aren't showing an interest in what's happening on these schemes.

from Jeff Wallmann, victimized at Cleland

Leichhardt dumps old garbos

LEICHHARDT Council, Sydney, is throwing old garbos on the rubbish tip.

They suspended five garbos five weeks ago, after a check on absenteeism.

But these are men who have worked for the council for years. And they are absent more often than they used to be because they are getting older.

Delegate Alf Woodhouse said: *"As men get older, they get more prone to sickness.*

"One of the men put off has been working here for 20-25 years. He's had a bad record for the last five years.

"But he had worked for 18 years before that. The Council tend to forget that."

Mayor Rodwell came to talk to the garbos on 16th February. The [illegible] coming up in Council [illegible]

And the garbos ho[illegible] the Labor Council [illegible] accept a submission [illegible] the suspened men [illegible] till the hearing, and [illegible] older men to go back [illegible] eral work, instead of [illegible] getting the sack.

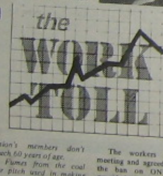
But over a [illegible] eering section [illegible] the workers aren't [illegible] their faith in the [illegible] the Council is Labor.

strike

When five men [illegible] sacked over there, the[illegible] on strike. And some [illegible] garbos think that isn't [illegible] idea.

As one of the [illegible] garbos said: *"The [illegible] had a meeting and [illegible] They got back in [illegible] While I've been laid [illegible] four weeks now."*

Mr W. Ferguson ... suspended after 16 years service.



WHOSE side are the Occupational Health investigators on?

Recently they did a "spot check" on a Sydney factory which does a lot of work with PVC.

But it seems they gave the company 24 hours notice.

Just enough time for the boss to have his workers clean the factory.

A worker who is currently being checked for respiratory problems, possibly connected with PVC dust, had to help with the clean-up. He was told to remove PVC dust from beside his bench, and replace it with granules.

A bit like being asked to help dig your own grave.

■

ROADWAY construction workers and council employees are being forced to retire early due to illnesses caused by fumes from asphalt.

The Victorian Municipal Employees Union is surveying its members on their superannuation and disability schemes to find out how many reach retirement age.

Preliminary reports indicate that half of the union's members don't reach 60 years of age.

Fumes from the coal tar pitch used in making roads is causing respiratory problems and encouraging skin cancers through making the skin more sensitive to the sun's ultra-violet radiation.

■

RAILWAY workers at Jolimont (Vic) are supporting the ARU ban on Melbourne's blue suburban trains which are lined with asbestos.

No trains are being serviced or repaired. This is restricting services and Vicrail is threatening to stand down drivers.

On 27 February industrial hygiene investigators said that the trains couldn't be tested until the bans were lifted.

The workers held a meeting and agreed to lift the ban on ONE train provided they were issued with special suits and oxygen supply to stop them inhaling asbestos dust which has already killed two workers.

■

THE Falling Brick Award for safety goes this week to the Victorian Health Minister, Mr. Holghton, for outstanding community spirit.

Twelve months ago he received a report that one in five children born in the Yarram area in 1976 were deformed.

It seems the deformities were caused by widespread spraying of pesticides by the Lands Department.

His "experts" investigation lasted 4 days and reported that there was no connection. Within hours Houghton had to announce another inquiry. His whitewash didn't wash.

■

"REAL health and safety for workers cannot be won until production is for need rather than wealth. The demand for strong safety laws and enforcement must continue to be raised.

"For organized workers it may be little more than an additional weapon: for those isolated from any shop floor strength it may be the only defence against the grosser abuses of health and safety."

– Patrick Kinnersly, "The Hazards of Work: How to Fight Them."

Now just arrived from Britain. The workers' weapon to rip away the secrecy with which bosses hide the dangerous facts surrounding the substances that we have to work with daily.

Available from IS Books, P.O. Box M8, Newtown South, 2042. $2.25 (& 60 cents postage).

by Steve Morgan.

Jocka loses BL[illegible] court battle

JOCKA Burns and the BLF rank-and-file group have lost their court battle to gain the right to stand for a trustee position.

Justice Sweeney ruled in Sydney last week that although an irregularity had occurred when Jocka was disqualified, it would not have affected the result.

Sweeney ruled that Marco Masterton, the union's returning officer and a Gallagher man, should have written to Jocka to tell him of the disqualification, and not just notified him verbally.

But Sweeney still upheld the disqualification, which was based on the "fact" that Jocka's nominee, Bill Barras, had an improper life membership.

strange

Barras was granted his life membership by the Gallagher officials, and his earlier nomination of Jocka for a Federal Council position was accepted. So this ruling was strange – to say the least.

Or as Jocka commented, *"It's so bloody idiotic."* In one way though, Jock was lucky to be able to nominate for trustee at all.

After he'd lost to Gallagher in the Federal Council election, he went into the union office. In walked Gallagher and two other officials.

"Congratulations Norm," said Jocka. *"You beat me."*

"Beat you? I slaughtered you!" replied Gallagher.

"Well," Jocka replied, *"I'm standing again. This time for trustee. I'd like another nomination form."*

"Well you can't have one," said Gallagher, *"It'll cost the union $30,000 to have another elec[illegible]"* Gallagher walked [illegible]

"I've got a [illegible]" called out Jocka [illegible] pointed to a friend [illegible] who'd come with him [illegible] morning, Jocka [illegible] telegram. NOMINATION FOR[illegible] THE OFFICE".

Meanwhile, [illegible] the Builders Labourers Democratic Control [illegible] scouring every newsp[illegible] they can lay their hands [illegible] to find out when [illegible] election will be for [illegible] Gallagher's Federal Se[illegible] position.

Last time, the [illegible] announcement was a [illegible] ad in that well-k[illegible] newspaper that so [illegible] workers read, Australian".

This time, some [illegible] souls have suggested [illegible] will appear in the [illegible] pages of the [illegible] Mercury ... or the [illegible] Review ... or the [illegible] Gazette.

THREE DAYS WITHOUT REPRESSION

by Michael Burke in Italy

AN Anti-Repression Convention was held in Bologna from Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th September.

Two car loads of comrades, each including a CPA member, made the trip from Germany to Bologna. The Italian state had decided to obstruct the convention and because we had long hair and sleeping bags there were great difficulties in crossing the Italian border.

After being subjected to long delays, insults, questioning, car and body searches, the first car was refused entry and had to try two other checkpoints in vain before it sneaked across the border at a remote checkpoint in the Swiss Alps.

refused

More success greeted the second car; it was only refused entry once, with insults and no reasons given. Luckily the Italian state is not too well organised and the second car crossed the border on its second try.

The bourgeois press tried to create an atmosphere of tension by warning against possible violence, but we found only crowds of youth filling the city squares and streets.

Some were looking at newspapers and bookstalls, some making music, some talking earnestly and others laying down at the steps of the medieval Cathedral in their sleeping bags, recovering from the difficult trip.

The Piazza Maggiore was filled with an atmosphere in tune with the slogan of the convention, TRE GIORNA SENZA RIPRESSIONE (Three Days Without Repression).

This slogan expresses the view of a big part of Italian society that life in the western country with the greatest Communist influence is experienced as repressive.

The general atmosphere of the convention was relaxed, the 6,000 riot-police being discreetly hidden for the most part.

In a speech shortly before the convention Berlinguer had equated the New Left with fascism.

The Left comprises all the groups and tendencies to the left of the PCI, including Lotta Continua and Autonomia Operaia, as well as those who abstain from formal organisations.

Although the PCI bureau was open throughout, no PCI members spoke at the various meetings.

On Saturday afternoon in the Piazza Maggiore a series of speakers from different sectors all over Italy addressed a large crowd for several hours. Common to the speeches was a critique of the "Historical Compromise" of the PCI and a call for autonomous action of a revolutionary nature.

militant

One of the major struggles was between the militant Autonomia Operaia group and Lotta Continua. Autonomia Operaia advocates immediate armed struggle and urged that the three days be used for the occupation of buildings and the release of prisoners from the Bologna jail.

Lotta Continua on the other hand argues for non-violent struggle as far as possible. On Saturday night there was fighting between members of the two organisations when Autonomia Operaia occupied a meeting place, the Palasport.

Women had also wanted to meet in the Palasport and 2,000 women demonstrated in the streets against the Autonomia Operaia's occupation.

The demonstration on Sunday against repression and in particular against the imprisonment of students from the March demonstrations in Bologna drew over 100,000 people.

In a procession through historic Bologna, (for the preservation of which the PCI administration is renowned) lively and high-spirited demonstrators shouted slogans, threw fists into the air, and intermittently rushed headlong for a time to sit down on the streets in the next moment.

When a police helicopter flew over the crowd the demonstrators sang *"Cascaro cascaro Porco Madonna si cascaro!"* (fall down, fall down Madonna Pork fall down) to the tune of Jesus Christ Superstar.

heavy

The tensest point of the procession was at Bologna jail where several hundred riot police in heavy armament demonstrated the potential might for suppressing any attack on state institutions.

Since the March demonstrations where one student was killed by police, a great number of students were jailed, of whom 11 are still held. Since that time it is considered unwise to carry a lemon at a demonstration to counteract the effects of teargas because it may be regarded as "passive armament".

Up until June students were being fingered by police spies in queues for the University Mensa. An obvious material basis for the politicisation of Italian students is miserable conditions of life.

The Mensas, for example, are stretched well beyond their limits in feeding the 30,000 Bologna students.

After a stiff means test some students receive a living allowance of $10 per week. It is very common to be asked for bread, cigarettes, wine and money.

strength

After "three days without repression" the police moved in to clear Bologna of the New Left. Contrary to warnings by the bourgeois press, it only became dangerous to be in Bologna after the strength of the demonstration had melted away.

What We Stand For

Workers' Power
Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism
We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State
The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism
A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation
For women, blacks migrants gays and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system.

Revolutionary Party
To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation
Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If thats the sort of work you want to do-

JOIN US!

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

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International Socialists

COME TO OUR CONFERENCE

THE second national conference of the International Socialists will be held in Melbourne over Easter week-end.

Members from all over Australia will meet to determine strategy and policy for the organisation.

On Friday, I.S. women will meet. On Saturday, the main resolution, "Tasks and Perspectives for 1978", will be debated, followed in the afternoon by workshops for industrial workers, teachers, health workers and students.

On Sunday, we will be looking at industrial policy, women's liberation and the election of a new Executive and National Committee.

All friends of the I.S. are invited to attend and participate in the discussion. If you've considered joining IS, or if you'd like to see our democracy in action, why not come along?

For information, contact your local branch or write to PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic. 3031.

International Women's Day

ADELAIDE
March on Saturday 11 March at 10 am. Assemble Rundle St Mall.

MELBOURNE
Wednesday March 8, 5 pm. Films at YWCA, 489 Elizabeth St. "Double Day" and "Simplemente Jenny". Food, drinks and music. $2 and $1 for pensioners and unemployed. Films start 6.45.

Saturday March 11, 10 am. IWD march from Bourke St Mall.

Sunday March 19, Forum. Possibly at Fitzroy Town Hall.

Monday March 13. A march will follow the Moomba Queen in the Moomba parade.

SYDNEY.
March 8th (IWD). Martin Plaza 12 - 2.00 pm Concert in ampitheatre. Exhibition and stalls. 4.30 - 6.30 Demo outside News Ltd. 2 Holt St. Sy Hills, over their campaign against married women workers. 7.30 - 8.15 Broadband programme, 2FC. on Working Womens Music.

March 11th, Saturday March. Assemble Sydney Town Hall 10 am, leaves 10.30 am. Paris Theatre. 12.15 concert and films. 7 pm Dance – Abraham Mott Hall, Argyle St Millers pt. – 1 am.

ALL WEEK from March 1st films and other activities in the Paris Theatre. for details ring Carole Jensen – 233 1848 or 896 2744.

BRISBANE
March 8: leaflets will be distributed throughout the city.

March 11 Rally Roma St 10 am. Singing and selling of suffragette sashes. Saturday afternoon there will be workshops in City Hall.

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL	PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031	33-4142
	24 hour answering and message machine	335-2783
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE	PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	335-2783
MELBOURNE	GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	543-1081
SYDNEY	111 Enmore Rd., Newtown	51-3665
ADELAIDE	PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49-7939
CANBERRA	PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	
BRISBANE	PO Box 111, St Lucia, Qld, 4067	44-7881

Fighting Fund

RM	$30
JL	$3
Brisbane	$6.85
North West Dinner	$50.28
TOTAL	$90.13

I.S. Books

Southern Africa After Soweto, by Alex Callinicos and John Rogers

Examines the crisis in Southern African capitalism and the role of the black working class in its overthrow. Special offer to Battler readers: normal price $4.50, now available for limited period for $3.50 (plus 40 cents post) All orders to IS Books, PO Box M8 Newtown, NSW, 2042.

What's On

Deadline for next edition – Wednesday March 8th.

Sydney — Sun 5 Mar
IS branch meeting. Discussion on rank and file activity in the BLF. 7.30 pm 111 Enmore Road, Enmore.

Sydney — Sun 12 Mar
IS business meeting.

Sydney — Sat 18 Mar
Middle East dinner at 7 Whitfield Ave, Ashfield. Reservations ring 51 3665 or 789 4785

Sydney — Sun 19 Mar
Verity Burgmann speaks on "Racism in the Australian Labor Movement". 7.30 pm 111 Enmore Road, Enmore.

Canberra — Mon 6 Mar
Unemployed Workers Union meetings, first and third Mondays of month. 5 pm Beauchamp House Room 30. Details – ring 81 2205

Canberra — Wed 8 Mar
Movement Against Uranium Mining. Meeting every second Wednesday. 8 pm: Environment Centre, Childers St Hall. Further details – ring 473 064

Canberra — Wed 8 Mar
International Womens Day. Details ring Womens Centre 478 070.

Canberra — Thur 9 Mar
Campaign Against Racial Exploitation. Weekly meeting every Thursday, 7pm: 27 Batman St, Braddon. Details – ring 477 647.

Canberra — Fri 31 Mar
Anti-Uranium Mobilization. Watch for further details.

Canberra — Easter
Federal Council of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders conference – billets in Canberra are urgently required. Ring 498 174.

Melbourne — Wed 1 Mar
Joint Melbourne I.S. branches meeting. Ring 335 2783 for details

Melbourne — Wed 8 Mar
South-East Branch meeting. Notting Hill Hotel, Ferntree Gully Rd Clayton North. 7.30 pm. Educational on Classical Capitalism.

Melbourne — Wed 8 Mar
North West branch meeting at Moonee Ponds Hotel 7.30 pm Friends of IS welcomed.

PANCAKES ON THE ROCKS

Report: Janet Vaux

How would you like to get the chop for "not being enthusiastic enough?" Heres a place where it actually happened.

NOT all young women are on the dole.

Some of them work for almost nothing in restaurants like Pancakes on the Rocks in Sydney's Rocks area.

Pancakes on the Rocks is a 24 hour restaurant which makes ends meet by employing inexperienced non-unionised waitresses at below award rates.

The restaurant chooses people who are desperate for a job. And university students and others who are not going to be around long enough to stir things up.

Especially as they usually don't have any experience of how to fight the bosses.

menu

In the menu, the waitresses are described as "birds of passage".

Roger Meadmore, the restaurant's slightly eccentric boss, says: *"We are particularly proud of our waitresses. Working at Pancakes has become quite an 'in' thing these days. Most of the girls are birds of passage – their average stay is about six months. Many are students going on to be doctors, teachers, scientists – and mothers of the future."*

And they are highly exploitable today.

One waitress told The Battler how management sits in a dark recess watching the waitresses at work.

"You can't see them. But they are watching how you work, to see if you are 'enthusiastic' enough. They are always going on about 'enthusiasm'".

A waitress was recently asked to resign for not being 'enthusiastic' enough.

But Meadmore has recently been having a spot of bother with the Department of Labour and Industry over the December award provisions that limit payment of junior rates.

Since he relies heavily on junior labour, he has retaliated by intimidating staff with an internal memo headed "Socialism (or killing the goose that laid the golden egg, more often known as your wages)".

In the memo, he threatens to lay off junior staff if he's forced to pay them adult rates.

In the chatty menu Meadmore says that "even the girls themselves" think that recent wage increases are "exorbitant."

But many of the waitresses are dissatisfied.

They are unsure of their rights, of what is in the award, of exactly what the issues are behind Meadmore's recent dust up with the DLI.

Any actions are taken at an individual level. For example, on Christmas Day staff were paid time and a half. Individuals who went to complain were given double time and a half; but management allowed the 'mistake' to stand in the case of the others.

worried

Some waitresses would like to join the union and to encourage other people to do the same. But they are worried about being victimised if they take the first step.

In Maxy's, another 24 hour restaurant with similar problems, workers have recently taken the first steps towards getting unionised. We'll bring you this story in the next Battler.

CES - What it's really ab[out]

by a CES worker N[SW]

THE central issue of the national CES dispute is the Public Service Board's cynical and blatant attack on working conditions of all public servants.

They plan to recruit people from outside the Public Service to work in badly understaffed CES offices at Clerk 4 level.

This is fine. We could do with the extra workers. But we want to keep the right of appeal on these jobs – as exists on every other job in the Public Service.

The Public Service Board's action completely neglects the right of appeal for people already working in jobs below the level of Clerk Class 4 who could be promoted to these posts.

threatened

As a result of ACOA bans on these outside applications 22 managers of CES offices have been stood down and threatened with being locked out of their jobs if they continue work.

All are continuing to work, as ACOA members do not want to inconvenience the public. They especially do not want to penalize the unemployed.

At our mass meeting in Sydney, we heard that the dispute is spreading outside CES offices.

Staff in the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, who pay CES workers, have refused to stop paying those stood down.

Telex operators in the Department's NSW regional office have refused to send out any more stand down orders and typists are refusing to type them.

The meeting supported the Employment Office managers stood down. A levy on all ACOA members, to pay the salaries of those stood down and legal costs during the dispute, was passed ... a motion ... Federal ... ACOA ... negotiation...

pre...

After the ... however, ... dissatisfaction ... ACOA ... apparent ... of the meeting.

There ... discussion ... members ... event of lock-... more people ... down. Instead ... Secretary was ... continue negoti...

Since feeling ... high among ... members ... CES, the ACOA ... may run into ... of its aloof handl... dispute.

Not that sort of choice, thanks!

LAST week, about 6,000 of Victoria's ... teachers went on strike for a day to fight the ... ion Department's reintroduction of ...

It was the first blow in what promises to be a long ...

The Department puts it all in terms of giving a choice of assessment methods – all seemingly very democratic. The only catch is that we know from past experience that if you don't choose the method the Department likes (inspection) you just don't get promoted. The Department – using the pretence of a choice – will eventually force all teachers to be inspected.

Shears, the Director General, took a survey – hoping to boost his case. But 74% of all secondary teachers (including non-union members) ... "choice" in favour ... SAAP method ... VSTA won in 197... 13% opted for the ... choice the Department wants.

Now Shears is ... ahead with his scheme ... way.

Our strike meeting ... Tuesday called on ... resign. That was ... wishful thinking, but ... of the meeting ... spite of the fact ... Department is going ... deducting our ... and cut off the ... President's salary ... meeting voted ... action.

We will be ... teachers not ... BAAPS and ... inspector panels ... Department sets ... do, we will ... time the inspect... schools. In ... names of ... this kind of ... be published ... get a fitting ... new (undeserved) ...

These are strong ... but they were ... ly endorsed by the ... teachers. Too many ... can remember the ... ation that were ... had a "choice" ... SAAPs.

As far as teachers ... concerned, this ... we've won once ... win again.

Utah picket broken for Cowen

POLICE forced the first break in over 200 days of picketing of Utah's Brisbane office on Friday 24 February.

The Seaman's Union has been waging a long, bitter fight against Utah. The seamen are demanding Australian award wages and conditions aboard Utah's five ships carrying coal from Hay Point, where foreign (mainly Spanish) crews are currently employed at under-award rates.

Tugboat crews at Hay Point refuse to work Utah ships until the company has employed Australian seamen on 40 per cent of their ships, in line with international agreements.

picket

Over six months ago the Seamen's Union began a roster system of its members to picket Utah's offices.

But a week ago the Governor-General, Sir Zelman Cowen, arrived in Brisbane, and his planned path happened to come close to the picket line.

So to avoid any injury to the sensitive feelings of His Uselessness, the seamen were removed by the police twenty minutes beforehand.

But the seamen face more dangerous challenges than Zelman Cowen.

In response to identical writs by the Federal Government and Utah, an interim injunction has been granted by the Federal Court, to restrain the seamen at Hay Point from any further action against Utah.

This is the first use of the new powers granted to employers under the amendments to the Trade Practices Act.

The Seamen's Union says other injunctions are being held in readiness by employers all over the country, awaiting the outcome of the Utah struggle.

Obviously the seamen's fight against the court case and their demand for Australian award conditions will receive the support of all unionists.

But to demand the replacement of foreign crews by Australian crews is another matter. It simply falls for the bosses' old trap of "divide and rule" if we see the answer to our problems in throwing foreign workers out of jobs.

BUS STOPPAGE[S]

ADELAIDE bus drivers are holding a series of 24 ... stoppages over working conditions.

The 1500 members of the Australian Tramway ... Motor Omnibus Employees Association are seeking ... working day, paid meal breaks in the middle of shifts ... to be evenly balanced on broken shifts, and an extra ... annual leave.

They are amongst the few workers in industry today ... have to contend with broken shifts.

The union has paired off the eight bus depots ... Adelaide. It is calling out two depots at a time ... stoppage a week, in rotation.

Don't rely on the dailies for your industrial news...

SUBSCRIBE to The Battler!

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18 Mar 1978

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

20 cents

23 MAR 1978
23 MAR 1978 ... OF VICTORIA

NATIONAL URANIUM MOBILISATION

All the Marches

MELBOURNE
Friday 31 March, 3-30pm
Flagstaff Gardens.

SYDNEY
Saturday 1 April at 10-30am
Belmore Park, opp Central.

ADELAIDE
Saturday 1 April at 10am,
Hindmarsh Square.

BRISBANE
Saturday 1 April at 10am,
King George Square

CANBERRA
Friday 31 March at 5-00pm,
City Hill.

Demonstrator tells...

HOW WE BLOCKED A URANIUM SHIP

Cops riot on I.W.D

FIFTY marchers were arrested in Brisbane as police tried to wreck the International Womens' Day march on March 11.

Many demonstrators were roughed up by the cops. One person had his ankle injured and had to be taken to hospital. Several others were bruised.

Some of the bails were as high as \$200.

However, we managed to march a considerable distance before the cops stopped us.

The International Women's Day committee advertised beforehand that we were going to march to King George Square.

The police were mostly between the Roma St. Forum and King George Square. But instead of going in that direction, we went the opposite way.

We started to head out towards King George Square. But as we came out of the Forum, we suddenly turned the other way – up Roma St instead of down.

The cops were very slow to react. They seemed reluctant at first to get in front of the march to stop it. At first there were only a few in position and they obviously didn't relish the task of trying to block us.

Earlier there were two motions put up to the rally of over 400 people.

One was a motion to march in twos and threes along the footpath, which is legal. The other was a motion to march in the street.

The motion to march in the street was overwhelmingly carried. Most people in the rally marched.

turn to p3

by John Minns

URANIUM ORE has started moving through Australian ports again, now that the ACTU sellout is in force.

But we're making it as tough as possible for them to get it out.

A shipment of uranium was due to leave Brisbane on Monday 6 March, aboard the U.S. ship, the "Austral Entente".

To block it, we smuggled ourselves onto the wharf and surrendered one by one.

Our aim was to delay it long enough so it would have to wait for the next high tide – a cost to the shipping company of thousands.

We almost succeeded.

picket

At the Civil Liberties demonstration two days earlier, organisers announced that the yellowcake was due to leave the port. Many demonstrators went to the wharf and set up a continuous picket.

At the picket, we found support from the crew of another ship in port, the "Jeparit".

The seamen from the "Jeparit" went aboard the "Austral Entente" and tried to persuade its crew to come out and talk to us.

None of the crew knew they'd be carrying uranium!

In any case, they were not given a chance to hear our arguments. The moment they left the ship, they were picked up by unmarked police cars and taken off the wharf by a gate half a mile away from the picket.

Meanwhile, the wharfies allowed several of us to address them.

The situation was clear. Their union, the WWF, feels bound by the ACTU decision to handle uranium exported under existing contracts.

So if any gang refused to load the uranium, they would almost certainly be sacked and given no support by the union.

All shifts agreed that if either demonstrators or police came onto the wharf, they would stop work for safety reasons.

Most wharfies supported our action. One said, *"The ACTU has made hypocrites of us."*

The picket drew considerable attention from the Queensland Police Force.

At least two carloads of Special Branch watched us and listened to conversations over their new long-wave directional microphones.

On Monday morning at 4.30 am, over 200 police arrived in buses at the wharf.

But by then we had made our plans.

Already groups from the picket had slipped onto the wharf and were hiding there.

Several groups were discovered by wharfies and storemen and packers, but were not reported or ordered off.

From when the uranium containers were brought through the gate at 6.30 am, until the ship sailed at 10.00 am, each group in turn came out of hiding and ran about the wharves attracting attention.

This brought loading to a halt and drew the cops onto the wharves to drag us off.

succeeded

We succeeded in delaying the ship for two hours. It was only because it was lightly loaded that it was able to sail at all that day.

Response to this action within the anti-uranium movement has been good.

Rather than an ineffective vigil, an attempt was made to actually stop the shipment.

Given the determination of Fraser and the uranium companies to export yellowcake, the anti-uranium movement will have to prepare for many more such actions.

between the lines

IT would seem that the cosy relationship between the NSW police force and the Sydney underworld is going to become a little more public in the next few weeks.

South Australia's Attorney-General, Peter Duncan, has named Abe Saffron as a leading underworld figure and claimed that he had a close relationship with several senior NSW cops.

One of the documents he tabled was a statement by a former prostitute, Shirley Brifman, who was murdered a few months after she announced she was going to blow the lid on police involvement in organised crime.

She claimed that she had been promised protection for her brothel by the then Chief Commissioner of Police, Norman Allen himself.

She names police she claims organised bank hold-ups, who organised customers for her brothel and organised protection for her.

■

AND another bombshell exploded when a well-known organised crime figure, David Freeman, was ordered from the members enclosure at Randwick racecourse last year.

He had been admitted through the membership ticket of Murray Farquhar, NSW's chief stipendiary magistrate.

The magistrate's court is always next to the police station and the magistrates rely heavily on the police for information and evidence in court cases. Being chief magistrate, Murray Farquhar would know both police and leading criminals well.

So how does well-known SP operator, David Freeman, usually referred to in the Press as "Mr Big", get into the races on the ticket of one of the state's chief law enforcers?

■

BUT of course, all of this is merely scratching the surface. When are the papers going to get into the third corner of the triangle, the State Liberal Party.

For instance, they must have known about the illegal casino owned by a former State Premier, who had a very soft spot for the police.

His name? It's yours for the askin'.

■

SPEAKING of lurks, a certain Melbourne surgeon is on a good one.

He specializes in putting in heart pacemakers. Once the operation is done, there's virtually nothing that can go wrong.

But this doctor gets each patient to ring him weekly to report back – then charges them $10 per phone call.

Just another corrupt doctor? Maybe.

But this doctor is also currently working on a book exposing the medical profession!

■

"I'M not interested in changing society. I was never interested in doing that. I always accepted society for what it was and just dealt with my own feelings."

That kind of bullshit from any artist would just about be enough to qualify for a specially corrugated Battler Plastic Straw.

But when it's Bob Dylan, you feel he oughta get a straw the size of a sewer pipe.

by Darth Vader

BRISBANE MARCH BREAKS THROUGH POLICE LINES

BRISBANE cops arrested 70 more demonstrators on March 4.

It was the most organised and determined march yet against Joh Bjelke-Petersen's ban on street-marches.

After a rally of 800 in the City Square, about 400 people formed up, linked arms, and marched onto the road by an exit decided on in advance and known only to ten elected marshals.

We hit the police lines at a gallop, in a street where they least expected us.

The line bent and actually broke for a few moments, before enough reinforcements arrived to drag us off the road or into the paddy-wagons.

Despite the relatively small size of the demonstration, it was the most militant yet in the long campaign to defend basic democratic rights.

The campaign has moved past passive civil disobedience, with demonstrators meekly offering themselves for arrest. It is now clear that the right to march will only be won back when we are able to stage a march that the police cannot stop.

Marches also took place in several provincial cities. Twenty arrests resulted from these.

foiled

In Townsville, after the cops prevented the main march taking place, thirty demonstrators foiled them by moving to a shopping centre a few miles away. There they marched unimpeded.

Civil liberties co-ordinating committees have been set up in over twenty Queensland towns.

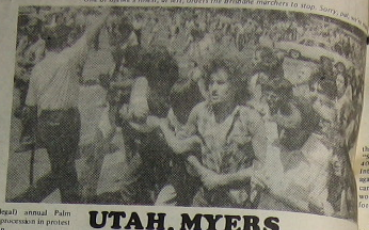
pressure

With every march attempt in the campaign so far, more pressure has been put on the Liberal Party, the minor party in the coalition government.

After March 4, even the churches decided to cancel their (legal) annual Palm Sunday procession in protest at the ban.

As a start to the Democratic Rights campaign for 1978, the march has played an important part in again raising the issue, and focussing and strengthening the wide-spread, though inactive, opposition to Petersen.

One of Bjelke's finest, at left, orders the Brisbane marchers to stop. Sorry, pal, we're [illegible]



UTAH, MYERS THREATEN UNIONS

MAJOR confrontations are looming with two of Australia's [illegible] companies.

Coal miners employed by Utah in central Queensland, and storemen [illegible] for Myers in Melbourne, could both be hit by new industrial legislation [illegible] their struggles.

In Queensland [illegible] Utah coalminers [illegible] demanding a $[illegible] rise, to make up [illegible] erosion of their [illegible] pay, which has [illegible] on $23 since 197[illegible].

The miners [illegible] had two 48-hour [illegible]. Now they have [illegible] ban on.

The miners [illegible] difficult fighting [illegible] own. Utah has [illegible] six-month supply of [illegible].

But if the miners [illegible] support from [illegible] workers to stop the [illegible] ment of Utah's stockp[illegible] then Utah will get desper[illegible].

And that could [illegible] the first use of [illegible] Petersen's "right-to-[illegible]" scab legislation, if [illegible] brings in scabs to [illegible] coal.

sackings

Meanwhile in Melbourne [illegible] Myers has already [illegible] a writ under the [illegible] Practices Act to [illegible] by the Storemen and [illegible] Union on deliveries [illegible] stores.

Myers storemen [illegible] fighting against [illegible] that Myers [illegible] following a [illegible] their operation. [illegible] men have already [illegible] two days.

Two of [illegible] workers had been [illegible] Myers for eight [illegible]. Myers wouldn't [illegible] alternative jobs, [illegible] give them any [illegible] pay, and is even [illegible] continue negotiating [illegible] the union.

The Myers writ [illegible] an injunction to [illegible] ban. If the storemen [illegible] to lift it, the union [illegible] fined up to $250,000 [illegible] right – a quarter [illegible] million) and individual members $50,000.

$mil meatworks scandal

THE FARMERS and Graziers' meatworks in Melbourne has always been well known for its loyalty to the Victorian Meatbosses Association.

And its delight at being able to victimise militants.

Now it's bankrupt. And it appears that the financial problems of the meatworks weren't caused by the "excessive" wages of the meat workers.

managers

In fact, the continuing financial troubles of the Farmers' and Graziers' Co-operative are caused by its managers, the people who claim to know best how to run the business.

Over one and three-quarter million dollars of the Co-operative's funds were lent to companies operated by Maxwell Newton.

Newton lost the money publishing the 'Sunday Observer', the most rabidly rightwing, anti-worker, anti-union newspaper ever printed in this country.

And the State Labor Party is claiming that the managers of the Co-operative along with senior Liberal ministers and meat industry interests lied to the farmer shareholders and the public about the co-op's financial dealings.

In 1968, the Co-operative was forced into receivership after other meat works owners had manipulated the market.

The firm who administered the Co-operative was accountancy practice Marquant and Lanifer. They appointed Leslie Smart, one of their accountants, to do the job.

Smart got himself appointed Chairman of Directors.

But in 1975, the Co-operative ran short of funds. They had been embezzled by Smart, who had "loaned" $1.8 million to Marquant and Lanifer who had passed it on to Maxwell Newton's publishing company.

In June 1975, the Co-operative again went into receivership.

It took two years before Hamer got the fraud squad to investigate. He is refusing to conduct a public inquiry.

The meat industry smells another killing. One company, Protean, has already arranged to buy the main meatworks at Brooklyn for a bargain basement price.

Sydney Uni Kangaroo Court

SYDNEY University continues its kangaroo court trials of students charged with demonstrating against Eysenck last year.

Cases are currently being heard on appeal to the University Senate. The Senate is actually increasing the penalties against several of the students.

The Senate has made it clear that what is in question is not the legality of the charges (which include *"participation in a demonstration"* and *"shouting or chanting"*), or whether or not they've been proved.

What the Senate is judging is the "attitude" or politics of the students concerned. And in discussion they have referred to the *"immaturity"* of charged students, suggesting that they would benefit from being off campus for a while.

They have also accused students of being *"unrepentant."*

The proceedings amount to a campaign against the student left. Of the 16 people charged, 12 are left-wing activists on campus, including members of the International Socialists and the Communist Party.

demonstrations

Although there were demonstrations against Eysenck at every campus that he visited in Australia, and he was prevented from speaking in Melbourne as well as in Sydney, Sydney University is the only one that has taken action against demonstrators.

Now that term has started, meetings of students are being organised to protest against the victimisation of activists, and against the hypocrisy of University administrators who say they are defending "freedom of speech".

This is the same administration that is controlling students on their political beliefs and denying them the right to demonstrate.

by Jean Pender[illegible]

"SACK MURDOCH NOT WOMEN"

Workers coming out of the Murdoch building added "Sack Fraser too!" as about 40 women demonstrated on International Women's Day against the Murdoch press campaign to force married women out of the work-force.

The Australian and other Murdoch papers have been running stories blaming married women workers for youth unemployment – with articles like the Australian's *"If mum quit work there'd be more jobs for the boys (and girls)"*.

RIGHT: Cops drag homeless women from the empty house they occupied in Glebe, NSW.

THIS IS HOW THE COPS CELEBRATED I.W.D...

by Janet Vaux

COPS in Sydney celebrated International Women's Day by arresting 16 women squatting in an empty house in Derwent Street, Glebe.

Several homeless women had moved into the house, owned by the Glebe Estate, which had been empty for the past six months.

When the cops arrived to evict them on Wednesday morning, the women and a number of supporters barricaded themselves in a top room.

Leaning out of the windows, they explained why they had moved into the empty house:

"We are women with little or no income.

"Women with children – women on their own because their husband has bashed them, or left them, or been put in jail – can't afford high rents."

The cops soon got the back windows nailed up, and guarded the front door to stop any more supporters entering the house.

They wanted to board up the front doors and windows too. But the Glebe Estate workmen refused to do the job while the women were in the house.

About noon, the upstairs door was broken down by Commonwealth detectives.

As the women were dragged out of the house, they were chanting *"Women need houses!"* along with a few other pointed comments about the cops who were arresting homeless women on International Women's Day.

...WHILE NIFTY NEV DRANK TO WOMENS' RIGHTS

wining

Meanwhile, Neville Wran was wining and dining 150 token women on the 31st floor of the State Office Block to celebrate International Womens' Day.

The Press reported it as the first recognition of IWD by the State Government.

This must have impressed the homeless women of Derwent St. as they were carted away in Wran's police wagons.

WOMEN'S CHARTER STRANGLED

THE SPECIAL Unions Conference to discuss a charter for working women, being held in Melbourne on March 15 and 16, has been organised in such a way to guarantee a bureaucratic stranglehold on the proceedings.

It won't get a chance to do anything really useful.

The very existence of the conference is due to the efforts of rank and file unionists. Especially women connected with the Working Women's Charter Campaign (not to be confused with the ACTU working women's charter), who pushed the idea through the 1977 ACTU Congress.

But because of the conference structure, it will be impossible for substantial suggestions to come from the floor.

And it is bound to be an intimidating and baffling experience for anyone who's not used to enduring formal meeting proceedings and long inconsequential speeches.

Large union conferences are never an easy place for rank and file unionists to make their voice heard.

attempts

This conference, however, will be made even worse than usual because of a procedural rule that any amendments or attempts to change the charter will immediately be ruled out of order!

To symbolise the iron grip of the ACTU executive on the conference, it will be opened by Bob Hawke.

Press – including socialist working-class newspapers – will be allowed in only for the opening speech.

After opening proceedings Hawke will leave, secure in the knowledge that nothing unforseen will be allowed to happen.

· SYDNEY

Above: A young IWD protestor hands out leaflets at Melbourne's Post Office.

· MELBOURNE

MAY HOBBS TELLS OF THE LONDON CLEANERS STRIKE

"THEY wouldn't let me work at the Ministry of Defence. They thought I'd find out top secret information about the number of waste paper baskets in the place.

strike

"When we went on strike there, they said we were endangering national security.

"We didn't waste time banning the entry of paper and pencils and so on. We let them go on working. We stopped mail. But we also stopped food, and we stopped their gin and tonics. That really hurt them.

"We also made all the old generals walk in. We wouldn't let their Rolls Royces through."

As a part of the week's activities round International Women's Day May Hobbs gave a talk at the Surrey Hills Public Library on the London night cleaners' strikes of 1970.

May Hobbs was a leading militant in the night cleaners action group which, with the help of the women's movement and others, grew to involve 2,000 women isolated in different jobs over London.

She described how the strike literally changed the lives of the women involved.

Women who'd never been involved in industrial action before discovered they could fight the bosses and win.

bashed

And some of them also discovered they could stand up to their husbands pretty well. One woman came to the picket after she'd been bashed by her husband. She didn't let that stop her.

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME

ADDRESS

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TRADE UNION

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The U.S. Coal Strike

"YOU CAN'T DIG COAL WITH BAYONETS"

THE great American coal strike is still on – and is as solid as ever.

As The Battler goes to press, the US government and even some officials of the coal miners' union, the United Mine Workers (UMWA), are trying to pressure the workers to return.

Mine workers picketing steel plants to win support.

The strike was opposed from the beginning by the union's president, Arnold Miller, who was elected three years ago on a reform ticket. But rank and file miners were prepared to risk not only opposition from their officials, but also retaliation from the government.

Behind the strike there are two major issues. The whole American economy is suffering from the squeeze on their super-profits caused by the capitalist economic crisis.

pay

And the response of big business is to make the workers pay. And that include American as well as overseas workers.

The employers want to force a major reduction in the pay and conditions of American workers. The coal companies are the first major employer group to attempt this. And if they succeed in crushing the traditionally militant miners, then car-workers and steel workers will be the next to feel the knife.

The companies tried to force through a series of cuts which went right to the heart of the miners' problems. They were aimed at cutting back on medical care, pensions and safety provisions in one of the most dangerous industries in the country.

So the strike had been coming for months. In fact it was virtually planned by the coal companies.

They demanded a new contract (award) that took away the miners' full medical coverage, that took away their cost-of-living rises, that fined miners for "wildcat" strikes and shattered hours, overtime and working conditions.

For the mining communities who've lived with explosions, black lung and speed up for years, it was just too much.

After all, the union's health fund was one of the main organising weapons the UMWA had. If the contract had been accepted, it would have led to the rapid disorganising of the union.

When they first went out on strike, on December 6 last year, the miners were fighting for the very life of their union.

Everyone expected the strike to collapse quickly. The coal companies have opened up vast non-union stripmines in the west; and big coal users, such as the steel mills and electricity utilities, built up huge stock piles of coal and boasted how long they could hold out against any miners' strike.

But the miners have wiped the smiles off their faces.

Most coal stocks are dangerously low and running out fast. Electricity restrictions are widespread in the American mid-west and some factories have been forced to close down.

Supplies of non-union coal have been cut by daring pickets. And the same rank and file determination that started the strike has kept it going.

Since the coal companies have failed to smash the union, big business has forced President Jimmy Carter to intervene in the dispute.

rejected

Carter's "negotiators" worked out a compromise with the UMWA officials, only to see it rejected by the rank and file.

Now Carter has invoked the repressive Taft-Hartley Act, which says that the miners must go back to work for an 80 day cooling-off period. But the miners have ignored three major Taft-Hartley injunctions before and they're doing so again.

One effect of Carter's latest move has been to swing a lot of trade union support, both official and unofficial behind the mine-workers.

The United Auto Workers (UAW) have given $2 million to the Mine-workers and the United

National ... with ... coal ...

Steel ... million.

Car ... food, ... have ... organised ... The first ... 22, Cadillac ... off three ...

There ... from workers ... stood down ... the strike.

American ... stage, are ... against the ... Jimmy Carter ... union officials.

In doing ... only fighting ... American workers ... rebuilding ... tradition of ... made America ... great.

China's New Ord...

CHINA'S fifth National People's Congress ... went with little controversy.

Predictably, ... proposals from the ... committee of ... communist party ... passed unanimously ... carefully ... delegates, purged ... leftist sentiments ... 'gang of four' ... and by the dominant ... the party's leaders.

The congress ... the goal of the ... modernisations" – ... ture, industry, ... defence, science ... technology – ... now been written ... constitution.

order

China's leaders ... called for "law ... and jumped at ... rights ... hypocritically ... Jimmy Carter.

What is the ... this? It is the ... that socialism ... built in one country ... is not linked ... capitalist ... and it depends ... modernise ... clothe and ... many millions.

Pulling itself ... own bootstraps ... preached by Mao ... 'gang of four', ... sacrifices. And ... these sacrifices ... emphasis of ... incentives, China ... catch up on its own.

technocrats

Now that the last ... maoists have died ... purged, the way is ... Premier Hua, Vice-Premier Teng and other ... crats, who would ... have been called ... readers', to import ... needed technology.

And the ... technologically ... nation is the USA ... get this know-how ... Carter China's leaders ... pushing their ... human rights and ... rid of the mass ... the Cultural Revolution ... days – "law and ... to encourage ...

FRANCE: WHAT IF THE LEFT WINS?

Socialist Party leader Francois Mitterand (left). President Giscard d'Estaing (centre), and Communist Party chief Georges Marchais (right). Will the election of a Socialist-Communist coalition government trigger a new wave of working-class militancy?

THE current French elections could trigger the most powerful wave of workers' struggles since May 1968.

Ten per cent inflation and five percent unemployment could bring the downfall of the right-wing coalition between the Gaullists, the Republicans and the smaller Christian Democrats and Radicals.

And in their place – for the first time in twenty years – could be a left parliamentary coalition of the Socialist and Communist Parties.

At the first round of the poll, the Socialists, Communists and Far Left got 50% of the vote, and the Right 46%. (Far Left parties scored 4%)

If the Socialists and Communists do form a government, they will face some of the problems the ALP faced here, in 1972-75.

Already there are signs of an outflow of capital. And the President, Giscard D'Estaing, a Republican, has the power to "do a Kerr" and dismiss the parliamentary government, as well as call referendums on any proposed legislation.

But there the similarities end. Because the Socialists and Communists have programs which are to the left of the ALP's.

The Socialists, for example, promise an immediate 30 per cent rise in the minimum wage, creation of 400,000 jobs, and a partial price and profit freeze.

The Communists say they want even stronger reforms. For example, the nationalization of major companies employing millions.

There is little doubt that if they are elected, the Socialists and Communists will immediately start retreating from these promises. That will be the price of playing the parliamentary game and trying to govern a crisis-ridden capitalist economy.

And it will also be a result of the influence that other western imperialist powers have cultivated in the Socialist Party; the large number of middle class, professionals and small capitalists in the Socialist Party's base; and the closeness of the Communist Party to Russia, which will not want France upsetting its detente with the U.S.

But whether the millions of French workers who vote for the left will accept a retreat is another matter entirely.

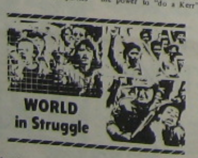
There have already been two one-day general strikes against the current Government's austerity policies.

After twenty years of Gaullist rule, they will be expecting improvements – and fast.

If a left government tries to back-track on its reform program under pressure from the ruling class, we can expect explosions.

And the French revolutionary left, which already has thousands of workers in it, will grow as a result.

With May 1968 still fresh in their minds, no wonder the French ruling class and the imperialist powers are getting so edgy.



WORLD in Struggle

THE Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) government is ending the mass-based "popular power committees" that sprang up during the national liberation struggle.

This was announced by Angolan President Neto in a speech to the Congress of the MPLA held in December.

outlawed

Neto is attempting to subject all organizations to the control of the MPLA. So popular organizations which the MPLA can't control will be outlawed.

The popular committees arose when the MPLA was leading the struggle for liberation against armies backed by the CIA and South Africa, (the FNLA and UNITA) which murdered thousands of MPLA supporters.

Black workers and unemployed of the capital, Luanda, responded by organizing self-defence committees under the heading of "popular power".

They organized militias driving out the FNLA and UNITA making Luanda a safe base for the MPLA to win the war.

The MPLA won the support of the masses because it was a genuine liberation movement fighting Portuguese colonialism and the imperialist backed FNLA and UNITA.

But the MPLA leadership has never stood for a revolutionary state based on workers power. It's now more interested in maintaining the confidence of multi-national oil companies than in the power of workers and peasants.

That means crushing the independent organizations of workers and peasants.

☐

MAORIS are waging a land rights campaign against the New Zealand government and the Tory Auckland Regional Authority.

In January 1977 the people of the Ngati Whatua tribe occupied Bastion Point, Land which traditionally belonged to them but had been taken away by the government.

They are demanding that the 160 acres around Bastion Point be returned to the Maoris. But the Auckland city fathers want to turn this prime land into an exclusive housing area for the rich.

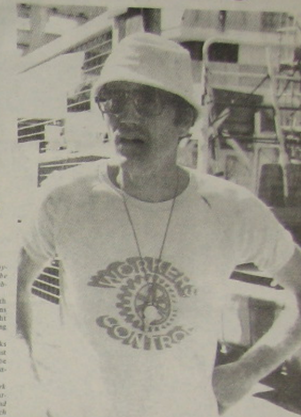
The trade unions have put a green ban on any work at Bastion Point.

The government is taking the occupiers to court. They are also denying the Maoris any legal aid.

In spite of police bashings, and the likelihood of the leaders being jailed, our latest reports indicate that protest rallies and pickering are increasing and winning much needed support.

Brian Rix tells

WHY GALLAGHER'S GOT TO GO!



BRIAN Rix is a dogman at the Qantas Construction site in central Sydney, where he's worked for the past 7 years.

He's originally from England, and he's been out here nearly 18 years. He's married and got 2 kids.

The BLs for Democracy candidate talks to Andy Milner

Brian is not a full-time union official and, until the past few weeks, he'd never been a TV star.

But, nonetheless, he's challenging 'Big Norm' Gallagher for the post of Federal Secretary of the Builders Labourers Federation.

On January 23rd, the Federal Court ruled Gallagher's election void – on the grounds that Brian's exclusion last time was unconstitutional.

Since then Brian has attracted a fair bit of attention in the press and TV.

But when you ask him if he's the leader of the anti-Gallagher group, he's quick to say 'no', he's not the leader, merely "a part of the rank and file committee".

The rank and file committee is the Sydney-based 'Builders Labourers for Democratic Control'.

They've been organising against Gallagher's federal leadership for some time now, and, at last, they're beginning to get the scent of victory.

Four years ago the Gallagher federal leadership intervened to smash the independence of the NSW branch.

democracy

Since then, union democracy has become a thing of the past in the state. There were no branch meetings at all for 2 years.

And when they were finally held, they took place in various bush centres, far from Sydney where the majority of the membership lives and works.

All of this is fairly well known. But Brian Rix is pretty insistent that the union is none too democratic even outside NSW.

On the last national wage campaign, Brian points out, *"There has been absolutely no way in which the rank and file of Builders Labourers nationally have ever been asked what they want to fight for".*

And Brian can point to the evidence of standover tactics in Victoria, as well as in NSW.

"People who disagree with Gallagher have been offloaded off jobs with the connivance of Gallagher with the employers.

"Blokes have been pushed out to little jobs in the suburbs where they're ineffective".

Against this the rank and file group is campaigning for the maximum possible rank and file democracy.

Brian says, *"As far as we're concerned the rank and file should produce all the leading positions, and likewise, the people holding the leading positions should go back to the rank and file, back to the job."*

Apart from union democracy, there are three main issues which the rank and file committee is concentrating on – unemployment, subcontracting, and relations with other unions in the industry.

In Brian's opinion all three are linked.

He says, *"The unemployment situation could be eased by eliminating subcontracting".*

And cooperation with the tradesmen's unions would make it easier to fight on all issues – including unemployment.

One of the main planks in the campaign against unemployment should be the demand for more investment in public works.

"There is plenty of work to be done on state institutions, such as hospitals, and state works generally, such as state housing".

If the things that are needed were built, then there'd be no unemployment in the building industry.

BLs for Democratic Control are in favour of co-operation with other unions on other matters besides unemployment.

Brian cites the example of the $6 travelling component which the BWIU recently got for its members.

refusing

"The Builders Labourers executive were refusing to back any action by the tradesmen to get this money.

"But if they don't get it, there's no way the builders labourers will get it. So, in fact, it is a battle which we should be involved in."

In order to be able to stand for election against Gallagher, Brian had to go to the courts.

Many militants are, quite rightly, deeply suspicious of court involvement in union affairs. But Brian defends his action in this particular case.

"Generally, I believe that the court should have nothing to do with the internal workings of the union. The union should run its own affairs.

"But unfortunately, when the union becomes undemocratic, and doesn't run by its own rules, then you've got to find some other way of attempting to get the union back on the rails.

"I believe that I was doing the right thing by the rank and file. I think that they're entitled to have a vote for the General Secretary's position."

In any case, Brian argues that Gallagher is a hypocrite to accuse his opponents of going to the bosses' court, when his leadership openly collaborated with the bosses to smash the NSW branch.

"Gallagher did seek, and got, help from the Master Builders Association.

"I think there is no way in which Gallagher could have completed intervention without the help of the builders involved in the MBA."

But despite the bosses' support for Gallagher, Brian is optimistic about the rank and file committee's chances. He is convinced that the Gallagher leadership is finished in NSW.

"Since intervention, conditions have done nothing but go down.

"The leadership have got absolutely no support. Their attitude to the rank and file is bad, their attitude to other unions is bad.

"I think that by at least 1979, the NSW branch will be back in the hands of the rank and file."

Outside NSW Brian's not quite so confident. In the other states, rank and file candidates won't be backed up by well organised rank and file campaigns like the one in NSW.

But even there Brian thinks that *"Something could happen, there could be an upset."*

"Gallagher hasn't come forward with the money. We've lost heaps of money around the 1.9% indexation last year. We haven't as yet got the four dollar increase the tradesmen got in August.

support

"He's got a lot to make up what he's cost builders labourers."

Brian has been surprised by the support that is coming from Melbourne and Brisbane.

Three weeks ago a meeting of thirty militants in Brisbane agreed to support the rank and file campaign and to send delegates to meetings in Sydney.

Brian Rix has actually met Norm Gallagher, although 'Big Norm' probably won't remember the occasion.

It was in the Hyde Park Motel, in Sydney, where Gallagher was staying, and it was at the time of intervention. Gallagher had called in job delegates to find out how they stood.

Brian said that he opposed intervention.

Gallagher's response was, as Brian remembers it, *"If you get in the way, I'll crush you like I've crushed them"* – that is, the old NSW leadership.

Brian Rix hasn't been crushed. And neither has the Builders Laborers for Democratic Control.

The rank and file is not that easy to crush.

Norm Gallagher – he once told Brian Rix, "If you get in the way, I'll crush you."

The smears have started

THE campaign in the BLF is hotting up for the Federal Secretary election and five positions in the NSW State Branch.

David Shaw, BLF, reports

Gallagher has already kicked off the campaign with a couple of slanderous leaflets attacking individual members of the BLF rank and file.

We are not particularly worried about these leaflets. The lies in them are easily disproved.

For example, one leaflet claims that $93,000 was withdrawn during the takeover of the NSW branch and "has never been returned to the Federation".

But this money was returned. In fact, Gallagher's own lawyer recently stated in court that they were not accusing the former NSW BLF leadership of stealing any money.

And the Builders Labourers for Democratic Control has auditors' reports available for inspection proving that there was no corruption or financial mismanagement.

disreputable

Gallagher's lawyer actually stated that the only charge they were now making against the former NSW leadership was that they were "disreputable characters" – because the NSW branch made donations to Fretilin, conservation groups and other non-union causes!

The style of these pathetic leaflets produced by the Gallagher-Black machine shows how weak their position really is.

Instead of talking about policies for the building industry that will help building workers, they attack personalities and tell lies.

Why? – Because they have been in bed with the boss so long that they have no policies for B.Ls. They don't even care about our welfare.

On the other hand, **Builders Labourers for Democratic Control** have come forward with a programme for the building industry.

This programme includes policies that can protect builders labourers against unemployment, deteriorating safety conditions, falling real wages, and the lack of democracy in the union. All of which have been rampant under Gallagher's regime.

Our policy is not just hollow words either. These are the things that our team will actually fight for on the jobs if we are elected.

Here in Sydney, on Monday 13th March, **Builders Labourers for Democratic Control** had a mass meeting in the Trades Hall to elect our state election candidates and ratify the programme.

Even if we win all positions in the NSW elections, we won't control the branch executive. But we know B.L.s are interested in concrete policies and action – not the hollow rhetoric of Gallagher and co.

That is why the rank and file will run the BLF again in this state. Sooner than Norm Gallagher thinks.

BUILDING TRADES
RANK AND FILE
AGAINST CORRUPTION

One of Gallagher's smear sheets – authorized by a bogus rank-and-file committee.

...hting Uranium where we work

AUSTRALIA hasn't yet seen the fierce mass struggles against nuclear power that have occurred elsewhere in the world.

But the Australian anti-uranium movement is more developed in one way. It has won more support in the unions than in any other country.

An important development has been work-place anti-uranium groups. The Battler spoke to members of two of these groups about how they went about setting them up, and what they do.

Jenny Murray, an ATEA member at Redfern Mail Exchange, told us:

"We set up the MAUM group before the October 27th mobilization last year.

"A group of us walked out of the exchange one day, and there were people out the re... handing out anti-uranium leaflets for the mobilization.

"Some of us said: 'Gee, wouldn't be a really great idea to try to mobilize the work... have 3,000 people work in... would be good to get a bo... them on side.

"So we decided to have a meeting.

"We put up notices all aro...

REDFERN

"From all that we got ten people to the first meeting!

"But then we saturated the place with leaflets from MAUM and FOE, about the mobilization. We put them on benches, and notice boards and handed them out to everybody we could. We got a few hassles from the supervisors this time...

"And on the march we got a turn out of about 30 or 40 people to march behind the banner. We thought that was pretty good. It was surprising some of the people who turned out, people who hadn't been to any of the meetings.

"When we handed out the leaflets, some people didn't care. But other people were really interested. They thought it was great to see somebody doing something. And then a lot of people did turn up to march with us.

"We approached the Union and they put out a letter urging delegates to give us support. And also the Redfern Mail Exchange branch gave us their support, and supplied us with what we needed in the way of paper and printing and so on.

"We were also hoping to put on a seminar under the auspices of TUTA (Trade Union Training Authority). But the Federal Government is threatening to take control of TUTA at the moment, so we don't have much hope of that now.

political

"Management have rules about not having so-called 'political' speakers on the premises. So we can't get any speakers from MAUM, for example.

"And they wouldn't let us show videos or films. They said it "might offend some of the workers" if they were shown in the canteen, and they wouldn't give us permission to use the cinema. Then the APT said we could use their room — but management blocked that too!

"So they haven't exactly been helpful.

"Now we're organising around the current mobilization in much the same way as before.

"But it's more difficult this time. Management have changed the shift times, so that now there's no common time for people on different shifts to meet.

"And some people have given up a bit because of the ACTU decision. But we certainly haven't all given up! Now that the Christmas period is over we aim to get going again with educational material. Perhaps try to put on a seminar.

"And we'll be marching with our banner on April 1st!"

Barry Corbett is involved with the Naval Dockyards MAUM group in Melbourne. Barry said:

NAVAL DOCKYARD

"We've been going about twelve months now. It was about this time last year that a group of blokes got together to discuss the issue.

"Since then we've set up an informal committee, which meets about once a week at lunch-time to plan action and discuss public meetings.

"The attendance at the meetings varies from a minimum of two or three up to a dozen at times.

"Most blokes on the committee are shop stewards, so there's quite an overlap with the shop committee.

"We've also had a few public meetings at the Oriental Hotel, just down the road.

"The first public meeting we had, we showed the film 'The War Game'. Ivan Circuedge from the ALP also spoke.

the formation of their union.

"The next public meeting we're planning to have at the Oriental will be on the 29th March.

"We'll be showing a film called 'Better Active Today Than Radio-Active Tomorrow'. There will also be a talk from Rita Camilleri of Pax Christi.

"Attendance at those meetings has been quite good, with thirty or forty people attending.

"Also at lunchtimes on Wednesdays, we have a shop called a 'Keep it In The Ground' shop — in the canteen at the dockyards, where we sell literature related to uranium.

"There's still quite a lot of work to do, and you often find difficulty in places like the dockyards when you have a MAUM group, because since Christmas we've had two major industrial disputes, which tend to throw our public meetings out of kilter.

"But then you've got to expect that when you've got a MAUM group at work, and we're full of feelings ways to make it work."

Why not set up an anti-uranium committee where you work? Your local anti-uranium movement office will be able to help with speakers, films and leaflets and badges and stickers to sell.

(Left): Part of the 50,000 strong Kalkar demonstration in Germany. ... for anti-nuclear demonstrators in Europe.

Alec Kahn interviews Dr. Jim Falk

THE WORLDWIDE STRUGGLE AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER

...onal convenor of the Movement ...n Mining, is just back from a series ... anti-nuclear activists in Germany, France, Japan, Sweden, Belgium and Austria.

... Battler his assessment of the ... nuclear power around the world.

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...ment and twenty years of development.

The cost of a new reactor in all regions of the U.S. is greater than the cost of coal-fired electricity generation.

And their capital costs are escalating far more rapidly than those of fossil fuel stations. So they're getting in a progressively worse and worse economic situation.

The reason for that — the major reason — is citizen opposition.

Citizens forcing out the time from when a reactor is actually conceived to when it is finally got going . . . through licensing appeals, through occupations, through a variety of other means . . . forcing them to put on many expensive safety features to cope with some of the physical hazards.

And they're finding it extremely difficult to find anywhere to put the reactors!

For example, in Japan the farmers and the fishermen are refusing to sell their land or their fishing rights to electric power utilities. The only places where they can put them are where there are existing reactors.

And nowadays there's resistance to them even doing that.

This is a general tendency. In many parts of Europe, if they try to build a reactor there's an occupation. Often with people moving across from different countries to the site.

So, they are losing their credibility. You can see this reflected in their sales, which have dropped dramatically all round the world.

In the OECD countries, their estimates of nuclear capacity for 1985 have dropped by 45% in the last two years.

In Japan, estimates for 1985 have dropped from the official estimates of 60 gigawatts electrical to about 22 gigawatts electrical - almost two-thirds.

In America, it's now almost impossible to sell a nuclear reactor domestically.

As well as losing their economic credibility, they're increasingly losing their credibility as being safe.

debate

For example, a major debate going on around the world now is the hazards to workers in nuclear facilities when they are subjected to routine levels of radiation.

The international maximum level is about 5 rem per year. Workers are routinely subjected to levels below that.

A recent study done by Mancuso, Stewart and Neil at Hanford in the U.S. which has been going for 20 years — a multi-million dollar study looked at those workers who have died who have been exposed to levels less than 5 rem per year.

They concluded that of those who died of cancer, 6% of these deaths were due to exposure to supposedly "safe" radiation levels.

Once this was discovered, funding was shifted away from Mancuso and the others. There's just recently been a Congressional inquiry into the covering up of this really shocking evidence.

This has very important implications for workers in nuclear facilities, because the radiation for nuclear reaction is doubling every few years.

They are being exposed to increasing amounts of radiation.

These sorts of considerations, amongst others, led to a strike of workers at the La Hague Processing Plant in France.

unemployment

So far, the unemployment in France has been used to keep a pretty strong hold over those workers. But it did lead to the union federation, CFGT, taking a policy opposed to further nuclear developments — and that's the main coalition of non-Communist trade unions.

This has real implications for Australian workers, who will also be subjected to 5 rem per year in the mines. The workers at Mary Kathleen are being exposed to those sorts of radiation levels.

So we have some very serious problems being revealed which have direct relevance to Australia.

The nuclear industry is suffering serious setbacks. But they're not taking this lying down.

If you look at the nuclear industry and governments around the world, you can see the beginning of a counter-strategy.

subsidize

The first operation, of course, is to subsidize the nuclear industry. Either by giving very low-interest loans to third world countries to buy nuclear reactors — highly inappropriate for them — but this is one way of transferring taxpayers' funds to the nuclear industry.

Or of course, there are direct investment subsidies.

But perhaps more ominously, there are some beginnings of repression of the anti-nuclear movement. It's most serious in France and Germany.

In Germany, the Baader-Meinhof killing of Schleyer has been used as an excuse to whip up public hysteria against "terrorism". And the campaign against terrorism is being extended to anybody who dissents from the Government.

This is being used very strongly against the nuclear opposition.

legislation

So that we've had an estimated 2-3,000 teachers being thrown out of work under the "Berufverbot" legislation, which is legislation that can be used to throw anybody out of a job if they cannot prove that they support the Constitution of Germany.

When Professor Ichikawa from Japan was in Bremen last year, he was visiting a colleague, Dr Schell. While he was in Schell's office, a government official arrived to tell Schell to get out and never return.

Schell had been involved in the demonstrations at Brockdorf against a nuclear reactor, and this was one of the things that was cited against him.

As well, they've used a massive show of police at demonstrations, to intimidate demonstrators and to physically prevent them getting there.

searched

For example, at the Kalkar demonstration the police claimed to have searched and detained for some length of time 150,000 demonstrators.

Now the organizers claimed that 50,000 finally made it to the Kalkar demonstration. Which suggests that each demonstrator was searched on the average three times.

The police used helicopters to stop a trainload of demonstrators getting to the demonstration. They were searched and then just left to walk.

An estimated 20,000 demonstrators were detained for such a long period of time that they were prevented from getting there at all. Many were detained up to seven or eight hours.

police

The police seized not only weapons — or what they called "potential weapons" — but also what they called "passive weapons".

That is, something like a hat which might stop a police baton or a scarf which might stop teargas.

The police have also used another strategy.

There was an anti-nuclear village built just next to Brockdorf, which is another nuclear site.

The police finally cleared out the demonstrators . . . and the demonstration have been sued for the costs of the police action! This could bankrupt them.

Then we've seen an even more horrendous situation at the Creys-Malville site, near Lyons in France.

grenades

There the CRS — the mobile police — used explosive grenades to disperse the demonstrators.

These grenades, when they landed on the ground, left about a one-metre crater.

It was one of these grenades that killed a demonstrator by exploding in front of his chest, and blew the arms and legs off several others.

All this should not be taken as something which should slow us down. Because it's a sign of the strength of the movement.

Indeed, the energy transnationals are suffering, and this should be an expected response.

But it does mean we have to be very vigilant to pick tactics which enable us to protect those who take part in opposing nuclear power.

" In Europe, if they try to build a reactor, there's an occupation"

(Left): A demonstrator injured by an exploding police grenade is carried away at the Creys-Malville demonstration in France. Police grenades killed another demonstrator. (Top Right): The people's school during the occupation of the Whyl reactor site in Germany. (Lower Right): Demonstrator confronts police at the Brockdorf demonstration.

THE BATTLERS

FROM THE SHELF

NOBODY else I know has read The Battlers, and yet it is probably one of the best Australian novels of working class life ever written.

A lot of the Australian fiction of this period (The Battlers was first published in 1941) deserves to be ignored, but this book stands out among the stories of squatters' daughters, horseback adventurers, cane-cutting musclemen and self-indulgent school-teachers for one reason: it is real.

Kylie Tennant did time on the track with the 'bagmen' (lately called 'dole-bludgers') whose struggles she describes in The Battlers, and she has the knack of viewing their lives with sympathy and humanity, but without a trace of superority or romanticism.

Forced to move from dole station to dole station through inhospitable country, the battlers became a tribe of nomads. Thrown on the scrap-heap by the crisis-ridden capitalist system, they developed an intense loyalty to their own kind and an equally intense hatred of coppers. To call a comrade a *"p'lice pimp"* was to become his sworn enemy for life.

worst

The remarkable achievement of this book is that Tennant never tries to make the bagmen into heroes. She lets us see them at their worst – men bashing women and enslaving their daughters, white travellers picking fights with black travellers, or husbands spending entire paychecks at the pub. But we also see them at their best – standing up for each other against bosses, protecting the weak or half witted, sharing everything they own.

Tennant sees the battlers first and foremost as victims. She forgives them everything because they've been on the track too long, and have so often been turned away by cockies or townspeople, too poor or too mean to spare them a drop of water. She sees that the violence and harshness in their lives are the result of their victimisation by the whole society.

But there is no suggestion in The Battler that organized resistance is futile. One of the highlights of the book occurs when, after a long trek from all over the state the travellers arrive at Orion, the cherry growing Mecca where jobs can be got for the asking, only to find that the A.W.U. has called all the pickers out on strike in support of a newly won award. It becomes necessary to a bagman's self-respect to let the cherries (and the much needed wealth they bring) rot on the trees.

Tennant casts an affectionate eye on the doomed Bagmens Union which is organised by the joint efforts of an anarcho-syndicalist and a Stalinist, and sees in it evidence that the bosses and coppers between them have not managed to crush all life out of the travellers.

Tennant's grestest admiration is for the people who battle determinedly against the greatest odds: that is, the women.

Dancy, the book's [illegible] character, fights back w[illegible] thing she's got. She [illegible] steals and works her [illegible] some sort of independ[illegible] yet she is no cardbo[illegible] either. Her first wish [illegible] enough money to buy [illegible] of false teeth to make [illegible] attractive to her mate on [illegible]

If, like me, you were b[illegible] on a diet of Mary Gr[illegible] (remember Nora and [illegible] old Wally?) you should [illegible] Battlers. You'll be [illegible] learn, perhaps, that the[illegible] to life in the 'lower [illegible] nosir and yessir and t[illegible] you good fella true.

And the [illegible] executive of the Bag[illegible] (with a membership [illegible] one of them a [illegible] heart to anyone fi[illegible] isolation and feeli[illegible] which are sympto[illegible] the dole – as it w[illegible] won't be ever more.

by Ju[illegible]

Looking for Mr. Goodbar

WITH THE DECK STACKED AGAINST HER

SHE'S a beautiful woman – strong, young, and independent – who means to find personal fulfillment and sexual satisfaction in her life.

Her desires, her sexuality, and her fantasies are in sharp conflict with her daytime existence – a spectacled teacher of deaf children.

But Theresa Dunn, played brilliantly by Diane Keaton, is not your average school-teacher stereotype. And "Looking for Mr. Goodbar" is not your average Hollywood film.

honest

It is the story of Theresa Dunn, who goes from one bar to another, from one man to another. As a single woman, she is left with little room in this society to find what she wants any other way.

"Goodbar" is one of the best films of the year. It is one of the few times we see women portrayed honestly and not through the eyes or desires of men.

Dunn's sexual fantasies, for instance (fantasies that many men believe women never have), are interspersed visually in the film with the events of her normal daily life.

These fantasies, and the personal freedom she seeks, are in sharp conflict with her strict Catholic upbringing and the guilt she has been trained to feel since childhood. And in conflict with society's moral standards – which would have her go home, watch television, and keep her legs crossed at night.

These are a few of the conflicts that make the film so much like our own lives. From the opening scene, in which Theresa is writing an essay on personal conflict, the movie reveals one contrast after another in her life.

Between her wish for independence, for example, and her authoritarian father.

"So long as you live this house," he screams at her, *"you live by the rules."* *"You're right daddy,"* she says. And she packs her bags, leaving the cultural world of her parents' generation behind her. She moves on to find her own life.

masculinity

But what she encounters is the biggest contrast of them all. The conflict between her own strength, maturity, and lovingness – and the immaturity and tough callousness of the men she sees.

Each of them, from the toughguy ladies' man to the fawning Mr. Clean-type virgin, is hung up on his masculinity. Each responds differently and inadequately to society's inhuman pressures of what a man should be.

What "Goodbar" shows is that these men, and the ways they have reacted to those pressures, are killing her – slowly and symbolically, and in the end, literally.

guilt

Some reviewers of the film have laid the guilt on Dunn – that her death in the end is her own fault. What else can a girl who goes bar-hopping and picks up all kinds of men expect?

Those reviewers have seen nothing but their own values in the movie, for it shows just the opposite. In this, the film deviates from the book that it was originally based upon.

The movie version shows that women looking for full, free, and independent lives have very little option. It shows that healthy relationships between men and women are perverted by social pressures, moral guilt, and brutality.

And "Goodbar" shows a woman who struggles to be free. Her fight is full of freshness, life, and sensitivity.

But she loses – loses the battle and loses her life.

"Looking for Mr. Goodbar" shows why, in this society, it can't be any other way – why Theresa Dunn can't find personal freedom with the deck stacked against her.

reasons

And although the film gives us no way of fighting to change society and winning, it gives us a lot of reasons to want to.

by Terri Ferguson

"BRILLIANT" – that was the response of the daily press to the play, 'Coloured Girls'.

The media said it was a "radical statement" from black women, but after seeing it I came to the conclusion that it was a betrayal of all those who are oppressed, both men and women.

The play includes some good poetry conveying what it must be like to be a black woman, and how she is denied self-identity by black men and white society.

Coloured women rarely feel like [illegible] human beings because they are treated a[illegible] how should black women fight th[illegible] their lack of self-identity? According to '[illegible] Girls', they should look into themselve[illegible] and find a solution there!

One way men frequently put down w[illegible] call them 'girls'. Males over 21 yea[illegible] females are called 'girls' even wh[illegible] approaching 40 and 50 years of age.

This is often the case among facto[illegible] they are called 'the girls' by their boss. [illegible] someone who hasn't yet matured, someo[illegible] a 'man'. 'Coloured Girls' even fails to s[illegible] down in the choice of title.

The play ends with the seven coloured [illegible] joyfully singing:

"I found God in myself
And I loved her fiercely."

As far as I can see, my oppression by [illegible] society is not going to be relieved by my findi[illegible] in myself. Self-knowledge is a necessary step [illegible] changing things, but change is only really p[illegible] come about through action. 'Coloured Girls' [illegible] this key fact.

I also reject the tokenism of a female God. [illegible] of either sex is not going to help my struggle, [illegible] fight of all oppressed people, for social equality.

The play tells us not to change conditions [illegible] us, but to change ourselves (It's called 'confor[illegible] It totally ignores societal, economic and po[illegible] oppression of black women.

As far as 'Coloured Girls' is concerned, op[illegible] occurs only in personal, one-to-one relationship[illegible] one has to do is to avoid these oppressive [illegible] ships and find peace within oneself.

Could we really expect a play sponsored [illegible] 'Women's Weekly' to say anything else? That's [illegible] why our 'objective' media thought the play wa[illegible] – they paid for it!

by Jill [illegible]

James Connolly addressing Dublin workers striking against the privations caused by war. Below: Soldiers hacking down a door searching for Republican rebels.

RED EASTER IN IRELAND

by MICK ARMSTRONG

ON Easter Monday, 1916, Irish revolutionaries seized the G.P.O and a number of prominent buildings in Dublin.

They proclaimed the Irish Republic and dug in to meet the British assault.

There were only about 1,200 of them and their aim was to defy the British for as long as possible.

The uprising was led by an alliance between Irish nationalists and the most militant section of the Dublin working class. The workers were organised in James Connolly's Irish Citizens Army.

strikes

The Irish Transport and General Workers Union, under the leadership of Connolly and Jim Larkin, had originally established the Citizens Army as an armed militia to defend their picket lines from police attack during the wave of strikes and lockouts which swept Ireland prior to the outbreak of World War 1.

Irish working class leader James Connolly – executed by the British army.

Unfortunately, for the rebels, the rising was isolated in Dublin. If all of the 12,000 Irish Volunteers had risen the British troops would have been hard put to crush the insurrection.

Last minute sabotage by Mac Neill, the commander of the Nationalist forces prevented any rising in the countryside.

At first, the rebels caught the British forces unprepared and inflicted heavy casualties. But by the Wednesday, British artillery had been brought in. Also, a British gunboat in the river was shelling the city centre.

Raging fires caused by British incendiary shells eventually dislodged the rebels. After six days of fighting they surrended.

merciless

The British were merciless. Most of the leaders of the rising were shot. Connolly was carried wounded from his hospital bed to face the firing squad.

It may seem that this was just another of the heroic but defeated rebellions against British rule which plague Irish history.

However, a whole generation of Irish republicans was inspired by the Easter events. Massive opposition developed to the British attempts to introduced conscription in Ireland.

By 1921, after a bloody guerilla war, the nationalist forces reorganised in the IRA (Irish Republican Army) had forced the British to quit most of Ireland.

By shooting Connolly the British destroyed at the time any hope that the Irish liberation struggle would lead to socialism.

The leadership of the nationalist movement passed into middle class hands. An independent capitalist Ireland was all they achieved. They were even prepared to concede Britain control of Northern Ireland.

The Irish uprising was the first in a series of uprisings which shook the tottering capitalist system in the wake of World War 1.

The Russian Bolshevik leader Lenin, who was then in exile, was inspired by the Irish rising. At last, somewhere, the workers had risen against the horrors of the war. He bitterly attacked those British socialists who criticised the "nationalism" of James Connolly.

Irish communities scattered around the world turned against the war after the Dublin events. This was particularly important in Australia where a large proportion of the working class were of Irish descent.

The left wing of the Australian labor movement had been vocal in its opposition to any attempts to introduce conscription here.

brutality

They were now joined by the Irish Catholic community. The news of the brutality of the British in Dublin made them less inclined to die for King and Empire in France.

The anger of the Irish Australian community forced the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Daniel Mannix, to oppose conscription and the war.

Mannix, at first, even supported the Russian revolution as a blow against the war. This led to him being summoned to Rome for a dressing down.

The ALP Prime Minister Billy Hughes, an arch empire loyalist, was determined to introduce conscription here. Eventually this led to a split in the Labor Party and Hughes ended up as Prime Minister of a conservative government.

However, both of his attempts to introduce conscription by referenda were defeated.

And for many years after 1916 workers round the world remembered Easter as a day of courageous assult against our masters whose wars we were forced to fight while they counted the gold in their coffers.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

IF you are reading this column in Adelaide you have just finished being edified by a festival of Arts. Here in Melbourne, however, we are filling the gap between the end of the cricket season and the start of the footy in our own inimitable fashion. Yes folks, let's all get together and have fun, Moomba is back again.

This year the papers are telling us that Moomba has "grown up". They said that last year, too, when they appointed Mickey Mouse as king of Moomba.

This year they have appointed Bert Newton as king of Moomba. It's hard to notice the difference except that Mickey Mouse had a tail and somewhat more personality than our Bert.

The Melbourne City Council is celebrating Moomba by closing and digging up the city square. Their long term plan is to make it impossible to hold demonstrations in the square. But it is typical of the sensitivity of the council that they close the square at the only time that it ever serves a half way useful, non-political function.

Also, in celebration of Moomba, the City Council has opened its long awaited Bourke Street shopping mall. All the great cities of the world have shopping malls, so Melbourne must have one too.

Myers are exceptionally pleased, because it might boost their already huge profits. Some of the smaller Bouke Street traders aren't finding it so good for business, but they don't run the council, so that's of no importance.

The only thing is being the Melbourne City Council, they have mucked it up anyway. The idea of a mall is that traffic is barred so that you can wander all over the road.

Wandering all over Bourke Stree Mall, however, proves to be a health hazard because you're likely to get hit by a famous Bourke Street tram. When the Council closed Bourke Street traffic they forgot to get the Tramways Board to stop the trams at Russell Street. This destroys the whole point of

Another great idea goes back to the drawing board!

And so the Moomba Festival drags on featuring the latest leftovers from the Adelaide Festival of Arts till it reaches its climax with the big parade on Labor Day.

That's right. Labor day! You probably haven't heard about it but up until the mid-fifties the second Monday in March was a public holiday to celebrate the victory of workers organisations in winning the eight hour day.

I've got nothing against circuses and parades. It gives the thousands of unemployed something to do.

But it's a bit much when they take away our one day of celebration and give us Bert Newton and Mickey Mouse instead.

SEC looking for trouble

THE Victorian State Electricity Commission is looking for trouble again.

At Hazelwood Station Unit 1, the SEC wanted to defy our bans and start moving contractors in.

They wanted to get an amenities block set up for the contractors to use. So they ordered some SEC electricians to connect it to the mains.

The electricians said they weren't going to connect it up, and the SEC threatened them with the sack.

So the electricians connected it up – the wrong way, so it wasn't any use anyway!

The latest is that Ken Stone is moving in on the whole issue. He wants us to accept this first contract while he negotiates on the rest.

Meanwhile at Yallourn Open Cut No 12 dredger, a job that is normally done by the Central Workshops sandblasters has been taken over by John Corser, a contracting company.

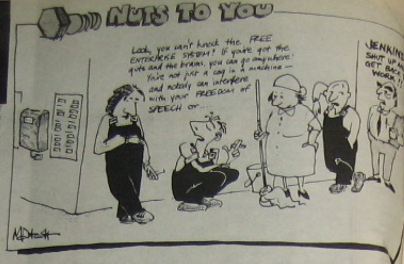
When the guy to do the sand-blasting arrived on the job, everyone just took it for granted that he was from Central Workshops as usual.

We stopped and got off the dredge to let him do the job. An hour after, when he'd finished and we were back on, someone said a John Corser truck was stuck halfway up the hill.

It was only then that most of us discovered the job had been done by a contractor.

The SEC is so confident after last year's power strike that they think they can spit in our face with this sort of behaviour.

by an SEC worker.



SACKED - BECAUSE SHE COMPLAINED!

COMPLAIN — and you'll be sacked.

This is the charming attitude that Barry Berkovitch, owner of B-Line Fashions, has to the nine women who work for him as machinists in his sweat-shop in Richmond, Melbourne.

Last month, Berkovitch sacked the one union member in the place, Edith Portelli. Edith had the nerve to complain about the lousy piece-rates and the way Berkovitch was cheating them in their pay-packets.

sacking

When Edity and the Clothing Trades Union went to court to fight the sacking, Arbitration "Justice" Isaacs washed his hands of the matter. He admitted that much of Edith's case had merit – then turned round and refused to do anything about it.

Berkovitch — who is president of the Victorian Garment Manufacturers Association – first tried to sack Edith last December.

Edith had talked to the other women about the under-payment and seen the union. Then she had queried her pay-packet with the office-girl.

Berkovitch came into the factory and shouted at her, and told her he would sack her.

Berkovitch didn't go through with the sacking. But at the New Year break-up, he made a speech to the women about how there were one-and-a-half employees who were problems, and he was going to get rid of the one.

He didn't mention Edith's name, but it was obvious who he meant.

Meanwhile, the breaches of the award continued. Even though starting time was meant to be 7.45 am, Berkovitch had the women turning up between 7.10 and 7.30 am to do unpaid overtime before work.

The piece-rates were pathetic – $1.50 for a frock, for example. So to try and make anything over the minimum award rates, the women were pressured into working through the lunch-break as well. . . . .

When Edith complained to him, Berkovitch's attitude was simple. If you don't like it, get out and get a job somewhere else.

Then on February 6, shortly after the union had come round, Berkovitch told Edith she was sacked.

Edith and the Clothing Trades Union took the case to Arbitration. Berkovitch tried to justify the sacking by claiming Edith was incompetent. He produced a couple of mistakes that she had supposedly made to "prove" his claim.

But Edith has been working as a machinist for 26 years. Berkovitch had employed her nearly 12 months.

wait

Why did he wait a year to sack her if she was so incompetent? Why didn't he get rid of her in the first month?

And it must take a special sort of cheek to pay women pittance wages, force them to rush their work, and then complain that they make mistakes.

Berkovitch and the Arbitration Court were able to get away with victimizing Edith because there was no union organization at B-Line. Most of the women were so scared of getting the sack they couldn't see any point in even belonging to a union.

gloating

Now Berkovitch is gloating over his little victory.

Only when we are organized and prepared to fight back will Berkovitch and all the petty little tyrants like him get the reward they so richly deserve.

And only then will we ever get any semblance of justice and self-respect.

Jobless teachers fight back

by Doug McCarty

UNEMPLOYED teachers in S.A. are beginning to organize themselves and fight back.

There are 1500 unemployed teachers out of 24,000 in the State. Some have short term contracts. But for the vast majority there is no work at all.

The executive of the South Australian Institute of Teachers (S.A.I.T.) passed a motion stating that where a teacher was absent a relief teacher should be sought.

If none was available the Principal or deputy should take the lesson (unless they were timetabled already).

strong

This unusually strong resolution from the executive may have been influenced by a number of classroom teachers now on it.

However, S.A.I.T. quickly announced that this motion was not binding on the membership but merely an expression of opinion by the executive.

For unemployed teachers, our first fight ... get ourselves recognised ... S.A.I.T. as a responsible ... teachers who are employed.

We should campaign ... the basis that if teachers ... the school fight for ... basic class size and ... loads in the Australian Teachers Federation ... then that is the best way ... fight teacher unemployment.

Our first meeting of Employable Teachers Association will be held Thursday the 16th ... when we will be deciding organization and policy ... the campaign ahead.

Meanwhile, the Victorian Unemployed Teachers Association held its ... meeting last week.

Sixty unemployed teachers – ... from primary division ... attended.

The first action will be a rally on Tuesday 14 March. The UTA will also be sending speakers into schools to address employed teachers.

Leichhardt garbos meet to discuss action.

Garbo strike gets quick result

"I'VE never been a striker. But I say that if we don't get a positive answer from the Council, we don't start work tomorrow."

This reaction was shared by most of the Leichardt garbos at a meeting on Monday March 6th to discuss the latest in a series of victimizations and harassment by Leichardt Council, Sydney.

The Council has been ignoring seniority claims when promoting men to permanent garbage staff positions, and just promoting whom they please.

On Monday the Town Clerk told a delegation that the matter could not be discussed before a Council meeting on March 21st.

So the men went on strike on Tuesday.

And a council meeting was promptly held on Tuesday evening, which agreed to recognise seniority.

Meanwhile the garbos still have to fight the Council's petty victimization over absenteeism and sick leave.

Some men are being intimidated into working after they've injured themselves: *"We had two blokes too frightened to go on compo.*

"One came out of hospital, went back to work, and fell and bruised himself badly. But he was afraid of being victimized if he went on compo."

Fairfax journos ban VDT's

"IT'S an ironic situation", commented Don Paget ... the PKIU chapel at Fairfax in Sydney, about the ... Australian Journalists Association stopwork meeting ... discuss the operation of visual display terminals.

The journalists decided that no AJA member should work the terminals or train to use them until they had been given guarantees of job security, along with an agreement on pay and health matters.

Don Paget

strike

But it was the introduction of these terminals, threatening mass loss of printing trades jobs, which caused the eight weeks long printers' strike at Fairfax in 1976.

And it was scabbing on the part of AJA members that helped defeat the strike.

Don Paget, a leading militant in the strike, said: *"I don't know if they'll be looking in our direction for any help.*

"Of course we'd ... put ourselves in the position of breaking a strike.

"But our members have some very bitter memories. We might have some trouble convincing them."

We were wrong

The Battler mistakenly stated last issue that NSW BLF members were keeping a close watch on the papers for announcement of the details of the Federal Secretary election, for fear that Gallagher would hide it in some obscure place like he has done before.

In fact, they were watching out for announcements about State Branch vacancies. The Federal Secretary election is a court ballot, and the Gallagher forces do not control the advertising.

the WORK TOLL

RAILWAY workers in Victoria look set to make a major breakthrough on safety conditions.

Workers at Bendigo, Newport and Jolimont workshops banned all work on the blue suburban trains because of dangers from asbestos.

When safety investigators came, the Jolimont workers agreed to lift the ban on ONE train to allow testing. But the railways had to supply special protective suits complete with air supply.

It now seems that Vicrail will be forced to issue these special suits to all workers if it wants to have the trains modified for the new underground or even just maintained in running condition.

YOU would think that with all the recent talk about asbestos, it is a newly discovered menance. Not so.

The Roman historian, Pliny, observed the adverse effects on people as early as the first century A.D. He noticed that slaves who wove asbestos fibre into cloth for cremation shrouds developed a sickness of the lung and died young.

This is the first recorded case of what we now know to be asbestosis – the scarring of the lungs by asbestos fibres.

THE first commercial asbestos mine started in Thetford, Canada, in 1879. The world now consumes some 6 million tons annually.

The first death from asbestosis in modern times was recorded in London in 1900.

By 1906 American insurance companies were refusing to insure asbestos workers because the risks were too high.

"WOMEN spend so much time these days stuffin' themselves with contraceptive pills and sitting on knitting needles to stop having children, every time they get a bellyache they look around for someone to blame, and the doctor, not knowing what's wrong quite often blames 245-T."

Who was the bastard who had the gall to say that? None other than a Mr. Robert Telford, managing director of Chemical Industries (Kwinana) Pty. Ltd., of Western Australia.

He thoroughly deserves the Battler Falling Brick Award for safety since his company is a producer of the herbicide 245-T which is believed to have caused gross abnormalities amongst children born in Yarram (Vic) 2 years ago.

I'm sure the women of Yarram and their children will be most indebted to the concern and sympathy of this man for their plight.

THE first National Seminar on Industrial Health will be held in Melbourne on the 7-8 April.

The first day's discussion is on "The Hazards" and the next is "How to fight them" about organizing on the job.

If you want to come contact your union or the Workers Health Action Group, 423 Lt Lonsdale St., Melbourne – ring 67 3047.

by Steve Morgan

International Socialists

COME TO OUR CONFERENCE

THE I.S. has grown steadily over the last two years.

Now we are spread over four capital cities and the A.C.T.

National Conference, held at Easter, is our opportunity to draw the whole I.S. together.

The Saturday morning session is called "Tasks and Perspectives". It is a thorough discussion of our successes and failures in 1977, and our perspectives for the coming year.

These details will be set firmly in the context of current economic, political and industrial developments.

We will then move to the topic of women's liberation. We expect the I.S. women's meeting on Good Friday to bring some important proposals to this session, both on the fight for women's equality and on strengthening the role played by women in the I.S.

In our last session on Saturday we are trying something new. Activists in five broad areas will meet in small groups to compare notes from one city to another.

The five areas are: blue collar, white collar, teachers, health workers and students. They will hammer out proposals to report to the whole conference.

union posts

The coming elections in the Builders' Labourers' Federation highlight the importance of Sunday's major discussion. When and how do revolutionaries stand for paid union positions? What's the relationship of this kind of election campaign to building a strong rank-and-file movement? In this session we will also look at some problems in our current industrial work.

elections

At day's end, we'll have elections for the National Committee and Executive. Candidates for the long hours and low pay of a professional revolutionary are welcome to nominate now.

We'll conclude with the Internationale: a rousing end to what we're sure will an exciting conference.

TO ATTEND:

If you'd like to come, just contact your local branch of the I.S. Or you can write or phone our National Office at PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic. 3031, tel. (03) 335-2783. Child care provided.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Saturday Start 9am Sharp
- Preliminaries
- Tasks and Perspectives
- Women
- Lunch (2pm)
- Industrial activist meetings

Sunday Start 10am Sharp
- Reports from activist meetings.
- Industrial Discussion.
- Lunch (12 noon)
- Elections to National Committee and Executive
- General Business

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society; based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state — parliament, courts, the law — is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks migrants gays and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

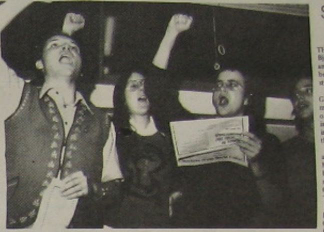
Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If that the sort of work you want to do.

JOIN US!



Some Canberra Branch members vigorously whooping out the Internationale at last years National Conference. Our musical harmony may not be too good, but we march to the same drum – the fight for workers power.

SPEAKING TOUR

THE campaign to defeat Bjelke-Petersen's repressive anti-demonstration laws has been carried into other states.

Carole Ferrier and Graeme Grassie, both members of Brisbane branch of the International Socialists, have been touring interstate, speaking about the struggle.

In Melbourne Carole addressed meetings at Melbourne and Monash Universities, while Graeme spoke to students at the Caulfield Institute of Technology.

They convincingly outlined the strategy of the Campaign for Democratic Rights, arguing against those people who saw the campaign as purely a single-issue struggle – a campaign to repeal the anti-march law.

Rather than adopting the liberal approach of "lowest-common-denominator" politics, the campaign is building into an extra-parliamentary movement against Bjelke-Petersen's attacks on the Left and the labour movement.

Carole also spoke at a demonstration outside the Queensland Tourist Bureau where hundreds of leaflets were distributed to shoppers and office workers telling them about Bjelke's latest attacks.

WOMEN

I.S. women and friends will hold a national meeting in Melbourne on Good Friday.

Discussion will be around work among working women, the women's liberation movement today, and the role of women in I.S. If you'd like to come, just contact your local branch or our National Office.

Billetting and Childcare

CHILD CARE is available for children of all ages for Good Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Please advise the National Office on 335 2783.

DO you need somewhere to sleep while you're in Melbourne attending the national conference? Billeting is available — ask your local branch or ring the National Office.

Tess Lee Ack from the I.S. speaking on women's right to work at the International Women's Day march in Melbourne.

Fighting Fund

TH	$12.40
BBQ	$35.16
DM	$3
AL	$30
LD	$2
Anon	$1
Battler readers at GMH Woodville	$4
TOTAL	$87.56

The Fight for Worker's Power

The politics of the International Socialists in a nutshell ... why we need to fight for worker's power. 40 cents (plus 30 cents post) from: Redback Press PO Box 46, Flemington Vic, 3031 or your local IS branch.

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031	33-4142
24 hour answering and message machine	335-2783
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	335-2783
MELBOURNE GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	543-1081
SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown	51-3665
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49-7939
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	
BRISBANE PO Box 111, St Lucia, Qld, 4067	44-7881
IPSWICH, QLD.	281 6113

★★

What's On

Deadline for next edition — Wednesday March 22nd.

ADELAIDE Thurs 16 Mar Employable Teachers Organization meeting, 4 pm Main Hall Teacher's Institute.

ADELAIDE Sat 18 Mar Campaign Against Nuclear Energy annual general meeting. CANE office, Angas St.

ADELAIDE Mon 20 Mar IS branch meeting. 'Battler workshop' and business. 7.30pm 14 Kelvin Ave Clarence Park.

ADELAIDE Wed 22 Mar CANE anti-uranium speakers workshop, 8pm, World Workshop, Grays Arcade, City.

ADELAIDE Sat 1 Apr Anti-uranium rally and march, 10am, Hindmarsh Square.

ADELAIDE Tue 4 Apr FCAATSI "Land Rights" public meeting, 8 pm, Norwood Town Hall.

ADELAIDE Wed 5 Apr IS branch meeting. For details ring 49 7939.

MELBOURNE Wed 15 Mar Unemployed Teachers Association rally 4.30 pm Bourke St. Mall.

MELBOURNE Wed 15 Mar IS South branch meeting 7.30pm Nottinghill Hotel.

MELBOURNE Fri 24 Mar IS womens national meeting All women friends of IS welcomed. Ring (03) 335 2783 or Sue (03) 489 9957 for details. Child-care provided.

MELBOURNE Sat 25 Mar IS National Conference begins. For details see above.

MELBOURNE Mon 20 Mar IS North west branch meeting 7.30 Moonee Ponds Hotel.

MELBOURNE Mon 3 Apr IS North-west branch meeting, 7.30 pm Moonee Ponds Hotel.

MELBOURNE Fri 7 Apr National Seminar on Industrial Health begins. On Fri "The Hazards" and on Sat "How to fight them". Contact Workers Health Action Group, 423 Lt Lonsdale St Melbourne – ring (03) 67 3047.

SYDNEY Sat 18 Mar Middle East Dinner to raise funds for The Battler, to have a good feed and a good time at 7 Whitfield Ave Ashfield. Reservations ring 51 3665 or 789 4785.

SYDNEY Sun 19 Mar IS business meeting 111 Enmore Road.

CANBERRA Easter Federal Council of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders conference. Billets are urgently required. Ring 489 174.

CAF WOMEN CLEAN UP

GIVE the bosses an inch and they'll take a mile.

Women working in the cafeteria at the Williamstown Naval Dockyards in Melbourne discovered that recently.

The women struck over not being paid a day's pay as compensation for a delay in the arrival of their wages.

Sue Scalise reports

Wilma Jamieson, Liquor Trades Union shop steward in the cafeteria, told the Battler, *"Most of the women working here have families and kids to pick up after school.*

"I'm lucky – I live in Newport. But some have to travel to Werribee.

waiting

"We spent the whole afternoon waiting to be paid. It wasn't till late in the afternoon that we were told that the payroll had been delayed at Tullamarine.

"According to regulations, we were entitled to an extra day's pay for the delay. When we were paid the next morning, no extra money was included.

"The interesting thing is that last December the wharves had a payroll robbery. Nobody felt like claiming for the day's wage.

"We didn't think it was their fault, so we didn't push the issue."

So apparently Commonwealth Hostels, which employs the women, thought they could get away with delays whenever they liked.

After a couple of weeks of negotiations, the women decided to strike.

At the shop committee meeting, the other shop stewards at the Dockyards decided to support the women. After all, the women had always gone out in support of any strikes by the men.

Fifteen hundred dockyard workers struck in sympathy. Management quickly went to Arbitration and caved in. The women won – at a cost.

Wilma Jamieson summed up, *"We had to strike for five days to win $34. But it was worth it."*

Dockyard Victimisation

DANNY Cook, an acting foreman at the Williamstown Naval Dockyards in Victoria, has been sacked as part of management's drive for economy.

Danny let the men under him knock off early after they had finished the job they were working on.

What Danny had done is a common practice under the job and finish system operating in the yard. Each job has a certain time in which to be completed. If it is finished early, often the men knock off but still get paid for the time the job takes.

When other dockyard workers heard about the sacking they struck for the day. Then they held rolling stoppages the day after.

Now a Public Service Arbitrator has recommended Danny's reinstatement. It is not yet clear whether Danny will suffer any other penalties.

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

CES - Our officials sold us out

by a NSW CES work[er]

AFTER a promising start, the dispute between CES workers and the Public Service Board has been sold out by the public service union – ACOA.

Three weeks ago 32 CES managers were stood down.

Mass meetings in four states voted to continue bans until CES workers were given the right of appeal over jobs advertised outside the Public Service.

The High Court then declared the stand-downs illegal.

So Tony Street, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, threatened to amend the new law to make it even easier to sack or stand down public servants.

This threat was too much for the Federal Executive of the ACOA. In a compromise deal which gained very little for the membership they recommended dropping the bans.

In a poll of CES workers in Victoria and NSW, Victoria followed the executive, but NSW voted 423 to 382 to continue the bans.

The NSW branch leadership was at this point split on the issue, with State Secretary Barry Cotter wanting to continue the bans.

But after presumably being pulled into line by the Federal Executive [illegible] dramatically [illegible] opinion and [illegible] members to [illegible] Federal Executive [illegible] to lift the bans.

Obviously [illegible] by this [illegible] members [illegible] bans – 590 [illegible]

This [illegible] ACOA has left a [illegible] in the mouths of [illegible] members.

So much [illegible] Sydney a diverse [illegible] unionists will [illegible] next week to [illegible] continuing the fight [illegible] wing steering [illegible] the ACOA may [illegible] formed from this [illegible]

Swanbank picketers turn back a truck. They've been getting good co-operation from the drivers.

A BLACKLIST BY ANY OTHER NAME

Now it's official.

The NSW Health Commission has had a "Blacklist" of 7,000 – 8,000 names which they have been collecting for thirty years.

These lists were regularly sent out to State, Pyschiatric and Public Hospitals and Psychiatric Clinics. They were also illegally sent to Private Hospitals.

As the Health Commission controls virtually the whole Health industry, and these lists could be circulated to outside industry, it could make it impossible for a listed person to get a job.

You will all be pleased to hear that things are now different!

As from December 1977, the names have been reduced to approximately 1,000. All existing names held for over 5 years will be destroyed and the maximum period a file can be kept is 5 years.

access

Lists will no longer be distributed to Hospitals, but will be kept in Central Administration. Hospitals have access to the files.

People will now only be listed for offences against patients, property or relevant convictions.

Anyone put on the Blacklist from now on will be notified. If you want to know if you're already on the list you can write in and ask the Health Commission (how sweet of them).

All these changes sound like quite a concession, and it would be much less disgraceful if it worked as announced.

But why should it?

The Health Commission has set up a perfect weapon against employing "undesirables".

You can bet anything that a Blacklist by another name will smell as rotten.

– from a nurse in a Sydney public hospital.

'Not even a packet of chewing gum gets through!'

SEVENTY coal truck drivers have placed a 24 hour picket around the Swanbank Power Station in Queensland, and stopped all deliveries of coal and fuel.

"Not even a packet of chewing gum is getting in or out," said one of the Transport Workers Union members on the picket.

They are claiming $40 extra and a 35 hour week.

"Blokes in the mining unions doing the same work got this three years ago. After that, we waited to get it in the TWU.

"We put it to them five months ago. Since the truck companies joined the Queensland Confederation of Industry, they've refused point-blank to consider the claim.

"They reckon that it goes against wage indexation guidelines. Yet eight of the last nine indexation decisions have gone against us.

"We've been fighting pretty hard over the last 5 months. We've been here since last Monday. And we'll be here as long as the Salvation Army can hang out."

The drivers are angry about distortions in the local press.

"If you murdered someone, they couldn't get the calibre of the gun right," said one.

The local paper, has tried to make out that the strikers are defying an order to return to work even though no such order has been made.

Miners at Box Flat, which supplies coal to Swanbank by belt, have already offered help to the drivers. They're ready to go out in support, or [illegible] hat around for a co[illegible]

The drivers have [illegible] out a roster to [illegible] picket going. The [illegible] families have formed [illegible] hoc auxiliary [illegible] up.

"We are prepared to [illegible] out for a while. The [illegible] we are to shutting the [illegible] down, the more [illegible] are going to be to [illegible] us."

– by Ian K[illegible]

Liberal scab bites the dus[t]

IT looks like Melbourne City Council mechanics fighting for better allowances and conditions have won a temporary victory against scab Noel Kane.

Kane – who is a Liberal Party member and a friend of the late and unlamented Paul Krutulis – crossed a picket line of his workmates with the aid of two armed cops.

Kane made two attempts to get past before one of the armed cops kneed a worker and broke through.

There were only 15 pickets there when Kane got through. The next day, the picket was strengthened.

But Melbourne City Council decided not to bring on full scale war and stood Kane down. Otherwise all council workers could have gone out, and the Moomba parade would have been threatened.

Earlier Kane demanded a secret ballot to decide on whether a strike should take place at all.

His 37 workmates went along with it to placate him – even though it was against union rules.

Then when the ballot showed an overwhelming vote to strike, Kane broke his word and refused to go out. Instead he resigned from the union and demanded that the Council give him work.

One mechanic commented to the Battler *"We don't want Kane. He's never going to work here or anywhere, except in a non-union shop.*

"But we never lost sight of our reason for striking. Our eyes were always on our claim."

Now that Kane is out of

the way for the mo[illegible] mechanics are con[illegible] their strike indefinitely.

And with eighteen [illegible] the Council's 27 [illegible] trucks already broken [illegible] their action is starting [illegible] hurt.

Don't rely on the dailies for your industrial news...

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CLIP & POST TO: PO Box 46 Flemington, Victoria 3031.

THE TRUE FRANK KANE STORY

SCOOP

EVERYONE in Melbourne has had to put up with the foulmouthed ravings of Frank Kane.

Kane (right name, wrong spelling) is the "person" who crossed the picket line set up by the striking mechanics at the Melbourne City Council Workshops in North Melbourne.

He got through the picket with the assistance of two cops who punched and kneed pickets to help him.

In the "Herald" he said, "My workmates hate me because I am a worker."

However, we reckon that they probably hate him because he's a scab and because he used the cops to cross their picket line to break their strike.

It probably didn't help his image when he demanded a secret ballot; when it was granted to him (against union rules) and when he broke his promise to obey the decision to continue the strike.

Right-wing, union bashing, Liberal Party scum like Frank Kane aren't particularly fussy about telling the truth.

But Frank Kane isn't even the "good worker" he claims to be. He has already admitted taking 15 days off (he's only been there 10 months) – two of them to go to the races.

He told the foreman he had some "business" to attend to.

He used to work at Carlton and United Breweries. One day he was sacked for being drunk on the job.

Since Frank Kane is so "bitterly opposed to unionism", and is "hated because he's such a good worker", you would think he would have been loyal to the free enterprise system and accepted the sack.

After all, being drunk on the job is pushing it a bit.

No way. When the TWU forced Carlton and United to give him his job back, he accepted.

And to show his gratitude, he went ahead and got himself sacked for being drunk on the job a second time. And once again, the union saved him. Horrible, aren't they?

But you can't keep a good scab down. The next time he was caught for being pissed at work, the union couldn't do anything more. He was out for good.

The man the union saved now turns on the union

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the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

STOP THE STRIKE BREAKERS

NOEL Latham, Paul Krutulis and now Frank Kane.

The profession of scabbery is certainly enjoying a boom.

BY PHIL GRIFFITHS

But the well-publicised adventures of these three miserable animals are just the tip of a very large iceberg.

In the past month we've seen

* Frank Kane use two cops to break the picket by striking Melbourne City Council mechanics.
* Cops used to break the strike by armoured car drivers. The armoured car drivers are now planning to picket to defend their strike.
* Thousands of farmers block the streets of Adelaide protesting against the Meatworkers Union ban on the export of livestock.

The farmers have threatened to smash the meatworkers picket at Cavan in Adelaide.

And just over a week ago, the Federal Government used the threat of the IRB to help beat the NSW postal drivers' strike.

For the past three years, our wages, our conditions and our jobs have taken one hell of a hammering.

fight

But workers are starting to fight back. This is too much for Fraser and his neanderthal mates in the Liberal Party.

They see every strike as a threat to wage cutting, so they're using all their power to stop us everytime we act.

They did it to the Latrobe Valley power workers. They are doing it to the Seamen's Union, because of its ban against Utah.

And to pave the way, Fraser has introduced a whole battery of legislation to make it either impossible or illegal to fight the boss.

scab

He has enshrined the right to scab and set up the IRB to enforce it. They have amended the Trade Practices Act to bankrupt any union that successfully fights the boss with black bans.

Gone are the days when you could simply walk out the gate, go home, meet every couple of days and wait for the boss to settle. Every strike is a war against your own boss and against the whole capitalist state.

It means that every strike has to be organised seriously. It means we're going to need pickets to keep the Frank Kanes and the misguided farmers from breaking our action.

It means that every strike is going to need the widest possible support. Not from union bureaucrats, but from the rank and file in neighbouring areas and in related industries.

When the Latrobe Valley strikers went out, there was tremendous support for them, right across the working class in Melbourne. Unfortunately, they waited too long to build that support and they were conned into going back.

solidarity

There was great solidarity with the mail van drivers and the MCC mechanics.

The support is there because all workers want to see an end to Wage Indexation wage cutting. And we all want to see a determined fight for jobs.

And that's going to mean driving the strikebreakers back into the woodwork.

BELOW: The meatworkers' picket line in Adelaide outside the Elders-Goldsborough stockyard at Cavan. Farmers have threatened to break the picket because they too are suffering from the effects of the crisis. But the cause of their problems is the decline in the world market and the money they all owe to rural parasites like Elders, Dalgety's and Australian Estates.

between the lines

IT'S a pity that the law never gets applied to the cops themselves. Just think how nice it would be to see the boys in blue up on charges of consorting (mixing with criminals) and conspiracy.

What's more, it could have happened! According to reliable sources. The NSW police once held "informal" discussions with one of Sydney's best known hoodlums.

The thug, doing his duty as a patriotic Australian, offered to make his own strong-arm men available to break up anti-Vietnam demonstrations.

PRESIDENT Carter's Crusade for human rights is obviously bearing fruit. General Pinochet, the dictator of Chile, has just appointed a delegate to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

The delegate is Professor Luis Winter Igualt, an officer of the Navel Reserve. In this capacity, he tortured and interrogated left-wing sailors when Pinochet seized power three and a half years ago.

FOOTSCRAY Football Club in Melbourne are behind even the Chileans when it comes to Human rights.

Last year's captain, Laurie Sandilands, was active in organising a players association at Footscray. The Club had withheld thousands of dollars in match payments promised to the players.

Victimisation is bad enough, but now Footscray have gone to the courts to stop Sandilands playing with other league clubs.

However, we can't see Malcolm Fraser's IRB dashing in to protect his "right to play". And because footballers are still badly organised, no-one else is going to stand up for him.

Meanwhile, at VFL headquarters, they're already engraving a bulldog on the wooden spoon.

WE don't have a special Battler award for "imagination" or doubletalk (there'd be too many winners). But if we did, Draffin Everhot of Bayswater (Vic) would win one.

A couple of weeks ago, they advertised for process workers to do "varied and interesting work."

"Entirely heavy lifting!"

BATTLER Plastic Straw this week goes to a "doctor". For the past couple of weeks, we've had to put up with Dr. Magnus Pyke, Britain's second-rate answer to Julius Sumner Miller, parading his way across our TV screens.

And his message? Take-away food is good for you. Now I'm not going to knock the pure aesthetic joy of a cold pie at the football, but I never guessed it could be good for you.

But that's what Dr Pyke reckons. He also says that you could be stranded inside a MacDonalds and suffer no ill effects and that hamburgers are a complete meal.

Dr. Pyke is in Australia as a guest of the Food Technologists conference; they're the people who put the plastic in our pasties.

What some people will do for a crust! Anyway, we feel Dr Pyke (or should that be Puke) has sucked enough for his Battler Plastic Straw. He'll probably find it as nutritious as all the take away food he loves.

And if he keeps at it, he may acheive his ambition: to be locked away in a MacDonalds, hopefully forever.

by Darth Vader

FREE SPEECH - HOW WE FOUGHT IN THE THIRTIES

WORKERS have always had to fight for the right to march and the right to speak.

And we've always had to defend our rights from attack by the bosses, the governments, the cops and the courts.

During the 1930's, there were many attacks on the fight to march and the right to hold street meetings.

Some months ago, we published an article by Ralph Gibson, a former leader of the Communist Party, who had played a leading role in a free speech fight in Melbourne.

We now reprint an article from Tribune, written in 1955 by Adam Ogston, a leader of the Communist Party in NSW who had been present during a free speech fight in Cumberland.

"Way back in the very early thirties, the Cumberland District Unemployed Council . . . decided to organise a huge march for double dole through the streets of Parramatta.

At the very last minute, the police banned the march. However, the leaders of the unemployed decided to hold a demonstration and quietly passed the word around to gather at the Fountain . . .

Speaker after speaker denounced the starvation dole allowance and called for double dole; then all of a sudden the police appeared and the local Inspector and a bunch of police shouldered their way to the platform amid hoots and jeers from the crowd.

The Inspector called upon the Chairman to close the meeting, who refused. He was seized by the police on one side and the crowd on the other, and a great tug of war began, with the Chairman's arms as the "rope".

This was the signal for a vicious attack on the crowd by the Political Squad . . .

It was learned later that the squad had been held in reserve at the police station, and had been drinking excessively all evening.

With batons flying the drunken horde of police attacked in all quarters, scattering the crowd in all directions. Women with children in prams were knocked over, blood flowed freely and dozens of arrests were made.

So full of beer and fury were the police that no distinction was shown. The U.A.P. condidate was caught coming out of a shop with a parcel in the middle of the battle and got smashed over the head with a baton; in fact, had to be taken to hospital.

drunk

It was in this riot that the late Mrs. Ogston, Senr. (about 68 years old then) was knocked flying into the gutter from a blow in the chest by a drunk sergeant.

One outstanding incident was when a working class fighter, Tom Quinn, seized Sam Cleary (now of Security) and was carrying him bodily out of the crowd when he tripped in the gutter and both nearly went flying into a plate-glass window.

For 10 Friday nights in succession the unemployed held demonstrations in Parramatta demanding the right to speak. There was only one way to stop the demonstrations. That was to give the unemployed the right to speak.

One Friday morning, while the 38 'prisoners' were awaiting trial at the Parramatta Court, the Inspector of Police approached myself and Kearns, the President of the Unemployed, and asked us to go with him to see the Mayor of Parramatta. We did, and they then proposed the following:

That if we would call off the demonstrations, they would allow us a place to speak in the street.

They promised that if all "arrested" pleaded "guilty" they would be given a nominal fine of one shilling.

That night a huge demonstration celebrated victory for Free Speech in the heart of Parramatta, protected by the same police that for 11 weeks had prevented us from speaking."

WOMEN'S CHARTER

"WE came away with a feeling that we should go back to our workplaces and get something going at a rank and file level.

"Quite a few women felt like that. Its the most positive thing that came out of the Conference."

The weekend after the ACTU Working Women's Charter Conference, the Sydney Working Women's Charter Campaign heard reports from union delegates to the conference.

As Sue Wyatt, APTU delegate, said: *"It wasn't actually as bad as we expected. In particular the amendment to set up a Women's Unit was passed. Though it will probably be opposed by the ACTU Executive".* (It was).

But it was still pretty bad.

The executive were handling the proceedings with such a heavy hand – especially in the beginning – that a number of women automatically voted the opposite way to Kelty.

The atmosphere at the Conference was especially difficult and disappointing for women who were unused to formal meeting proceedings.

Vera Dodd, ATEA delegate from the South Melbourne telecom workshops, told the Battler: *"It was the first official conference I've been to as a delegate.*

"We were only given the agenda as we walked through the door. They said they'd been sent to the Federal office.

"I would have like to read the motions through beforehand and find the things that needed debating. But they just went through the numbers really quickly, saying 'any dissent?' You hardly got a chance to do anything.

"I was very disappointed at the beginning. I had thought – for once someone's listening to us – but they were laughing at us.

"They were literally laughing at us. Because we didn't know the right way to put motions. We were more interested in getting the issues through.

"It was a bit better on the second day. Though even then one older women had to get up and say 'Either we work side by side, or we'll fight you all the way.'"

HEIL Bruce! Put an end to the high-handed injustice being doled out by the university.

Passing blissfully through the gauntlet (on the left) is Bruce Williams, vice-chancellor of Sydney University . He refused to talk with students who were trying to pass on to him the demands raised at a front lawn meeting of about 400 on March 15th; that the university drop the charges against students who were involved in a demonstration against racist academic Hans Eysenck.

AFTER spending two hours trapped in a basement dunny at Monash University in 1976 by angry students Malcolm Fraser vowed that he would return.

Australia's very own General Macarthur returned to Monash on 29 March to give the first Sir Robert Menzies Address to the Liberal Student Club.

He was speaking on, of all things, "Terrorism", with an escort of 500 Victorian and Commonwealth cops.

Some 1500 students chanted outdoors. When it came to leaving the police fanned out in a wedge kicking, bashing and even strangling students.

Meanwhile, we are scratching our heads trying to understand why the State Labor Party is championing the police drive for funds (including censuring the Liberals) while students and workers are being attacked at demonstrations and pickets.

BYE BYE DLP

AFTER a ... working people ... very little ... politics we fi... some good new... month.

The D.L.P. anno... decision to fold as a ... mentary party. A... months in which ... Labor get slaughtere... Federal elections ... respond to that by ... even further to the ... was about time we ... good news.

The prolonged de... votes plus a sho... funds finally conv... DLP membership ... rest of us had kn... years; they had no... say and no plac... political spectrum.

Since the depar... Evatt and Calwell ... end of the Vietnam ... DLP has had no ... policy planks.

fanatical

A fanatical ... communism, which i... longer direct anywhere ... puritan anti-female ... policy based on the ... wing of Catholic ... Philosophy.

It's anti-communism ... to be directed agai... ALP but as the ALP ... further to the right ... Malcolm Fraser also ... the Liberals to the ... ruling class doesn't ... DLP anymore.

No-one at all ... know about the DLP's ... philosophies. Even ... the Catholic church ... "populate or perish" ... would appear to ... retreat.

At the same ... should not forget ... at its most powerful ... the DLP was no ... than the parliamentary ... of a more sinister ... Bob Santamaria's ... Civic Council.

Those nice ... the paper about ... death said nothing ... NCC folding, for ... good reason that ... not going to fold ... not yet awhile.

bosses

The prime task ... NCC has always been ... power for itself ... union movement ... serve the bosses by ... power to the left, ... and file and even ... way honest members ... right.

The NCC, under ... different names ... career in the forties ... Industrial groups to ... the unions.

Later it attempted ... take over the Labor ... and when this failed ... its own political party ... that history has ... passed the DLP by, ... is returning to its ... strategies of infiltration ... manipulation inside ... union movement.

They may also ... to get scabs back ... Labor party.

All the same it's ... see the end of the ... electoral politics.

URANIUM MOBILISATION DAY.....URANIUM

PERTH

THE FIGHT against uranium shifted from the docks to the streets on March 31 and April 1.

Thirty thousand marchers round the country demanded an end to all mining and exports.

In SYDNEY, the 5,000 strong march was attacked by the NSW police when it stopped outside the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau to protest against Bjelke's bans.

The cops tried to arrest several demonstrators. But the anger and militancy of the marchers forced them to back down. Eventually, only one person was arrested.

PERTH has its biggest demonstration for years. Over 4,000 marched without incident.

In MELBOURNE, 15,000 people marched through the city during Friday evening peak hour traffic. The demo stopped and sat down in Melbourne's busiest intersection, outside Flinders St. Station, where it listened to three speakers.

In ADELAIDE, there was a strong turnout of 5,000, while in BRISBANE, 400 people braved the rain to be confronted by 700 cops. Naturally, they didn't try marching.

Now attention must turn to the uranium shipments that are still getting out. The mass marches represent a widespread political commitment against uranium.

The task now is to turn that commitment into action. Action on the picket lines, action at the docks and action in the workplaces – so that we can force an end to uranium mining once and for all.

Winning our workmates - It's a long HAUL

SINCE September last year, a small but active anti uranium group has operated at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (R.P.A.H.), in Sydney.

The other day I interviewed a member of this group for the 'Battler'. She wishes to remain anonymous to protect her job.

The Hospital Anti Uranium Lobby (H.A.U.L.) was established by a group of friends who noticed a number of other hospital staff were wearing anti uranium badges.

A group of about 15 was quickly formed through personal contact and started to produce a roneod news sheet. This met with a good response and a film night was held with a speaker from M.A.U.M. and videos from Friends of the Earth.

This event was used to raise money to finance their campaign and publicise the issues to hospital staff.

H.A.U.L. also held a number of stalls on which they sold badges, stickers and literature. This was useful as a contact point and also to advertise the October 22nd March.

On October 22nd about 40 people marched under the H.A.U.L. banner which said "Workers Health Not Bosses Wealth".

Since the mobilisation H.A.U.L has managed to get some union recognition for the anti-uranium struggle from the Nurses Association. A special union branch meeting was called to discuss uranium.

"We got about 20 people along. Which was good since we're usually struggling to get a quorum, which is 5"

article

The union's industrial officer has encouraged the group to write an article for the Association's journal 'The Lamp'. *"It will be an article arguing for discussion at a branch level".*

The group sees the importance of rank and file discussion of uranium amongst health workers. *"It's mainly up to people at the branch level to discuss uranium. They'll have the backing of an official looking article in the journal".*

The future activities of the group are centred around the coming April 1st mobilisation. They hope to get more nurses and health workers onto the streets than last time, through holding informational and fund raising activities.

by Martin Hirst

MELBOURNE

ACTU Wage Push
IT'S ABOUT BLOODY TIME

BY ALEC KAHN

AT last!

The Great Indexation Pay Robbery has got so blatant that even the ACTU Executive has been finally forced to pull its head out of the sand and say something.

But unfortunately, there's a mighty gap between what they've said and what they'll actually do.

The Executive said it was going to initiate a national campaign to restore wage levels. It called on state trades and labour councils to discuss the sort of campaign needed and forward proposals to the ACTU.

And it also called on unions to launch their own on-the-job campaigns.

executive

But there's been precious little heard from them since.

There was some speculation after the Executive made this announcement, that it only got through because Bob Hawke wasn't there at the meeting.

But it's unlikely that Hawke's absence would have instantaneously led to any stiffening of the Executive's collective back-bone.

In fact, the announcement about a "wage campaign" is little more than a neat tactical ploy, aimed at three different audiences.

Firstly, it's aimed at Arbitration. The Executive wants to try and bluff the judges into shelling out a bit more next time than the miserable 1.5% we got on 28 February.

Resounding condemnations haven't worked in the past. So this time, they're using the threat of action. But it's only a threat.

Secondly, the resolution is aimed at the left union officials. Their rank-and-files are about to launch into some major wage struggles over the next few months. . . metal workers, oil engineers, oil transport workers, and airline ground staff have all got campaigns brewing.

This will mean a lot of flak from the Government aimed at the left officials, and they'd like the backing of the ACTU to face it, rather than take it alone.

The ACTU resolution gives them some token verbal support.

aimed

Finally, the ACTU resolution is aimed at the rank-and-file. It's designed to shut us up a little longer while we wait for them to do something.

It's designed so that all the do nothing union officials can continue to do nothing for a few more months, while they tell us not to take action on our own ahead of the ACTU.

And then of course, when nothing happens they'll turn round and say "The ACTU couldn't organize anything – what do you expect us to do?"

A wage campaign is needed – you only have to look at the supermarket prices to see that.

But the ACTU bureaucrats sitting at the top aren't going to build it!

We're going to have to do it ourselves – from the bottom up.

HAWKE: Conveniently Absent.

U.S. Dollar on the skids

THERE is a spectre haunting the world's money markets.

For the past few months, the American dollar has been sliding in value. It has now reached the point where the world monetary system is in peril.

The slide in the dollar has been caused by America's massive trade deficit. In the past 21 months, America has imported $52,000 million more than it has exported. That's over $200 for every man, woman and child in the country.

The Carter Administration has been more or less happy for the slide to continue. A cheaper dollar means that American exports are cheaper and foreign imports more expensive.

Bankers Panic

The only catch is that the American dollar is the basic currency for world trade. Once its value starts to slide, then anyone holding dollars stands to lose a fortune. This can lead to a collapse in trade, or trade war as well as crisis for major multi-nationals and third world economies.

The obvious solution would be for a world economy, planned on a world-wide basis. At the very least, you'd think that the American government would curb the activities of the speculators who are behind every currency crisis. But no way. Making a profit manipulating currency and stock markets runs through the very veins of the biggest capitalists in America and elsewhere.

And they don't mind that it is the workers and peasants of the world that suffer.

Not only is capitalism ruthless and exploitative; it can't even keep itself going properly!

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME..................

ADDRESS..................

Postcode..........

PHONE NO...............

TRADE UNION...............

Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, 3031

TWO FACES OF TERROR

Left: A Black September terrorist outside the Israeli atheletes' apartment of the Munich 1972 Olympic games.
Right: Priests pray beside the machine-gunned car from which Aldo Moro was kidnapped by the Red Brigade in March.

TERRORISM: WHAT DOES IT SOLVE ?

SINCE the Hilton Hotel bombing in Sydney, the press has been in full cry about terrorism.

We have pointed out that no terrorists have been proved to be behind the bombing, and that terrorists like the fascist Ustashi have been ignored by the Liberals for years.

Many on the left have also been rightly pointing out that the method of individual Terror has nothing to do with the socialist approach, that individual terror is not revolutionary at all.

In this article, written in 1904, the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky explains the socialist view of terrorism.

A strike, even of modest size, has social consequences: strengthening of the workers' self-confidence, growth of the trade union, and not infrequently, even an improvement in production technology. The murder of a factory owner produces effects of a police nature only, or a change of proprietors devoid of any social significance.

Whether a terrorist attempt, even a 'successful' one, throws the ruling class into confusion depends on the concrete political circumstances. In any case the confusion can only be short-lived; the capitalist state does not base itself on government ministers and cannot be eliminated with them. The classes it serves will always find new people; the mechanism remains intact and continues to function.

But the disarray introduced into the ranks of the working masses themselves by a terrorist attempt is much deeper. If it is enough to arm oneself with a pistol in order to achieve one's goal, why the efforts of the class struggle?

If a thimbleful of gunpowder and a little chunk of lead is enough to shoot the enemy through the neck, what need is there for a class organisation?

If it makes sense to terrify highly placed personages with the roar of explosions, where is the need for a party?

Why meetings, mass agitation, and elections if one can so easily take aim at the ministerial bench from the gallery of parliament?

In our eyes, individual terror is inadmissible precisely because it *belittles the role of the masses in their own consciousness,* reconciles them to their powerlessness, and turn their eyes and hopes toward a great avenger and liberator who some day will come and accomplish his mission.

The S.A.S. "counter-terrorists" squad training somewhere in Britain. They have been in the forefront of the murdering of catholic workers in Northern Ireland.

The anarchist prophets of 'the propaganda of the deed' can argue all they want about the elevating and stimulating influence of terrorist acts on the masses. Theoretical considerations and political experience prove otherwise. The more 'effective' the terrorist acts, the greater their impact, the more they reduce the interest of the masses in self-organisation and self-education.

disappears

But the smoke from the explosion clears away, the panic dissappears, the successor of the murdered minister makes his appearance, life again settles into the old rut, the wheel of capitalist exploitation turns as before; only police repression grows more savage and brazen. And as a result, in place of the kindled hopes and artificially aroused excitement come disillusion and apathy . . .

Before it is elevated to the level of a method of political struggle, terrorism makes its appearance in the form of individual acts of revenge. So it was in Russia, the classic land of terrorism.

The flogging of po... prisoners by the St Peters... police chief, General Trepov, failing to doff their caps wh... passed, impelled Vera Zasulich to give expression to the ge... feeling of indignation b... assisination attempt on Gen... Trepov.

unthinking

Her example was imitated in t... circles of the revolution... intelligentsia, who lacked any m... support. What began as an ac... unthinking revenge was devel... into an entire system in 187... The outbreaks of anar... assassination attempts in We... Europe and North America a... come after some atro... committed by the governme... the shooting of strikers... executions of political oppo... The most important psycholo... source of terrorism is alwa... feeling of revenge in search o... outlet. . . .

Whatever the eunch... pharisees of morality may sa... feeling of revenge has its rig... does the working class the gr... moral credit that it does no... with vacant indifference upon w... is going on in this best of a... possible worlds. Not to extinguish... the proletariat's unfulfilled feeling... of revenge, but on the contrary to... stir it up again and again, to... deepen it, and to direct it again... the real causes of all injustice... human baseness — that is the ta... of social democracy.

great

If we oppose terrorist acts, it... only because *individual* reven... does not satisfy us. The account... have to settle with the capitali... system is too great to be presented... to some functionary called... minister. To learn to see all t... crimes against humanity, all t... indignities to which the huma... body and spirit are subjected, as t... twisted outgrowths and expressions... of the existing social system, in... order to direct all our energies into... a collective struggle against th... system — that is the direction in... which the burning desire fo... revenge can find its highest mo... satisfaction.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

THERE have been some pretty horrible murders this year. And of course when one group of violent madmen come out of the woodwork there is always a second group not too far behind: the executioners.

In Melbourne, in March, three men were shot in cold blood during a jewel robbery. A few days later a twelve year old schoolgirl was raped and bashed to death. The following weekend Sir Henry Bolte the hangman from the bush, produced his solution for ending violent crime; bring back the rope.

Murder is a horrible crime, and rape/murders of school children are particularly horrible. If there was any proof that hangings really stopped this sort of crime, then there might be a case for re-introducing them.

In fact there is no correlation between the existence of the death penalty and the frequency of murder. The death penalty was universal during the nineteenth century and murder was far more widespread than it is today.

No-one really knows why a crime like the murder of Denise McGregor is committed. Fairly obviously rape itself grows out of the ideas that men are encouraged to have about women and sex. Murder accompanying rape may be an extreme form of those ideas, it may simply be a form of insanity or it may be fear of being caught. Certainly the best way of wiping out rape as a crime would be to change the way we are conditioned to look at relations between the sexes.

The death penalty, as a deterrent, implies that killers think of the consequences at the time they are committing murders. This is demonstrably not the case when murders are committed from insanity or passion. It's not necessarily the case even with premeditated murder committed during robbery, since the killers in a case like the jewel robbery obviously believe that they are not going to be apprehended and so need not fear sentence.

The most frightening thing about the death penalty is that if the wrong person is found guilty it's a little late to reverse the decision after they have been hung. Capital punishment was abolished in Britain at least partly because of public horror after a couple of wrongful executions.

To go back to Sir Henry Hangman, he probably believes that his finest hour as Premier came when he hanged Ronald Ryan against the wishes of the majority of Victorians. If you look at the evidence of Ryan's case a strong possiblity emerges that Ryan did not even fire the bullet that killed the warder.

The most replusive aspect of the current screams to re-introduce the death penalty is that the ghouls who are cheering so loudly for its reintroduction would never be in a position to perform the executions or even witness them being carried out.

Its very easy to order the death of another person if some-one else does the killing and you don't have to watch it.

Above: Refugee children shelter behind sand-bags. ▲

▼ Below: Israeli tank troops cruise through a Lebanese town.

Next Issue THE FULL STORY BEHIND THE AMERICAN MINERS' SETTLEMENT.

BEHIND ISRAEL'S LATEST OUTRAGE

by David Lockwood

WHEN the Israelis tore into Lebanon on March 15, it seemed as though another Middle East war was only moments away.

The Israeli invasion was triggered off by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) raid in northern Israel.

Palestinian commandoes hijacked a bus north of Tel Aviv, the capital, and drove towards the city, firing on passing motorists.

bus

Later Israeli soldiers blew up the bus, killing 45 people including most of the civilians on the bus and 9 of the 11 commandoes.

For the Palestinians the raid was futile. The killing of civilians, and the Israeli revenge which followed, only set back the Palestinian cause.

But of course, from the Israelis and from the capitalist press, we only hear about the killing from one side.

We don't often hear of the original violence that started the conflict — the establishment of the state of Israel itself.

The conflict in the Middle East is about the rights of the Palestinians. They were driven from their homeland when Israel was set up in 1948 with the support of the imperialist powers.

Those who remained are treated as second class citizens. The rest — 600,000 of them — are scattered in refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the Gaza strip and the West bank.

The Palestinians are fighting to regain their homeland. But a fight like that can only be won with organised mass support not only from the Palestinians, but from the Arab working classes as well.

shot

Sections of the Palestinian movement have attempted to take a short cut — through terrorism. The problem for the Palestinians is that while this draws attention to the situation, it can in no way solve it.

After the raid, it was obvious that Israel would take revenge. Defence Minister Weizmann said, "*We will have to do something so things like this do not happen again.*"

While Prime Minister Begin threatened that Israel would *"cut off the evil arm of the PLO"*.

On March 15, 20,000 Israeli troops, backed up by tanks, artillery and bombers, poured across the Lebanese border. Within 17 hours the Israelis held a strip of Lebanese territory in parts as wide as 30 kilometres.

For some time, Israel has been itching to get into southern Lebanon and wipe out the Palestinians. The PLO raid gave it an invitation.

Israeli troops linked up with their right wing Lebanese allies, who have recently been fighting Lebanese leftists and the Palestinians.

Children flee an Israeli attack

Lebanese right wingers followed the Israelis into the occupied villages and committed brutal acts of reprisal.

Why hasn't the situation escalated into a general Middle East war? After all, the Israelis aren't the only ones in Lebanon. Following the civil war, a 25,000 strong Syrian 'peace-keeping' force was stationed in the country. Most people thought that neither the Syrians, nor the other Arab countries, would let Lebanon be invaded.

condemned

All the Arab regimes have condemned the invasion, but none have been prepared to do anything about it.

The reason is that most of the Arab countries — like the rest of the world — are suffering severe economic crises. They simply cannot afford another war. They need peace in the Middle East to restore their economies.

It is no accident that Egypt, the Arab country with the most serious crisis, and the most rebellious population, is also the closest to signing a separate peace with Israel.

little

What this means is that the Palestinians now have little support. Israel, its American backers and the Arab nations all want the Middle East conflict resolved — even if that means once again trampling on the rights of the Palestinians.

The PLO raid showed that there can be no peace while Palestinian rights are ignored.

But it also showed that the Palestinians cannot win their rights on their own. The arab regimes no longer support them.

The Palestinians will have to win the support of the arab working class who are in growing revolt against their own rulers.

Memories of the Junta

by Mark Matcott

WEARING helmets, carrying fire hoses and driving armoured cars.

That's how the local police of Patra in Greece attacked a demonstration of 5000 students and local residents on Tuesday 21st March.

They left behind them a trail of about 50 wounded, 33 demonstrators and 22 police . . . there were 8 arrests.

Not only the students were outraged by the attack, which they said was totally unprovoked, but even the local mayor criticised the police. So why did they decide to go in boots and all?

Karamanlis

Students had occupied the annexe of the university for 19 days in a fight to improve education facilities at the University of Patra and to get more flexible courses.

jockeying

Although the student demands weren't especially relevant to politics outside the university at first, there was plenty of jockeying for position by leaders of various left-wing groups.

The local police force in Patra includes many supporters of the junta which had held power in Greece until 1975 and they saw the presence of "outside agitators" on campus as a great opportunity to prove that "democracy isn't working."

A small bloodbath on the local campus was just what the doctor ordered.

Meanwhile, the government of Karamanlis in foreshadowing stiffer legislation against "violence and terrorism" including the death penalty for terrorist bombers.

In spite of the fact that Greece hasn't had a significant problem in this regard, it won't change a thing. The recent kidnapping of Aldo Moro in Italy and the Baader-Meinhof "suicides" in West Germany will provide convenient cover for a general attack on the left.

pressure

Karamanlis is under pressure already from police and security circles and sections of his own government to crack down on "extremists and anarchists."

JAPANESE residents and radicals have won a temporary postponing of Tokyo's new international airport.

But at a price. In a battle with police many were injured including one catching alight from petrol bombs.

Demonstrators had occupied the site erecting a tower to block aircraft landing. Although police finally pulled down the tower demonstrators continued occupying and stopped the opening.

WHY BJELKE PLANS TO WRAP UP AURUKUN

BY JOHN MINNS & JANET VAUX

The Battler thanks Barbara Russell and Rosina Toumasa from the North Queensland Land Council for their help in preparing this article.

Requests for information and messages of support can be sent to:
North Queensland Land Council
PO Box 1429, Cairns 4870.

WHEN FRASER TURNED A BLIND EYE

FRASER'S legislation may serve to curb the worst excesses of the Queensland Act.

But that is not because Fraser hates racism or is concerned to protect the aboriginal people.

For example he is not rushing to the aid of the Oobulgurri community in Western Australia.

They have appealed to him because the State Government is trying to change the law and allow diamond mining on the reserve. But the Federal Government claims that this case is *"only a State matter."*

The Federal Government were recently forced into denying their own plans to abolish the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission.

The National Times has now published evidence of a cabinet submission to abolish the aboriginal land fund. The submission had been prepared by Mr Viner's office.

The Federal Government has probably also been forced into moving the new legislation by Bjelke-Petersen's provocative attitude. They tried to give him a chance to "reconsider", but he didn't take it.

Aborigines on all Queensland reserves will now have a legal right to remove themselves from State government control. But the right is not being extended to West Australia.

The real "concern" that the Federal government feels for the Queensland blacks is probably better judged by their reaction when Bjelke-Petersen ordered the suspension of the Trachoma programme.

Trachoma, which causes blindness, is both preventable and curable. The trachoma programme had treated 16,000 cases in five weeks in Queensland.

afraid

Bjelke-Petersen ordered the suspension of this programme because he was afraid of losing a few votes.

He claimed that Mick Miller and Clarrie Grogan, two field workers on the programme, had been helping North Queensland blacks to enrol for the State elections, and exhorting them to vote Labor.

Federal Minister for Health, Mr Hunt, not only sacked the two field workers, but cancelled the entire programme until after the Federal elections. Though he admitted he had *"no hard evidence"* that Petersen's allegations were true.

The trachoma programme has not yet been re-started in Queensland, and there are no plans to do so until May.

In November 1975 the Queensland Parliament rushed through a piece of mining legislation in just one day. This allowed Aurukun Associates to develop bauxite mining on the Aurukun reserve.

The Aurukun people had not been consulted, except in the vaguest terms. And the 'royalties' that were assigned to them were negligible.

RIGHT
In immediate protest, tribal elder Albert Chevalier led a group of about 20 Aurukun men on a raid against a mining campsite on the Aurukun reserve.

The campsite had been deserted by the two mine caretakers and the Aurukun people occupied it to prevent their return. They also painted slogans on a number of the buildings and removed markers put up by the mining companies.

Now that their legal case against the Queensland Government has been lost in the British Privy Council, the Aurukun people are still prepared to fight.

BJELKE-PETERSEN wants to take over the aboriginal reserves at Aurukun and Mornington Island for one reason only — Bauxite mining.

He claims that it is because of poor conditions on these reserves, due to mismanagement by the Uniting Church.

But conditions at Aurukun and Mornington Island are no worse than on other reserves. In fact, those managed by the Lutheran Church, like Hope Vale near Cooktown, are widely known as the worst in Queensland.

The important difference is that the mining companies are interested in the land at Aurukun and Mornington Island, but not the land at Hope Vale.

And when the mining companies are interested in aboriginal land, that means the end for the aborigines.

killing

Marcia Langton, speaking on the recent national land rights tour, said, *"Throughout Australia mining companies are moving on to aboriginal land and they are killing us. I mean that quite literally. They are killing us."*

Mining companies destroy aboriginal culture, because that culture is so closely attached to the land.

James Galarrwuy Yunupingu, Chairman Northern Lands Council, said in 1976: *"The land is my backbone. I only stand straight, happy, proud and not ashamed of my colour because I still have land. The land is the art. I can paint, dance, create and sing as my ancestors did before me.*

My people recorded these things about the land this way, so that I and all others like me may do the same."

Mining companies destroy aboriginal health and life, because they bring white men's diseases with them.

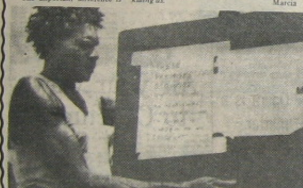
Marcia Langton told 500 sympathizers at a Melbourne meeting last week; *"In Oenpelli, 25% of the people have been treated for leprosy.*

"There are people my age who are walking round with no hands and no feet. A quarter of the population is being eaten away with leprosy and the health authorities are not really doing anything about it.

"In 1971, before there was an influx of whites into the area, there was no v.d.

"Last year 300 cases were reported. And that's with only a couple of hundred whites in the whole of Arnheim Land.

"The people will be destroyed by v.d., by colds, by all the thousands of diseases that didn't exist in this country before the whites came."



ABOVE
They have declared the reserve occupied and posted on the gate a list of white people that they will allow to enter. The list does not include representatives of either the Federal or State Governments.

WHAT 'POWERFUL INFLUENCE' CAN DO

GOVERNMENT and business interests are unscrupulous about how they stop aborigines speaking on land rights and the dangers of uranium mining.

The Northern Lands Council had planned a Lands Rights Speaking Tour across Australia to coincide with the recent uranium moratorium.

This had to be cancelled at the last moment. Galarrwuy Yunupingu, Chairman of the Northern [illegible] telegrammed [illegible] explaining the [illegible]

His telegram [illegible] following [illegible] not expected [illegible] happen to [illegible] Land Council [illegible] tour.

"But [illegible] influences [illegible] the Government [illegible] commercial [illegible] projects [illegible] working on.

"This is [illegible] matter where [illegible] mining interests are attempting to exploit the local situation for their own purposes on the national scene."

"The Council is unable to take part in any public activity at a national level, until the project in question has been concluded."

attacks

The cancellation followed attacks from Government and mining interests.

The Australian Mining Industry Council had published an attack on the Lands Right Act with a 15 page paper called "Matters of Serious Concern to the Mining Industry."

This makes the breath-taking suggestion that aborigines land rights claims are "totalitarian" and provoke "serious racial disharmony."

And Doug Anthony, in a press conference on 7 March, had suggested that dealing with the NLC is now *"the greatest problem confronting the development of uranium."*

After the cancellation of the NLC tour, an alternative tour was put on by the North Queensland Land Council. The North Queensland Land Council recieves no Government money, but is funded by trade unions, church groups, an others.

Marcia Langton, who also spoke on the tour, after her resignation from FCAATSI because of the cancellation, commented: *"The Northern Land Council has been told to shut up.*

"They can't tell me to shut up, because they don't own me. They don't own any of the people on this platform."

THE COMALCO CONNECTION

OVER the years Queensland's politicians and public servants have made fat profits from the mining industry.

The 1970 Comalco share handout was a particularly blatant case.

Six cabinet ministers and several top public servants — as well as Mrs Flo Bjelke-Petersen — took up the offer of low cost Comalco shares.

This was at a time when major government policy decisions were being made on Comalco.

The cabinet ministers included Mr N Hewett, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. He was apparently not worried that Comalco's bauxite mining ambitions threatened aborigines in the whole Weipa-Mapoon-Aurukun area.

And Premier Bjelke-Petersen was not worried that his ministers might be torn by conflicting interests.

He said: *"We make decisions clear and above board, in the interests of Queensland as a whole and without fear or favour."*

But then Petersen is used to trying to explain his way out of dubious business situations.

He started his career with shifty use of a loophole in the law against trafficking in authorities to prospect.

Then he appealed against the Federal Government's tax on the profits that he made on the deal.

This time he didn't win. The judge described his dealings as "a simple method of circumventing Department practice". And Petersen had to pay up.

He was luckier in 1976. A friendly mining warden ruled that the Minister for Mines would not be unduly influenced by the fact that a company applying for a clay mining lease was entirely owned by the premier's family and close relations.

But for the "enterprising" there are some good pickings in the mining industry. For example, Comalco's net profit after tax for the year ending 31st December 1977 was over $40 million.

☐

COMALCO have a huge lease extending down the coast from Weipa to Aurukun. It covers 750 sq. Km. and was given to them under the 1957 Comalco Act. They are just beginning to move onto this part of their lease this year.

Aurukun Associates were granted over 2,000 sq. Km. by a Queensland Government Act in 1975. The church and aborigines took legal action against this Act, but recently lost their case in the British Privy Council. Soon after this, Bjelke announced his intention to take over Aurukun and Mornington Island.

Aurukun Associates is a conglomerate owned by three major multi-national mining companies: Billiton (part of Shell Oil), 40%; Tipperary (a U.S. land company), 40%; Pechiney (a European mining company), 20%.

WHY BLACKS ARE FIGHTING THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT

THE Queensland Goverment has unlimited power over aborigines under its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Act.

The Act can compell aborigines to work for taken wages. The average wage is $65 per week for men and $58 for women, for a 40 hour week.

The Government can decide whether individual blacks should live in the city or on the reserve. Passes are needed both to enter and leave the reserves.

controls

There are even controls on areas of settlement within the reserves. For example, the State Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement has decreed that at Aurukun, which covers 750,000 hectares, the people should only live in and near Aurukun village.

This is particularly an issue since Bauxite deposits were confirmed on Aurukun land.

The Queensland Act is hated by the blacks.

Mark Nobel, speaking on the recent national land rights tour said: *"Get rid of the Act. Under the Act I'm a part of a property. I'm there to do what I'm told and I'm owned by the State".*

The worst powers of the Government were demonstrated after they gave away the Mapoon land to the Comalco mining company in 1957.

Mick Miller

The Mapoon people refused to move. In November 1963, armed police rounded up the Mapoon people in the middle of the night, put them on boats and burned their houses down as they looked back over the water.

Mick Miller, Chairman of the North Queensland Land Council said, *"Our homes are burned down and our missions are closed. It is all done under the Act.*

"Our doors are knocked down in the middle of the night, families are rounded up like cattle and sent hundreds of miles away.

"They're not breaking any laws. Except the law of humanity."

WOMEN

Dear Battler,

Please allow me to congratulate you on the improved coverage of womens struggles in your paper.

The recent article on the situation at 'Pancakes on the Rocks' in Sydney was an excellent exposé of the conditions under which many many women are forced to work, not only in a period of unemployment.

It showed problems they face when they try to present some organised opposition to the degradation imposed by bosses such as this one.

On the other hand, I do think it a little arrogant of your (male?) editorial staff to bless a modest (if incisive) two page article with the heading 'The True History of Australian Women'.

Surely our 'true' history would take more than two pages to tell?

Marea Adler
Mount Waverely, Vic

Dear Battlers,

Pancakes on the rocks

WHERE YOU LOWER YOUR AGE TO GET A JOB!

Dear Battlers,

With regard to your article on Pancakes on the Rocks (4 Mar 78) we would like to make one correction.

Waitresses are not paid below the award rates. The situation is rather that waitresses over 21 years are obliged, by the job, to lower their ages in order to be employed.

This makes the threat of losing your job because you are a junior (in the event of the introduction of adult rates for juniors) even more farcical.

More relevant is the sacking on the spot of waitresses for little or no reason, and being sent home after arriving for work because either it is not busy enough or because the person in charge of rosters has inadvertantly double-rostered some of the shifts.

Moreover, apart from the problem of not having, to quote you, "any experience of how to fight the boss", most of the staff – including cooks and kitchenhands who are also non unionized and inexperienced – are not aware that they have rights, let alone what their rights are.

exploitation

If this letter is published please omit our names as our exploitation is a short term necessity.

Two Waitresses
Sydney.

Anyone can wri[te]

Dear Battler,

In the Daily ... articles are wri[tten by] 'professional' journ[alists]. The Battler ... written by ordinary ... writing honestly ... things they know.

Anybody can ... South Australia ... written either at ... workshops or by ... ing people and ... own words.

At Battler ... topics are selected ... singly or in groups ... articles are ... written. The articles ... shared with the ... and ... collaborating.

Battler ... held fortnightly ... with the paper ... Anyone can ... time and place ... in each issue.

Clare and Ma[...]
Adelaide

What We Stand For

Workers' Power
Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism
We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State
The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism
A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation
For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party
To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation
Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If thats the sort of work you want to do-

JOIN US!

'Idle Workers'

Dear Battler,

After one month of being an "idle worker", I thought I'd let you know about some of the wonderful things that are happening to unemployed people in capitalist Australia.

It's no wonder there are so many migrant Australians unemployed when there are factories like Kraft Foods in Port Melbourne who discriminate against them. While filling out a form for a job, I watched this clerical upstart inform three Greek people that, "No. There were no jobs available".

This firm had advertised for two machine operators, and after inviewing about thirteen people, called me and another guy into the office.

qualifications

It seemed that yes, we had good qualifications for the job, and yes, we had stable work histories, but no, he wouldn't employ us. Why? Because the foreman had specified married men over thirty!

Since people answering that description didn't apply, they would simply leave the ad in the paper until they did. So next time you see the same ad. in the paper two days running, don't jump to the conclusion that no-one wanted the job.

By the way, the other fellow had decided to join the army if he didn't get this job.

And it is not just Kraft either. Australian Motor Industries and the Melbourne Tramways Board are two other employers who do the same thing.

No matter what legislation is passed, there is no way whatsoever to stop discrimination or vi[ct]ions of job ... without union co[ntrol of] hiring and firing.

Employers can ... think of some ... excuse for their d[iscriminat]ory policies, so we ... take it out of their ha[nds].

Kevin ...
Armadale

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 30[31]

THE I.S. AT WORK

International Socialists

One of the Industrial activist meetings at Conference.

BUILDING the I.S. where we work. That was the most important theme of our two-day national conference, held in Melbourne at Easter.

In our first two years of existence, I.S. has worked around major industrial disputes trying to build a presence in the industrial working class. Now that we have had some success, we have to build organisation on the job around our working members.

The situation of every worker is different. So we have to be flexible in what kind of organisation we try to build. In some areas, such as the public service and the building industry, strong union reform groups exist and here we are involved in struggles.

militants

But in other places, our members have to get to know other militants, and begin talking about politics. We have to look into establishing workplace bulletins.

Our branches have a vital role. Branch members need to be better informed about what is happening where each member works, so we can provide advice and support.

An important event of the conference was the women's meeting held on Good Friday. A large number of women sympathetic to I.S. came along to share experiences and ideas.

Some 18 resolutions were drafted, and adopted by conference with minor changes, aimed at improving our work among women and the role played by women in I.S.

Everybody who was involved felt the women's meeting, which combined some social activities with discussion, was the most enjoyable and exciting part of the week-end.

A national Women's Commission will be established to co-ordinate our work among women.

debate

In general business, resolutions from Sydney and Brisbane sparked a lot of debate. A proposal to launch a fairly ambitious theoretical journal was greeted with sympathy. But some members, knowing from experience the value of a dollar, insisted in taking a hard look at the proposed budget. The financial details were referred to the National Committee for further discussion.

A Brisbane resolution criticising some articles in The Battler led to a lengthy discussion of Battler format and content. In our attempt to write a popular newspaper, do we sometimes fall into unnecessary sensationalism? What kink of language is needed? Our general approach was supported by most members present, but we will try to modify our style to meet a number of criticisms which were felt to be justified.

enthusiasm

When we sang "the Internationale," ending the largest and most successful conference in the history of the I.S., there was an atmosphere of enthusiasm for the work ahead.

The Fight for Worker's Power

The politics of the International Socialists in a nutshell ... why we need to fight for worker's power. 40 cents (plus 30 cents post) from: Redback Press PO Box 46, Flemington Vic. 3031 or your local IS branch.

Fighting Fund

BH	$200
PU	$2.00
Annon (GMH, Adel.)	$3.00
BT	$5.00
AT	$5.00
Nth-West Melbourne Branch fundraiser	$36.00
SP	$1.00
TOTAL	$252.00

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 24 hour answering and message machine	314 [...] 335 2[...]
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	335 2[...]
MELBOURNE GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	335 27[...]
SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown	51-36[...]
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49-79[...]
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	47 62[...]
BRISBANE PO Box 111, St Lucia, Qld, 4067	44-78[...]
IPSWICH, QLD.	281 [...]

TIME PASSES SLOWLY...

but it passes just the same

By DAVE NADEL

WHEN Bob Dylan last came out to Australia in 1966 he was at the height of his creative powers.

He was past his "protest" stage and had "gone electric". He was writing drug influenced, surrealistic poetry, which in its own way expressed some kind of protest, but one which was in no way political and on the whole carried a rather negative message. But it was beautiful poetry and great music.

As a "protest" singer his politics were pretty confused liberal stuff, but they played a role in launching a movement that went far beyond Dylan's own views. But by 1966 Dylan was well past writing protest songs.

That of course did not stop the Australian press asking him a whole lot of silly questions about his role as a protest singer. But then they asked the same silly questions this month when they were only about fourteen years out of date.

In 1966 for a whole generation of young people Dylan was special. Dylan described the confusion, anger and despair we all felt. All he offered as a solution was that *"everybody must get stoned."* We thought we had some better answers but we still identified with the world that he described.

stoned

The actual concert that he gave in 1966 was pretty disappointing. He reached Melbourne at the end of a six month tour and on stage he was pretty tired and pretty stoned. But even so, he was Dylan, and he was magic.

Twelve years later Dylan is just completing a second tour of Australia. A lot has happened to us all in those twelve years. A massive student and youth movement that grew up singing Bob Dylan's songs bloomed, helped stop a war, then collapsed in a thousand pieces. A would-be counter culture that grew alongside the movement proved unable to withstand economic crisis, hard drugs and the temptations of the existing ruling class culture.

millionaire

Quite a lot has happened to Dylan since then, too. For one thing he has become a millionaire with a mansion in Malibu. Just after he left Australia the last time, he released his greatest album "Blonde on Blonde." Then there was his motor bike accident, his marriage, a period of seclusion and after that the records he was producing were never as good as those that had come before.

Apart from a couple of rare appearances he did not start performing again in public till late 1973 when he went on tour with the Rolling Thunder Review. It was not until 1974 when Dylan released "Blood on the Tracks" and "Desire" the year after, that any of his songs even approached the quality of his music of the mid-sixties.

So there he was at the Myer Music Bowl. A marriage, five children, a divorce and several million dollars later; the legendary Bob Dylan.

As a musical performance this year's concert was infinitely more professional. The arrangements were tight, the backing musicians were superb. But something was missing. The magic was gone.

Although Dylan did many of his old songs the words meant nothing. They were just there to hang the tune around. Most of the tunes in fact were totally rearranged. *"Don't think twice it's alright"* for example came out as reggae.

The music was well performed and professional, but when all was said and done, they were just another band from L.A.

politics

If you are wondering where the politics comes into this review (The Battler being a political paper and all) it doesn't. There wasn't any politics in the concert either.

For an encore Dylan did *"The times they are a-changing."* It seemed out of place. The times had very definitely changed already. And Bob Dylan had changed with them.

A Bitter Story

Contributed by Chris Simpson

"THE Women's Room" by Marilyn French is the story of two generations of women, those who reached adulthood in the fifties, and their daughters.

If it is a bitter book that is only because the story of women is a bitter one. As French comments, you can't expect thousands of years of oppression to suddenly end in one generation.

married

For instance, Mira goes back to university after her husband divorces her. All her married life she has learned to submit to him: dropping her friends if he disapproves of them; having intercourse with him when he demands it; moving to a bigger house because he wants the prestige, though she will have the extra work; above all, learning never to disagree with him openly, never to give the impression that her ideas are right and his wrong.

Mira is the perfect wife, but she gets divorced by Norm just the same. He has found someone younger, prettier. Trade in the old model on the new.

So there is Mira, intelligent, talented, eager to learn. At university, however, she learns that her most significant quality is still her sex. Women have been admitted to institutions like Harvard very reluctantly. The scholarships, the teaching positions, the preferments, go to men.

And it is the same in private life: Mira's lover, Ben, is vastly more sophisticated than Norm, yet despite his delight in her mind, their shared interests, he can and does deny her individuality and separateness. When he wants to go to Africa, she is supposed to throw everything in and follow him. The worst thing is that he doesn't even realise this is what he is asking. He just assumes she will go with him.

Variations on the theme of Woman. Mira's story is the central one but in one way or another they all come out much the same. The younger women in the book are often worse off, because they are still trying to make hopeless situations work, still blaming themselves if the great dream of Love and happily-ever-after doesn't seem to be going right for them.

feelings

"The Women's Room" is not an optimistic novel. Its primary importance is the way it shows the feelings, ideas, attitudes and difficulties of women.

"The Woman's Room" helps you not only to better understand women's problems, but to realise they're not a sign of insanity after all.

FROM THE SHELF

GERMINAL

IF you ever feel that your determination to fight the capitalist system needs a shot in the arm, read Germinal by Emil Zola.

Written in 1885, it is the story of a mining village in France during the time of the Second Empire (otherwise known as Napoleon III's delusion of grandeur.)

It was the time of the Eiffel Tower and the grand Paris Exhibition. It was also a time of abject misery for the French working class, and a time of struggle that culminated with the creation of a Commune in Paris during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.

But for the miners of Montsou, Paris and 1870 were still a long way off. They struggled on, day after day, earning barely enough to feed themselves and their families.

Etienne Lantier comes to Montsou, desperate for a job. He gets one and starts to organise the miners. He succeeds in establishing a fighting fund, but it has hardly got off the ground when the bosses force a strike by imposing a wage cut.

Most of the book deals with the strike and how the workers, after a long and bitter fight, are defeated. But it is by no means a pessimistic book. The sheer courage of the workers shines through, along with the message that some day they, and we, will win.

Part of Zola's achievement is that the characters are very real, in no sense mere mouthpieces for his views. The miners are not perfect; in many ways some of them are pretty unpleasant characters. But this is shown as a product of the way they are forced to live.

courage

In a crunch they show courage, determination and solidarity. The women are particularly well-drawn. From the old woman who hates the bosses fiercely and despises her son-in-law who sucks up to them, to proud Maheude who never loses her dignity, even when forced to beg to feed her children.

After losing her husband (shot by soldiers), one daughter to starvation, another in a cave-in and her son in the rescue operation, forced herself to return to work, she can still believe that some day the workers will overcome injustice.

Souvarine, the anarchist, sees total destruction as the only way to create a new world. He sabotages the mine as the workers start to go back. But for Zola this is not the answer: miners are killed and in the end are so demoralised by the disaster that they go back without any gains at all. And the bosses crack down hard.

For Zola the answer is this: *"The sensible way would be the big day when they could band together, know what they were doing and work through their unions. Then, one morning, confident in their solidarity, millions of workers against a few thousand idlers, they would take over power and be the masters. Ah, then indeed truth and justice would awake!"*

That day is still to come, but reading Germinal makes you want to hurry it up.

by Tom Lee Ack

Tribunal lays the bait

THE Victorian Teachers' Union recently went to the Tribunal with a pay claim and won a meagre 3% rise.

Little though it is, it's providing a threat to the direct negotiations policy of the other teacher unions in Victoria.

Both the VSTA and TTAV want to get rid of the Tribunal and have pay claims (and everything else) negotiated directly with the Department. Since neither the Tribunal or the Department will accept this, we haven't had a wage rise for quite some time.

Both unions are now running a poll to see if the members want to drop the direct negotiations policy and crawl back to the Tribunal.

If the VTU (which is a relatively docile union) can only get 3%, we'll be very lucky to get even that, so it doesn't seem worth it.

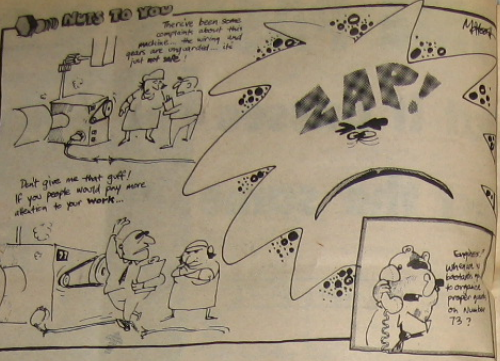
Going back to the Tribunal would be a disaster. It took a long time to get a joint policy going, and it is too important to abandon it now.

The Tribunal consists of one teacher member, one Department stooge and a government representative who is supposed to be "neutral". Any way you look at it, it's two against one.

The Tribunal costs a fortune to maintain and is nothing but a thinly disguised mouthpiece for the Liberal government. We should get rid of it, not prop it up with our pay claims.

The response to the poll so far is not conclusive, but if teachers decide to abandon direct negotiations in favour of 3% or less, we'll live to regret it.

by Tess Lee Ack, VSTA



The mail dispute

INTO THE BOG OF ARBITRATION

AFTER two weeks out and nearly 4,000 stand-downs, the officials of the APTU (Australian Postal & Telecommunications Union) have led the NSW mail drivers into the quicksand of Arbitration.

This sell-out came only hours after a meeting of stood-down postal clerks and "posties" had overwhelmingly voted to support the drivers in any action they took.

Now Arbitration Commissioner Clarkson will decide by April 26 whether or not Australia Post can carry out its plans to introduce more contractors on mail runs and inevitably, lay-off Australia Post employees and worsen conditions.

When the Clarkson proposals were passed around at the final strike meeting, there were loud rumbling noises from a large section of the drivers. It was obvious the proposals offered them nothing they didn't have two weeks ago.

When State Secretary Merv Hawkins spoke, he managed to sway a large number in favour of the proposals and a return to work.

claimed

Merv Hawkins claimed the proposal was the best the drivers would get under the circumstances.

According to Hawkins, the drivers had a good chance in Arbitration because Clarkson was more on their side than on Australia Post's. The union would be given a special chance to spell its case out in economic terms.

There was strong opposition to the return to work.

All the drivers who spoke in favour of the strike – as well as the clerks at the morning meeting – pointed out that it was *"almost accidental that the drivers are out."* Because all APTU members are under threat.

However, the influence of Merv Hawkins won the day, and the vote was carried 207-82 to go back.

A member of the transport committee, which led the strike, commented after the meeting that it was obvious nothing had been won this time.

In future, he argued, all sections of the union would have to be mobilised to fight Australia Post's plans.

At the morning meeting of stood-down clerks and posties, one clerk told the Battler of the role of George Slater, the federal secretary of the APTU, who also serves as a Postal Commissioner.

Slater sees himself as serving the union and the Commission equally, and he regularly attacked the strike during the two weeks.

"We asked him to resign from the Commission and he refused. So we've asked him to resign as Federal Secretary." Both the drivers and the clerks passed motions to this effect.

Many drivers were upset at the return to work decision. One commented, *"We lost $400 in pay and we went back with nothing."*

Some drivers think they will be out again if they get nothing from Arbitration.

As one unhappy striker commented, *"Next time the whole bloody union will have to come out."*

Meatworkers fight for jobs

MEATWORKERS in Adelaide are waging a desperate struggle for jobs.

For the past two weeks, picket lines have successfully stopped over 80,000 sheep being moved from the Elders GM yards at Cavan.

The dispute is over live sheep being exported to the Middle East. Elders has broken the established quota of two carcasses for every live sheep.

In fact, it's now got to the stage where 1.5 million sheep must be slaughtered before the 2:1 quota is restored.

This situation is costing meatworkers their jobs.

A court injunction has been issued against the meat workers union (the AMIEU) and their officials are being threatened with gaol.

Farmers have stopped supplying sheep to the abbatoirs and on Friday drove in a procession through the city streets with banners reading 'Smash the Union Pickets'.

However, a lot of stock involved comes from interstate.

The SA Meat Co[mmiss]ion is also in for the ... Gepps Cross abbatoir ... started laying off ... ignored all ... seniority procedures.

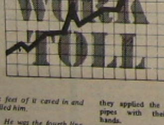
Despite this ... attempt to split the ... the meatworkers ... firm.

Gepps Cross ... strike. Ships have ... up in Albany (WA) ... Outer Harbour in ... and the ARU has ... move any sheep ...

One of the pickets summed ... said, *"If these ... jobs go too."*

Meatworkers on the picket line at Cavan

the WORK TOLL



EVERY year more than 50,000 new chemicals come onto the market.

Their properties and toxic affects are often unkown to the inventors. But chemical workers producing these substances and others who must work with them daily are recklessly exposed to unknown dangers.

Two years ago, in Melbourne, workers at Monsanto – a world-wide chemical company – decided to find out what they were working with.

They pinched a list of chemicals involved in production. Of the 16 chemicals listed four were marked with a bland comment, "toxic effect unknown."

☐

LAST month, a Telecom linesman working at Maryborough in Queensland was asked to put a line in a trench 12 feet deep and only 2 feet wide. There was no shoring in the trench – a flagrant breach of safety regulations.

When the linesman climbed into the trench, six feet of it caved in and killed him.

He was the fourth linesman to die on the job in Queensland in the last six years.

The 4,000 APTU members working for Telecom in Queensland decided enough was enough. They struck for 24 hours in protest at Telecom's shocking safety record.

☐

AT THE Melbourne City Council's Spencer Street power house, a Municipal Employees organizer found workers carrying bags of asbestos compounds.

They were dumping the asbestos in buckets and mixing it with water. Then they applied the stuff to pipes with their bare hands.

The men were working in a snow storm of asbestos ignorant of the dangers to their lives. One workmate died a year ago. The union believes it was due to asbestos but no tests were done.

Another worker has been forced to retire early with severe asbestosis. The council has accepted liability and indicated that it is willing to phase out the use of asbestos.

But for many years to come, workers will be exposed to asbestos dust flaking off the pipes.

ARBITRATION Commissioner Walker gets this week's Battler Falling Brick Award For Safety, for his supermarket approach to asbestos protection.

He was laying down the line to the unions at a conference on asbestos in Melbourne blue trains, which have been banned for several months.

Walker lauded the 'generous' offer of Vicrail to supply 'optional' respirators. "But it's up to the men to use or not use them. If the railways makes them available, how can the unions refuse?"

But there isn't any safe level for asbestos dust. And the respirators are notoriously inefficient and won't stop the gas-like dust which can cause the rare cancer mesothelioma 20 to 30 years after exposure.

The workers don't need optional respirators. They need the total removal of asbestos.

Commissioner Walker, your special asbestos-coated falling brick awaits you at the Battler office.

Just put on your respirator and come round and collect it.

by Steve Morgan

Let's get rid of the sell-outs

QUEENSLAND members of the Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union (AMIEU) should know this week if we are getting another union election.

by Ian Rentoul, AMIEU

Good use will be made of it if we are.

In the last two weeks, we've seen the present officials try to "dis-endorse" delegates elected on the job at the Bremer and Dinmore sheds. Even though only those who elect the delegates can do this.

Our officials have threatened to expel members from the union for supposedly "anti-union" activities – like supporting delegates elected on the job.

And they have used Supreme Court writs for defamation to stop public comment on their activities.

One point has been driven home. Election or no election, we have to take the present officials on. Both to protect those organizing on the job, and to safeguard our working conditions.

For example, workers at Bremer got no support at all from the officials when they were suspended for holding a meeting to elect a boners' delegate.

spectacle

And for the third time, the officials have put proposals to Borthwicks and the other sheds to increase their killing tallies as part of the log of claims. We've had the spectacle of Vestey's putting out a leaflet supporting the proposal – and why wouldn't they!

The Reform Committee has been busy drawing up fighting proposals for the meat industry – ... premanency, sick ... compensation and ... for time workers.

And we need to ... Smorgons at Dinmore ... off 300 people four ... ago. And while a ... agreement kept jobs ... some, in the long run ... agreements don't provide ... answer – as 700 workers ... Smorgons in Melbourne found out when they got the bullet.

With the companies ... the offensive, ... people for "insufficient effort" and increasing ... loads, the last thing ... need is a union which accepts the company's arguments and tries to ... the delegates that ... on the job have elected to represent them.

A MIGHTY BLOW AGAINST SCABBING

THE slimy vocation of scabbery took another pummelling last week.

Australia's latest practitioner of the ignoble art, Frank Kane, got the shove from his Melbourne City Council job.

And the thirty-seven mechanics who used to have the dubious honour of working with him won a total victory on their log of claims – despite Mr Kane's miserable blacklegging efforts.

The Melbourne garbage strike

For the record, that log of claims included dirt money, better ventilation, improved washing facilities and first-aid at the Green St workshop, reimbursement of driving licence costs, and better over-award pay. A total cost of maybe $6 or $7 per week for each worker.

But the mechanics not only had to fight Melbourne City Council for four weeks on strike – they also had to beat Kane and his attempts at scabbery.

In fact the threat of the Industrial Relations Bureau is still hanging over them, as Kane has gone crawling to it to try and get his job back.

One AMWSU member involved in the strike told the Battler how Kane had crossed their picket line during the strike.

Kane had brought along two armed cops to protect him. The cops told the half-dozen men on the picket line that they had to keep their hands behind their backs or they would be taken as acting in a menacing fashion.

The picketers complied with this. Then one of the cops kneed a workers in the crotch to break through the line.

Another mechanic told us what it was like working with Kane.

"He's an anti-unionist. Never stopped complaining about the unions, and how they're destroying the country. You just got sick of listening to him.

"You could just work it out for yourself he was in the Liberal Party.

"He was a pig. Nobody would work with him. He just had his little set area where he'd work by himself.

"He still carried on about the unions and the state of the country. Nobody talked to him about it. Just stood there and listened."

During the strike Kane claimed he'd been tricked into joining the union. This was a lie.

"It's a union shop. You get told before you start. If you don't want to be in the union, you just don't start.

Rubbish piles up in Melbourne streets during the garbage depot mechanics' strike.

"You've got to abide by majority decision."

But abiding by majority decisions is not one of Frank Kane's strong points despite his claim to be a defender of democratic rights.

"He demanded a secret ballot before the strike. He said the New Australians were too scared to put their hands up and went along with everyone else.

"He got a secret ballot and got beaten in it. But he still wouldn't abide by it.

"He went to the union office and told them he wanted to resign. They told him he couldn't – he was on strike.

"So he went downstairs and told the girl he was resigning. She didn't know any better, she resigned him. So he went straight back to work."

Kane got through the picket once. But then all hell broke loose and rather than face a strike by all 500 of its workers, the Council stood Kane down.

Then as the strike continued, the city's garbage trucks broke down. The Council forced an apprentice to make some of them roadworthy again – but the other council workers observed the black-bans and refused to touch them.

Finally with rotten garbage fouling the streets and threatening business in the City area, the Council caved in completely. Kane got the sack he so richly deserved, and the log of claims was granted in full.

Getting rid of Kane was a mighty blow against the right to scab that Fraser and his mates want to protect.

If Kane brings in the I.R.B., it's up to all of us to turn that victory into a rout.

Swanbank - back but not beaten

STRIKING coal truck drivers have returned to work at Swanbank Power Station in Ipswich, Queensland, while their case is before the Industrial Commission.

The seventy drivers are demanding a $40 rise and a thirty-five hour week to give them parity with other workers doing identical work under other awards.

The commissioner hearing the case wanted to carry out an inspection of the work being done by the drivers. The drivers have bent over backwards to do the "right thing" as the commission has no excuse for deciding against them.

At the last strike meeting, there was much talk of the success of the picket they held and the way it had strengthened their position.

"We didn't realise we had so much power. You'd be surprised at the amount of stuff on the road," was one comment.

Another bloke who was originally against the picket tactic told the meeting how the action had convinced him.

The drivers also decided to take action in future if any of their fellow workers continued to work during the strike. They resolved that if anyone was victimized because of their support of the strike, there would be an immediate stoppage.

Although at the moment the coal truck drivers' hopes rest with the industrial commission, they have said they are ready to take action again.

It is that determination, more than any legalistic considerations, which will decide how much they get from the commission.

Metal workers meet

MASS meetings of Victorian metal workers took place last month for the first time in two years to discuss progress on our industry log of claims, first submitted in 1975.

We overwhelmingly rejected the proposals of metal employers on wages.

What the employers have offered, after three years of over-award surveys, stalling tactics, and sometimes not even turning up to negotiations, is wage rises of only a few cents a week!

Some of the employers' organisations offered to incorporate part of the over-award payment into the award.

This means a slightly larger rise from indexation, since over-awards do not attract wage indexation.

offer

The National Negotiating Committee of Metal Unions has rightly rejected this offer as unsatisfactory because it does nothing for those workers on lower wages.

In fact, it is nothing more than an attempt to buy off the better organised workers at the expense of those who, for one reason or another, don't have the same bargaining power.

The mass meetings called for a real increase for everyone in the industry, and endorsed a resolution which includes further report-back meetings from the officials.

The Moulders' Union has already caved in to employers' pressure, by telling its members that they didn't have to stop if they didn't want to.

The Victorian Chamber of Manufactures has successfully had the log of claims referred to the Full Bench of the Arbitration Commission.

This means any struggle we wage will have to be a better and hard one.

by Kevin Bain, AMWSU

SEC - get ready for round two

IT looks like Victorian power workers in the Latrobe Valley are headed for round two of their battle with the SEC for a $40 pay rise.

The SEC won round one last year when John Halfpenny and Bob Hawke persuaded the workers to go back after an eleven week strike, with nothing more than the promise of a work value case.

But Commissioner Mansini only awarded pitiful rises in the work-value case. So now the Latrobe Valley shop stewards committee has recommended the imposition of bans to re-open the fight.

This is an excellent move. After last years' struggle, most workers have still not recovered enough financially to wage another long strike.

action

Bans on overtime and availability will run down the SEC's equipment over the next few months, while giving the workers time to prepare for stronger action later in the year.

Mansini's decision was carefully designed to try and split the Latrobe Valley workers. It gave those who had been in the SEC three or more years $3.50 to $5.50. Those who had worked two years got around $2.50.

Workers with under two years experience, and building workers, got nothing.

The stocks of SEC workers have been low recently, with the sell-out of last year's strike, and recent defeats where the SEC has introduced contractors.

The shop stewards' recommendation could herald the start of the fight-back.

260 days on picket

SEAMEN, wharfies and painters and dockers have now picketed continuously for 260 days outside the Brisbane offices of Utah (Australia).

The picket began on July 18 last year, after Utah refused to implement International Labour Organization (ILO) guidelines on the employment of foreign crews.

The ILO suggests that 40% of crews should come from the importing country, 40% from the exporting country, and 20% from anywhere else. The 40-40-20 agreement is widely accepted by shipping countries.

Utah's five ships carrying coal from Hay Point in Queensland are registered in Liberia and Panama, where labour laws are virtually non-existent.

The Spanish seamen working these ships live under constant threat of the sack for the slightest resistance to the lousy conditions and rotten pay.

So the Seamen's Union is demanding that all Utah ships fly the Australian flag, so that Australian labour conditions won by decades of struggle would then apply.

Rockhampton tug-boat operators in the Seamen's Union last year refused to move a Utah ship, the "Lake Buyestia", and forced Utah to pay $49,000 in back wages to the Spanish crew.

This sort of action, and the demand for sailing under the Australian flag, can help to protect seamen's wages and conditions.

But the 40-40-20 demand will do little more than exchange Spanish seamen's jobs for Australian ones.

When the picket first started, motorists would stop nearby at the traffic lights, and when they turned green, shout abuse and hurriedly drive off.

But now most passers-by offer support and encouragement.

Now Maritime workers in Melbourne have started a regular Friday picket at the offices of A.M.P., which has substantial shares in Utah.

One seamen, Jeff Wills, commented that the Seamen's Union now had to mobilize all its allies in the maritime industry, and spread the pickets on A.M.P. to as many centres as possible throughout Australia.

'Seaway Queen' crew members on the picket line outside Utah's office in Eagle St, Brisbane.

Utah miners fight on

MINE workers are containing the series of rolling actions against Utah.

The main demand centres around payment of an over-award wage agreement.

Mine workers won an over-award payment of $23 in 1973. This should now be around $70-$80 to compensate for inflation.

In the same period Utah's profits have risen from $8 million to $158 million.

claims

Other demands in the 13 point log of claims include return air fares for holidays from the isolated mining townships, a health scheme, and air conditioning for the rented houses.

A month ago the Company flatly refused to negotiate over any of the demands being put to it.

The mine workers then set up a regional committee, with representatives from the Combined Mining Unions, to co-ordinate against Utah for as long as it takes to win. There is already some indication that the snap 24 hour strikes are starting to hurt.

support

The Utah workers have already received widespread support for their campaign from miners in other states and from other unions, including the Seamen's Union, who have their own score to settle with Utah.

THE TEAM TO TAKE ON THE BUILDING BOSSES

by David Shaw
BLF member

BUILDERS Laborers for Democratic Control in Sydney have chosen the rank-and-file team to contest the coming elections in the NSW branch.

The team is:- Noel Olive (for State Secretary), Duncan Williams and Bob Petty (for organisers) Brian Daffney (for trustee) and Ralph Kelly (for Executive position).

We are fairly confident of winning this election. Especially considering the team the Gallagher/Black leadership has put up against us.

All their candidates are lightweights in the industry, and have yet to offer any policies for the real interests of builders' labourers.

Instead, they continue their campaign of slander and personal abuse against our candidates.

On the other hand, we in Builders Labourers for Democratic Control have now finalized our rank-and-file policy for the industry.

amenities

It covers issues like: no wage restraint . . . permanency and the fight against the sack . . . better safety and amenities on the job.

These policies, coupled with three years of irresponsible leadership by the Federal body's stooges, should prove a winner for the Rank and File.

However, we are not over-confident. Returning officer, Joe Ferguson, might try and run a crooked ballot – as he has in the past.

The union returning officer is meant to be neutral. But Ferguson has been attending meetings of the leadership's candidates.

So our scrutineers will be keeping a close watch on the ballot in this election.

Most important though, we'll be getting out on the jobs and building rank-and-file support for our candidates and program.

We'll be aiming not just to win the election, but to use the campaign to build the rank-and-file movement in the BLF.

UP IN THE AIR AT QANTAS

A change of tactics beat the bosses soundly in the latest dispute on the Qantas site in Sydney.

The blue started when Dillingham's smartie project manager, John Fawkner, decided that the workers would have to eat their lunch on the 23rd floor of the building. A whole lot of sheds were lifted up there.

Eating your lunch 300 feet up in the air is no fun. You can't just duck out to the shops in George St. during your break.

And if it starts to rain, the boss has got you trapped, actually in the building.

If it was raining at the start of the day, the company had kindly provided sheds on the ground for workers to sit in.

But these sheds were locked at all other times.

On top of this, Dillinghams had turned the workers' favourite eating and meeting shed into a change-shed. They had put up partitions and coat-hooks, etc in it.

This was an obvious provocation, and everybody went out the gate for three days.

But obviously Dillinghams were happy to ride out the dispute. Maybe even sit out another three month strike.

So the workers changed tactics.

The mass meeting on Monday April 3 decided they would simply restore the status quo themselves.

So they set to work. Down came the partitions and coathooks, as they ripped out the inside of the big change-shed.

Back went the furniture into the old sheds. And the locked-up sheds were opened with a key courteously provided by a sympathetic foreman.

Everybody then went back to work, having informed the company that the dispute was all over.

John Fawkner and his off-sider Ross Martin were pretty upset. They carried on a bit, threatening to sack everybody and saying the workers weren't covered by compo and so on.

But the bosses were beaten this time and they knew it.

The strike is just one of the weapons in our armoury against the boss. The Qantas workers' tactic was another, and it caught the bosses with their pants down this time.

Noel Olive (standing), Builders Labourers for Democratic Control candidate for NSW secretary, and Brian Rix (seated), candidate for federal secretary, at a builders labourers' meeting. Gallagher's men are already trying to smear them.

Cake company throws in the sponge

FOUR women have won their jobs back at Winmar Shortcakes, near Geelong in Victoria, after being victimized for union activity.

The women – Elaine, Kathy, Robyn and Pam – were sacked shortly after the Pastrycooks Union organized at the factory. But a picket by sixteen of the forty workers forced the company to back down in three days.

The workers at Winmar voted to join the union in early February. Then the union asked the company to bring wages up to award conditions.

The company at first agreed. But then they turned around and sacked five of the women who were amongst the strongest unionists.

One of the women decided to leave anyway. But the other four set up a picket. The same day, twelve other workers walked off and joined the picket line.

Winmar's owners claimed that the women's work was unsatisfactory. This was a weak excuse.

appointed

For example, they had just appointed one of the women to floor girl after 2½ years at the place. In that time, she had never been warned about her work.

The picket cut off all supplies to the factory, and the company was threatened with closure. Within three days, it caved in and re-instated the women.

It seems that even Winmar's owners were divided on the sackings. Out of the family of four that owns the company, the father, mother and one son were against it. Only the other son wanted to go through with it – but he got his way.

Now the women have won their jobs back. But feelings are still on edge, and workers are reluctant to discuss the issue.

The shop steward, in fact, told us he thought that unionization had not done any good at the factory. Despite the fact that the union has got wages raised to award levels!

Nonetheless, the picket at Winmar Shortcakes has proved one thing. If we're prepared to fight – *we can* defend our jobs and union organization.

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ACI printers win $...

ACI Fibre P... at Keon ... Melbourne, ha... the scene of a ... struggle by w... over a log of cl...

The ... presented ... workers' ... representati... $20 weekly ... wages. By ... claim, workers ... bring their pay ... with the rest of the ... container industry.

Other claims ... laundering of ... $3.50 *tea money*.

emotional

These demands ... came from a group ... teen key printers ... lift drivers. On ... reply from the ... these militants ... strike.

They stayed out ... days before returning ... part in a secret ... organized by fellow ... to decide on action ... the company.

An emotional ... vote saw the other workers joining the strike action.

Over the next ... the workers formed ... lines to ... materials being ... the factory. ... rushed to take ... Arbitration.

warning

Union officials ... from the court ... warning that, unless ... strike ceased immediately ... a working party report ... prepared by union ... employer groups ... industry conditions ... be closed down. The ... returned.

Arbitration ... seventeen original ... militant, strikers ... immediate wage rise ... to five dollars. All ... workers received nothing.

Still, they didn't ... completely empty ... The company "gave" ... warning that anyone ... was late for work ... more than three times ... be sacked!

Women assembly ... workers also ... joyous news that ... received a one dollar ... in future, they would ... massive retrenchments.

All this from a company ... that admits it workers ... one of the best productivity ... rates in Victoria!

unity

The PKIU will ... further representations ... the company on behalf ... the workers who got nothing ... from the Arbitration ... decision. Militants at ACI ... believe that workers' unity ... will be a key factor in ... future gains.

If anything stands out ... this struggle – apart from ... the company's tightness ... it is the fact that ... militant action brings results.

Workers who opposed ... united front against ... bosses received their ... They got nothing. Those ... who fought, won.

by Greg Patch...

DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOUR UNION !

No. 50 (49)
22 April 1978
20c

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

STATE LIBRARY 26

"THERE WAS no compromise, it was a complete sellout." That's how one Dinmore, Queensland, meatworker summed up Bob Hawke's contribution to the meatworkers' struggle for jobs.

"Sixty-odd meatworkers were arrested on pickets, the export companies broke a long-standing agreement, police had attacked pickets and allowed scabs to lead the sheep, yet the bans were lifted. Sellouts seem to be getting a bit of a habit with him."

Robert James Lee Hawke has added the meatworkers to the long, long list of Australian unionists whose struggles he has wrecked with his brand of "moderation" and "diplomacy".

The meatworkers union – the AMIEU – was fighting for jobs in Adelaide by trying to enforce the long standing agreement of two sheep killed locally for each live sheep export.

At the moment there are 1500 unemployed meatworkers in South Australia alone, and lay-offs in meatworks right around the country.

Just as the meatworkers were getting somewhere, Bob Hawke arrived. He was "concerned" about the pickets arrested in Western Australia and the use of scab labor on the wharves.

jubilant

He organised a "compromise". If the union backed down, ended the pickets, lifted its ban, the scabs and the farmers would go home.

The farmers and the press were jubilant. He didn't even secure the dropping of charges against the picketers in Western Australia.

On their picket lines the meatworkers had had to fight the companies, the cops, the farmers and the Fraser government. They were confronted by organised strike-breaking and arrest-hungry police.

What they needed was a trade union leadership which would galvanize the rest of the union movement behind their struggle.

What they got instead was treachery – pure and simple.

In the past, Hawke has at least had the "decency" to cover his tracks with plenty of rhetoric on television in support of the workers he is meant to represent.

This time, he didn't even bother. He spent more time weeping for farmers with quarter-million dollar properties than the meatworkers who were losing their jobs and livelihoods.

There can no longer be the slightest trace of an illusion about Bob Hawke. When he becomes involved in a dispute, he has only one intention – to get us back to work and break our struggle regardless of the terms of settlement.

The trail of defeats he has "led" us to is a mute and bitter testimony to the poverty of his "politics of compromise".

The only question that remains is why do other union leaders – left-wing union leaders – let him stick his nose in in the first place?

tennis

It can't be in the hope of getting broad trade union solidarity. From the Kerr coup, when he told us to "cool it", to Medibank, when he played tennis during a General Strike, to the Latrobe Valley power strike, where he worked himself sick (literally) to avert a nation-wide stoppage, it has been obvious that Bob Hawke will do everything in his power to undermine trade union solidarity.

There can be only one explanation why trade union leaders let Bob Hawke do what he does. Because it gets them off the hook themselves.

That doesn't solve anything for us, though. We're still going to need the solidarity of our fellow unionists in our struggles – despite that fact that Bob Hawke refuses to organize it.

We're simply going to have to do the job ourselves from now on. Every strike that in any way takes on the Government is going to need strike committees and delegations building active support and solidarity from our fellow workers.

Tech School Cancer Threat

by Steve Morgan

SCHOOLCHILDREN at Kingsbury Tech in Melbourne have been exposed to the threat of cancer.

The foundations of the school library have subsided.

This has put stress on the ceiling causing the sound proofing material containing dangerous asbestos to fall onto the children.

Midway through 1977 the Health Department measured 0.1 fibres per millilitre in the air. This was with few children in the library to stir up the dust in the carpet.

This fibre count is four times higher than the dustiest levels now being enforced by Victorian railway workers at Jolimont. And they have special suits and breathing equipment.

The fibre count may sound small but the World Health Organization and the U.S. National Institute on Occupational Safety and Health say that the only means of avoiding asbestos-linked cancers is a complete ban.

There are no "safe" levels of exposure for workers and for public places like schools, hotels and laundaries.

grant

The Library was built by the State Government under a libraries grant from the Federal Government to Federal education department standards.

There have been about 160 Commonwealth Standard libraries built in Victoria alone.

The Co-ordinator of Building Operations for the Victorian Education Department, Mr Rowan, told the Battler last week that the building program began in 1970.

He said all buildings were of a similar design and of similar standards. Libraries similar to those built in Victoria would have been erected in other states.

When the Battler asked the head of the Library Services branch of the Education Department Mr. Barry Sheen how many libraries were built, he said "Records are not kept.

"But from memory there are about 120 High Schools and 45 technical schools with Commonwealth standard libraries."

When asked about the asbestos ceiling he said that the library was in "the first 6 or 7 built and there was some experimentation with design and construction materials. "It possibly could have been a one off design."

Asbestos has been a proven killer for seventy-five years. Yet it is still widely used in many kinds of building work.

The reason it hasn't been banned is that it's cheap and the asbestos-producing companies have been able to get their way with government and the health authorities.

In the end, we all pay for their profits with our lives.

And that could include some of the students from Kingsbury Tech.

STOP PRESS

ON Page 10, we tell of a struggle by steelworkers at BHP in Wollongong to save the jobs of 28 fellow workers.

As The Battler goes to press, we've heard that the 28 jobs have been saved and the other claims are to go to Arbitration.

between the lines

IT probably brought tears of joy to Lang Hancock's eyes. I'm referring to the story of the young Melbourne woman who cleared a total of six dollars for a week's work.

That's right, six dollars. Irene Lunett, 18, got a job working as a salesgirl for Julien Clarke Jewellery. She was sacked after two days and received no commission money and no wage.

She then spent three days delivering jewellery for the same creep and received $36. Out of that, she had to pay petrol, parking fines and parking fees.

Result? She had $6 clear by the end of the week.

MEANWHILE, the Federal Government is going to spend millions it doesn't need to.

Sir Robert Mark (the former London cop who thinks that picketing is worse than murder) has recommended the government set up an elite special police unit to deal with terrorism and VIP security.

They needn't bother. The government already has its own, private, captive little group of para-military fascist thugs. I'm referring to the Ustasha, of course.

Only last month, the Victorian Minister for Ethnic Affairs, Walter Jona, opened a Croatian Hall named after Cardinal Stepinac, formerly High Priest to the Croatian fascist movement in Yugoslavia.

Naturally, several well-known Ustashe operatives were at the ceremony.

GUESS where Victoria's National Country Party is holding its conference?

Answer: Cowes. At least it'll keep their mind on the job ... milking the rest of us and moaning that it's still not enough.

AND now for our very own honour, the Battler Plastic Straw. Coveted, desired by every creeping, crawling suck that ever emerged from the woodwork of society, the Battler Plastic Straw this week goes to a writer.

While most of us at home were thrilled to see Vanessa Redgrave win her award, and even happier at her forthright acceptance speech, a few tired Hollywood hacks weren't.

Immediately after Vanessa came Paddy Chayevsky, who got his award for the script of Network last year.

Without naming anyone, he deplored the fact that some people had brought politics into the ceremony. Tut, tut. It would never do to bring politics into Hollywood.

Unfortunately, though, it's a bit late to worry about that now. Paddy should have told John Wayne, who killed a million Indians in the name of the American Way of Life before making that ultimate political obscenity, the Green Berets.

Or to those countless hacks who turned out war film after war film to remind us what our boys were fighting for. Or to the people who drew up and enforced the Hollywood blacklist that drove dozens of the greatest stars and directors out of their jobs.

The people who had Charlie Chaplin exiled from his home in Hollywood.

Of course, Vanessa Redgrave's crime was not that she brought politics into the Academy Awards; she brought the wrong politics in.

by Darth Vader

ON THE PICKET LINE

from Jeff Wallman in Wallaroo

MEATWORKERS at the South Australian Meat Corporation (SAMCOR) started picketing on March 19.

The pickets were set up at Cavan and Virginia, at the holding yards of Elders-GM and Metro Meat.

For four weeks, these pickets were effective and no sheep were loaded, although several attempts were made.

The pickets had been set up by the union, the AMIEU which was convinced that they could handle it alone. They rejected any outside assistance, which was later shown to be a mistake.

The farmers were incensed by the picket. They had found that they could get $18 a head from the export market, instead of $4 for local killing.

They held a rally in Adelaide which consisted of hundreds of trucks with signs and placards. The demonstration was obviously well-prepared and by no means spontaneous.

Back on the picket line, farmers were constantly driving past yelling abuse and threats like "Go back to work, you lazy bastards!"

pickets

The pickets we spoke to were convinced that this was the right action. They were 100% behind the union and confident the pickets would be effective in forcing the re-introduction of the one-for-two agreement.

At Virginia, on the day the ship "Aries Chief" was due to sail for Western Australia, the picketers were thrown off the Metro Meats property by Dunstan's State Police.

The picket was then set up on land owned by the railways, so the Commonwealth Police came and removed them again.

Since the sheep couldn't be loaded at Adelaide, they farmers decided to ship them from Wallaroo, a small country town about 100km from Adelaide.

Wallaroo was the ideal port for this move. It was only 60km from where the sheep were held, it had a small workforce of 52 wharfies, the port has easy access for ships and there is no need for tugs. It had also been used for live sheep loading before.

The townspeople are largely farmers, so they too were sympathetic. Around 2000 farmers converged on the town and virtually took over. The meatworkers maintained a token picket on the outskirts of town.

vigilante

There were vigilante groups driving round in cars with CB radios ready to take on anyone suspected of being a picketer or meat-worker.

Tempers were kept high with statements like "If the meaties come here, we'll know how to handle them" and "We'll give the Police five minutes then we'll let them see our side of the law".

We were approached several times, abused and threatened and we narrowly escaped being beaten up.

The plan to use Wallaroo to break a meatworkers ban had been prepared three years ago, according to MacLachlan, the farmers organiser.

LEFT: On the picket line in Queensland. BELOW: Part of the farmers' vigilante force in Wallaroo. The farmers were mobilised by companies like Elders; the people to blame for the farmers' bad financial condition.

WHAT WE THINK

Protectionism is a dead end for the trade union movement.

That is an argument we have hammered home year in and year out in the pages of the Battler. Yet more than once we have enthusiastically supported struggles which raised demands for protection: in the Newcastle shipbuilding industry last year, and in the meat industry in this issue.

Why?

There is more to these struggles than just protection, and we have to look at all sides of a struggle.

In the fight over the Newcastle dockyards, the workers were effectively demanding that ships be built in Newcastle instead of Japan. That is protection. But the dockworkers aimed most of their fire at the Fraser Government. Moreover, they were not demanding new protection measures, just the maintenance of existing ones.

In the current meat dispute, the meatworkers are under attack by farmers and the Federal government. A defeat in this struggle could mean a threat to the union's organisation, especially if Fraser brings the government in to smash the meatworkers.

In both cases, two issues were closely linked: a defensive struggle by workers to maintain the status quo as far as protection went, and the on-going struggle of workers against the Fraser government.

It is likely that there will be many more such struggles in the near future. We expect to be supporting most if not all of them. Let's look at each of the interlinked issues.

We are not for using protection to "export unemployment". But neither are we for "importing unemployment" by slashing away wildly at the existing tariffs.

While we don't like protection, and eventually we want a world free of tariffs, we will support strikes in defense of existing protection arrangements. why we support the workers in their ... maintain the present system.

And whenever ... come into conflict ... Fraser, or other ... ing forces, we have ... their defense, wh... are striking over p... or anything else.

2 for 1 will not save jobs

BUT althou... supporting the m... workers demands ... do not believe it ... going to save jobs ... the industry.

If we restrict the ... of live sheep going ... Middle East, what ... is there that the ... any increase in the ... for Australian carcass...

Will the Middle ... countries be prepared ... the price for kill... frozen meat, even ... killed according ... religious traditions?

The answer is ... guarantee at all. ... the meatworkers ... situation in the fi... that all markets ... world have declined.

capitalism

And that include... market for meat ... if people aren't hungry ... capitalism only allows ... to eat if you can pay.

There is a ... around the wo... millions of people ... pay.

We have to be p... to challenge the ... "free market."

Our meat is ... the private meatw... the semi-g... authorities like SA... won't provide it, w... to demand that the F... Government nationalise ... meatworks and take ... responsibility for them.

If they can't sell ... meat we can produce ... should either reduce ... working week or give ... surplus meat away ... starving peoples of ... and Asia.

They'll never ... willingly, of course ... have to force them ... then, they won't ... enforce the existing ... ments voluntarily. W... we want, we'll have to ... for it.

Brisbane
Cops getting restless

by Carole Ferrier

BRISBANE cops are starting to complain about their jobs!

On Friday 14 April some had to get out of bed to be on the wharves at 5 am to watch anti-uranium picketers as the latest shipment of yellowcake went through. Two picketers were arrested.

Then they had to wait for information about the size of the planned march from Queensland University to the City. It was only a small group — about 25 people — but it marched half a mile out of the campus in the middle of the road while motor cycle cops circled around and through them.

Then they were stopped by lines of uniformed and special branch cops who arrested three women and charged all of them with so-called Illegal Procession.

The march from the University was to join up with a rally called by the TLC in support of Civil Liberties, especially over the arrest of 13 Concerned Christians the previous Sunday in a land rights and civil liberties demonstration.

marched

Some unions, including the seamen and wharfies, stopped work and marched on the pavement to the rally.

The TLC didn't want the rally to be too big lest it cause 'trouble', so they organised it within three days, didn't inform a lot of unions, and didn't leave time for consultation with the Civil Liberties Co-ordinating Committee. It clashed with a big metal workers' stopwork organised earlier.

As a result it was far smaller than the big Zaphir rally last September.

Cops kept low profile — below windowsill level in various buildings around the Roma St forum area. TLC Secretary Whitby had assured them there would be no attempt to march — but they couldn't be certain.

About 800 workers listened to two hours of speeches and then went off to the pub. Many in fact went earlier and missed anti-uranium and civil liberties speakers who attacked the opportunism of ALP leader Burns.

Burns had called for co-operation with the Liberal Party in restoring the right of appeal to a magistrate.

With friends like Tom Burns, the civil liberties movement in Queensland doesn't need enemies!

Then the poor overworked cops had to get down to the Lands Department where 45 people picketed in support of black land rights and against the Federal sellout of black interests. No less than six inspectors were conspicuously on duty, plus Special Branch including their head Les Hogan.

The cops were disappointed when they realised the picket had no plans to march and dispersed at 5:30. Five arrests in one day won't add that much to consolidated revenue. However they've just put up all the bail and fines to meet 'inflation'.

Cops complained to waiting newsmen that they'd spent the day trailing about. We'd be quite happy for them to stay at home.

ABOVE: Katingal BELOW: Bathurst

Getting rid of the bashers

"THE most important thing is to get them out of the system."

"If we don't get them out of the system, they will keep on bashing prisoners. And other screws will bash too."

Tony Green, president of the Prisoner's Action Group, is taking out a private prosecution against several screws whose brutal behaviour is detailed in the report of the Royal Commission into N.S.W. jails.

The first prosecution has already begun. There are up to 22 screws who could be prosecuted on the basis of Justice Nagle's Royal Commission Report.

For example, there is a screw called Aitken, who broke a baton on a prisoner's head during a group bashing. Then he asked for another baton and used it on the prisoner's spine.

Then there's Atkins, "the angry ant". He told Bathurst prisoners in 1974: *"There are two of youse dead already. You've had your turn, and now it's our turn and a few more of you are going to die."*

Pallot was Superintendent of Bathurst in 1970, when he led the systematic flogging of two hundred prisoners; and in 1974, when he led screws in to bash prisoners with the warning, in one case, *"Be careful, they are old men."*

Over 50 prisoners were injured, either by flogging or by shooting, in Bathurst in 1974. One is paraplegic as a result.

The Nagle report states: *"In most cases, the injuries were inflicted by prison officers illegally using unreasonable and unnecessary force."*

recommend

But the report did not recommend prosecuting the prison officers involved.

Barry Todd, the chairman of the Prison Officers Association has also claimed that the screws should not be charged because it would cause bad relations in the prison system.

It is hard to imagine how relations could get any worse.

Tony Green accused the leadership of the Prison Officers' Association of protecting the bashers.

"The jails are full of working class people who don't have to tolerate that sort of animal behaviour.

"While the screws are bashing other working class people, we cannot recognise their rights as unionists."

In any case, the wankers seem to be getting plenty of protection from the authorities.

Tony Green told the Battler: *"It is interesting that a private prosecution had to be launched.*

"The law works for the benefit of one group against another. We are highlighting the fact that the criminal justice system is biased.

"We don't want to get the bashers sent to prison. We just want to get them away from the prisoners."

NOT SO MUCH A SETTLEMENT AS A SELLOUT

AS was expected, the Fraser government last week backed down on its threat to take over the Aboriginal reserves at Aurukun and Mornington Island.

The so-called 'compromise' arrived at with Bjelke-Petersen means only one thing — a denial of the legitimacy of Aboriginal claims for land rights.

While Viner and Fraser have since touted the agreement, which confirms the Queensland State Government's legal coup in converting the reserves to Crown Land, as a triumph for 'self management', Petersen is more forthright.

Without the victorious crowing that destroyed the first effort at compromise, he has let it be known that the Queensland State Government has achieved everything it originally intended.

mining

The establishment of local government areas on Aboriginal reserves ensures that these communities will have no control over the issue of mining leases, and no right to mineral royalties once mining begins.

Moreover, if any of the elected councils step out of line, which will be difficult to do with so many State, Federal and Church bureaucrats hovering behind the scenes, the State Government can exercise its right to sack the elected members and appoint an administrator.

This fear was voiced at the Brisbane Civil Liberties rally by Mick Miller of the Northern Lands Council.

The Gold Coast City Council was sacked only recently because of a conflict over land development involving a company owned by the Mayor, Bruce Small, so this possibility is not at all unlikely.

Although much opposition has been expressed to the State Government's stand, the only action taken so far has been two small pickets outside the Department of Aboriginal and Islanders' Affairs — one organised by the Concerned Christians' Group, which was dispersed by the police, and one by the Civil Liberties Co-ordinating Committee.

passive

The black community, in Brisbane and elsewhere, has been very passive.

One of the important features of the dispute has been the success of right wing intransigence. Whatever the Constitutional niceties of the matter — and it is clear that the Federal Government has all the rights, including the takeover option — Petersen stuck to his guns and yielded not an inch, and this strategy paid off.

While newspaper editorials and the Liberal Party, even in Queensland, criticised his redeement and his stubbornness, thereby temporarily weakening his position, in the end he emerged firmly in the saddle, dispelling all suggestions that he might take a holiday or stand down before the next election.

This should be a lesson to those in the labour movement who fear to 'pick up the gauntlet'. The mailed fist will surely crush them if they continue to search for the middle ground.

Uranium Groups Organise

STUDENTS at Nailsworth High School in Adelaide have established their own branch of the Campaign Against Nuclear Energy.

After a meeting of about fifty students which was addressed by a speaker from C.A.N.E., a number decided that they would set up a branch in the school.

Already they had been putting up posters around the school and had been getting into lots of arguments. Now they have written off to CANE for formal recognition.

They have begun to circulate a petition in the school against uranium, as part of the state-wide petition signing being organised by INSPECT, an education-based Conservation and Science group.

Railways

THE Shop Committee at Islington Railway Workshops in Adelaide organised their third Anti-uranium meeting last Tuesday. Two speakers from the Campaign Against Nuclear Energy brought down a slide and cassette show.

Twenty-five workers came to the show in the works theatrette.

This was the first time the slide show had been used at a lunch-time meeting, and it proved to be a bit long. We are now producing a shorter and more up to date one, specifically for workplace meetings. We hope to do many more of these.

Any shop committee or interested group who would like an anti-uranium workplace meeting is asked to contact C.A.N.E. at 310 Angas St. Adelaide or telephone 223 6917.

STOP URANIUM MINING

Behind The Battler...

WE'RE called the International Socialists. We're active trade unionists. We participate in the uranium movement and I.S. members are amongst the leaders of the fight against Bjelke-Petersen in Brisbane.

We stand for socialism; the control of the factories and social services by the working class.

We fight all exploitation and oppression. Our meetings are open to interested people. If you'd like to come, just ring one of the numbers on page 8.

JOIN US!

...There's an Organisation

OR clip the coupon below.

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME ...
ADDRESS ... Postcode ...
PHONE NO. ...
TRADE UNION ...

Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, 3031

RADICAL ACTIONS DO THEY ALIENATE THE MASSES?

— BY —

TOM O'LINCOLN

IN every mass movement, there comes a time when some people begin to worry.

Getting a protest movement off the ground demands bold initiatives and risks. But once it is moving, some people begin to become cautious. They worry that too much militancy might endanger the gains that have already been made.

cautious

Today we are seeing the growth of a "cautious faction" in two important movements: the movement against uranium mining, and the civil liberties movement in Queensland.

This current is best represented by the newspaper DIRECT ACTION, which becomes more timid with every passing day.

DIRECT ACTION cites the experience of the Vietnam movement of the late 1960's. They argue that only broad, all-inclusive actions of the Vietnam moratorium type can build a successful movement. They say that the moratoriums had to be built by restraining the "ultraleftists" who stood for more radical action and more radical slogans.

This is a great oversimplification of history.

At the start of the Vietnam war, even peaceful street marches were radical actions. Lots of people who disliked the war also disliked street marches. Plenty of radicals of my generation will remember being given friendly lectures about our "too radical" tactic of marching in the streets.

We persisted in our militant tactics, and *made* them legitimate. And when the marches were accepted, we moved to other radical initiatives.

forgotten

Many people may have forgotten that during the early Vietnam days about half the peace movement wanted to limit the demands to "Stop the Bombing, Negotiate!" It was only the more radical people who called for immediate withdrawal of the troops. For this they were accused of "ultraleftism" — but they proved to be right.

As the war progressed many of the radicals began building industrial action against the war, openly resisting the draft, identifying the war as a struggle against imperialism, and collecting aid for the NLF. All of these actions were attacked, at one stage or another, as "diversions" from the main issues of the movement.

In fact all these actions helped build the movement. They upset people, inspired and mobilised those who were moving to become anti-war activists.

Militant and radical actions helped to build the movement, widening the boundaries of legitimate opinions. The most extreme action taken in the anti-war campaign, the decision by Monash students to collect aid for "the enemy", horrified many of the Liberal Labor Party opponents.

build

But far from being away from the anti-war movement, it helped to build it. It helped people who were afraid to oppose the war for fear of being thought extremists, to "come out" against the war and for recognising the NLF. Compared to negotiations. These people suddenly become "reasonable", "moderate" compared to "extremists" from Monash.

Advanced actions act as a catalyst. By dramatising issues they can move masses of people into action.

Look at the events of last year in Melbourne. A fairly small group of demonstrators moved to Swanston Dock, where a ship carrying uranium was loaded. They got attacked by police. Soon the wharfies struck, and the banned uranium.

This proved a turning point. Immediately afterwards there was a dramatic growth in the size of mass marches. Equally important, larger numbers of Melbourne workers began to attend the marches. This was especially in the Melbourne, scene of the dock actions.

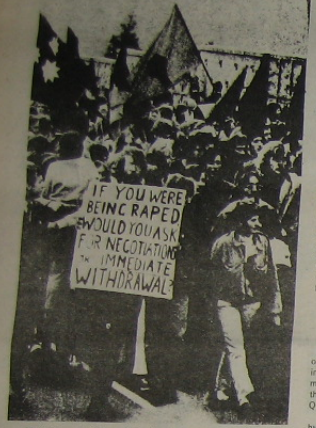
To be sure, there are actions which really are "too far in front", or just poorly prepared. Attempts to actually fight the cops when you are outnumbered — this sort of acts of vandalism — this sort of thing can really alienate the people.

resistance

But no one in Queensland is leading the uranium movement, is anything like this kind of thing. Those advocating militant forms of direct violent resistance. There is a faction which is well-established and which stood by large numbers of Australians.

The fears of the "cautious faction" are perhaps understandable, but they are misplaced. The main danger is not ultraleftism but overcaution. We need both legal marches and militant actions.

And we need to have faith in the ability of the people to understand both.



Marching against Vietnam (above) and Bjelke-Petersen (below). Do actions like these alienate the masses?

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

ANTHONY and Cleopatra, Romeo and Juliet, Tristan and Isolde, more over? According the papers we have a new grand passion; Roddy and Margaret.

There seems to be a certain amount of outrage amongst Australian journalists and British politicians that Princess Meg is indulging herself. The Conservatives are worrying that she is demeaning the monarchy while the Labor "left" are worrying that she is doing it on taxpayers' money.

It strikes me that the British Labor people might be wasting their energies on the wrong Maggie. But apart from that, there seems to be the slight-not case of double standard going on.

If scrawling around demeaned the monarchy it seems to me that the British monarchy has been demeaned for about one thousand years. Most male royals until this century used to root like rattlesnakes.

Edward VII, George IV and Charles II, to name only three, all had more mistresses than most of us have had hot dinners. Of course they were male and they were born before the Truth newspaper and the Women's Weekly.

The more serious objection is not that Meg and Roddy have naughty weekends together, but that unlike the rest of us they have shots in the Caribbean at the taxpayer's expense. Worse still, Margaret is not doing the job she is paid to do.

The terribly important job that she is supposed to be doing involves opening fetes and going to parties, plays and movies. So you might have difficulty noticing whether she is doing it or not.

But obviously she is letting the side down expecting us to pay for her holidays in the Caribbean.

The papers say that, what we should be paying for is Lizy's holidays and tours all over the world, which she takes with her lawfully married polo-playing husband.

Personally, if I was a British taxpayer and I had to pay for anyone's holidays I think I'd rather spend my money on Maggie's beach-side screwing than Phil's polo or Anne's riding. I can at least identify with swimming and sex. Horses bore me to tears.

But of course as Australians what we are taxed for is Governors. Which means that we pay for Kerr's drinking and Cowen's lecturing.

I suppose you can argue that Margaret and Roddy have been useful for someone. They have helped Kerry Packer (Australian's Weekly) and Rupert Murdoch (Truth) sell papers. Frankly, gouging above Royalty is a far safer thing to occupy their organs than meddling in cricket or politics.

Of course, the point is that the entire royal family is useless. With employment and wages in the condition they are, most of us have enough trouble paying for our own holidays, drinking and other entertainments without subsidising the richest family in Europe and their colonial messenger boys.

TRANSKEI BREAKS WITH VORSTER

THE show piece of South Africa's apartheid policy has rebelled and the black "Uncle Toms" are showing a more militant face.

Chief Kaiser Matanzima, Prime Minister of the Transkei, has vowed to break relations with South Africa. He has pledged support for "bloody struggle" for black majority rule.

The South African Government was stunned.

The Transkei was the first Bantustan to win "self government" 19 months ago. It was meant to show that the apartheid policy of "separate countries" for the works.

Chief Mantanzima was angered that the South African government would not incorporate the rich farming area of East Griqualand into the Transkei.

He has also been worried by the number of defections of his supporters in the Transkei to the somewhat more militant New Republic Party.

unviable

The Transkei, like the other Bantustans in South Africa, is economically unviable. The populations consist of old people, women and children who are forced to eke out a precarious living from the infertile countryside — while the young men are sent off to the mines and cities to work.

The Transkei is totally dependent on South Africa. Last year, more than 70 per cent of its budget came from South Africa, while it depends on South Africa to provide work for most of its labour force.

Contrary to what the South African government says, the Bantustans — "separate countries" for the blacks within South Africa — are not being created to allow "separate developments" for the Africans.

regime

They are used by the South African regime to break up the black working class. By splitting up black men and women, the Vorster regime hopes to contain the black liberation struggles.

The existence of the Bantustans also means that white capitalists can get away with paying lower wages to black male workers — as the women and children are expected to support themselves off the land back in the Bantustans.

There is no way the Transkei can "go it alone" with Matanzima. A better life and human dignity for the people of this support state could only be achieved through the destruction of the apartheid system in South Africa itself.

explosion

But what Matanzima's new-found "independence" does reflect is the growing militancy of blacks in southern Africa since the explosion in Soweto in 1976.

— by Mick Armstrong

U.S. MINERS RETURN

by Phil Griffiths

AMERICA'S coal mine owners tried to smash the mine-workers' union late last year.

They nearly succeeded. But the miners, led and organised by the rank and file, stopped the bosses' plans after a bitter three month strike, and saved their union.

The strike was over the rewriting of the miners' contract with the mine-owners.

The owners presented the unions with a list of demands that would have destroyed miners' conditions and threatened the union.

The main issue is the mines is health and safety. Coal mining in civilised, advanced America is one of the most dangerous jobs in the country.

financed

The miners had previously won free health care which was financed by the companies and paid out of health funds run jointly by the union and the employers.

Bad management of the funds had seen them run down. The owners blamed miners who had gone on strike without union authorisation.

They demanded that all wildcat strikers should pay for the lost healthcare contributions and that all miners would have to pay towards the health funds.

Mining is one industry where most of the claims against the funds are caused by accidents and illnesses from work. The companies expected the miners not only to suffer but to pay as well.

The miners were furious. As soon as this proposal leaked out, there was a wave of wildcat strikes lasting through the American summer of 1977. At their peak, 85,000 miners, or more than half the union was out.

The company proposals were a threat to the union. Free health care was one of the union's strongest weapons for recruiting new members.

The companies also demanded a no-strike clause. This was a direct challenge to those miners who had waged the partly successful wildcats of the summer.

strike

The miners knew they couldn't rely on the union officials, that they could simply hail to have the right to strike to protect their jobs.

The companies demanded the right to contract miners to work any five days of the week, including weekends without any penalty payments at all.

Finally, they tried to force a productivity drive and cut some "subjects" jobs that would have torpedoed mine safety standards and led to more fatal accidents.

Up till last year, the miners' union had always been one of the strongest and most militant in America. But with the economic crisis, the bosses were determined to smash the union and conditions won in the 1940s.

They opened up large new strip mines in the West of the country. These mines are more profitable, so they paid slightly higher wages to keep the union out.

In just three years, the amount of coal mined by union members went from 70% to 50%.

When the time came to re-write the miners' contract, the companies deliberately obstructed the negotiations and made sure everyone knew there was going to be "trouble".

So when the strike began, on December 6 last year, most major coal buyers had two to three months' stock on hand.

Large stocks and a lot of non-union coal were the employers' major weapons. A pro-business Jimmy Carter in the White House, plus a tame Arnold Miller running the union would also help.

angry

But the miners had stronger weapons. They were angry, they were in serious danger, and they had the experience of the wildcat strikes of the summer.

After a couple of weeks, Arnold Miller tried to sell a pathetic deal to the miners. It meant basically yielding to the companies, with a few concessions to take the bitter taste away.

It didn't work. The contract was thrown out.

Meanwhile, the miners moved to stop the flow of non-union coal. They stopped most of the coal in the country and their pickets held firm despite bad injunctions, cops, and hired company thugs.

Striking U.S miner burns Miller's contract proposal.

Everyone expected a long strike, but no-one expected it to last nearly four months. As electrical companies ran out of coal and restrictions came on, big business and the government started to worry.

They forced negotiations to reopen. But the miners voted down the second compromise Miller prepared.

And then a striking thing happened. Workers from other industries in our massive solidarity drives with the miners.

Caravans crossed the United States collecting food, money, and other other assistance. Football spectaculars and functions were organised to raise money. Miners were invited to speak to workers in car factories, steel mills and at large rallies.

At an official level the United Auto Workers Union gave $2 million to the miners and the Steelworkers $1 million.

In Detroit, a group of union local leaders set up an all-union committee to support the miners. With the end of the miners strike, it may continue. If it does, it will be an important source of strengthen union organisation.

obeyed

Less than one-half of one-ninth of the miners' union obeyed it. That's less than 80 people out of the 160,000 strikers.

But the government did get a lot of non-union coal moving.

In the final compromise, the miners strike, it may continue. If it does, it will be an important source of strengthen union organisation.

MARCOS WINS RIGGED VOTE

THE Philippines election on 7 April was a ritual offering to international opinion.

President Marcos, who has been running the country under martial law for six years, was not a candidate. He and his ministers were automatically left members of the new National Assembly, which if they choose, they can ignore anyway.

There was massive vote rigging and ballot stuffing. Marcos' New Society Movement' was guaranteed a clean sweep.

The elections took place because Marcos' system of "Constitutional authoritarianism" - rule by decree and rigged referendum - is beginning to come apart.

There has been rising discontent and resistance to the regime, in spite of the repression that accompanied martial law.

protestors

Most recently, protestors against the rigged elections were picked up and charged with sedition.

The former leader of the opposition, Benigno Aquino, was arrested when martial law was proclaimed. Last November, he was sentenced to death.

When Marcos introduced martial law in 1972, he promised to clean up political corruption, "share the wealth", introduce land reforms, and promote African economic development.

This meant two things. Firstly, breaking the power of the landlords who had been the real Filipino rulers. This was done through land reforms and attacks on the worst kinds of corruption.

Secondly, Marcos' reforms, but now it is the Marcos regime that benefits most from it.

attacked

Secondly, Marcos attacked the working class to make the Philippines an attractive area for investment. There are now no independent trade unions, while real wages for workers in American workers are falling at the moment, that's a real victory.

They are the first group of workers to have been able to take the companies for exploitation and increased poverty.

Needless to say, "sharing the wealth" was only among the ruling class.

Marcos needs all the electoral lying he can get on his repressive rule, to cover up the splits in Filipino society.

— by Lucy Bond

What They Won, What They Lost

How Asbestos Danger was Beaten at VicRail

VICTORIAN railway workers have won an historic victory in the struggle against the dangers of asbestos.

Maintenance workers at the Jolimont workshops have forced VicRail to provide proper safety suits to all workers coming into contact with the deadly asbestos fibre.

They are now aiming to get rid of all the asbestos in Melbourne's blue trains within five years.

One of Melbourne's Blue Trains: Lined with dangerous asbestos.

They won their fight for safe working conditions by refusing to work on the dangerous blue trains.

Their bans crippled Melbourne's peak hour train services for nearly two months. In the end, the railways caved in and met all their demands.

Until the asbestos is removed the men will be completely protected. The railways are supplying the men with one piece protective suits covering their feet, body, hands and head.

Those who do the dustier jobs such as vacuuming will have air fed suits. Others will wear the suits and have full face respirators which stop 97 per cent of asbestos dust.

VicRail has installed a portable shower and changing rooms until a permanent building is erected. They have agreed to train a chemist to continually monitor dust levels.

In the meantime, the Victorian Division of Industrial Hygiene has agreed to monitor dust levels every 6 months or on union demand. Any refusal to do tests will bring immediate bans.

In the Arbitration Commission the railways agreed to union demands that all those who have worked or are working on the railways with blue trains, should have thorough medical tests.

authority

On Wednesday 5 April a mass meeting of Jolimont workers gave the shop committee authority to lift the bans if they were satisfied with the equipment and assurances from the railways.

The bans were lifted the next day. But there were problems. The suits are cumbersome and hot, and full face respirators made it difficult to work in confined spaces.

Jolimont AMWSU shop steward, Vic Marks, told The Battler that there was a mass meeting over difficulties with the equipment on 10 April.

"We decided to go for a half face mask provided the men took precautions to make them a proper fit; they had to be clean shaven and to properly adjust the masks."

"It's not an easy job to do working in confined spaces with cumbersome suits and masks or respirators.

"You can't do the same work in a day with a respirator on. The department has been told more men will be required if they want to get the same number of trains out."

But though the men may use masks rather than respirators at times, they aren't backing down from their demands for full protection.

Vic Marks said, *"Virtually every one of our people are aware of the problems of asbestos and are prepared to take the necessary precautions."*

The union's medical advisors have told them that if the dust exposure is cut by half the chances of getting asbestos related diseases is halved.

However the victory at Jolimont is only the end of round one. At Newport where the trains are repaired, and at Bendigo where they are being renovated for use on Melbourne's underground, asbestos dust levels are much higher.

The victory at Jolimont has set important standards for asbestos workers around Australia.

Jim Frazer, Victorian Secretary of the ARU told The Battler, *"We expected the readings at Jolimont to be the lowest."*

But also, Jolimont was where they could put the most industrial pressure on VicRail because of its role in maintaining Melbourne's rail services.

removed

When asked what is happening about Newport and Bendigo, Jim Frazer said discussion would start soon.

"We haven't the capacity to do three jobs at the same time. As soon as maintenance on the suburban trains is proceeding well at Jolimont the department will look at Newport and Bendigo."

"We've been totally engrossed in solving Jolimont. It would have been unlikely that we would have had such success if we had taken on the three places simultaneously."

Vic Marks said, *"Our aim is to have all asbestos removed in 5 years."*

He said it's going to be a huge job and *"may not be practical or possible to win, but that's our aim."*

This is going to be expensive for the railways and difficult work for the men.

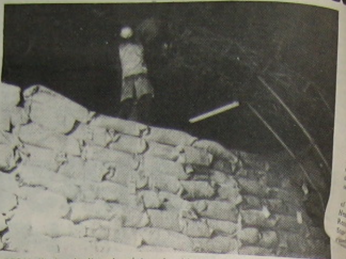
The difficulties are underlined by the failure of the railways find any laundry prepared to wash the protective suits.

To remove the asbestos, and any work involving cutting of train panels the unions are going to demand a decontamination building with special airlocks, and forced air fed 'space suits' to protect workers.

The Miscellaneous Workers Union is demanding protection for any of their members employed in laundries handling asbestos contaminated clothing.

Our aim is to have all asbestos removed in five years

Are you work[...] with death?



NIGERIA: Workers loading asbestos in sacks with absolutely no protection. What future can they have?

... into ... estos ... Health ... for 1977 ... gives a ... million ... to have ... manufac- ... rs and ... in the ... "some ... lung ... more ... ma will ... Institute ... ety and Revised Asbestos ... types including ... available ... no ... or for ... the

standard should be set at the lowest level detectable by available analytical techniques."

The lower the level the less the risk of disease.

The NIOSH recommends a standard of 0.1 fibres per millilitre. This being the lowest measurable quanity in a 10 minute sampling period.

intended

This is intended

– to protect against effects of asbestos other than cancer;

– "virtually reduce the risk of asbestos-induced cancer (only a ban can assure protection against carcinogenic (cancer) affects of asbestos)" and

– can be measured by available equipment.

The International Labour Organization's report in 1960 called asbestos *"the killer time bomb."*

The asbestos industry is big business. It is in their interests to spread the proven lie that blue is dangerous and other forms, such as white, are safe.

But blue asbestos only accounts for 4 per cent of total production. A mere few thousand tons.

The only safe asbestos is banned asbestos. We don't need it. There are substitutes for heat and sound insulation.

We must stop asbestos mining. Stop asbestos spraying on walls and roofs. We should demand the replacement of asbestos by safe substitutes. Asbestos must be left in the ground.

there is no such thing as safe asbestos

A SNOWTORM OF DEAH

by Steve Morgan, Battler S[...]porter

FOLLOW the struggle against asbestos, and the fi[...]ns at work every fortnight in The Battler. Read the Wo[...] P10

IF a young driver goes out, gets drunk and kills someone on the way home, they're in trouble.

At the very least, they'll face charges of criminal negligence and manslaughter.

But if a conspiracy of blue bloods like the Melbourne City Council plays games with the lives of their workers, they get off scot free.

workers

And that's exactly what's been happening at the Melbourne City Power House in Spencer Street.

For years, some power workers have turned up every day to this citadel of death, to work hour after hour in a snowstorm of deadly asbestos.

And most of the workforce has been exposed to this deadly fibre; sufficiently exposed to endanger their future health.

The worst thing about asbestos is that it is a slow, silent killer. It doesn't hit you, or harm you immediately.

But even twenty years after working with it, you can still face the torture of asbestos cancer (mesothelioma) and an early, painful death.

It has never worried the conscience of these polo boys turned city administrators that asbestos has been a proven killer for the past seventy-years.

It was left to the workers at the power house to use their trade union organisation and strength to force the council to stop using asbestos and provide safe working clothes.

The power workers first became concerned when they heard of the dangers of asbestos on Melbourne's Blue Trains.

So when their organiser, Ian Jones from the Municipal Employees Union came down to the power house, they brought the asbestos to his attention.

He went into the lagging mixing room and found men carrying bags of asbestos, dumping it in buckets and mixing it with water. The pla[...] was a snow storm of asbesto[...] and it was so thick on the floor there were footprints.

LEFT: crumbling asbestos falling from a chimney at the Power House

BELOW: Asbestos lagging on a pipe.

... ng off old ... the first ... the steel workers ... day the ... uld stir up ... ds. ... d it to the ... on Group ... Kilpatrick ... on officials ... photographs ... lagging was ... and white ...

... es reported ... port quoted ... saying that ... advised of ... week before ... union letter ... ncil of the ... t the union ... e Kilpatrick

onto the site.

But, that didn't stop the council from getting rid of all bags of asbestos – the day after the Town Clerk's denial!

Now the council, with the media hot on its trail, has quickly agreed to ban any further use of asbestos lagging, agreed to medical tests, and to supply protective equipment the same as won by railway workers to all working with asbestos.

But for some, it's too late. Several retired workers are known to have asbestosis, some have died from diseases the unions believe were asbestos induced, and many more are coming forward with breathing and heart problems.

committee

The Battler asked Eddie Michels, a member of the shop committee, how they found out about asbestos.

"Earlier this year we were able to get some tests done on the material that was being used for lagging and from that it has developed until where the wide-spread publicity has got the blokes worried.

"About half a dozen men have come forward so far (concerned about their health). It may not all be directly attributed to asbestos but they have particular problems and they are worried.

"As understanding grows I think we will uncover more people who are affected in one way or another".

Eddie had read about asbestos but only since the station has been brought back into regular operation have they become concerned about it.

Asbestos lagging at the Melbourne Power House

"It's everywhere. It covers pipes in the boiler house and engine room. Anything which carried heat is covered.

"It's very uncomfortable to work with, even if you don't like the dangers. It throws up a dust and you have problems with breathing while you're working – it gets in your hair, it gets everywhere. It's not a nice thing to work with."

But it's not just the men working on lagging who are exposed.

"Whenever the cleaners sweep, or lagging is pulled off old machinery, or any maintenance is being done, it falls to the ground and immediately rises.

"Anyone in the vicinity is likely to be affected."

The council is now being cooperative with the unions, although it seems they'd prefer to close down the station than strip and replace all the asbestos.

But this is only because of publicity. Never have the council medical or safety people told the workers of the dangers.

Eddie said the nursing sister was concerned. *"She recognises that there has been a problem with it."*

But she hasn't been able to force anyone higher to do something. *"She's like us. She's just a number."*

The council's safety record is criminal.

"There are now respirators. But we can take the case of a lagger who was wearing one mask for 6 years before he realized that you're supposed to change the filters. We now know that the filters should be changed 3 times a day."

management

Management's response to the blow up is mixed.

"The management at the highest level are concerned. Management at lower levels are disgusting.

"One foreman is reported to have said, 'Some cunts have ripped the can on us' in regard to the area where lagging is repaired.

"It's an obnoxious situation where lagging is mixed in a small room and the dust has no way of escaping other than by a small vent which was totally ineffective. The design of the room was wrong."

At a lunch time meeting on 12 April the men heard that the council agreed to their demands.

There will be no new asbestos. Old lagging will be coated with a special paint preventing flaking. Vacuuming will replace sweeping.

Protective suits, masks and respirators will be supplied to all working near areas with asbestos dust. They will have medical tests.

But who to test? Everyone from senior managers to tea ladies to garbage truck drivers have probably been exposed.

When the meeting finished men came forward to Dave Kilpatrick and pulled from their pockets samples of material they used.

Boilermakers, carpenters, brick layers, they all had bits of asbestos material in their pockets.

The asbestos is everywhere and it seems the council would rather close the power station than strip it – the only way to make it safe.

If the council used the money it spends on VIP lunches and official Rolls Royces, it could get rid of all the asbestos.

Another Victim?

WERNER Ebbling is a big, quiet man in his 50's.

He has worked at the Melbourne City Power station for 16 years as a brick layers' mate. He worked with asbestos.

But he now has trouble breathing. It started 9 months ago.

"The last week I've had three bad days. All stuffed up in the chest and could hardly breathe.

"And I had to wait till Friday morning to see a doctor. He told me there was nothing wrong with my asthma or bronchitis. He said it was the lungs and heart.

"I had an x-ray because he didn't know what was wrong.

"He told me that my lungs had stiffened up and some of the air passages in the lungs were damaged."

Because Werner's lungs are no longer as flexible as they should be, it is putting strain on his heart.

Werner arrived from Germany 26 years ago. He worked on the Snowy Mountains scheme and other construction jobs before starting at the power house.

Before he started he said, *"I was lively – alright, you know . . ."*

He doesn't know whether his illness is cause by asbestos, but he's worried and concerned.

"They should do something to clean everything up. I still have to wait for a report from a specialist about what is wrong."

JOHN RHODIE, a Glasgow lagger, has asbestoses. Notice the the clubbing of his fingers.

"The way it gets you is bad. You get these sharp pains in your side and your shoulders."

"It comes on you sudden. You'll be out shopping with your wife and then suddenly your legs will go."

Asbestos Diseases

What You Face

THE three commonly used forms of asbestos are: blue asbestos (crocidolite), white asbestos (chrysotile) and brown asbestos (amosite).

The stories that only blue is dangerous and white is safe is nothing more than a myth of the asbestos industry. There are even forms of white asbestos which have been shown to be more dangerous than the blue.

Asbestos causes three diseases. They are scarring of the lungs (asbestosis), the common variety of lung cancer often associated with smokers (bronchial carcinoma) and a rare cancer of the lung lining or pleura, (mesothelioma).

Asbestosis is part of a general group of dust related diseases classed under the heading of pneumoconiosis. It is similar to diseases like silicosis and black lung that miners get.

It restricts the breathing, causes emphysema (smokers cough), puts strain on the heart since it has to work harder. There is less oxygen in the blood, and when the disease is severe, clubbing (swelling) of fingers and toes occurs.

Bronchial carcinoma of the lung almost always develops just below the bottom end of your windpipe.

Almost everyone has a chance of dying from it. In most cases the cause is unknown but if you smoke cigarettes or breath asbestos dust you are more likely to get it.

The third disease, the rare mesothelioma, occurs from 20 to 50 years after exposure. It is a cancer of the pleura which is the lubricating lining between the lungs and stomach.

Almost all mesothelioma is caused by asbestos. It strikes one person in a million amongst those with no contact with asbestos, but occurs in one in every 250 asbestos workers.

As little as 5 minutes exposure or merely washing asbestos covered overalls have caused mesothelioma.

If you don't die directly from these asbestos-induced diseases then you run the risk of dying prematurely from the strain put on your heart and lungs.

BATTLER READERS WRITE... BATTLER READERS WRITE...

ONE WOMAN'S FIGHT

by Anne Hulks, Adelaide

I AM 20 and was unemployed for fourteen months. I had applied to thirteen nurseries for gardening jobs and had no offers.

Every time I went to the dole office, I told them how I wanted outdoor work and I asked them about the State Unemployment Relief Scheme.

I was told that the UR scheme was 'for married men only' and that I was wasting my time.

But I pointed out that I knew single men who were working on the scheme.

Finally, I was sent for an interview at the Blackwood Community Centre for a landscaping job on the UR scheme.

I was interviewed by a very arrogant architect who was surprised that a woman should want the job.

When I told him that I could do any work that a man could do he said, 'Don't play with my emotions'.

Anyway, I got the job and was employed as a gardener. We're supposed to be landscaping the area around the stadium at the Community Centre but we've been doing general laboring.

I've been doing all the work the men do. . . pick and shovel, axe, crow bar, and pushing loaded wheelbarrows.

dirty

But the manager at the place doesn't like the idea. He wants me to work inside cleaning up the kitchen which all ten of us use. He even came out one Friday and asked me if I wanted to change from this 'hard dirty job'. Another time he actually tried to refuse me a cool drink unless I agreed to clean up.

But the men I work with have accepted me.

Because they're laborers, most of them have never worked with women before.

At first they were shocked by my language and said that I should be making coffee for them. They also make a lot of sexual jokes.

But I think most of them would stick up for me.

I've also tried to get the AWU to organise the site. I had to ring them a few times before someone came out. Finally Keith Plunkett turned up.

It was Thursday and he said he'd be back on Monday. A week has gone past and he still hasn't returned. No-one's been signed up!

There's things the union could be doing up there. Although I'm supposed to be a gardener, I spent the first three weeks concrete finishing.

But I was only getting paid the gardener's rate which is 60 cents less per hour.

Also, two sub-contractors have been put on the concrete finishing. One day they came and just worked as laborers. Now we're doing footpaths which should have been done by Mitcham Council.

There's no gardening work to do.

There's a much higher number of unemployed women than the figures show. We're always the last on and the first off. We're treated as second class workers. Too many women accept this. More women should stand up and fight.

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If that's the sort of work you want to do– JOIN US!

Dear Battlers,

Never Satisfied

Dear Battlers

Some people are just never satisfied. For Dave Nadel, the Bob Dylan concert twelve years ago was "pretty disappointing", and as for this year's tour, well they were "just another band from L.A."

When reviewing an artist who has been in the business for as long as Dylan has, I think it is a mistake to spend the whole article reminiscing about the "good old days".

Yes, Dylan has changed and he has also included some reggae, says Dave.

The times certainly are changing and all of us with them, or at least most of us. Dylan still has some social comment to make in his songs, "Hurricane" is one example of that.

As for the concert itself. Yes, it was a professional performance; it started on time (most unusual for concerts nowadays), we could hear all the instruments in the group and we got two and a half hours of the best music Adelaide's heard for a long time.

To make cheap comments like "a marriage, five children, a divorce and several million dollars later" does a disservice to The Battler's review page. If we can't do better than that then we should stop reviewing rock concerts.

Ross Mackenzie
Adelaide

The headline to end all headlines

Dear Battlers,

In the great tradition of
"Cake Company throws in the sponge"
"Up in the air at Qantas"
"Caf women clean up"

Here are a few additional headings for [illegible] reference.
"Meat workers get the chop"
"Carpet workers get walked on"
"Brewery workers over a barrel"
"Bathtub workers throw in the towel"
"Lid put on garbos' struggle"
"Bedspread makers get laid off"
"Coal workers in the dark"
"Car workers throw in the spanner"
"Teachers get the quill"
"Nurses needled out"
"Plumbers go down the drain"
"B.L.F. crumbles" – so do apples.

Hope these suggestions relieve you of a few sleepless nights.

Jill, Merilyn, Ly[illegible]
Adelaid[illegible]

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 303[illegible]

March with the I.S. on May Day

International Socialists

MAY Day is a workers' festival around the world.

A day to commemorate past struggles and inspire us to rid the world of the bosses.

The I.S. will be marching in all major cities. March with our contingent.

Marches will be assembling at:

CANBERRA
in the Garema Place at 10 am on 29 April.

BRISBANE
assemble near Festival Hall at 9.30 am on 1 May

SYDNEY
Assemble in Haymarket at 1 pm on 7 May.

MELBOURNE
Trades Hall at the cnr of Drummond and Victoria Streets at 2 pm on 7 May

What's On

CANBERRA Thur 4 May
Public meeting, "What is the I.S." – a discussion of our politics and how we put them into practice. Speaker is an I.S. National Executive member. All welcomed – contact 49 6405

MELB Sat 29 April
South Branch vegetarian dinner, $4 including wine. At 2 Coombes Ave South Oakleigh 7.30 pm

MELB April
Melbourne branches are raffling 6 bottles of fine table wine. Tickets are 20 cents from any IS member. Will be drawn at the vegetarian dinner on 29 April.

SYDNEY 12-14 May
All sisters and brothers are invited to the Women and Labour Conference at Macquarie University. For further information contact Sue Bellamy, School of History, Philosophy and Politics, Macquarie University, North Ryde, NSW, 2113.

Deadline Next Edition
Wednesday 26th April

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL
PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 — 376[illegible]
24 hour answering and message machine — 335-2[illegible]

I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE
PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031 — 335-2[illegible]

MELBOURNE
GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001 — 370-14[illegible]

LATROBE VALLEY
P.O Box 15, Yallourn

ADELAIDE
PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061 — 49-7[illegible]

SYDNEY
111 Enmore Rd., Newtown — 51-3[illegible]

CANBERRA
PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601 — 49-6[illegible]

BRISBANE
PO Box 111, St Lucia, Qld, 4067 — 44-[illegible]

IPSWICH, QLD. — 281 6[illegible]

Reviewer Alec Kahn sees a U.F.O (Unacceptable Filmic Object)

It's a bird! It's a plane! No .... it's a close encounter of the third kind. Strange beings from another planet, brought to earth by Columbia Pictures for a mere $19 million.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD RATE KIND

BEEN sucked in by all the publicity surrounding "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" yet?

The spooky ads, the learned discussions of UFO's by panels of scientists, and all the rest.

The whole UFO cult is undergoing its biggest revival since 1972. That was when Erich von Daniken's "Chariots of the Gods" explained that not only was there intelligent life in outer space, but it had actually given advanced technology to our ancestors and got them building all sorts of monuments to use as landmarks.

Though it always was a bit hard to work out why interplanetary aliens could fly light-years across the universe to little old Earth, then needed the Great Pyramids to find their way to the Casbah, or whatever they were going.

Von Daniken has now been debunked. But at least he had the decency to offer some sort of theory to explain it all. "Close Encounters" on the other hand, is merely an expensive ($19 million), slickly produced wank about the way the beasties from outer space might finally reveal themselves to us.

The basic story is about two middle Americans who see some UFO's over their home town in Indiana. Roy loses his job because he chases them instead of attending to the black-out they cause. Jillian loses her baby boy when he is sucked in to one of the spaceships.

memory

All they're left with is a nagging memory of a shape-something like a blob of gelati ice-cream. They become obsessed with it, and eventually make their way to a mountain in Wyoming that resembles this funny shape.

There they happen upon about 500 US Army scientists just in time for the big finale when the aliens from outer space reveal themselves. And after all the suspense, they look pretty much like us, in an ant-ish sort of way.

So why all the fuss over such a silly story?

For a start, "Close Encounters" does take on a fascinating subject. It is true that there are a large number of unexplained sightings of "flying objects".

About 20 per cent of sightings can't be explained as shooting stars, or weather balloons, or natural phenomena.

But just because they haven't been explained, that doesn't mean they must be from outer space or "supernatural". After all, there are plenty of things that science hasn't been able to explain before that have turned out to have perfectly mundane, natural causes.

So why are so many people eager to believe in UFOs and life in outer space . . . not to mention spiritualism, astrology, and a million and one other cults and fads?

Partly, it's a symptom of the general break-down of capitalism. As more and more people lose faith in it, they start casting about for different explanations. Some turn to politics . . . some to the "supernatural".

And for some (like Von Daniken's followers) there's even the fond hope that these "chariots of the gods" will bring us a better world.

It's very much like the cargo cults of some New Guinea tribes. But instead of waiting for the white gods with precious goods we wait for UFOs and alien saviours.

aliens

The trouble with the UFO "cargo cult" is that the aliens from outer space – even if they do exist – have been taking an awfully long time to deliver the goods. By the time they stop playing funny games confusing air traffic controllers, we'll probably all be wiped out by a nuclear war.

"Close Encounters of the Third Kind" has nothing to contribute to the debate on UFO's. Its promoters have made skilful use of the reputation of Dr. J. Allen Hynek, a serious researcher into the subject to give the film a false air of authority.

See it if you've got four dollars to waste and you like mildly competent science fiction. Otherwise, forget it. H.G. Wells tells better stories and there's a million places where you can get better information on the subject.

Steve Berkoff

Theatre with Guts

IF you get the chance to see "EAST", don't miss it!

This play, written by Steven Berkoff and performed by The London Theatre Group, is just ending a season in Adelaide and is now heading for the eastern states.

Don't expect the polite phrases of the middle class theatre, painted scenery that draws applause, props, or a plot!

There are five chairs on the stage, some graffiti, a couple of ads and a tinted picture of the Queen. All the rest comes from the actors – they become a motor bike, a pub door, a silent film, a ball-room.

unique

The language is unique. It rips through the theatre. It sounds like dialogue from "A Clockwork Orange" and yet has the density, vividness, and imagery of Shakespeare, and all this by searing phrases from the East End of London.

The program tells us that the play is meant to "reveal" or *"Hold a mirror up to life"*. It does more than this, it presents us with the contradictions we all face under capitalism.

The mother tells us of her consumer role and how little time this leaves her for anything more creative.

Syly tells us how she despises being a sex object but longs to be a "bloke."

Les also describes his desire for a woman he sees on a bus but knows is impossible, she's from a different class. He would be speechless. "What words hath my gob to speak?"

Nor does the "resolution" at the end clarify these contradictions.

waste

It doesn't point to any reason for this frustration or waste of energy. It doesn't suggest any alternative to this introverted violence or crude sexuality.

The young people resolve instead, not to become what their parents are, not to be "jolly babies" duly moulded and sucked away – but that is not enough.

To make sense of the brutal and oppressive world, and to see the way to transform it, we need to organise and fight for socialism.

by Clare McCarty

All Quiet....

FROM THE SHELF

WHEN the Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933, they burned All Quiet on the Western Front.

It had been a world-wide success as a novel and film. But it was also one of the greatest anti-war novels in history, and the Nazis had to destroy it as part of their own plans for war.

The author, Remarque, soon had to flee the country, and continued his writing in Switzerland and America. Never again, however, did he write a book as good.

He had been a soldier in World War I, twice-wounded, so he knew all about life at the front.

Sometimes he writes like other antiwar writers: chapters with ghoulish scenes of torn bodies, coffins thrown up out of the ground by exploding shells, and the sight of comrades dying in crowded hospitals.

These are the most obvious horrors of war, but Remarque is more concerned with a different kind of tragedy.

He wants above all to "tell of a generation of men who, even though they may have escaped its shells, were destroyed by the war".

"We are the Iron Youth" was the slogan when the young men marched to battle. Paul, the hero, is bitter about it. "We are none of us more than twenty years old. But young? Youth? This is long ago. We are old folk."

When the soldiers come home on leave, they feel like strangers in their home town. When they see their old teachers, they feel nothing but contempt. They do not feel at home anywhere but at the front, however much they hate the war.

The rough humour of the trenches is the only consolation. It is virtually the only form of rebellion. Once the Kaiser comes to the front, and they are amazed to see general Hindenburg salute him.

'And would a king have to stand stiff to an emperor?'

None of us is quite sure about it, but we don't suppose so. They are both so exalted that standing strictly to attention is probably not insisted on.

'What rot you do hatch out', says Kat. 'The main point is that you have to stand stiff yourself.'

But Tjaden is quite fascinated. His otherwise prosy fancy is blowing bubbles. 'But look,' he announces, 'I simply can't believe that an emperor has to go to the latrine the same as I have.'

For all their discontent, the soldiers never get much more rebellious than that. They are all too demoralised.

Later Remarque wrote a more rebellious sequel called The Way Back. In that book his hero decides to campaign for peace.

That is a good novel, with better politics. But All Quiet on the Western Front is a brilliant novel, for it captures the war weariness of a generation.

by Tom O'Lincoln

SEC workers call it quits

LATROBE Valley power workers have rejected a proposal from their shop stewards to resume last years' wage struggle with an overtime ban.

The stewards proposed the ban in retaliation against Commissioner Mainin's decision to award derisory pay rises to only 70 per cent of the SEC maintenance work-force, and nothing to the rest.

The workers instead voted for a "moderate" amendment to refer the whole issue to the ACTU and the Victorian Trades Hall Council.

The heavy vote for the amendment shows that most SEC workers feel it is now time for them to "lick their wounds" and recover from last year's eleven week strike before embarking on another struggle.

militant

Nonetheless, the fact that the shop stewards were prepared to take up the fight shows that the militant rank and file leadership in the Valley has not been broken.

One thing is clear from the defeat of the campaign.

Last year's strike could have been won. But at the crucial moment when the Government was in trouble and massive rank-and-file support was growing all over Australia, the shop steward leadership faltered.

The shop stewards allowed Bob Hawke and John Halfpenny to talk them into believing that the working class movement would desert them and Arbitration was their only hope.

As soon as we let Arbitration and the trade union officials take control of our struggles, then defeat is on the cards.

We can only trust in our own strength and the strength of our fellow workers.

STEEL WORKERS ON THE MARCH

THE streets of Wollongong echoed to the sound of workers' chants last Thursday, as angry Australian Iron and Steel strikers marched through the middle of town up Crown Street.

"Two, four, six, eight – Reinstate the 28" was the slogan, as the strikers demonstrated after a five thousand strong mass meeting.

On job delegate said he'd never seen anything like it in all his years at the giant Port Kembla steel workers.

The strike against the sacking of 28 workers has clearly taken Australian Iron and Steel – a subsidiary of BHP – by surprise.

The majority of the 16,000 Federated Ironworkers Association members of the South Coast of NSW are now out.

The strike has just kept spreading. John Lysaght, Commonwealth Steel, Electrolytic Refining & Smelting, Stewart and Lloyds – workers have been coming out everywhere. On Friday, 2000 AMWSU members joined in.

The immediate issue is pretty clear. A.I & S has sacked 28 men and women, mainly crane drivers, from the Number One Machine Shop at the Port Kembla Works.

Their crime? Refusing to work additional Saturday and Sunday overtime on top of ordinary weekday overtime!

A.I. & S. obviously thought the crane-drivers in Number One were isolated and that they could be picked off easily. But it didn't turn out that way.

First the Traffic, Shipping and Rigging Department all voted to strike. The foundry workers agreed not to touch anything brought in by scabbing "staff" drivers.

Then when a woman crane driver refused to handle blacked work she was physically escorted off the plant. The foundry workers came out in response to that.

Arbitration told the workers to go back without any reinstatement. Within a day, the whole steelworks was out. And the strike just spread from there.

The 5,000 strong mass meeting of FIA members which preceded the march overwhelmingly rejected the Arbitration decision.

The few speakers who tried to argue for a return to work were booed and jeered.

One rank-and-file speaker summed up the mood of the meeting. *"When there's 6,500 unemployed in the Illawarra it's criminal for BHP to try and work people for refusing to work overtime."*

The delegate who proposed the strike motion to the mass meeting later told The Battler the workers' anger went much deeper than just the immediate issue.

ruthless

"It's BHP's policy towards the workforce – which has been completely ruthless for many years now.

"People have been forced to accept conditions which are inhuman in the steel works."

Carl Grey, the FIA delegate for the Traffic Department at Port Kembla, believes the company sees the strike as a trial of strength. He expects the struggle to be a long one.

Carl told us the Port Kembla workers are going to need outside help from other industries, including relief funds.

But he had one message for AI & S and its parent BHP. *"We are definitely going to win this strike!"*

by Andrew Milner

Taubmans gets the brush off

LIKE to spend your annual holidays hustling round a heater, watching the rain beat down outside?

Taubman's Paint was virtually proposing this to the ninety Miscellaneous Workers Union members in Sunshine (Melbourne) plant this month, the week long strike put paid to their plans.

The company wanted to split the annual break into a fortnight at Christmas and a fortnight in May.

Instead the workers have won three weeks at Christmas, and the other week at any time they like during the year.

Betty De Bono, the Miscellaneous Workers Union steward at Taubmans, explained how the company tried to attack them.

"In June last year, the company put out a bulletin and just said to us that we'll be having our holidays in 2 week periods – 2 weeks in May, 2 weeks at Christmas.

"We made it known to them this wasn't acceptable.

"We had three meetings with them but it didn't solve anything. They thought it was all over at Christmas – that by letting us have 2 weeks at Christmas they'd force us to accept.

"We had a confrontation with them – the manager Rodney Dredge said he had to go to Sydney to see the Board of Directors. We thought they'd have moved a little bit, but they hadn't. So we downed tools and went out.

prepared

"We were prepared to compromise with 3 weeks Christmas and 1 week May.

"The other unions at Taubmans can have the holidays when they like. But the unions were supporting us. One of our members heard they want to do it to all of the paint industry.

"They've macked around every year for the past everyone could have 4 weeks one week another. We don't all holidays in winter – that's bushwah and we're asking for and Christmas is the only time we can get together."

"The company sees their right to give us a holidays when they like to be the only sign of humane attitude.

"They say they want to 2 weeks in May just to tenance, and maximum production at Christmas. In other words, they want to beat the other companies to the market."

Roadies union gets into gear

BEING in a road crew for a band is not the easiest way to make a living.

The hours are long and irregular, pay is usually low and the work is exhausting.

At the moment roadies have to join the Theatrical Employees' Association to work. But according to longtime roadie "Ned" Kelly, it doesn't do anything for them.

Roadies want to get their own union going. So they've had one meeting, and will be holding another at Nimbin when most of the crews will be in town.

We spoke to "Ned" Kelly, who says their main concern at the moment is conditions. For instance, he'd like to see the promoters provide extra help when there are flights of equipment to carry the gear up, and pay an allowance for overnight drives.

promoters

Another reason for the roadies organising is the lousy treatment they get from promoters. Quite often after playing they are given half an hour to get the gear out, and are heavied if they can't do it.

The injury rate is also quite high, and it is not uncommon for roadies to get beaten up. They'd like to get some help from other unions.

It's the promoters who are really cleaning up and who are responsible for most of the roadies' problems.

When the union gets off the ground, the promoters mightn't find they have a choice between giving the roadies a fair go or facing black bans.

by Tom Lee Ack

the WORK TOLL

A FACTORY in NSW is making its workers responsible for health and safety. It sounds good – but there's a catch.

Vinedex, a multi-national plastic manufacturer of PVC, is demanding that all workers sign a form saying they will keep their hands clean, wear safety equipment and that the company shares no responsibility for any injuries.

If you get sick, it's your fault, not Vinedex'. But manufacturing PVC is dangerous. Workers are exposed to heavy metals like lead, mercury and cadmium, all of which can cause diseases and illnesses if something goes wrong because of management mistakes.

■

ON a happier note, measles at the Simongas Domestic Heatworks in Queensland have forced the bosses to shore up some machinery.

A meat saw weighing 120 lbs fell down and a worker falling on top only escaped being killed because the saw was off. *They give the company 3 days to fix the kill floor, or else – no meat.*

The saw fell cause Simongas thought they could save money by cutting maintenance on the kill floor so they sacked 15 fitters.

With fewer fitters the machines broke. The saw was only held by a bolt and had no safety chain.

Rollers and chains carrying 1,100 lb bullocks keep on breaking. One worker told The Battler, "If one of them came down and it didn't kill you, you'd probably end up with your knife black in you anyway."

■

FUMES from solvents are a major hazard at Taubman's paint factory in Sunshine (Vic).

One workers handles 30 to 40 solvents in a small room without any ventilation. The fumes are so bad that flies coming into the room will gradually fly slower and slower, eventually dropping dead.

This worker's nasal passages are permanently irritated. His doctor says the fumes are causing it.

The fumes are so bad that many new workers leave after only one or two days.

■

MR WILLIAM Hassler, director of Queensland's Sir Ian Fletcher research station, taken off duty a week. Battler Falling to A Standard for Safety.

Speaking to the Council of Weed Science Societies of Melbourne, he said that the controversial herbicide 245T doesn't "pose any threat to humans or our families ... I would use 245T in my own garden, and have been using it for many years.

The same day the ABC reported that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has told chemical companies to produce evidence showing why 245T shouldn't be banned.

In the U.S. it is on restricted sale and cannot be used in water catchment areas or near towns. 245T contains dioxin – known to cause birth deformities.

In Victoria, 245T is suspected as the cause of a spate of birth deformities at 3 farms in 1976.

by Steve Morgan

CLEANERS STOP BOSSES' DIRTY TRICKS

WOMEN cleaners at Meadowbank Technical College in Sydney recently won major concessions from their employers – General Contract Cleaners.

But this victory was only achieved by the militancy of the women on the job, not by the union, the Miscellaneous Workers. The union officials even tried to persuade the women not to press their demands.

by Verity Burgmann

The trouble started last August when the company tried to stand down cleaners over the holiday period.

This was against the award. So was the fact that the women had never been paid the 'toilet money' they were entitled to. Not had leading hand Meg Cutarino ever been paid her overtime.

A stop-work meeting prevented the stand downs and the company promised the back pay. But the money never came through.

threatened

Then the bosses told Meg they would have to make retrenchments. When a cleaner left, he was not replaced. *"And we were continually threatened with the sack"* Meg explained.

The women then discovered that were being docked one and a quarter hours pay every week. Meg rang the union and the officials first reaction was *"Women never complain to the union. Our women are normally happy."*

When Meg asked for an organiser to attend a stop-work meeting, the official said they could not get an organiser on request but they could not have a meeting without the union present.

"You'll be sacked, and we won't support you" he added.

The women said they intended to hold a stop-work meeting anyway, and informed the company. Eventually the union man agreed to attend but turned up nearly an hour late.

And the only male cleaner who supported the women was Julio Castro, a Chilean immigrant. The men were not being cheated in their pay packets. But Julio's attitude was *"If you strike, I strike."*

demanded

The stop-work meeting demanded 38 hours pay, no stand downs, no sackings, replacements if staff left and proper cleaning equipment.

The women had been expected to clean chemical stained lab sinks without gloves.

The company conceded all these demands. And this time the money arrived.

The only demand not granted was that the leading hand be chosen by seniority in future, not by the company. The union man's attitude to this was *"Bosses can hire and fire who they want."*

official

The union official and the boss were very friendly at the stop-work meeting and called each other by their first names.

No wonder the women concluded they couldn't trust the unions' officials. As Janet Rushworth said *"The union and the company are too damn pally."*

"If you can get people to stick together, you can get what you want" Liz Quiles summed up.

****

Is General Contract Cleaners cheating cleaners elsewhere?

The Battler is helping the Meadowbank women distribute a leaflet about their strike to cleaners at the Opera House and employees of General Contract Cleaners. If you work for General Contract Cleaners and want copies of the leaflet, ring Sydney 513-669.

Gay Wardie Sacked

A WARDSMAN in the Bathurst District Hospital recently lost his job because he is homosexual.

Hospital authorities apparently made not-so-discreet enquiries about him and his friends. He lived with a known homosexual.

Then they called him into their office and asked him if he had "a certain kind of relationship" with the man he shared a house with.

The interview then went something like this:

David: *"What do you mean 'certain kind of relationship'?"*

Deputy Executive Officer (aspiring): *"Homosexual".*

David: *"No. I live with him. He's a homosexual. But I'm not having a relationship with him or anyone else."*

David was then accused of trying to "corrupt" people in the hospital. After some more discussion, he said: *"I don't see anything wrong with homosexuality. I'll be homosexual."*

added

Matron: *"It's bad for the mental ward. Bad for the community."* She added that they were supposed to be setting standards for the community.

David was given the "choice" of resigning, rather than being sacked. When he went to see the C.E.O. he discovered it would have been better to be sacked. Resigning cost him six weeks dole.

The hospital now claims that they asked David to leave for reasons connected with his work. They have also sacked a male homosexual trainee nurse on grounds of unsuitability.

David is currently trying to get his job back through the industrial courts.

Teachers take to street

OVER fifty teachers from four Sydney Eastern Suburbs schools took to the streets on April 11th, as part of a series of one day rolling strike actions.

They handed out leaflets to the morning crowds at Bondi Junction, explaining their demands for a reduction in face to face teaching hours.

Rosemary Child, of Randwick North High School, said afterwards: "An incredible number of people just said things like 'you're absolutely right' and 'good on you.'

"We were just there 1½ hours, and there were only about five people who were hostile.

"We saturated the place with leaflets.

"It was very exhilarating and very rewarding just to talk to people, many of whom were related to children that we teach."

The one day strikes in the Eastern Suburbs are part of the NSW Teachers Federation campaign to reduce teaching hours in primary and secondary schools.

Canberra PS demo

A HUNDRED and twenty public servants demonstrated outside the Department of Administrative Services in Canberra last Tuesday morning.

The public servants were from departments housed in temporary offices in Queanbeyan.

One public servant from National Mapping told the Battler that a few years ago his section had been informed that it was to be re-located in Belconnen, on the other side of Canberra.

He and many of his co-workers have bought houses in the area and now have been told that they were "indefinitely temporary" at Queanbeyan. Just because they were temporary, they couldn't get travelling allowances.

He has to travel 50 kilometres a day without compensation.

A Department of Health public servant explained to the Battler that Treasury was up to its tricks. Departments in Treasury's good books, "get travelling travel allowances, or has thousand dollar-a-year jobs".

Metal shops slide

OVER recent years in Brisbane, there has been a serious decline in working conditions in the smaller metal workshops – some of which had good union strength in the past.

With low prices on contracts and high unemployment, the bosses have created a fear situation. Very few tradesmen will say much for fear of the sack.

One of the worst methods of breaking conditions is the setting of a product price the job has to be made in. Usually only the fastest tradesmen can do the job in this time.

In some places tradesmen work in appalling dirt, in light rain, and outside because there aren't enough work benches – even on the ground.

Workers have been told they have to work thirty hours overtime a week or they would get the sack. Then a few weeks later they have been told they can't work any overtime at all.

In one engineering company, there is even a notice up saying that any tools taken out of the store and lost will have to be replaced by the tradesmen within that week, or the value of the tool will be taken out of the pay packet.

(A disc grinder value, for example, costs $140.)

– by a Brisbane AMWSU member

WHARFIES AWARD FIGHT

EVERYONE knows that Arbitration is the graveyard of industrial disputes.

That's why the Waterside Workers Federation is doing all it can to steer clear of the Arbitration Tribunal in its current campaign.

The wharfies' contract comes up for renewal on May 1. Since 1968, the Waterside Workers have agreed to the wharfies' claims with little resistance.

After all they were making massive profits, so why not?

But this year, things are tougher. And Malcolm Fraser is standing right behind them saying that the Government would not "tolerate" an award favourable to the workers.

The Federation is demanding a $23 rise, increased annual leave, paternity leave and improvements in the present voluntary redundancy scheme.

The wharfies have decided not to fall for the government's trap and go out on strike. Instead, they are conducting a campaign of harrassment which has the Melbourne waterside completely tied up.

One wharfie told us *"The guys are responding really well. We're going to keep it going as long as we can."*

"Divisions on the wharf have disappeared."

The employers haven't accepted one single point on the log of claims. Their only concession so far was to withdraw a claim by BHP for compulsory redundancy.

GMH - How about some unity?

THE AMWSU has finalised its 1978 log of claims for the Car Industry Awards, General Motors – Holdens section. The log has been presented to the company on 19th April in Melbourne.

The log, work out in a series of shop steward meetings and a national meeting, contains claims for a $23 increase, 35 hour week, five weeks annual leave (six for shift workers), childcare facilities at all GMH plants, and other conditions improvements.

Although the AMWSU strongly lobbied till the other unions involved to present a common log of claims only the AAEEIA has united with the AMWSU in this log.

The VBU are presenting a separate log, and the ASE are doing nothing except mumouring about a Tradesman's Award for the car industry.

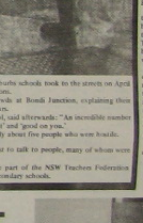
possibility

However, there is still a possibility of the unions presenting a united front to the company once the campaign gets into full swing.

Car workers' conditions have been deteriorating for some time, and with the problems of job security as the economy becomes more and more depressed, those claims must be won.

A strong militant campaign will be necessary.

by Alan Briggs



MEATWORKERS at T.A Field's Rennet shed in Queensland successfully fought a lock-out by picketing last week.

The company locked them out after they struck against the loss of non-union labour ahead of union labour at the gate.

Despite attempts by the union officials to kill the picket, the workers kept it on.

The threat of losing contracts soon made T.A Field's back down.

WHY WE NEED A RANK AND FILE LEADERSHIP

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

by

David Shaw

SINCE Gallagher knocked off our democratically elected leadership in NSW 3 years ago, our wages and conditions have gone downhill fast. The industry is in a shambles.

WAGES

The buying power of our wage packets has been under attack for several years now. This is the case for all workers. But we've copped it even worse than others.

First we got a maximum paid rates clause in our award. Then the bosses tried to absorb indexation rises into our over award payments.

The workers on the Qantas site managed to stop this, but the scaffolders at Beejays weren't so lucky. They lost their whole over award.

To cap it all off, we had to live through Gallagher's mismanaged $30-35 hour campaign. That cost us indexation rises and months of back pay.

CONDITIONS

Safety and amenities have gone to the rack since Gallagher took over in N.S.W. The bosses are simply not observing the industry amenities code.

For instance, the Liverpool Hospital and Westmead Flats jobs had no toilets. You just had to go into the grass to shit.

The jobs that enjoy the best safety and conditions are those that have elected their own safety officers and committees, e.g. Westmead Hospital, Qantas.

LONG SERVICE

The N.S.W. Building Industry long service leave scheme is in a mess.

Many employers are not contributing their quota to the fund and workers are not having their credits properly recorded.

For instance, many Dillingham workers have been working on the same site for exactly the same time, but they are credited with different amounts of service.

The rank and file policy calls for greater union control of the scheme, to make sure it operates properly and is not abused by the boss.

SUBBIES

Sub-contracting is completely out of hand in Sydney. Whole jobs have nothing but subbies.

Companies like Building and Engineering Construction and Westfield employ no-one themselves at all. Parasite body-hire merchants like Middlemass and Skilled Engineering were all but stamped out in Sydney when Gallagher arrived.

The big $30 million Westfields job at Hurstville is all subbies. The labourers on site are paid under award and work in shocking conditions.

B.L.s for Democratic Control say that body-hire, all in payment and pyramid sub-contracting must be stamped out for good. We aim for all workers to be employed by the main contractor.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment is the main issue facing B.L.s today.

The rank and file programme calls for massive public works programmes on buildings that are needed, e.g. schools and hospitals.

We call for an end to planned overtime and to the understaffing of jobs. Here are some examples:

L.W. Giles – N.S.W.I.T., Broadway. No formwork labourers to work with formwork carpenters.

Watts – Reserve Bank Strike action forced Watts to accept two dogmen on the hook.

Kell & Rigby – Darlinghurst. Kell & Rigby would only employ one dogman on the hook in breach of a long-standing agreement. Industrial action forced K & R to employ another doggie.

Two things are necessary to carry out these policies, and others, successfully.

One is democratic control of our union instead of the Gallagher-Black dictatorship. The other is an end to the B.L.F.'s isolation from the other building unions.

That means trying to settle demarcation disputes by discussion with other unions, instead of all-out war.

Left and above: Rank-and-file candidates talk to job meetings.

N.S.W Builders Laborers' Election Fight

Campaign gets rolling

THE B.L.s for Democratic Control election campaign is well under way.

Our candidates and supporters have visited nearly every site in Sydney, and we've had meetings on several jobs.

Job meetings last week included Hornibrooks – Minto, Costain – Bond St., Dillingham – Qantas, Marra Cranes, Concrete Constructions – Burwood. We're getting good support from nearly every job.

On the federal scene, our candidate Brian Rix is visiting jobs in Brisbane and Melbourne.

Besides getting going with the campaign to knock off Gallagher, the federal BLF election is a good way to build the rank and file movement in other states.

The BLF leadership are desperate to win this campaign by any means possible. Their bodgie "official rank and file" team is already up to all sorts of tricks.

For a start, the Democratic Control supporters have been told three different figures for the N.S.W. membership.

"Acting Secretary" Steve Black said there were 4,500 members in his 6 monthly report in March. Returning officer Joe Fergusson says there are 2,900 members and the Electoral Office conducting the federal ballot has only 2,400 names.

Black was in hot water at the April branch meeting, when he tried to [illegible] how the branch [illegible] 1600 new member[illegible] days.

But in the [illegible] officials closed the [illegible] when it was clear [illegible] vote would go agai[illegible] This is their usual [illegible]

On top of this, [illegible] scrutineer, Mick R[illegible] been knocked out [illegible] ballot. Everyone know[illegible] is a life member of the [illegible] But his name has myste[illegible]ly disappeared off [illegible] branch membership li[illegible]

But that's not all. R[illegible]ing officer Joe Fe[illegible] will not let us take a c[illegible] the branch membersh[illegible] out of the union offi[illegible] prevents us doing a [illegible] to members.

A couple more qu[illegible] Where is the Gallagh[illegible] campaign getting it[illegible] from? How do they [illegible] their lavish [illegible] leaflets without [illegible] job collection, raffle [illegible] raising function?

We know for a fact [illegible] interstate BLF branche[illegible] giving money. May[illegible] MBA (Master B[illegible] Association) is chipp[illegible] too.

Why has Dilling[illegible] threatened to sack [illegible] Olive, Brian D[illegible] Brian Rix because they [illegible] time off to campaign? C[illegible] it be the MBA is backing [illegible] officials?

One thing is clear. [illegible] There is no way the [illegible] leadership in NSW co[illegible] a fair election. [illegible] wouldn't even know [illegible] one looked like.

Nurses get organised

OVER one hundred nurses met last week at Royal Brisbane Hospital to discuss proposed increases of up to 250% in charges for food and accommodation.

We unanimously agreed that there should be no increases whatsoever, due to the current lousy standards of the food and accommodation.

We also agreed that cheap food and accommodation are one of the few decent workplace conditions we have.

Most of the nurses there being fairly conservative, the meeting decided to leave the fight to the bureaucrats in the Royal Australian Federation of Nursing (RANF) and Arbitration.

letters

They also thought it was a "nice" idea to write letters to the local MP.

But some of us, more aware of the failings of union bureaucrats and the Arbitration system, decided there needed to be some action coming from the rank-and-file nurses.

We're tackling the issue with leaflets to all Queensland state hospitals, trying to get the rank-and-file informed and active. We're calling a series of after-work meetings to discuss the issue.

One success up to date has been forcing the union bureaucrats to call a m[illegible] on the day of [illegible] Arbitration hearing at [illegible] am at RANF headqua[illegible]

From there, nurse[illegible] placards will go [illegible] court-room and sit in [illegible] case.

The struggle is n[illegible] in right-wing, non-[illegible] workplaces – but [illegible] impossible!

by a nurse at the Royal Brisbane [illegible]

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'They didn't think the girls would stick together.'

WE WON'T LET THEM CUT OUR PAY!

Thirty-five Melbourne women are fighting a pay cut.

They're angry and they're out on strike till the bosses change their mind.

The woman are machinists for the clothing company, Sportscraft.

"In 1976, they told us we would have to take a 5% reduction on our bonus rates. We were sort of stuck and we agreed to it."

"Now they come out and say they want us to go down 10 or 20 percent, which will come to about $50 or $60."

Dorothy Xuereb, from Sunshine West is one of the leaders of the Works Committee.

"They claimed that they put new machinery in. But the new machines were put in 3½ years ago. I don't know why they come out with this now."

better

"They even said it's all better material and it's not. When we've got harder materials to work with we just don't say anything.

We accept the good with the bad, like they always told us."

The woman are saying plenty now. They've been out for two weeks and they're staying out.

"We're just going to stay home until there is a move from them. If they don't care, we don't care."

One woman told us about the pressure of work.

"The floor lady pushes us and we push each other. Every day, same thing. If we were working for wages (flat rate) they wouldn't push me."

The woman get a 10 minute tea break and in the morning and half and hour lunch. The rest of the day is Go Go Go.

"This company is very bad. They just want more and more profit. We make one blouse in 3 minutes and they sell it for $35."

Another member of the Works Committee told us how they tried to bring the wage cut in. *"It was all done in sections. They said it would only affect three for the time being."*

"They wanted to split the girls up because they didn't think we would all stick together and take some firm action about it."

defend

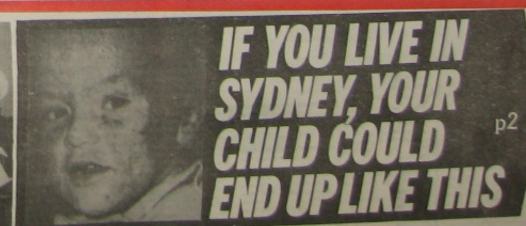
The Sportscraft struggle is just one of dozens that are being waged each month to defend our falling wages.

It proves that we can resist the bosses' and their wage cuts, provided someone is willing to organise the struggle.

The women at Sportscraft could sure teach Bob Hawke a thing or two.

Dorothy Xuereb

p6-7



between the lines

WITH all the publicity about excessive health costs, you'll be pleased to know that the Federal Department of Health takes its job seriously.

It has ordered a private health fund, the IOOF, to increase its rates. The IOOF applied to the department for a 32% increase. But ever mindful of the public's empoverished pocket, Fraser's health bureaucrats told the IOOF to put their rates up 44.7%; between 50c and $1 a week more than necessary.

This was, presumably, another victory for the forces of free enterprise and the market economy.

WHILE we're on the subject of wasted money. You'll be pleased to know that the table used at the recent Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting at Sydney's Hilton cost just $2,500... to install!

PERHAPS he ought to have used the table in his address to the nation a couple of weeks ago.

It seems that rather than use the ABC's facilities to tape the speech, Mal flew a special PR unit in from Sydney.

Then, rather than use cue-cards (appropriately called "idiot cards") to speak from, our beloved leader decided to memorise bits of the speech, tape them, and then put it back together piece by piece.

In the end, Malcolm's whim cost the government $7,000 instead of a couple of hundred.

MIND you, they don't waste money in Texas, USA. A year ago, Mr Jose Campos Torres, a Chicano, was arrested by six cops for drunkenness and disturbing the police, er peace.

It turns out that they beat him up so badly, the local prison refused to accept him. So the cops took Jose for another ride and another beating. To see if he could swim with handcuffs on.

He couldn't. However, the cops beat the murder rap and were convicted on a lesser charge.

Penalty? A fine of one dollar.

IT'S a good thing the Battler Plastic Straw is so tough. It's going to need to be to withstand the united suck-power of the Brisbane Trades and Labour Council.

This honourable body, in its infinite wisdom, has decided not to allow a speaker from the civil liberties campaign to speak from the official platform at Mayday.

Why? Because if they allowed the civil liberties people to speak, they'd have to let everyone!

But we suspect that the real reason is that if a speaker from the civil liberties campaign was let onto the platform, they'd actually make it interesting.

Yes, they might even wake (or resurrect) the audience. People might listen. And wouldn't they embarrass the boring collection of old farts who usually dominate Mayday.

Gentlemen! You have earned your plastic straws. Now, do you think you can find the energy to use them?

by Darth Vader

UNION CARBIDE - THE COMPANY THAT PLAYS WITH YOUR LIFE

by JANET VAUX

A CHEMICAL which causes birth deformities and deaths has been dumped in Sydney rubbish tips.

And the state government is trying to cover-up the scandal.

The chemical, Dioxin, was dumped by Union Carbide in drums which are now rusting and in danger of letting the dioxin into Sydney's environment.

Dioxin is an ingrediant of the herbicide 2451, which is under a top level state enquiry in Victoria, after spraying in the Yarram district led to a 10 fold increase in birth deformities and numerous deaths.

In Seveso, Italy, an explosion of a small quantity which was then spewed into the air, killed all the small animals and birds in the area, and caused terrible skin diseases.

abortions

It also caused a huge increase in spontaneous abortions and deaths at birth amongst pregnant women.

The NSW Pollution Control Commission admits that the steel drums containing the chemical will disintegrate within the next 10 years.

However, they claim there is no cause for concern, because the substance was dumped in clay-lined pits. Supposedly this will stop leaching into the watch system. But there isn't any supervision or monitoring of the dumps.

If the dump at Menai leaches it will flow into the Woronora River which connects with the Georges River and the rich oyster beds in Botony Bay.

There is another dump at Bradshaw's tip in Homebush Bay.

But it is the dump at Majors Bay, Concorde, which highlights the dangers and the irresponsibility of Union Carbide and government departments.

The dump is on a reclaimed mangrove swamp with a bed of shale that is supposed to prevent leaching.

However, when the Concorde RSL Club was built on the site the foundations were dug through into the shale.

The workers did not know that they were digging in an area that was probably polluted by Dioxin. And the building company was not likely to know that the shale bed they were piercing was a vital containing wall holding the Dioxin.

The existence of the Dioxin has been a well-kept secret until recently. It was not known to local councils, or to workers who risked contact with it.

Workers at the Union Carbide's Rhodes plant, where Dioxin has been stored since 1972, did not know it was still on the premises.

One union delegate told the Battler that he believed the Dioxin had all been removed from Union Carbide some years before.

The Workers' Health Centre believes that this is one of the most serious aspects of the affair. They say workers who may have been exposed to Dioxin should receive medical check-ups.

THIS dump will soon be a children's playground. Beneath it in rusting steel drums lies Dioxin — a chemical known to be a thousand times more dangerous than thelidomide. Will they be safe?

concealed

It is not very comforting to be told "there is no cause for concern", when the very existence of the chemical has been concealed for so long from workers, councils and local residents.

There is no reason to believe the authorities when they claim that there are no dangers from the dumped Dioxin.

Dioxin's tentacles of death and disease stretch around the world. Its dangers became widely publicised after 245T and 24D chemicals (containing Dioxin) were used in Vietnam as a defoliant on the jungle camps of the Viet Cong.

Vietnamese villagers had increased abortions, birth deformities, liver and kidney diseases and a severe and disfiguring skin disease called chloroacne.

It is lethal in small quantities. The US Drug and Food Authority say that it's a 1600 times more dangerous to unborn children than thalidomide. The US Environmental Protection Agency has recently told the chemical industry that they intend on banning 245T which contains Dioxin.

In Victoria the use of 245T is controversial and the subject of an enquiry.

And in Italy there was a terrible industrial accident.

On July 10th, 1976, a small quantity of dioxin exploded at the Icmesa company's factory near Seveso in Northern Italy.

The explosion was due, said Icmesa, to *"an unaccountable chemical reaction"*. In fact the explosive nature of Dioxin at high temperatures were already well known.

The first the inhabitants of Seveso knew about the disaster was a stinking cloud that filled their air in the early afternoon.

On July 15th came the first reports of animal deaths and of skin rashes on children.

But Icmesa and its parent company, Hoffman La Roche, together with local health officials embarked on a massive cover-up.

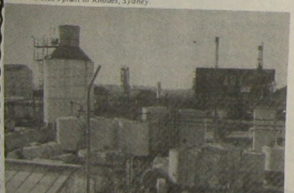
No attempt was made to cope with the disaster for two weeks, when the people were put out to evacuate the area.

killed

In the most affected zones, all small animals died soon after the explosion. Larger animals which survived had to be killed.

Over 4,000 people were immediately affected by the Dioxin. Long term effects remain unknown.

Union Carbide's plant in Rhodes, Sydney.



A child of Seveso scared by chloracne.

Right To Life Attack

THE ease with which repressive anti-abortion laws were passed in New Zealand last December reminds us of the need for a consistant vigil against attacks by parliamentarians of our right to choose when, if and how we will bear children.

CONTRIBUTED BY THE WOMEN'S ABORTION CAMPAIGN

New Zealand passed anti-abortion legislation in December 1977, virtually making abortion impossible to obtain except under very severe and uncommon conditions.

These included incest, when the mother is severely subnormal and if the *"the continuance of the pregnancy would result in serious danger to the life or physical or mental health of the mother."*

In Australia it was the issue of abortion which drew many women to feminism. Although only minimal demands have been won, women in the movement have become complacent over the issue of abortion.

Abortions are not readily available. For all women, especially working class women because of the expense, lack of information and concentration on a few private clinics.

The little we gained is under attack. The right wing is growing in strength. Last year the pro-life forces succeeded in stopping a private abortion clinic being established in the A.C.T.

Flushed with that victory they went on to attack the Medibank coverage of abortion. The argument put is that tax-payers should not have to pay for women who *"irresponsibly get themselves pregnant"*.

The Minister for Health, Ralph Hunt, responded by referring the question to the Medical Benefits Schedule Revision Committee.

As the Fraser government is looking for ways to further cut back Medibank it will eagerly respond to the pressure to drop abortion from Medibank claims.

organisation

Given these facts the Right to Life must be taken seriously. Their organisation into electoral divisions is a clear indication of their tactic of pressuring the government for legislative change.

Their strength can be seen in their April rally in Melbourne, attended by 6000 people. The abscence of a functioning abortion campaign to co-ordinate opposition, show how complacent we were over the issue of abortion.

ABORTION CAMPAIGN TO HOLD ITS FIRST MEETING ON MAY 10 AT 7.30 PM, WOMEN'S LIBERATION CENTRE 165 LATROBE STREET CITY. PHONE 662 1037.

BUSKING

IN Australia, busking (playing music publicly for donations) is illegal. But police in the eastern states turn a blind eye to it.

But during the Adelaide Festival of Arts, busking was allowed in the mall as long as you had a permit. It added to the city council's idea of a festival city.

Chris Aronsten was payed by the ACC to busk during the festival.

But he has recently been fined $73 for playing in the mall.

Local musicians held a rally in the Rundle Mall on April 8. As Chris said, "We want busking legalised, not the controlled licensed affair we had during the festival."

Q'ld Labour in Turmoil

by Graeme Grassie

THE Queensland ALP is in turmoil.

In the past month, one branch (Majimba-Coolum) has been suspended and an electorate committee (Kurilpa) told to halt its activities.

There has been intense infighting within the Labor Party between two pretty hopeless groups.

The first is the Party's State Executive which is based on the union bureaucrats of the Trades and Labor Council.

They're being challenged by a recently organised Reform Group which originated in the largely middle-class dominated branches of Brisbane's Western Suburbs.

By now, however, the Reform Group has spread its appeal to encompass the dissatisfaction of ALP Branch members throughout the state.

The dissatisfaction is well earned. The party re-organisation carried out after the 1957 split was designed to centralise power in the hands of the Queensland Central Executive, and to stifle any initiative from the branches.

policy

Branch members play no role in the formulation of policy, and they are not allowed to communicate with each other except through the QCE.

Branch preferences for election candidates are regularly vetoed by the QCE who put up their own lackeys. In fact, one candidate's sole claim was that he had acted as driver for a leading Trades Hall Official whose license was suspended for drink driving.

And the recent reaffiliation of the AWU was engineered, at least in part, to strengthen the hand of the officials against the branches.

claim

Tom Burns and the rest of the existing leadership claim to defend the interests of the trade unions.

But it is well known that Burns has a conscious policy of not taking a stand on issues he fears may be unpopular. This lets Bjelke-Petersen make the running.

And when he came out against the setting up of a Japanese-owned health resort at Yeppon, Bjelke was able to call Burns (correctly) a racist.

The only firm policy the ALP opposition has left is to wait for the Liberals to cross the floor and bring down the National Party-dominated government.

On the other hand, there is not much you can say for the Reform Group. They appear to want a leadership more like Wran or Dunstan.

Unfortunately, having Dunstan and Wran as premiers hasn't done the carworkers of S.A. or the teachers of NSW much good.

While Wran and Dunstan may be useful for picking up the trendy vote and placating the middle classes a little, they have made themselves more independent of the union machine.

BURNS: Under Attack.

support

The Reform Group has picked up support from both Gough Whitlam and Bill Hayden and may end up sharing power, or even taking over in Queensland. But will this improve things?

They are more distant from the unions and would find it easier to take up anti-union positions (something the Labor Party has done plenty of times before).

Reform Groups have never been reluctant in the past to resort to bureaucratic methods to defend their power interests, especially when their original supporters are easily demobilised.

But whichever group wins the current struggle, the Labor Party will remain essentially the same; committed to minor parliamentary reforms, committed to running the capitalist state while the working class suffers the worst crisis in 50 years.

The Labor Party is committed to ignoring the real cause of injustice in Australia. If we really want to change society, we're going to need a new kind of party.

A QUEENSLAND cop stops the march from NSW to the Queensland border a couple of weeks ago.

INFLATION

THEY are cheering Malcolm Fraser in the press, because inflation has fallen to an annual rate of 8 percent.

But it's not going to stay down long.

Fraser has served notice that health fees are going to rise — another step in the mutilation of Medibank.

We are going to start feeling the bite of soaring petrol prices, as the Government lets them approach world market levels.

In addition, a sugar price hike seems inevitable.

And apart from everything else, the Fraser cheer squad in the newspapers doesn't want to talk about how he has got inflation down. It took two years of ruthless cuts in social services, and two years of massive unemployment.

NO RIGHTS FOR LESLIE

An activist in the Democratic Rights struggle in Brisbane lost her job at the A.B.C. where she worked as a film editor.

Leslie Mannison was sacked on 14 April for showing some used TV film of a demonstration to a friend who had been arrested at it. The film was subpoened for a court case.

Leslie said, *"I was working when a friend came in to subpoena a piece of our film for a court case.*

"He came in to see the cameraman who had seen shoot the film, because he would have to go to court too.

"I tried to find the cameraman but couldn't. He asked me if he could see the film. He said it was a film of him being arrested and had a subpoena.

"I just said 'yes' because he had a subpoena. I thought he would just get the film, and I had shown film when the head of news had come down with a subpoena before. I really thought it was just automatic."

The Queensland manager of the ABC, Mr J. D. McLean, denied the sacking; saying that Leslie Mannison was only temporary staff.

work

Leslie has worked at the ABC for 5 months, and there had never been any complaints about her work.

She said, *"I regard this as a political sacking."*

Most of the staff support her and petitions and protests were organized half-heartedly by the Staff Association.

Leslie is the third person involved in recent political campaigns in Brisbane to be sacked.

Two women lost their jobs at the Royal Exchange hotel after uranium demonstrations last October.

The Liquor Trades Union did nothing but the Civil Co-ordinating Committee organized picketing of the hotel.

by Judy McVey

WHY HEALTH COSTS MORE

by Janey Stone, Healthworker

It's not true that the Federal government never carries out its promises.

For months now they've been promising to do something about health costs. Finally last week they let on what they're planning to do.

They're going to solve the problem of increasing government costs by handing them over to us.

This is how it works out.

- increased charges for hospital beds: $10 for public wards and $20 for private.
- all patients (except pensioners) will pay out of their pockets a bed fee of about $4 a day.
- increase in the gap between the standard doctors fee and Medibank refund from 15 to $20.
- increase in the levy and the ceiling.

What are the facts? Health care costs rose by 36 per cent in 1974-75 and 27 per cent in 1975-76. In 1972 health costs were $2,500 million; last year they were $6,000 million.

costs

Why have health costs gone up so much? There has been no corresponding improvement in people's health in Australia. In fact the whole problem has nothing to do with health or sickness at all.

It has to do with how our so called health "services" are organized.

It may come as a surprise that hospitals, doctors and so on aren't there to give us good health. The health care system is not based on people's rights to quality care. Rather it is organized for private profit.

For doctors this means working a fee-for-service basis. The more patients they cram into their time, the more "services" they perform on each, the more expensive their "services" - the better off they are.

And up go health costs.

GPs order endless pathology testing and specialised referrals. Take the case of an 84 year old woman treated in 1975 for an ulcer she'd had for 30 years.

She had over 100 pathology tests, 16 x-rays, 37 medicines, and dozens of other procedures. Eventually she cried for an end to it, saying, *"I can live with the ulcer but I can't live with the tests."*

Who gained from these tests? The patient or the various specialists and pathology services?

Surgeons also have a good racket. They are paid according to the procedure they perform - and the decision on which procedure is up to them.

For instance the standard fee for removal of a mole is $41. But if the surgeon makes a big cut with a scalpel the charge is $104. The fee is determined not by the size of the mole but by the size of the cut.

cancer

In 1976, 2,700 hysterectomies (removal of the womb) were performed. Fewer than one in twenty were done for milignancy (cancer).

But we do know that at least 1000 gynaecologists were kept in the manner to which they are accustomed.

Doctors aren't the only ones to profit from the system. The drug industry is one of the most profitable around.

Retail prices can be up to 5,000 times the cost of the drug, as in the case of the tranquilliser, Librium.

Private nursing homes, medical equipment companies, private pathology services are all very profitable.

The government is committed to maintenance of the supposedly non-profit private health funds, who in their turn carry a lot of weight in decision making.

The result is that the private wing feeds off the public wing "Profitable" medicine flourishes.

The money from escalating costs is channelled into private pockets.

WOMENS CONFERENCE

THE Women and Labor conference, a conference about Australian women, will be held at Macquarrie University from the 12th to the 14th May.

The conference has a wide ranging set of themes, and there seem to be about 100 papers on offer.

These are a bit overweighted with academic contributions, but there will probably be some interesting discussions on Australian women's struggles which could otherwise be forgotten.

If you're fighting for safety at work...

EVERY fortnight in The Battler, you can read of the daily struggle for safety at work.

We covered the fight against asbestos. We exposed the council's prior knowledge of its danger.

And we've reported numerous safety struggles in the Building Industry.

Every fortnight, the Work Toll column, by Steve Morgan, tells you of the hidden dangers at work and what can be done to fight them.

The Battler reports all the struggles against the bosses and their system.

And if you want to be part of the movement for a socialist society, why not join us?

Just contact the local branch of the International Socialists listed on page 8.

Or fill in the coupon opposite.

the WORK TOLL

Asbestos lagging in the Melb. City Powerhouse photographed exclusively by The Battler.

...The Battler is YOUR paper!

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE NO.
TRADE UNION
Postcode

Cla and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, 3031

REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

On the 10th anniversary of May–June, 1968, Tom O'Lincoln writes on the greatest general strike in history.

THE year 1968 brought the end of an era.

For two decades the western world, led by the U.S.A., had been in the grip of reaction. Hysterical anti-communism was a way of life for millions, and the idea of revolution seemed a joke to most people.

Yet in May 1968, French students and workers brought France to the brink of social revolution. The shock waves were felt across Europe, and around the world.

The year began in an atmosphere of confrontation on French campuses. In Februrary, a mass demonstration of university and high school students renamed the Latin Quarter "Heroic Vietnam Quarter" In March, students at Nanterre occupied the university and took over the campus broadcasting station.

order

The Nanterre campus was closed in an attempt to restore order, but now the students of the Sorbonne and several high schools declared their solidarity. On May 10, a giant march of 35,000 students wound through Paris, singing revolutionary songs.

Thousands of police with hundreds of armoured cars were called out, and the marchers were driven into the streets of the Latin Quarter. Barricades began to go up.

There followed a night of violent clashes. Police could not clear the quarter until the next day, and only by using the most vicious methods. At nine o'clock that evening, a shaken Premier Popidou announced he would meet the demands of the students, and release everyone who had been arrested.

But Pompidou had moved too late. Anger was swelling through the French working class over the police brutality.

Communist Party trade union leaders, who only a few days before had denounced the students as irresponsible, were now forced to call a general stoppage in their support. On May 13 a million workers marched through Paris, with the "irresponsible" student leaders in the front.

ferment

The next day, there was a ferment in the factories. A day later, an airline factory in Nanterre went on strike. The workers occupied the plant, and shut the manager up in his office.

Strikes spread through every Renault car factory in France. By Saturday May 18 trains, mail and telegraph services were stopped. By the next week the entire national economy was paralysed by the greatest general strike in history.

The French government was in disarray. The world was stunned. Young radicals everywhere were elated. They had learned that mass struggles, even revolution itself, were possible in the west.

But a second, less pleasant lesson was to follow.

Several thousand radical students marched six miles to the Renault factory near Paris, to express solidarity with the car-workers who had occupied the plant. They found the gates guarded by Communist Party stewards, who had strict instructions to keep the students and their radical ideas away from the workers.

Communist Party posters in all ment within the limits of demands for better wages and conditions.

The government was given a breathing space. The explosive potential of the strikes was contained. French President the Renault factories in France charged that the student groups were agents of the bosses. Meanwhile, the entire vast organisation of the Communist unions was mobilised to hold the strike move-

Charles DeGaulle rallied the right wing, and held demonstrations of his own. He then proceeded to call an election in an atmosphere of rightwing blacklash and intimidation, while troops stood at the ready.

DeGaulle won the election. The momentum of the mass movement had been lost, and the left parties spent the election campaign trying to appear respectable. In France in 1968, as in Australia in 1975, the path of respectability and dampening struggles proved to be a poor election policy.

Only the small Unified Socialist Party, which supported the radical students, got an increase in its vote.

But much was gained all the same. The unions made immense wage gains, which have not been wiped out to this day.

new

And thousands of young people were won to revolutionary organisations. They had learned in bitter struggle that a new kind or organisation was needed, to replace the traditional parties of the working class.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

STATE Governments throughout Australia are finally beginning to take long overdue action to cope with a dangerous drug menace. At the same time, it is understood the action will be limited and not aimed at the major sources of the drug distributions: several multi-national organisations with contacts in high places.

No, this is not an article about the N.S.W. drug enquiry, the "mafia" and the N.S.W. police. The drug I am referring to is good old aspirin and the other associated pain killers.

Abuse of analgesics is Australia's second most serious form of drug addiction. Alcohol is the most serious. The press and government, typically are more concerned about marijuana.

Abuse of analgesics can cause brain damage and heart disease. It does terrible things to your liver and kidneys. It is a more serious problem in Austrlia than in any country in the world.

Aspirin addicts are not unemployed kids from the suburbs or long haired dropouts from the inner city. They are more likely to be somebody's mother. The pushers are not shady dealers with "foreign accents". They are the local supermarket, the family chemist and (especially) the family doctor.

And the big dope merchants, the people who are really making the money peddling drugs of addiction? Why they are one of the first families in Australia. The Nicholas family.

Nicholas are one of the Australia's few genuine multinationals. Their best known product is Aspro. You can buy Aspros in London or Paris but the profits all return to Melbourne.

The Nicholas family have been prominent in Australian society and the Methodist church for generations. They endowed Melbourne's Wesley College, the school at which former Liberal Prime Ministers Menzies and Holt were educated.

The Nicholas company have had friends in high places for a long time. The original formula for Aspros was obtained for them on the eve of the first World War from another gang of crooks. Bayers with the help of the Australian Legation in Germany and the then Australian Foreign Minister Billy Hughes.

As with all drug abuse the problem is not only with the manufacturers but in the reasons that they are used in the first place. The main analgesics addicts are housewives and female production line workers. In other words people develop headaches and aches and pains from a combination of boredom and too much repetitive tiring work.

Doctors very often prescribe pills as an alternative to treating complaints that they consider "trivial". Australian medics have an international reputation for being far too free with prescriptions for painkillers. But it is only now that state Government are beginning to require prescriptions for analgesics anyway. In most states you can still get them from supermarkets.

Meanwhile dope smokers and pedlers continue to get heavy jail sentences for a drug that has not been proved dangerous. But then dope growers are unlikely to endow Wesley College.

BEHIND SMITH'S "PEACE" DEAL

by David Lockwood

SMITH, Muzorewa and Sithole are not alone in wanting the Rhodesian question 'settled'.

The United States and Britain have considerable business interests in Rhodesia – mostly in the export of Rhodesian chrome. This export has been held up by the economic sanctions imposed by the UN. If the 'internal settlement' is accepted by the rest of the world, the sanctions may be lifted.

buyers

This explains why Muzorewa and Sithole have been getting support from 3 US companies in particular – Allegheny Ludlum, Union Carbide and Foote Minerals. These three are the main buyers of Rhodesian chrome.

They are giving financial support to the 2 black leaders, are lobbying for the 'settlement' in Washington, and have financed a speaking tour by Muzorewa in the US.

united

Meanwhile, the war continues. The ZANU guerrillas have united with the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) in the Patriotic Front.

According to the Front, at the beginning of 1978, there were over 5,000 guerrillas operating inside the country, with a further 10,000 in training.

The Front has refused to accept the 'internal settlement'. As the leadership of those actually fighting for liberation, it demands a majority in any transitional government, and the handing over of security and police operations of its own soldiers.

cities

The 'settlement' has support from sections of the black community – especially in the cities. Muzorewa can still turn out over 100,000 supporters to demonstrate in favour of it.

When the US Secretary of State visited Salisbury to urge negotiations with the Front, he was greeted with a hostile demonstration.

But this black support for the settlement comes from people removed from the war against the regime, from people who see any change in the present situation as a positive step.

Support for Muzorewa and Sithole might be due to the Front leadership. One of the record its co-chairman, Joshua Nkomo, attempted secret negotiations with Smith (in 1975 and 1976) and was expelled from the ANC for this.

Smith has described him as the "most responsible" of the African leaders.

Nkomo has received support from the large British firm, LONRHO, and is a personal friend of its managing director, Tiny Rowlands.

But at the moment the Front represents the freedom fighters. This may change – all of the black leaders have shown a remarkable agility for leaping into and out of the arms of the white regime.

What must not change is our support for the men and women who are doing the actual fighting against Rhodesia. A world of experience separates them from the various power-brokers white and black in Salisbury, Pretoria, London and Washington.

And whatever is decided around conference tables, it is the freedom fighters who will have the final say.

Here is the real reason Smith wants to find a quick and easy internal settlement – ZANLA guerilla fighters on the march.

SMITH FINDS THREE STOOGES

ON December 2 last year, Rhodesian prime minister Ian Smith had his first meeting with 3 black leaders.

Could this mean that his white minority government had at last seen the light?

Unfortunately not – there were more material reasons behind the negotiations.

The Rhodesian economy has been shattered by the war against the black guerrillas.

That war is now costing US $5½ million a day, and is causing a severe shortage of skilled white labour. Because of the war, many whites are leaving the country.

Meanwhile, the black population has continued to grow.

The Smith regime has had to make concessions or be swept aside. It aimed to split the black movement in Rhodesia by doing a deal with one section – which would preserve white business interests – and isolating the rest.

But Smith found his stooges in an unexpected quarter.

The attendance of one of the African leaders at Smith's negotiations – Jeremiah Chirau of the Zimbabwe United Peoples Organisation – was quite predictable, since the organisation was set up by Smith, and most of its officials are on the government payroll.

But the attendance of the other two – Bishop Muzorewa of the United African National Council (UANC) and Ndabaningi Sithole (from the African National Council (ANC) – was a bit of a surprise.

Both these men had consistently refused sell-out deals in previous negotiations.

But having spent the last 2 years arguing for armed struggle, Muzorewa and Sithole returned to negotiate with Smith. Muzorewa states:

"It does not help us very much to shout at each other about one man one vote ... The discussions are the main thing"

While Sithole promised:

"We do not intend to dismantle the existing instruments of law and order."

In March this year, they signed an 'internal settlement', which sold out lock, stock and barrel to the white regime.

These are the essential points of the settlement:

Joshua Nkomo

– 28 out of the 100 seats in the new parliament are reserved for the white minority. This means that one white vote will equal 7 black votes.

– whites will continue to control 50% of the best land. Land starvation for the blacks will guarantee a constant supply of cheap black labour

– the white controlled army and police will remain intact

– there can be no change in the new constitution against white opposition.

"Neither with the State, nor the Red Brigades"

WHEN top Christian Democrat and former premier Aldo Moro was kidnapped by the 'Red Brigades', the Italian police launched a campaign of wholesale repression.

A cordon was thrown round Rome and a house search was made of all those known to be on the revolutionary left.

The Italian Communist Party (PCI), which is becoming more right wing every day, supported these measures, as necessary to root out 'terrorism'.

Many revolutionaries and trade unionists however, did not. The picture shows one of a number of revolutionary demonstrations against terrorism and repression, under the slogan, 'Neither with the State, nor with the Red Brigades'.

Afterwards the leadership of the PCI-controlled trade union federation threatened that any trade unionists found demonstrating under this slogan would be expelled.

East Germany ~ Under the Mask

OPPOSITION in East Germany is not limited to intellectuals.

Last year there was widespread unrest among workers, especially over the lack of consumer goods – up to and including individual strikes.

The source of the unrest is the well-known "Inter-shop" stores, where you can buy western products for western currency.

affluent

This divides the population of East Germany into two groups. There are those who possess western currency – Communist Party bureaucrats or those with affluent relations in the west – and those who have no access to it.

The workers at the Fritz Heckert state machine factory in Karl-Marx-City went on strike demanding that a fifth of their wages paid in western currency.

The situation has driven other workers to struggle at other plants. There were stoppages in the Brandenburg steel works, in an electrical goods factory in Berlin-Treptow and in the Weimar agricultural machinery factory. This list may be incomplete.

The government responded by making goods from the Intershops available in special "Exquisit" shops, where they sell for East German marks. (Sometimes they include goods produced in East Germany for export).

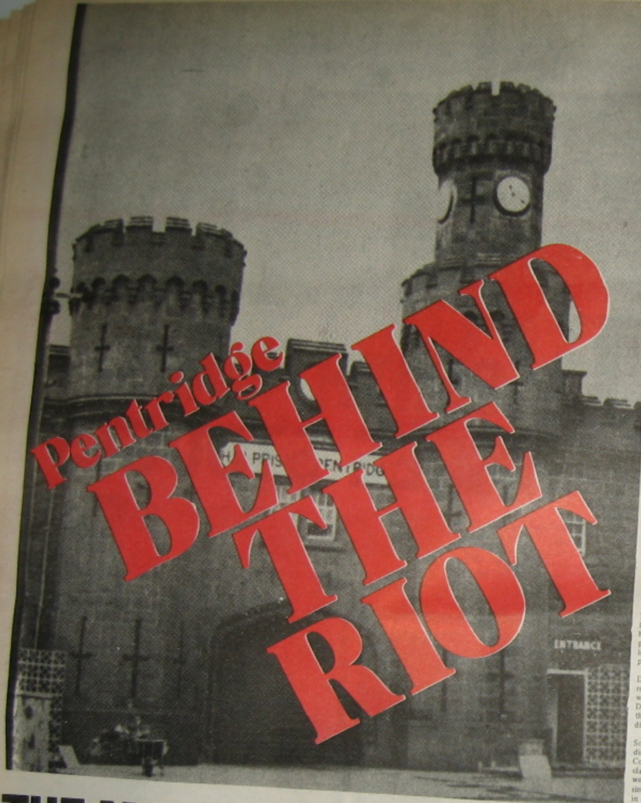
The catch is the prices. They are based on an exchange rate of about 5 to 1 between East and West German marks. So a pound of coffee worth 11 marks in the west costs 55 marks in the East.

But the average East Germany worker doesn't earn five times the income of his colleague in the west. It's more like one-[illegible].

privileged

The new arrangement in the shops is really aimed at the privileged middle class, doctors and other professionals, factory managers and the like. These people have been complaining about their needs in [illegible]. The new policy is aimed to keep them happy.

Workers, as before, are to pay through the nose. Whether they will take it lying down seems unlikely after the experiences of last year.



Pentridge BEHIND THE RIOT

THE MAN THEY CALLED MARSHALL

For 14 years, he was the jail's visiting magistrate

THE appointment of Victoria's first Ombudsman was hailed as a new era for democracy in this state.

The Ombudsman would be the public's watchdog. The protector of the 'little man' against bureaucratic government.

Consumers, workers, migrants and prisoners could have their grievances championed by an impartial knight in shiny armour.

But from the very start, the Ombudsman was never to be more than a sop to Hamer's Liberal image. So the Government appointed a long-time public service hack.

mere

John Vincent Dillon became Ombudsman in October 1973, a mere 2 months after retiring as the head of the Chief Secretary's department.

As the tallest of the "tall poppies" in this state's bureaucracy from 1961 to 1973 he was responsible for administration of the police, prisons and numerous other statutory bodies.

John Dillon is now investigating the Pentridge riot and if his past record is any guide it will be another white-wash.

Already he has lectured the prisoners on his shock and dismay that they should riot less than a month after conditions were relaxed in H division.

He pounds his chest with his achievements saying *"prisoners never had it so good."*

They've recently won the right to smoke; daily showers; radio headphones in all cells; 'lights out' extended to 9.30pm; greater access to newspapers; earning power up from 35 to 75 cents a day; and weekly cubicle visit.

wasn't

And wasn't he the man who stopped rock-breaking in H division? And didn't he also put an end to the bread and water ration?

Yes, that made life a little better in the black hole of H division. But John Dillon, the man often called "The Marshal", was for 14 years the

visiting magistrate at Pentridge.

For 14 years he sent prisoners accused of trival and dubious breaking of 'house rules' to H division.

For 14 years he put prisoners onto hard labour, into solitary confinement and halved their bread and water ration in H division for the odious crime of making noise.

This is the "public watchdog" to whom prisoners have to turn for help. A man who has been a police magistrate and later a stipendary magistrate at the Melbourne City Court.

enemy

A man who was tipped to be the Chief Commissioner of Police in 1968: a proven enemy of prisoners.

His record as an Ombudsman, not to mention a prison reformer, is shocking and no reason for hope amongst the prisoners.

The largest number of complaints come from prisoners. During 1976 there were 1450 complaints and nearly a third were from prisoners.

The prisoners complained about victimization, assault, visits, remissions, release dates, wrongful punishment and wrongful detention. Of the 408 prisoner complaints Dillon claimed that only 28 were justified.

And what happened to those …

The…h? Every Night, Every Night……

…tcott reviews Ray Mooney's …y about life in H-division

"EVERY Night, Every Night" is set in H Division at Pentridge. But what it says doesn't just apply to prisons…

Dale is a recent arrival at H Division and like everyone else he is treated to a good solid bashing. Like everyone else he swears he'll get revenge on the screws when he gets out.

Bryant is another prisoner, but he's tough. You prove you're tough by never putting someone in – not even the …

… so he *"resigns from the human race"*. The screws can't break him just by bashing him – so both he and Bryant are trouble-makers.

One night, shouting blindly at all the other cells, Dale calls all the other prisoners "dogs".

The screws put Dale and Bryant together hoping that Bryant will do the bashing for them . . . because a "dog" means someone who dobs people in. Dale tells Bryant: *"You are a dog. You put someone in. You put yourself in."*

In other words, by refusing to put the screws in, you betray yourself.

To survive in prison, perhaps like surviving in a boring and pointless job, people sometimes try to convince themselves that it's tough and only the tough can take it.

If someone complains about the conditions, you'll hear somebody else accuse them of being "afraid of hard work". Or worse, before anyone even complains, you get people telling tales of the awful things they've put up with as if they were proud of it.

In "Every Night, Every Night", the prisoners begin to really fight back against the screws' brutality when Dale wins them over to the idea that the rule about not dobbing people in can have certain exceptions.

There is one very tense scene where the governor of the prison comes down after the prisoners have been successfully ridiculing one of the guards.

terrorise

He tries to terrorise Dale back into submission by threatening that his sentence could be extended for years and he'd stay in H Division. Dale replies that he is not as scared of being beaten up as he is of spending the rest of his life having to be tough like an animal.

The governor then goes back to Bryant and tries to use the old line about toughies never dobbing anyone in which he had believed for so long.

I think it's that pause, wondering what Bryant will do, that drives home one big point playwright Ray Mooney is trying to make. Oppressors can use your own rules to keep you down. They can even use a tough prisoner like Bryant to keep other prisoners down.

But prisoners aren't being kept down. In NSW they've organised in the Prisoners' Action Group. In Melbourne they testified about the brutality of warders to the Jenkinson Inquiry.

I've often heard people say that prisoners are animals. These prisoners aren't. An animal doesn't dream to demand rights – that's the sort of thing you expect from a human being!

STEVE MOR… REPORTS:

ON the weekend of April 15, prisoners at Melbourne's Pentridge Jail rioted.

The riot started as a protest in H division and culminated in the burning of the prison chapel.

They were fighting the system of classification that sees many prisoners wrongfully sent to H division, the Black Hole of Pentridge, and kept there for long periods.

The prisoners outcry was answered with brutal bashings by guards on the following Monday.

Dolph Eddy, the Labor spokesman on Social Welfare has spoken to many wives and parents of prisoners.

They report that prisoners heard screams echoing through H division cells as many were dragged from their rooms and batoned.

barricaded

On Tuesday, 18 April, Kevin Taylor and three other H Division prisoners went on a hunger strike. B Division prisoners barricaded themselves in their cells refusing to work in protest at the bashings.

The 130 prisoners of B Division on Wednesday again refused to work in sympathy with their bashed mates in H Division. Late in the afternoon the old blue stone chapel in B division was set alight.

The Victorian Minister for Social Welfare, Brian Dixon, dismissed calls for a Royal Commission into Pentridge. He claimed that a few prisoners were trying to incite violence similar to that which occured in NSW, after reading of the Royal Commission there.

…

in his cell and alleged that he was going to use it to escape.

He denied it was his – he had never touched it and they didn't finger print it. He was sent to H divison.

Some months later they found out it wasn't his, but they wouldn't transfer him from H division. The Classification Committee agreed he shouldn't be there but the prison administrator refused the transfer.

After the riots Kevin went on a hunger strike which lasted for 12 days until the prison administration agreed to his demands for reclassification.

But no matter why a prisoner is sent into H division the conditions are the same for all.

loses

Automatically a prisoner loses all remissions. Under the remission system a prisoner can have his sentence reduced by 1½ days per month for good behaviour.

You are locked in your cell for 18 hours a day. There isn't any communication except with the guards.

Your day starts at 6.30 in the morning when the guards wake you for breakfast. Later you have a shower. In fact daily

Playwright Ray Mooney

showers have just been granted in the past few weeks to H division prisoners.

At 9 am you go to the exercise yard – by yourself of course. Talking to other prisoners is prohibited and if you're "lucky" you might do some menial work. But usually the day drags in idle monotony.

lonely

At 3 pm you're again locked in the cells. Radios and newspapers are prohibited but you can read books and magazines. Recently lights off has been extended to 9.30 pm. But still the nights are long and lonely.

Ray Mooney, a former prisoner at Pentridge and now playwright, told the Battler, that he had heard reports that *"there is an attempt to bring the bash back."*

"I believe the bash hasn't been used in recent years (since the Jenkinson inquiry in 1972) but because of a few volatile prisoners serving time in H division at the moment there is a concerted attempt to bring the bash back."

He believes that a small group of prisoners would be involved in the riots.

"That is the way it works inside prisons. It always takes a few people to show the initial courage to stand up to authority. Once there is a small group with guts others will join."

stunned

The bash as it was before 1972 stunned many of the audience watching Ray's play.

A new inmate in H division is told he is guilty and has no rights. He is told, "You don't eat, shit, sleep unless we (the guards) say. You don't even breathe, you hear?"

At the same time the prisoner is punched, kicked, hit with a baton and choked. He is stripped for an internal examination (supposedly to see if there are any concelled weapons – the prisoner is told to touch his toes and a bar is repeatedly rammed up his backside until the guards are satisfied there's nothing hidden.

Ray outlined the history of 'the bash'.

"Before 1972 there was the structured bash. It worked along the lines that everyone interned in H division on reception was given 'the bash'.

"The reason for this was because it controlled the behaviour of prisoners in country prisons. If you played up in a country prison or escaped you were automatically sent back to Pentridge via H division.

"And you know that if you're going to be sent back you'll get 'the bash'."

The Jenkinson inquiry of 1972 got rid of the structured bash. After 4 years it led to the stopping of rock breaking as the H division prisoners' 'work' and again 4 years later, it stopped the bread and water ration.

But not to be outdone the prison authorities are now using more subtle means of control – drugs.

Prisoners are being stuffed with large doses of sedatives like Tryptanol, Mogadon and valium.

docile

Dolph Eddy told the Battler that the drugs are prescribed by the medical officers. He said *"Many prisoners are in Pentridge through drugs and now it is being prescribed so as to keep them docile.*

"If they refuse to take them they're forced."

A form of punishment before 1972 was stringing a prisoner up naked and splashing him with cold water – a scene from 'Every Night, Every Night'.

You didn't eat, shit, sleep or breathe in H division before 1972 without the screws saying so – a scene from 'Every Night, Every Night.'

Firemen on the roof of the chapel set alight by prisoners in protest at the recent bashings.

Footscray not Fascists

Dear Battlers,

In Between the Lines in the last Battler, there was an unfortunate comment on the Footscray Football Club.

We think it was in very bad taste to say that they are "behind even the Chileans". Perhaps footballers are badly organised, but obviously there is no comparison to terrible repression in Chile.

We don't object at all to humorous or light-hearted articles, but a sense of proportion is also necessary.

Janey Stone and
Janet Vaux
Sydney

THIS IS YOUR PAGE. LET US KNOW YOUR IDEAS' LIKES AND DISLIKES.

WRITE TO: P.O. BOX 46, FLEMINGTON, VIC 3031.

A BARBARIC PENALTY

Dear Editor,

My purpose in writing this letter is to draw the attention of students and staff of Wollongong University to the savage sentence recently imposed on a young woman by Mr. Justice Lee (N.S.W. Supreme Court 22.3.78).

Last week, Judith Anne Mitchell was sent to prison for three years with a non-parole period of six months after pleading guilty on the grounds of diminished responsibility to the manslaughter of her newly born baby in the early hours of last Christmas Day.

She gave birth to the baby in an unsewered lavatory and was later charged with murder.

In passing sentence, Mr. Justice Lee said Mitchell had two other children, had been a good mother, had never been in trouble with the law, was depressed at the time of the offence and had shown contrition and remorse.

This woman needs compassion and help, not punishment. Her sentence cannot be justified on logical or humane grounds, since it deprives two children of, to quote the judge, "a good mother", and stigmatises these children by making a criminal out of the unfortunate mother.

I am at a loss to understand the ethos which underlies this judicial decision and can only suppose it to be inspired by a moral code which regards punishment as more important than constructive help.

Surely, the resources of the State could be used in a more positive way to provide Ms. Mitchell with professional guidance to support her and her children through a period of severe social and psychological distress?

help

Please help this woman by registering a protest against Mr. Justice Lee's jackboot justice. If you feel shocked, as I do, at this inhumane application of the law, make your feelings known to the N.S.W. Attorney General, Mr Frank Walker, either directly or through one of (or all) of the local State parliamentarians.

For the benefit of newcomers to the district, these are Messrs. L.B. Kelly, 84 5602; E. Ramsey, 84 1863; G. Peterson, 96 4848; and R. Jackson, 94 1143. A phone call will do, but a letter C/- Parliament House, Sydney is better.

Ms. Mitchell's case is significant, not only because she has been treated in a senseless and barbaric manner, but because it highlights the fact that there are people in the community who, for various reasons, are particularly vulnerable to the legalised oppression system that they ... understand.

Does it make ... the wealthy, the ... and the corporate ... able to ... system with ... the Judith Ann... rot in goal?

Ruby ...

Too Late?

"You can't march," he said,
"Why it's against the law!"
But he didn't say that
When I marched to war.

There'll be no protest meeting or debate
Echoes here of blackshirts
My God, perhaps we're too late.

But it's never too late
Even though the banner is furled
Freedom's threatened in Queensland
March we must for a free world.

Sid, the Cleaner
Wollongong

Dear Battlers,

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 303[illegible]

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If that's the sort of work you want to do–

JOIN US!

JOIN A GROWING MOVEMENT

International Socialists

THE I.S. and the Battler are a well established part of the Labor movement.

A few years ago, we were just starting out, a handful of white collar workers and students.

At Monash University in Melbourne, three students launched a broadsheet called Hard Lines at the start of 1972. Two clerical workers launched a similar sheet called Clerk and Dagger.

Other members were active in the women's movement and the teachers' union.

We called ourselves the Socialist Workers' Action Group, or SWAG for short. And we produced the first-ever edition of the Battler for the 1972 elections.

work

But it took another year or two of hard work before we could produce the Battler on a regular basis.

By the end of 1975 we were a solid organisation with a clear idea of where we were going. And we were about to grow.

When Whitlam was sacked, SWAG members threw themselves into the fight. A special issue of the Battler was produced, and sold out in 36 hours.

A lot of angry young people joined us, and at a special conference held in the midst of the struggle, the International Socialists were formed.

Until then, we had only been a Melbourne group. But in early 1976, a small team of people pulled up roots and moved to Sydney. By the end of the year we had a thriving Sydney branch, and were beginning to build one in Canberra.

Last year saw the establishment of branches in Adelaide and Brisbane. Brisbane branch barely had time to get organised before Bjelke banned street marches, and the Brisbane I.S. has been in the thick of that fight ever since.

From a handful of inexperienced people, I.S. has grown to a national organisation with a fortnightly paper. Our members are active in industry, in offices, in the struggle against uranium mining.

We fight for women's liberation, civil rights in Queensland – and for a socialist society run democratically by the working class itself.

If you like the Battler, you're sure to like the International Socialists. Why not come to a meeting. You'll be more than welcome.

Fighting Fund

THE BATTLER Fighting Fund is in trouble. So far this year, we have raised $1000 less than our target of $400 a month.

If we do not succeed in building the fund up to target, we will be forced to cut back on the paper's coverage.

If you like The Battler and support its hard-hitting comments, then all we ask is a few dollars every month. Or you can take up a collection at work or amongst your friends.

I.S. Branches also run regular fund-raising functions. Come along! You'll enjoy yourself and help The Battler at the same time.

Last month, our Fund raised $133-12. Thanks to:–

AK $13
RP $13 IT $3
Misc $0-22 IVP $10
Melb North BBQ $28-90
Sydney Middle Eastern Dinner $58-00
Brisbane $7

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL	PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031	376-91[illegible]
	24 hour answering and message machine	335-27[illegible]
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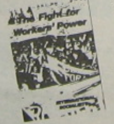
SYDNEY	111 Enmore Rd., Newtown	51-36[illegible]
CANBERRA	PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	51-3[illegible]
ADELAIDE	PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49-7[illegible]
BRISBANE	PO Box 99, St Lucia, Qld, 4067	49-64[illegible]
IPSWICH, QLD.		281 6113



The Fight for Worker's Power

The politics of the International Socialists in a nutshell ... why we need to fight for worker's power. 40 cents (plus 30 cents post) from: Redback Press PO Box 4[illegible] Flemington Vic, 3031 or your local IS branch.

What's On

ADELAIDE MON 8 MAY Discussion on current metal industry claim and the metal unions' car industry claim. Also a Battler writing workshop. 28 Ballantyne St. Thebarton 7-30pm

ADELAIDE MON 15 MAY I.S. General Business branch meeting 7-30pm

ADELAIDE WED 24 MAY Branch Meeting, "Marx on Money" part I 28 Ballantyne St Thebarton, 7-30pm

ADELAIDE 24-25 MAY I.S. National Teachers Fraction meeting. All I.S. teachers and teacher readers urged to attend. All accomodation etc will be organised. Could all interstate people contact us as soon as possible to let us know they're coming.

ADELAIDE WED 31 MAY Branch Meeting, "Marx om Money" part 2, 28 Ballantyne St Thebarton, 7-30pm

CANBERRA THURS 4 MAY Public Meeting "What is the I.S.?" Discussion of our politics and how we put them into practice. Speaker, from the I.S. National Executive. For further info, contact 49-6405

MELBOURNE SUN 7 MAY Mayday march. Assemble Trades Hall, near corner Drummond and Victoria Sts Carlton, 2pm

SYDNEY SUN 7 MAY Mayday march with the I.S. Assemble in Haymarket 1pm

SYDNEY 12-14 MAY Women and Labour conference. Macquarie Uni. Details from Sue Bellamy 88-9375

SYDNEY SAT 13 MAY I.S. Dinner. For details and invitation ring 51-3665

SYDNEY SUN 14 MAY I.S. Branch meeting 111 Enmore Rd Newtown.

IN MAY and June, a series of meetings are being held for uranium activists in Melbourne.

They will discuss the state of the movement and how to build it. Until now, the emphasis has been on organising rallies. The organisers of the meetings are hoping to build the movement amongst rank and file workers, and in the women's and black movements.

All the meetings w... be held at:

1-00pm on the 2... floor of the Melbo... University Union Bu... ing.

MAY 13: Where is ... Movement go...

MAY 27: Uranium ... women

JUNE 10: Uranium ... the aborigines

JUNE 24: Uranium ... the unions.

DEADLINE NEXT EDITION: 10 MAY.

THE BATTLER is edited by Phil Griffiths of 1a Wight St Kensington Vic and printed by Media Press, 7 Garners Ave Marrickville, NSW.

Two men, two classes and an epic struggle

Dianne Fieldes reviews the movie 1900, Bertolucci's epic of Italy, 1900–1945

THIS IS a great film. It is superbly acted and directed, beautifully photographed and authentic to the period down to the smallest detail.

But these aren't the things that make it a great film. What makes it great is it's living, breathing depiction of the class struggle.

1900 is not realistic, nor is it meant to be. In the scope of a film, even a four hour marathon like this one "realism" isn't possible.

Instead we see the life stories of two men, born on the same day in 1900. Afredo Berlinghieri is the grandson of the landowner, Olmo Dalco the illegitimate grandson of one of the workers for that landowner.

symbols

Olmo and Afredo are symbols of their respective clases but they are never stereotypes.

As the film traces their life stories we see clearly what class differences really mean. Their childhoods have been at opposite ends of the scale of want and abundance. Then, both men are caught up in World War One.

Olmo goes to the front as a private while Afredo, having the right family connections, is an officer at the rear. And when the war ends they return to the country property.

One thing more than anything else has changed the relationship they had as boys. Alfredo is now the boss on the estate.

The film is set in the province of Emilia in Italy which was one of the seedbeds of agrarian fascism and the Berlinghieri property is no exception to the trend.

Attilia, the foreman, is the leading public fascist in terms of spouting forth fascist ideas and wearing black shirts, but the film clearly shows who was really behind fascism, who kept it financially solvent and who ultimately benefited from it. The owners of property.

Although this is a film about two men, women play a significant role. The woman who eventually marries Olmo plays a leading role in several struggles.

She especially plays a leading role in the spine-tingling scene where the workers stand up to armed mounted soldiers and win.

But the film is about the real world and so the workers don't always win. We not only see their triumphs but also their defeats and their mistakes.

For example at the end of World War Two, the workers have armed themselves to fight the fascists. When the war ends a massive celebration is held with everyone dancing under a huge red flag and with the landowner forced to witness it all.

army

During all this members of the regular army arrive in a jeep to collect the guns. Many don't want to surrender them but Olmo mistakenly persuades the more reluctant to do so.

As the guns are handed over he justifies handing control back to the capitalist state by saying that the landowner is "dead".

Very quietly the landowner himself says simply *"the landowner is not dead"*.

I couldn't review this film without talking about the violence in it. It's truly sickening and in any other film would probably have caused me to leave (or at least look away a lot).

All the most revolting incidents involve Attila the fascist foreman, beginning with the scene where he ties a cat to a hatstand and bumps it to death with his head and ending with his own death.

But two things make the violence bearable. First, it shows the physical attrocities that are part of fascism, and more importantly shows that the bosses behind fascism manage to keep their own hands clean.

Secondly the violence that happens to the fascists themselves arrises naturally out of the action preceding it.

On liberation day 1945 when Attila get stabbed in the leg with a pitchfork by one of the woman he has been terrorising you can't help feeling he deserves it and more.

Village women lead the beaten figure of Alfredo Berlinghieri, the fascist.

recommended

Much, much more could be said about this four hour film, it contains so much. A few issues ago Tess Lee Ack recommended reading Emile Zola's book Germinal if you ever felt that your determination to fight the capitalist system needed a shot in the arm.

If you want to see a film instead of reading a book, go and see 1900. It's the best film I've ever seen. What more can I say?

Peasants occupy their stolen land and prepare to fight the landowner's armies.

If ever your determination to fight capitalism needs a shot in the arm, see this film

FROM THE SHELF: Homage to Catalonia

GEORGE Orwell went to Spain in December 1936 to join the Republican forces. They were fighting General Franco's fascist coup. He wrote Homage to Catalonia on his return to England seven months later, after being hit in the throat while commanding a militia detachment on the Catalonian front.

In common with the rest of the European Left, Orwell felt that, unless Franco was halted, Italy and Germany would be encouraged to unleash a new World War.

Their support, both military and political, for the Francoist rebels, was undisguised. On the other hand, the "democracies" refused to commit themselves to the elected Spanish government, thereby permitting the eventual fasicst victory.

Only one government– the Soviet Union– was willing to supply arms to the beleaguered Republic, and the political cost of this, as Orwell points out, was extremely high.

The Soviet government and its political arm, the Communist International, believed that all else had to be sacrificed in order to make common cause with all those opposed to fascism, even the bourgeoisie. This was the policy of the popular front.

Apart from the Trotskyists, Orwell is virtually alone in exposing the inconsistencies of this position, which required the sacrifice of independent working class action in order to keep bourgeois allies.

Orwell is full of enthusiasm for the revolution fervour of the anarchist influenced working class and peasantry of Catalonia. They were not hampered by the niceties of the Popular Front in establishing workers' control over Barcelona, purging the reactionary clergy, and setting up their own militias with elected officers.

vivid

His description of the human detail of workers' capacity for self-organisation is vivid and fascinating: the disappearance of servility and tipping; the atmosphere of co-operation; and the ability to resolve disputes through discussion rather than authority and fear.

Orwell's account of the downfall of the revolutionary movement is equally vivid and instructive. The Communist Party of Spain united with all non-revolutionary forces in order to defeat Franco militarily.

This required reversing land reforms in order to appease the wealthier peasants, and restoring the regular army with its hierarchy of command in order to conciliate the officer corps.

One can sympathise with Orwell's increasing pessimism about the prospects of socialism as the Spanish Communist Party launches a vicious campaign against the "saboteurs", "provocateurs" and "spies" – that is, its left-wing opponents, all of whom are included in the term "Trotsky-fascists".

Members of left-wing organisations might be at the front fighting fascism while their political leaders were being shot at by the police as fascists back in Barcelona.

Unfortunately, Orwell did not pursue the implications of these events for his vision of an independent socialism.

To some extent one can even detect an embarrassment that he has written so much about politics, as when he invites his reader to skip the chapter where he analyses the class forces at work in the Popular Front.

He is at his best when examining the morality and humanity of political decisions, or when denouncing the dishonesty of those who sought to conceal the crimes of the Communist Parties.

S.A Education Under Attack

EDUCATION in South *Australia is undergoing its most serious attack.*

The government's cutbacks in educational services have already led to sackings and little employment for newly-qualified teachers.

For the first time since the Depression teachers are being issued with redundancy notices. At least 100 kindergarten teachers and teacher-aids are being laid-off.

This is the government's reply to the national teachers' union drive for smaller class sizes. Not only has the government ceased to employ all qualified teachers, they have now started to sack existing teachers.

Proposals have already been accepted for the amalgamation of tertiary institutions within South Australia.

This thriftiness by the government assumes that there is already an over-supply of teachers, but there are still overcrowded class-rooms.

refuses

The government refuses to pay out more money in terms of wages and facilities. Instead they build cheaper open-space schools without properly training staff to use open-plan concepts.

The rationalization of teacher-training course will worsen this situation further.

The government is perpetuating the myth that there is an acceptable teacher-student ratio in schools. The Australian Teachers' Federation has recommended a ratio of 25:1, but there are many classes of 30 or more students.

The government's action hides the true situation because it includes such people as principals, deputies and other non-class-room staff.

The government is cutting its own throat and that of students. Children are legally required to attend school yet the educational services they receive are continually regressing.

Miranda Carr
Grace La Pott
Ngairie Jackson.

A WIN AND A LOSS

Janine Marshall

The Janine Marshall Case

LIBRARY worker Janine Marshall, who was sacked by Rockhampton Mayor Rex Pilbeam when she married last year, has lost her court battle to get reinstatement.

The Arbitration Full Bench admitted that Janine's sacking was "clearly discriminatory".

But then the judges ruled it was "highly undesirable" to make the sacking illegal. After all, they argued, it was legal at the time it happened . . . even though it contravened Federal Government anti-discrimination policy dating back to 1973!

Janine's court case did bring about one important gain, however.

The judges agreed to change the Queensland MOA award to outlaw any discrimination in sacking *"on the basis of sex, other than . . . based on the inherent requirements of a particular job."*

Janine told the Battler, *"I'm glad they put that thing in the award, but I'm disappointed about my job.*

"I had pretty high hopes of getting my job back."

Janine's workmates at Rockhampton supported her court challenge. *"They were hoping I'd win it. There's girls there getting married who would be in the same position as me.*

"A couple of girls in Bundaberg were also in the same position. The council was advised not to do anything till after the Commission case.

pigheaded

"Pilbeam was advised too. But he just went ahead. He's so pigheaded — all for the single girl."

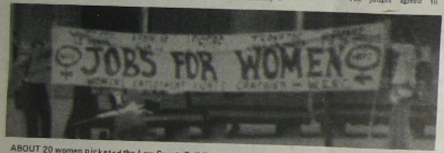
The change in the award will make it harder for sexist employers like Pilbeam. But there are still loopholes.

For example, the ruling bans sacking on the basis of sex — but not marriage. An employer with smart lawyers can argue, *"I didn't sack her because she was a woman, but because she was married."*

And employers always use the old trick of reclassifying jobs to "ease out" married women. Rank-and-file action will still be the only sure defence of married women's employment.

All the same, the change in the MOA award is an important precedent.

We now have to make sure all our unions push for similar changes made to all awards as soon as possible. The Arbitration ruling against Janine shows they won't even think about protecting victimized workers until we get the awards fixed up.



ABOUT 20 women picketed the Law Courts Building in Sydney on Monday April 24th.

They handed out leaflets protesting at the sacking of married women.

Inside the court, the Arbitration Commission handed down judgement in the case of Janine Marshall who was sacked from Rockhampton Public Library because she got married.

The judgement was good news for the future, because the court ruled that people cannot be sacked just for getting married.

But the ruling does not affect past cases — so Janine Marshall has not yet got her job back.

FIREMEN HURT

TWO firemen suffered internal bleeding after a plastic factory fire at St Peters in Sydney several weeks ago.

Another three were admitted to hospital with internal troubles. All the 194 firemen involved had medical tests after inhaling poisonous fumes the plastic gave off.

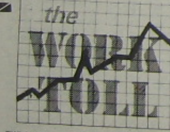
Since then there have been two more fires at plastic factories and several more firemen hospitalized.

If the firemen were supplied with adequate breathing equipment these injuries could have been prevented. Recently the employers were forced to agree to buy equipment, but they didn't say when.

It could take months because the equipment comes from overseas and orders haven't yet been placed.

Meanwhile, many more firemen's lives will be endangered because of the employers' slack approach to safety.

by Mick Segreto



ROBERT ASHTON was just 20 years old when he was killed by Hamersley Iron Company at Mt Tom Price on 31 January.

He died from pheumonia 10 days after he was drenched when a valve on a water line blew out at the mine. His supervisors had refused his request to go home for a change of clothes.

On 8 April 480 mine workers struck over his death demanding that the company give a written undertaking that such an event will never arise again; severe disciplinary measures against the supervisors; and that the company pay all the burial expenses.

A fitter working with Robert Ashton was also drenched. He was not allowed to change and was off work for three days with a chill in his kidneys.

The area in which they were working is known as "Death Valley" because of the dust.

There wasn't even an inquest. The coroner didn't consider an inquest was necessary.

It's only a worker's life. What does that compare to the price of iron on the world market?

▲▽

THE LAST edition of the Battler carried a story of the Melbourne City Council power workers being exposed to asbestos dust from decaying lagging.

We have just learnt that the blue bloods of the council have known for 15 years of the dangers of asbestos.

▲▽

BUILDING workers at the Quantas site in Sydney have won their fight for a safe lift.

A few weeks ago several workers were trapped in a lift for half an hour in a "blind" section of the lift shaft with no exits for several floors.

It didn't have proper ventilation or any telephone link to the outside world.

The men were coming down from the last shift. They were saved from spending the night trapped when a fellow worker came back for something and noticed their gear still in the huts.

The lift normally carried 15 men but the delegates told the supervisors that only 10 would go until it was made safe.

When the supervisor threatened to sack those who refused to go more than 10 in the lift the men said they would all walk up the 23 floors to work.

The lift now has air conditioning and a telephone.

▲▽

HAS YOUR boss told you recently how those high worker compensation premiums are breaking him?

The premiums are high but all the moaning and bickering only comes to a matter of accountancy for many bosses, especially big builders.

The latest figures available for Victoria (1973-74 — that's right, the latest figures are 4 years old) show that $118 million was paid in premiums. Only $78 million was paid out in workers compensation.

That means the insurance companies had at least $40 million to play with like building useless multi-storey office blocks which remain empty.

So if you're a BL — working in an industry where bosses are notorious for unsafe practices — the boss might be paying high compensation premiums to insurance companies, risking your life, and picking up the tab from the very same insurance company for another useless office block.

Whichever way you look at it there is nothing in workers compensation for the worker. What good is a few thousand dollars if you're crippled and can't enjoy it?

We need to make the work place safe. And that means making the boss pay in real money and not compo "monopoly" dollars.

by Steve Morgan

Fairfax Sack

JOHN Fairfax have invented a new phrase for standing down workers.

On Monday April 24th six PKIU members were "put off pay."

The workers had refused to operate visual display terminals because the company were suggesting too low a rate for the work.

The printers had agreed to operate VDT on a trial basis, on the understanding that they could refuse the work if the company didn't fix a suitable rate.

Don Paget, father of the chapel at Fairfax, said that the company were probably trying to engineer a stoppage for the Anzac day holiday.

So PKIU members collected money for the ... stood down and waited ... Wednesday to hold ... stoppage.

Journalists at Fairfax maintained their ... record, and helped ... labour bring out the ... — even though they have their own bans on VDT's at the moment.

But the strike still ... ed the Sun for about ... hours. The six workers ... reinstated as a result of the strike, and the PKIU ... a court order to get back their lost wages.

On Friday, the ... ruled in the workers' fa...

Tradesmen want Equality

HOSPITAL tradesmen in NSW are fighting to get equal pay with other tradesmen.

They are also having to watch that their union doesn't land them in an even more isolated position.

At the moment hospital tradesmen are covered by three different awards.

The trade union officials following the Health Commission, want to negotiate one consolidated award.

But some rank and file members aren't keen on that: *"It would isolate us even further"* said Hal Alexander, ETU member at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. *"We would be under an award for hospital tradesmen only.*

"Ideally all hospital employees should be in one union. But consolidation of the award would only do this — it can only be won by rank and file job action.

"As far as we're concerned, the present action is for a wage increase within existing structures."

The tradesmen have held a series of stop work meetings recently, in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong and are awaiting the outcome of a conference with the Minister of Health, Kevin Stewart.

Botany Bay FIGHTING A DIRTY JOB

THE Botany Bay (NSW) development project was already controversial.

And now that construction has started, the workers are finding that wages and conditions at the Leighton's Christiani site leave a lot to be desired.

strikes

In the last three weeks there has been a series of strikes involving crane drivers, labourers and carpenters.

First the crane drivers went out. They were being paid at different rates, depending on the particular job they were working on.

After several days, management caved in and now all are on the top wage.

Meanwhile, members of the AWU and BWIU had been stood down, with only 1 hour's notice.

Angrily, they held stop-work meetings and demanded 24 hour stand-down notice, and payment for time lost during the stand-down.

As one worker put it, *"The bosses want to have everything their own way. But we think things should go our way sometimes."*

won

The workers won the 24-hour stand-down notice, but still struck for a week for the lost-time pay. *"It's not so much the money, it's the principle of the thing,"* said one workers.

Most workers also saw this strike as a blow in their ongoing struggles.

AWU members are fighting for wet weather money, which all the other workers on the site already get. And the carpenters are going for dirt money: *"Its a very dirty job. Sometimes we have to work all day in 6" of water."*

The workers at the Leighton's site are militant. There have already been several strikes this year, including one over victimization. Their main problem is lack of over-all unity.

There are 5 different unions and no site committee. Even members of the AWU and BWIU, supposedly the one union now, meet and vote separately.

BWIU members had special trouble during this struggle.

Several workers told the Battler of the trouble they had with the union organiser when they wanted to stay out longer for the lost-time payment.

fascists

"He called us fascists, he's the one who's a fascist. An organiser like that is worse than useless.

"At night he's out wining and dining with the bosses. Then in the day time he's pretending to represent us.

"How can you win like that?"

PM WORKERS DEMAND $9.70

STOREMEN and Packers at the Philip Morris factory in Cheltenham (Vic) are trying to break through the indexation guidelines.

For two weeks they have been on strike over a $9.70 claim to catchup losses from partial indexation. About 1,500 tobacco workers are stood down.

dirty

But there appears to be some dirty dealing behind the scenes amongst the unions involved.

Philip Morris has taken the storeman and packers to arbitration to try to get a bans clause inserted in the award and also have the storemens work reclassified to tobacco workers.

The 19 striking storemen work in the bonds store where cigarettes are held before distribution to wholesalers.

John Karadeas, AMWSU maintenance shop steward at Philip Morris told The Battler that the tobacco workers were stood down because there is a standown clause in their award.

He said that there was talk of standing down the maintenance workers but the company backed off because they've got a claim in, and it didn't want two fights at the same time.

Also the company knows only too well that it was the leadership of the maintenance workers that won a big combined strike two years ago.

John said the Tobacco Workers Union is company run. *"It's not a regular union. The company is paying all expenses to get the union registered (in arbitration) and it has put the idea into the tobacco union secretary (Ron Dore) that the storemen work could be reclassified for his members."*

sweetheart

The tobacco union is trying for a few extra jobs and a sweet-heart deal with its paymaster, Philip Morris.

ALL THE NEWS ON THE BLF ELECTIONS

WHY THE BALLOT STINKS

AT the demo on Thursday, Noel Olive said the NSW BLF ballot "smelt like rotten fish". And he's not far wrong.

Here are just a few examples.

1 BLF members were supplied with three different membership figures for the NSW branch:

2,900 — state returning officer

2,400 — federal returning officer

4,500 — acting secretary Black.

We still don't know who are the members.

2 Dozens of financial members are missing off the membership lists.

3 Democratic Control candidate for scrutineer, Mick Ross, is missing off life members list.

4 State returning officer, Ferguson, refused to allow us to take branch lists out of Trades Hall for photocopying even in his presence.

In the end, we carried a photocopier into the union office and copied the lists there.

5 Some names in the list have no known address.

6 Sean Cody, NSW BLF Organiser, has been visiting jobs and telling migrant workers to bring their unmarked ballot papers to work and he would "fix them up."

He tried this on the Concrete Constructions site at Bondi. The workers told him what to do with the idea.

7 Union resources and money from interstate branches are being used in the campaign by Black and his team.

8 Fifty names were added to the state list on the eve of the election.

Queensland for Rix

RANK-AND-FILE group members in the Queensland BLF are using Brian Rix's campaign to build their own organization as well.

Brian Johanson, a member of the rank-and-file group, said that when Brian Rix was in Queensland, *"We took him round and introduced him to blokes in Brisbane.*

"We didn't take him on job-sites — there's no job-sites in

"We didn't take him on job-sites — there's no job-sites in Brisbane to take him onto.

"We took him to the Gold Coast where we've got about 8 jobs. He went very well — no opposition at all."

Five rank-and-file group members have been campaigning for Rix in Brisbane, and three on the Gold Coast. The work is widening the rank-and-file group's support.

"Even blokes who were opposed to us, have turned around and given us money," Brian Johanson said.

"If we get a good turnout this time, when it's a direct election for federal secretary, we might get away from the collegiate system.

"In our campaign we're not attacking Gallagher for other than his mismanagement of the $30 campaign and the 35 hour week campaign.

"Our main thing against him is he didn't campaign democratically. He didn't give the blokes the chance to decide."

IN THE BATTLER EVERY FORTNIGHT

A BAD WEEK FOR SMORGONS

by
Ian Rentoul

IT hasn't been a good week for the management of SCI Meat and Paper at Smorgon's Dinmore meatworks.

They even lost the Commission hearing they called, after workers there voted to continue their stoppage in protest at the company's high handed manner of dealing with their claims.

The dispute centred around a manning agreement in one of the departments of the meatworks, the offal room. According to a 1971 agreement, there should have been six more people working there.

But the company since decided that they weren't needed. So for the last two years the gut floor has tried to get a manning done with zero co-operation from the company.

They wouldn't even hold a conference. The shed had to go home for 1½ days to even get this. But sure enough, the union official was there Monday morning to do the manning.

He didn't stay long. He had forgotten a lot of the material he needed for the job. Things like task descriptions and said he couldn't get back for ten days.

The company in the meantime flatly refused to put any more labour on the gut floor and threatened to stand the offal room down while keeping the rest of the shed going, sending all the offal straight to the by-products.

At the mass meeting, the workers from the offal room were adamant that the only way to get cooperation from the company was to take action.

refused

Even when the manning official appeared sooner than expected, no doubt as a result of the turn of events, the manager refused to consider the format for the manning, was only going to put up a handful of boners, wanted to pick and choose his labour for the day and refused to talk about payment for the Anzac Day holiday until work was resumed.

The workers were angry at his attitude in dealing with their conditions. The industrial officer had even sacked workers in one department for refusing to do more than their normal cleaning up.

At an earlier meeting, the union officials had been urging a return to work as a way to get cooperation from the management.

The vote decided that there were only four against staying out. The officials even threatened that setting up a picket was illegal, and could cost us up to $250,000 in fines, and it ought to be considered that their permission was needed and so on.

Fighting the sack at A&R

FRIDAY night shoppers at Angus and Robertson's bookstore in Melbourne were confronted by a picket last week.

The picketers were protesting about the unfair sacking of three women last week.

Susie Williams, one of the sacked women, said that a new manager had recently been appointed and he was trying to prove his worth to the Sydney head office by putting "the broom" through the staff.

A part-time worker was laid off first. She was told that A & R "couldn't afford to keep her on." She was replaced that night.

A few days later another woman was told to go. Her replacement had been hired that morning and the same happened to the third woman.

The new manager told Susie she wasn't working hard enough. When the union came down he refused to re-employ her, but said that they would give her a good reference.

A & R are reknown for their "good" staff relations and ability to rip off customers by overcharging as much as 50 per cent on books.

NSW Campaign moves into top gear

THE elections in the NSW BLF have been postponed to allow for an investigation of the ballot by the Federal Court.

We took this action after the ballot started to look more bodgie every day.

The last straw was on the Friday before the ballot was due to begin, when 50 new names suddenly appeared on the membership list.

On Thursday 27th April we fronted the BLF officials in a demo outside the court. We were calling for a clean ballot and for the rank and file to throw Black and Co. out.

The BLF officials had called their own demo, but we had them well outnumbered with supporters of BLs for Democratic Control.

Our chants of "Sack Black! Sack Black!" drowned out his speech through a megaphone. We were pretty pleased with our turn out as we only had time to visit three jobs that morning.

On the other hand the BLF officials had done a big job trying to round up supporters.

They visited every job in the city and, as usual, lied to them. The blokes that agreed to come with them were dragged under the pretence that police had arrested union officials.

When unelected BLF "organiser" Sean Cody went to the Reserve Bank job, he told the workers that the cops were going to arrest union officials, and that this was not related to the elections.

discovered

Its not surprising that when the workers got to the Court and discovered what was going on, they took no part in the demo supporting Black and the officials.

Although the election has been held up, we are continuing our campaign. We are bringing out new leaflets in several languages, putting up posters and, most important, keeping up job meetings and visits.

The officials are concentrating nearly all their attention on the Westmead Hospital site, the biggest in Sydney. After the demo on Thursday morning, they sent no less than seven officials to Westmead.

The workers on site gave Black a hard time, especially when he knocked back a challenge to a public debate with Noel Olive.

the battler

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

INSIDE

*OLD BL'S FOR RIX.

*WHY THE BALLOT ST[…]

PAGE 11

Builders Labourers

WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE RANK & FILE

NOEL Olive is candidate for NSW Secretary, on the B.L.'s for Democratic Control programme.

He says that unemployment among B.Ls is one of the important areas to fight in.

"The building industry has been decimated as far as jobs go, and the union needs to do something about it.

"But the union officials don't even have a register of our members.

"The long service leave fund should be used selectively for public works building. That is, building for councils — not private companies."

Like other rank and file candidates, Noel is very critical of the present leadership.

"They initiated the campaign for a 2% increase without even consulting members.

"They got some jobs active. Then after 6 to 8 weeks they called a mass meeting to endorse it.

"Workers never had the chance to discuss when we should go into the campaign and what we should be campaigning about."

BRIAN Rix, candidate for Federal Secretary, sees democracy in the union as the major election issue.

"There should be more say for the rank and file in campaigns.

"This came up especially in the last campaign, which cost us money.

"We lost money from the actions that we got involved in, and we lost money in back pay."

He is also very critical of the top-heavy bureaucracy in the BLF at present. They have taken on 3 extra organisers for the elections, making a total of 9 organisers, only 4 of whom were elected.

And this is at a time of a drop in union membership, partly due to the recession in the industry, but also due to mismanagement by the union leadership.

Not that the leadership seem very clear on what the union membership is at the moment. "But if it is 2,900 then somebody's not doing their job."

Voting in the Federal Election starts May 4.

DUNCAN Williams is a rank and file candidate for organiser.

He is angered by the lack of gains made by the State branch: "With the state branch, we have had to fight even for normal gains like flow on from indexation.

"The leadership have mucked up even run of the mill things.

"They haven't even co-ordinated the industry on a company basis. We should be unified so that, say, one guy at Concretes knows whats happening at another Concretes job.

"But, for example, the strike at Berrima was well and truly under way before we knew anything about it."

Body hire, especially with high unemployment, has meant a general breakdown in conditions.

"I'll see guys that I've worked with 10 years on different sites. Now there are only 2 or so on a job. The rest are just body-hire.

"We have to make a concerted effort around that. There was no such thing 15 years ago."

Gallagher's lies exposed

NORM Gallagher's solicitor finally chickened out in the Industrial Court a few weeks ago.

Marcus Einfeld (son of Syd Einfeld), told the court that the Gallagher leadership had never alleged that Joe Owens and others had used any union money for their purposes.

So much for the slanders that the Gallagher mob have been putting round for the last three years.

Their major accusation was that the old BL leadership in NSW had stolen money from the union. None of their charges have ever been proved.

In fact, the court hearings provided some proof the other way, when Gallagher had a special audit report produced by Coopers and Lybrand.

The report was produced in court — and showed that no money had been stolen.

won

Joe Owens, Bob Pringle and Jack Mandey have now won the court case to get their BLF tickets back. The union leadership still won't let them in.

When they went down to the union office, they were told that the matter had to be discussed by the union's federal committee.

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Beware the Courts!

WHAT WE THINK

THE BL's for Democratic Control have asked for a court investigation of the ballot in NSW. The result may be a court controlled ballot.

Under the circumstances, a court ballot is likely to be much fairer than a ballot run by the Gallagher forces. But that is not to say there are no dangers involved in court ballots.

machine

The courts are an arm of the capitalist state machine — the same institutions which jailed Clarrie O'Shea, and indeed the same institutions which Gallagher used to help smash the NSW branch of the BLF some years ago.

While it may be necessary to use the courts in some situations, it is still a dicey business, for once they stick their noses into union affairs they can do a lot of damage.

Nor are court ballots necessarily fair ballots. In 1949, for instance, right-winger Laurie Short got a court investigation of an FIA election. The court promptly installed him as FIA National Secretary *before investigating anything.* The judge then found 1951 allegedly faked ballots, and threw out left wingers elected with majorities of over 3500.

In the same year, a Grouper named Dobson tried to interfere with postal ballots through a contact at Rose Bay Post Office.

In the NSW Boilermakers Society in 1950, a court ballot was ordered by Justice Dunphy. There was no check on the number of papers printed, and scrutineers were allowed only at the final count. Names and addresses of all members were made available, and Groupers collected ballot papers from members' homes and filled them in en masse.

The following year, a court ballot was held in the Railways' Union. The ARU ran its own check ballot. In the check ballot, left wingers Browns and Williams won by 10 to 1 majorities. In the court ballot, Brown scraped in and Williams lost. In Rolling Stock [...] return of ballots wa[s] *100 percent.*

In more recent [...] there was consistent [...]ference in court ball[ots...] the NCC in the AEU [...] the Boilermakers' Soci[ety...] one Boilermakers' [...] ballot, a whole bag of [...] papers was "lost", [...] return would have [...] 103% with this bagful.

At another time, [...] pretending to act for [...] electoral office coll[...] AEU ballots from voters.

It may sometimes [...] useful tactic to use [...] courts, if you are faced [...] scandalous ballot-rigg[ing] from an entrenched [...]cracy. But the BLs [for] Democratic Control sho[uld] certainly go into any [...] ballot with their eyes open.

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the battler

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

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INSIDE The Chrysler Disaster.

25 MAY 1978 VICTORIA

warmonger..... imperialist.... racist..... union-basher....

MENZIES: WE'RE GLAD TO SEE YOU GO

by DAVE NADEL

NOW that he is dead, they are all saying wonderful things about him.

In those massive obituaries, the daily papers are telling us that Bob Menzies was a great statesman, a great democrat and a great leader.

It's a wonder they didn't try to tell us he was a great soldier. In fact, Menzies' military career was spoilt by the outbreak of World War 1. He had been a member of the Melbourne University Regiment but resigned before it was sent overseas.

conscription

This did not stop Menzies supporting the conscription of others during the war. Nor did it stop him introducing conscription nearly fifty years later when he was Prime Minister.

As a politician he was remarkably peace-loving and co-operative when it came to dealing with right-wing dictatorships. His nickname, "Pig-Iron Bob" came from his determination to sell pig iron to the Japanese during the late thirties; iron the Japanese gratefully returned in the form of bombs a few years later.

Menzies was also a strong supporter of appeasement towards fascist Germany and Italy before World War II. By the 1950's, he had lost his distaste for war. He had no qualms about committing Australian troops to fight in Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam.

As a "great statesman" some of his finest hours were his totally unsuccessful attempt in 1956 to keep the Suez safe for world imperialism; his similarly unsuccessful attempt to keep South Africa in the Commonwealth *('Apartheid,* said Menzies, *'is South Africa's internal affair with which outsiders should not interfere.');* and his attempt, also unsuccessful, to attack Nehru at the United Nations.

The greatest obscenity about the Menzies obituaries is their attempt to depict "Ming the Merciless" as a great democrat.

This great democrat tried to outlaw the Communist Party in 1951 and was only stopped by a referendum in which the Australian people voted against his Communist Party Dissolution Act.

Menzies, the great democrat, also introduced the Crimes Act Amendments in 1960, which were the greatest peace-time attack on civil liberties and the rights of trade unionists ever made by a Federal Government.

lose

In 1954 when the great democrat seemed likely to lose an election, he produced a Russian defector (Petrov) whom ASIO had had on tap for at least six months, and amidst a stream of hysterical redbaiting, mostly aimed at the Labor Party, secured re-election.

After the election, a Royal Commission found no evidence to back up the Liberals' hysteria. But by then, the great democrat was back in office.

As a great leader, Menzies failed even by his own standards of loyal service to the bosses. He presided over a long period of boom and prosperity that he and his government did nothing to initiate. A lot of people now look back nostalgically to the Menzies years as a period of full employment and rising wages.

In fact, Menzies deserves no credit for this. The boom was largely imported and actually ran more smoothly in most other capitalist countries because government regulation was more consistent. Menzies managed to disrupt the Australian boom with a credit squeeze and recession in 1961.

Similarly, most of the few developments that came to fruition during Menzies long reign, such as expansion of tertiary education, the Snowy Mountains Scheme and the mass-immigration program were all planned and started by the Chifley Labor government.

actor

In fact, Menzies really had only one significant ability. He was a great actor. He was particularly good at acting like a statesman and a leader during campaigns without actually being either. He also had the ability to look clean while fighting dirty.

Perhaps the best epitaph for Menzies would be from Eddie Ward, one of his most bitter parliamentary opponents. In a speech made in 1944, Ward called Menzies *"This posturing individual with the scowl of Mussolini, the bombast of Hitler and the physical proportions of Goering."*

Ward was too kind.

between the lines

"THERE'S as much chance of a reactor accident as of two jumbo jets colliding."

That's what one uranium producer said in February last year. Reassuring, isn't it.

Five months later, two Jumbo jets did collide at Tenerife in the Canary Islands.

REMINDS us of that great humanitarian, Sir Phillip Baxter. He's head of the Atomic Energy Commission and virtually a mouthpiece for the uranium producers.

It seems he's losing faith in them. He's now calling for Australia to develop chemical and biological weapons for our defence. Better than nuclear weapons, he says.

□□

VICTORIA'S most astute politician would have to be Vance Dickie, the Chief Secretary. Having survived the Lands Deal Inquiry, where it was alleged he was bribed $20,000 and later said he'd do it all again, he's off on a trip.

No doubt he needs a break from the hard work of doing nicely. So he's going overseas, to West Germany, Finland, Britain and Norway to study "road safety."

All but one of the countries he's visiting have higher fatality rates than Australia and all have higher injury rates.

We're sure he'll learn a lot.

□□

THE monarchy represents everything "good and noble" about our society, something we can look up to.

That, no doubt, accounts for Prince Philip. He was invited to open a dome-shaped sports complex at a girl's school in Britain. At the ceremony he said:

"I cannot help feeling that sooner or later the school ought to have a pair of them."

□□

BUT that's not as bad as Judge Robert K. Richardson in Hawaii. He dismissed a rape charge against a motorist who knocked down a woman jogger and raped her.

The judge dismissed the charge because he believed that the woman, who was dazed after the accident, "did not put up enough resistance."

□□

I'M furious. And it's all because I've been upstaged. I can't give the Battler Plastic Straw this issue because it's already been done.

And by no lesser person than Fred Longbottom, head of the NSW Special Branch for 15 years, up to 1973.

He got up at a business lunch in Ryde last week and handed out bouquets to:

— Pat Clancy from the BWIU and a member of the Moscow line Socialist Party of Australia.

— Elliot V Elliot from the Seaman's Union and SPA.

— Jack Mundey, formerly of the NSW BLF, the Communist Party and

— the late Jim Healy of the Wharfies Union, also from the Communist Party.

Inspector Fred Bigbum said that these four exemplary communists were the best he had ever dealt with in arranging police supervision of demonstrations.

"If they gave their word on something, they would abide by it and keep things under control."

Darth Vader

ALDO MORO'S LEGACY

Corrupt and right-wing government

THE execution of former Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro by the Red Brigades has only succeeded in turning him into a martyr.

It has also been used as a pretext for large scale round ups of Italian revolutionaries by the police.

The tactics of the Red Brigades, full scale war against the state, with little or no popular support, are all wrong. But the explanation for their activities lies in the problems of Italian society.

In the Italian city of Naples for example, there are 150,000 people unemployed, out of a total population of 1 million.

There are 800,000 students using buildings and resources designed for less than 400,000. There are nearly 50,000 students studying architecture but jobs for less than 3,000 architects.

In Milan, the city government doesn't have the money to build 40,000 desperately needed housing units.

In southern Italy, where poverty and unemployment are at their worst, promises of regional development have instead produced giant steel, auto and engineering projects which have no markets and import skilled workers from the north.

short-cut

In the absence of a fight-back by any of the parties of the left, and especially the Communist Party, it is not surprising that some seek short-cuts to change, through terrorism.

And we shouldn't get too sentimental about the death of a man like Moro. Far from being the popular figure now presented to us in the press and on TV, Moro led some of the most criminally inefficient, corrupt and viciously anti-working class governments in Italy's history.

Most recently, Moro was prime minister until the elections in 1976. It was under his government that the Italian lira fell in value by 33%, while food prices shot up and unemployment reached 1,300,000.

We can only guess at the numbers dead, directly and indirectly from these sort of conditions.

It was under the Moro government that some of the biggest stories of government corruption were uncovered — like that of Christian Democratic ministers lining their pockets with bribes from the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation in return for guaranteed deals.

At the same time, his government had the cheek to demand 'sacrifices' from the working class, in order to overcome the economic crisis.

signatures

Finally, it was against the Moro government that 800,000 signatures were collected in support of a referendum to change Italy's anti-abortion laws. Opinion polls at the time indicated that the pro-abortionists would win.

But Moro refused to [illegible] a referendum and [illegible] election instead. A [illegible] of this ploy, Italy's abortion laws have still not been satisfactorily changed.

So let's not spend too much time weeping over Aldo Moro. He took more than his share of people with him to the grave.

Instead let's give a little thought to the hundreds of thousands of ordinary people who suffer every day from capitalism's crisis in Italy, and for whom Moro did so little when he was alive.

THE SCANDAL THE PAPERS IGNORED

by Janet Vaux

THE gutter press is delighted.

Cops in NSW have given them yet another chance to humiliate and abuse migrants, by arresting 200 Greek people over an alleged "pensions racket."

But what the press conveniently forgot to tell us was how the police got their arrests. And how they've victimised the people concerned.

The press "implied" that the 200 people must all automatically be guilty and that they were all in it together. In fact, the truth is that they have only been charged and nothing yet has been proved.

It's a lot different to the way they treat coppers who are charged with offences against the public.

First, the people were charged with conspiracy under the Commonwealth Crimes Act and their pensions were suspended.

They were denied rights given to them under the Social Security Act. These include a three year limit on charges.

In this case, a lot of the charges go back seven years to 1971.

Another 500 people had their pensions suspended before the Department of Social Security had arranged for an interview and a review of their eligibility. This is contrary to the Department's regulations.

And it wasn't the result of some "fair and thorough" investigation. The cops picked on

— people whose names were Greek

— people who had changed doctors

— people who had had certain illnesses, mostly psychiatric illness.

Some of the pensioners then had a lot of trouble when they went to other doctors to get certificates. The new doctors didn't want to get involved.

So these people can't get sickness benefits because they can't get certificates saying they are unfit for work.

And they can't get unemployment benefits because the Department of Social Security is demanding certificates saying they ARE fit for work!

The cops involved acted in their usual thoughtful and considerate way. They didn't bother with search warrants. They either bluffed or barged their way into houses.

One man was photographed in a police station carrying a card with the word "Greek" on it.

There were no independent interpreters; just interpreters from the police or Social Security. This is also against their own regulations.

Bail was set at $1,000.

They bluffed or barged their way in

REVENGE AGAINST SEXISM

WOMEN in Adelaide are reacting to the sexism of employers.

Recently a group of women took revenge on a local book publisher who had attacked a woman when she went for a job interview.

The employer, Oscar Wallace, had told the woman to be at his office at 4.30. This is when the office workers finish work.

When she went inside the office he locked the door, stripped, and proceeded to assault her for one hour.

The women is not inclined to take legal action because there were no witnesses; she was obviously set up by Wallace. But the onus would be on her to prove the case and she would *undoubtedly* be accused of tempting the employer.

desperate

After all, why did she go to his office after hours? The fact that she (like many others) is desperate for a job and is willing to go out of her way to get one would be misconstrued by the court.

This is why one group of women decided to get back at the employer on their own ground. A midnight spraypainting raid on his warehouse was the first move.

Others are anonymous letters and phone calls. These will both intimidate Wallace personally and cost him money (to remove the slogans).

retribution

These women are no longer accepting the sexist behaviour of employers. Nor do they believe that the courts offer a working woman any retribution against sexist entrepreneurs.

After all, such men in our society are often good friends of the police and the judges.

by Ngaire Jackson

What's my naughty nephew been up to, hmm?

AT Repco, one of Australia's largest companies, capitalism is alive and flourishing.

Last January, David McGrath, joint Manging Director and nephew of chairman Sir Charles McGrath sold 5,000 of his Repco shares at $1-13 and another 5,000 at $1-20 yielding him more than $11,000.

Three weeks later Repco announced a 23.4% slump in net profit for the December half; their first ever drop in profit.

In March, Repco bosses in all their factories and work-places announced that the company had to look at ways of "cutting costs". To date, the way they have cut costs is to sack 140 workers in Melbourne alone and to reduce their workforce even futher through "natural" wastage.

The outcome of these and further retrenchments, combined with Fraser's attack on wages through the Arbitration Commission will be that Repco will probably announce a rise in profit in its next half-yearly report.

No doubt our friend McGrath will eventually buy back his 10,000 shares in Repco. It's a safe bet that his transaction will take place, co-incidentally, three weeks before the next report is released.

REPCO boss Sir Charles McGrath

HAMER'S RIGHT TO SCAB THREAT

by Alec Kahn

VICTORIAN Premier Dick Hamer is following in Bjelke-Petersen's footsteps.

He's introducing "right-to-work" legislation to protect scabs, and break up closed shops.

The legislation fines unions $400 a day for any strike action taken against scabs protected by a "certificate of exemption".

To get a certificate, scabs have to pay the equivalent of the union dues to the Government.

Any union that takes action after scabs have done this will then have the onus of proof on it — in other words, the union will be assumed guilty till it proves its innocence.

grubs

By making the scabs pay the union dues to the Government, the legislation does not protect the grubs who stay out of unions to save money.

That will be the next step. But for the moment, Hamer and his Minister for Labour and Industry Ian McLennan just want to protect the conscious, right-wing scabs like Frank Kane and Paul Krutulis, who make a premeditated attempt to break up closed shops.

The danger of "right-to-work" legislation can be seen in the US. The nineteen states there with right-to-work laws have the lowest wage rates in the country.

For example, the average rate of hourly pay in manufacturing for the whole country in 1975 was $4.81. But in "right-to-work" states it was: Florida $4.04, Virginia $3.99, Tennessee $3.92, Georgia $3.88, South Carolina $3.59, Mississippi $3.55, North Carolina $3.51.

deadly

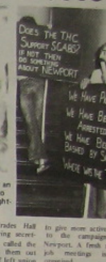
In South Carolina, union membership is only 8 per cent of the workforce, so deadly have the right-to-work laws been. In Michigan with no "right-to-work" laws, 38 per cent of workers were unionized and average hourly pay was $6.15 in manufacturing.

The Victorian Trades Hall Council has rightly condemned Hamer's legislation. But disturbingly, they are prepared to exempt people with "conscientious religious objections" from compulsory unionism.

We can't see why they should. After all nobody has any conscientious religious objections to accepting all the money and conditions that unions have won.

And it doesn't matter whether your objections are religious, political or financial — if you're not in a union, you don't just hurt yourself, but your workmates too: by undermining their ability to defend themselves.

By accepting "religious conscience" as grounds for exemption, the Trades Hall is playing right into Hamer's hands by legitimizing the whole idea of "conscience" as an excuse for scabbing.



Above - Cops pay an unwelcome visit to THC meeting. Right- Simon Marukic.

Newport struggle hots up

ANTI-NEWPORT protestor, Simon Marukic, was recently sentenced to 10 days jail for running over a cop's helmet in an anti-Newport demonstration.

He was released after 5 hours because of some obscure bureaucratic mixup. Since then, a personal friend has paid his fine. But it shows how far the Hamer government is prepared to go to stop opposition to the deadly power station in Melbourne's western suburbs.

Meanwhile, the anti-Newport movement has had a lift recently. Activists invaded the Trades Hall Council. Right-wing secretary, Ken Stone called the cops to throwm them out and a number of left union officials objected and walked out.

They are now beginning to give more active support to the campaign against Newport. A fresh round of job meetings is being organised.

If you want a speaker, phone Harry Van Moorst at work on 689-3400 or the I.S. on 335-2783.

I'M NOT LOADING URANIUM

10,000 people marched recently against the nuclear power station at Windscale in Britain. The anti-nuclear movement in Britain is growing in size and militancy. The British people don't want our uranium, we should stop Fraser exporting it.

Brisbane wharfie Bill Thomson talks to The Battler

BILL Thomson is a Brisbane wharfie who refuses to load containers of uranium.

"The control tower told me to pick up some container. When I got close I could see the radiation stickers and I radioed back that I wasn't going to touch them."

That started his problems.

ACTU and Waterside Workers Federation policy is to load uranium sold under existing contracts. But existing contracts last until 1986.

"The Federal Officials of the WWF told me that if I wasn't going to load the stuff I could get out of the federation."

In fact, none of the officials were prepared to give Bill much support.

"The branch officials were a bit better than that, they offered to move me from the container terminal to another wharf. But that wasn't solve the problem."

As well as having no effect at all on uranium exports, it would mean a drop of $6,000 a year in Bill's wages. But rank and file feeling against uranium is running high.

"Most of the gangs at the container terminal are against loading uranium but with ACTU policy the way it is, they feel there's nothing they can do."

Uranium shipments have been very heavily guarded by police. Whenever a shipment goes through Brisbane hundreds of police line the fence around the container terminal.

"The worst thing about it is that we're supposed to go to and from work through lines of police there to keep the demonstrators out.

"It wasn't so long ago that wharfies were being shot at by police and a lot of us still remember that."

We're going to have to organise to make sure individuals like Bill Thomson aren't able to be picked off and victimised.

In the meantime, there will be a lot of bitterness on the wharves over the ACTU and union position. As one wharfie put it,

"The ACTU has made hypocrites of us."

Adelaide CANE News

TRADE Unionists at Adelaide's Islington Railway Workshops have now set up their own branch of the Campaign Against Nuclear Energy.

After a recent lunchtime slide show by CANE, several decided to call a meeting to launch a group in the workshops.

Fifteen attended and elected an executive to plan activities in the works.

ADELAIDE Cane are at the moment discussing how to spend $2,500 that was given in a lump sum to the group some time ago.

Front runner in a number of ideas is a "Band Wagon". This will be a multi-media display, with video cassette screen and photographic display, that could be taken to shopping centres and to factory gates during lunch hours.

As well, $500 is likely to be ear-marked for helping newly established local groups with their initial costs.

If you're fighting for a democratic union...

In NSW Builders Labourers are fighting for control of their union. The officials, installed after the Gallagher intervention of 1974, have been beaten at branch meetings and fought on the most militant jobs. Yet they remain in power.

Now the BL's have the chance to elect a new leadership. And The Battler is right there, supporting their struggle and covering their campaign.

Whether you're a Builders Labourer, a meatworker or a public servant; wherever workers are fighting for militant and democratic unions, The Battler and the International Socialists are in there: reporting, organising and putting forward the socialist point of view.

The Battler is YOUR paper!

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME ...

ADDRESS ...

Postcode ...

PHONE NO. ...

TRADE UNION ...

Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, 3031

Leonid Plysch

If you think Russia is socialist, listen to this man..

Leonid Plysch is a distinguished Ukranian mathematician. He spent several years in Russian psychiatric institutions for his opposition to the regime. He was freed after an international protest movement demanded his release. Plysch recently visited Australia to gain support for Russian dissidents and the small independent trade union movement. He now lives in Paris with his family.

I HAVE a lot to say to sincere people who believe Russia is socialist.

I ask them to look at the distribution of wealth and income.

Lenin once wrote that the income differential between top and bottom should never be more than six to one. This was to pay the bourgeois specialists for their services until we got our own.

Now if you take a prominent politician in the Ukraine, what does he get by comparison with my mother, who is an agricultural worker? He gets 400 roubles a month whereas my mother gets 60. And he's far from being in the top salary range.

All the inhabitants of the major cities know of the existence of the secret shops for members of the bureaucracy. In these places, they can get all the products ordinary mortals can't.

The extent to which it goes on is amazing. Khruschev, for example, had 33 dachas. I was told this when Khruschev was sacked. I was a party activist at the time.

Outside Kiev there is, as everyone knows, a massive guarded wood where the top people hunt. Wild game is brought in.

There are special nurseries for the children of the privileged. My wife worked in the Ministry of Education department responsible for them.

protested

There are honest Communist Party Officials. One such was Ostachi in the west of the Ukraine. When he was offered the privileged shopping facilities, he protested. He ended up in prison for his efforts.

For Lenin, socialism in a political sense is a transitory society, whose selfcontradictions should be diminishing. The bureaucratic and police apparatus, for example, should be on the way out. The state should be being transformed into a voluntary association of collectives.

Throughout, the whole emphasis must be on democracy, the involvement of the masses in controlling their own lives. The dictatorship role that every state has should be beginning to vanish.

Yet even Khrushchev was forever harping on about the massive role of the police apparatus.

Take the laws regulating elections. You can cross all the names out and write in your own candidates. In theory this should allow some genuine elections.

But, in reality, this is quite useless unless you have some means of propaganda and counter propaganda, freedom to hold meetings, the ability to make use of printed matter.

Apart from the parts of the constitution which promise you rights, there is of course the clause about anti-Soviet propaganda.

And so any group of people who start to agitate in an organised fashion—even if that involves only crossing out the names of some candidates and writing in others—are branded as anti Soviet. They become liable to harsh punishment.

It is, therefore, hard to talk of the role of the working class, the intelligentsia and the peasantry in the elections.

AS YOU know, there are workers' strikes in the Soviet Union. There was the enormous Novocherkask uprising and others.

Yet nowhere in any of these risings did a trade union of any sort appear as defending the workers' interests. In the Soviet Union, the working class has no party and no other organisations which defend its interests.

Take the example of a collective farm. Its head is appointed by the local party official.

functionary

The workers play some part in choosing a section of the 'leadership'. But, in practice, the farm is controlled by the appointed functionary. There is, once again, this complete contradiction between theory and reality.

In some cases, the head of a collective farm will defend the interests of the workers. But every type of means will be used to have him ousted. And if the workers don't agree to this, he is simply removed without consultation.

This is what happened in the famous case of Ivan Yakimovitch. He had assisted in transforming a farm into a model collective. But when he declined to go along with local party directives, there was a huge campaign against him.

His protest against political trials was used to throw him out. And he ended up in a psychiatric hospital like myself.

WE have a mono-party state system which claims a monopoly on ideas, which are subject to the whims of a particular group or even of a particular individual at the top.

Then from the national point of view, socialism equals the right to the equal development of culture. Yet from the official point of view what you get is anti-Semitic propaganda or propaganda against the deported nations.

So the most obvious feature from this point of view is the growth of great state chauvinism, the absolute opposite of socialism.

In theory, too, you would expect a socialist state to support working class movements in the west. We know that under Stalin there was the pact with Hitler. We know that Kruschev was giving Nasser a 'Hero of the Soviet Union' medallion at the very time Nasser was putting socialists and communists in jail.

We can also see that Brezhnev keeps very good relations with the Iranian government and has never once interceded for any imprisoned socialist of any kind, not even Communist Party members.

HOW do I characterise the society that exists in the Soviet Union? After a long search, I have come to the conclusion that the most accurate characterisation, though not absolutely perfect, is state capitalism.

Lenin used this term to describe a situation that existed not very long after the revolution when power was still in the hands of the toilers.

When I use the term, I do not mean this, since in Russia today power in no sense is in the hands of the workers.

You have to examine who is the exploiting class. Who is doing the exploiting? Who controls the surplus.

Djilas (the Yugoslav government minister who later broke with Stalin) says that the exploiting [illegible] is the bureaucracy as [illegible]. I feel that it is still accurate to say, as [illegible] once did, that the [illegible] an abstract exploiter.

But with the [illegible] the bureaucrats [illegible] have the [illegible] controlling the [illegible] sharing the profits with [illegible] bureaucratic stooges.

This is exactly what [illegible] capitalist does. He does [illegible] put it all into his pocket. Some goes to his lackeys, some to the state, a part [illegible] the bureaucratic [illegible] apparatus and [illegible].

Marxist groups [illegible] Volga region [illegible] programme [illegible] sunset of capital[illegible] were not [illegible] West. They were [illegible] ing the situation [illegible] Soviet Union [illegible] form, the death [illegible] capitalism.

'And it is true [illegible] these signs of decay [illegible]. There is the most [illegible] corruption. There is a [illegible] vacuum, moral [illegible] especially among the [illegible].

There are immense [illegible] problems, the [illegible] drug taking and [illegible] the destruction of [illegible] and the environment [illegible] swift unplanned [illegible] spoliation of [illegible] resources, the emphasis [illegible] militarism, the [illegible] police role, the chauvinism [illegible].

I say all this. But I [illegible] not a man without hope. [illegible] the contrary. I look forward to this being changed.

I am a marxist. I [illegible] the intelligentsia and [illegible] working class to [illegible] realising the noble ideals [illegible] socialism, and [illegible] sooner than any of [illegible] think.

Valdimir prison, the prison where most dissindents are held.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

EVER wondered why so many Victorian schools get burnt down? Particularly by students and ex-students?

Just before Christmas last year there was a fire lit at Latrobe High School in West Heidelberg. About the same period there was a confidential study done by a sociologist on the schools in West Heidelberg.

I have recently seen a copy of the report. It includes a section of interviews with teachers and principals and quotes some of their views about the West Heidelberg community. I do not suggest that these views are typical of all secondary teachers in the area.

The following quotes are all from secondary school staff although not all of them would be from Latrobe High.

"Teachers would shoot themselves rather than go to Olympic Village".

"The problem is mainly social, I think, but when you look at their parents you wonder if it's innate".

defeat

"When you call on them . . . they're still slopping around in their dressing gowns, or their hair is still in curlers . . . it's like the final defeat."

"Parents don't have the same expectations. These kids aren't headed anywhere . . . parents are blue-collar workers . . . white collar parents work at home (sic) . . . the atmosphere of the home is directed to a long-term goal . . . there's rarely a newspaper in a blue-collar home . . . father comes home tired and watches TV . . . they don't know any other way. There's usually no place to study. The parents in West Heidelberg don't read much."

"(the teacher) felt that most parents didn't really know or care what their children were doing or where they were."

"There is a network of families in West Heidelberg, what with intermarriage etc., many the people who moved in [illegible] problem families, 'the [illegible] always worked in threes'. [illegible] came from a place called [illegible] Pell, many of the men [illegible] criminals and many of the women were prostitutes; many of the present residents are their [illegible] and daughters. There are terrible truancy problems with these kids."

"He saw some parents trying to keep their children away from school, and other [illegible] children. He saw many [illegible] 'stupid.' "

ignorance

"(She) saw the problem [illegible] mainly environmental. The children are brought up in a world of ignorance. They do not know about their own bodies, how to wash or about periods."

"There's a succession of men 'Uncles' . . . I don't blame them . . . they need the money to pay the rent, make life more comfortable . . . causes tensions of course for the children . . . it's economic necessity. Then of course the gentlemen friends have a go at the daughter . . ."

'Many mothers are "trollops" slovenly . . . tolerate absenteeism . . . gets up in the morning . . . can't be bothered to make the kid go to school, "bugger off then" she'll say . . ." '

'Forty percent of Olympic Village children are from single parent homes.' "Best favour that could be done for many would be to take them out of their homes."

(In fact the number of single parent families in the Olympic Village region of West Heidelberg is only slightly higher than the average for Melbourne and nothing like 40%).

Even if only some of the teachers and Principals have these attitudes towards the kids they are supposed to be teaching and their families, can you wonder why the kids might hate school so much that they try to burn it down?

CHRYSLER: Anatomy of a Disaster

REPORT: PHIL GRIFFITHS

IF ever we wanted a lesson in just what capitalism means, we got it last week in Adelaide.

The giant Chrysler corporation sacked 300 car-workers and closed down Tonsley Park for the day last Friday.

Chrysler, who have already sacked over 1000 workers, are planning to reduce their workforce by a further 800 inside the next 18 months.

There was no resistance to the sackings, despite union encouragement for a work-in.

And with Monday a Cup holiday, we can expect little action in the coming week, again despite chest-beating from the Vehicle Builders Union.

sack

It's hardly surprising that Chrysler decided to sack half its workforce and limit its future to mainly assembling cars.

Chrysler has been a "lame duck" in Australia for many years. Both Leyland in Sydney and Volkswagon in Melbourne have also ceased manufacturing cars because of their losses.

The collapse of weaker businesses in exactly what we have to expect from a capitalist society.

unimportant

For capitalism, the loss of productive workers, the widespread poverty and misery that all come from a crash like Chryslers — all this is unimportant. What matters are the profits of the firm.

Chrysler has decided to cut its losses and get out of manufacturing while it can. The deals with Mitsubishi, the continuation of the Astron engine, are just a hardheaded decision to continue building what they can profitably.

More Protection? It can't solve anything

CHRYSLER'S move makes a joke of those whose only answer is more and more protection for Australian industry.

Australian industry has always been uncompetitive on the world market, because it has been produced for a small local market and because it has all grown up behind massive tariff walls.

The economic crisis has led to a massive shakeout in word industry. Around the world, national governments have responded in the same way as the Australian government, by increasing the barriers to trade.

The EEC won't buy Australian steel, Japan and the US won't buy Australian beef, and the South East Asian countries are threatening retaliation unless Australia allows them access to our home market.

In every country of the world, the car industry is in trouble.

And the governments are telling workers to blame foreign competition. The employers are seducing union officials to support their drives for more protection.

In America, the car companies themselves are trying to shut out the Japanese, as are the steel makers. Meanwhile, other companies are complaining about Japanese import restrictions and Australian tariffs.

Yet it is precisely the logic of their beloved capitalist system itself that has led to the economic crisis and now threatens to lead to further trade war.

The solution to the crisis in the car industry lies not in more protection, not in saving a few Australian jobs at the expense of a few Japanese jobs, but in a determined struggle against both Australian and Japanese employers by the workers in Australia and the workers in Japan. And while Australian unions continue to demand trade war against Japan, Japanese business can continue to demand unswerving loyalty from Japanese workers to defend their rights and their industry.

But the most important argument against more protection is even simpler. It doesn't work. Australian industry has grown up behind a massive featherbed of protection. And it's still as weak as ever.

It is still dominated by fluctuations in the world economy, by economic crisis in America and other countries and by the whims of the Australian ruling class, who now prefer imperialist ventures in Indonesia and the Philippines to risking their "hard-earned" money here.

Protectionism was rampant during the depression of the thirties and it only made the depression worse.

And how much more protection can the car industry get? Even if all imports were banned, how many more jobs would there be?

The car companies would still demand lower wages and worse working conditions, they would still be engaged in a ruthless struggle for the small Australian market. And they would still expect their employees to pay for their problems.

And still the weak-kneed reformists in the unions, the people like Townsend from the VBU go to the employers asking for joing approaches and common policies to solve the crisis in Australian industry.

Despite the fact that the crisis is caused by those very same employers, it's an inevitable product of their system and despite the fact that they have every intention of making us pay for it.

Now - We need a fight back

THE problem facing the Chrysler workers now is how to save their jobs.

We believe the key is fighting the bosses at every turn. We believe the answer is in militant action. And we taken our examples from Britain.

The economic crisis has hit Britain as hard as anywhere. Manufacturing is in worse shape there than here. But Britain has always been an exporter. The workers there have no illusions in protectionism.

When the wave of sackings first hit, around 1972, there was a wave of factory occupations.

At the Upper Clyde Shipyards, a work-in forced the government to support the shipbuilding industry for many years.

At Fisher-Bendix, a large factory in West Lancashire, threatened closure was fought first with a militant nine-week strike and later an occupation.

shocked

The strike shocked the company, who were planning to move their operations to Spain. The sackings were held over.

The metal trades convenor explained *"Most of us knew that the matter would not end there. We had to look for new ways of fighting redundancy.*

"The strike, however, made all the difference. The men and women in the factory could see that redundancies were not inevitable and could be fought and fought successfully."

They occupied the factory, locked out the management and demanded their jobs be saved. They forced the government to put up several million pounds to save their jobs.

And they only got themselves into trouble when they agreed to compromise and set up a co-operative, where the workers and the shop stewards take responsibility for making the business profitable.

Again, in Australia, we have many small examples of struggles that have successfully saved jobs.

With 800 more people facing the sack, and some time to organise, Chrysler workers can save the rest of their jobs.

They could demand the government take over the factory and guarantee jobs. If they back their demands with a militant struggle, they could even force Chrysler to reconsider its decision, rather than risk losing its business altogether.

This is the militancy the VBU destroyed

THE Chrysler episode makes a total mockery of the position of the V.B.U.

Last year, the V.B.U. collaborated with Chrysler in the wholesale victimisation of the militant rank and file committee at Tonsley Park.

When Chrysler announced 800 sackings, the rank and file committee proposed action. The union officials preferred to close the meeting and disorganise the fight-back.

Now they have the total hypocrisy to call for a work-in and a militant fight back.

They, the very same people, cut the heart out of union organisation at Chryslers. But it's the workers, not the officials, whose jobs have been sacrificed as payment.

When Chrysler broke the rules on seniority to completely purge the rank and file committee in the sackings, the V.B.U. looked on with a blind eye.

Now that Chrysler is again sacking shop stewards out of seniority, the V.B.U. is protesting. But who's listening? The V.B.U. has cut its own throat . . . and the members pay for it.

The Chrysler move out of car manufacture makes a total mockery of all the joint union-employer approaches to the government. The employers are always happy to have the unions on their side, when it suits them.

And when it doesn't they are just as happy to ditch them as Chrysler has now done. This lesson has been repeated a hundred times, yet the V.B.U. refuses to learn. Because its officials are more intent on co-operating with the capitalist class than fighting it.

This was the reaction of Chrysler workers when 800 were sacked in July, 1977.

AT LAST.... THE 1978 SHOW

by Alan Briggs

LITTLE progress has been made with the car industry award claims.

Logs have been served by the unions concerned but there is no unity. No common logs have been served nor has there been any united action.

This years tactics are to serve logs on GMH only.

The VBU, AMWSU and the FCU met with the company separately to present their logs. The ASE and the ETU sent theirs in by post. Holdens then proceeded to hold 3 meetings with the VBU.

On May 9, the ACTU called a meeting of all the unions involved and another meeting was held with the company the same afternoon.

The VBU did not attend the morning meeting and left the afternoon meeting early due to 'other commitments'. Because of this, the company closed the meeting.

Following minor industrial action at the Elizabeth plant, GMH has refused any further negotiations and has referred the matter to the Arbitration Commission.

GMH has served a counter log of claims against the unions called 'discussion points.'

It contains such provisions as a closed award for 3 years, controls on shop stewards, 12 month employment contracts and other claims which would destroy years of hard fought gains.

Without a common union front there will be no gains made at Holdens this year.

But the VBU refuse to attend meetings where there are shop floor reps, eg. the joint AMSWU and AAESDA meetings.

The ASE also refused to take part in any stopwork meetings even though ASE members have been involved in 3 stoppages at Elizabeth.

But now the VBU has called for a meeting of all the unions involved. But all they want to discuss are 'job security' claims. They won't listen to the AMWSU claims for $25 pay rise and a 35 hour week.

A FORGOTTEN CLASS STANDS UP

The American Working Class Fights Back

On the picket line at Alltrans Los Angeles

Teamsters for a Democratic Union

DAVE Perry is a stocky, bearded truck driver for Safeway in the San Francisco area.

He has been in the Teamsters' Union for 30 years. His disillusionment with the union has grown slowly but steadily.

Pete Camarata

can't

"All my life I've been hearing from the Teamsters' Union we'd have to do this and that, but we can't ... the government wouldn't let us, the International Union wouldn't let us, we'd get hurt."

Seven years ago when he came to Safeway, he was appalled at what he found. The local union branch meetings were worthless, because the quorum was too high.

It had been doubled years before to keep "rank" from "causing trouble." As a result, no business ever got done.

At work there were no shop stewards, and no grievance procedure.

It took a determined struggle to lower the quorum, and then a further battle to get shop stewards. And then last year the truck drivers went on strike, most of them for the first time in their lives.

The union officials tried to block them at every turn. They opposed extending the picket lines to new locations. They dissolved meetings when the membership didn't agree with them.

At this point, the strikers came into contact with the Teamsters for a Democratic Union. Have Had heard of TDU, but other Teamsters had told him it was only a small and isolated group of cranks.

"But during the strike, the only people who did anything for us were TDU people. They produced leaflets, picketed, they had expertise – and even free attorneys."

Dave is now on the TDU national steering committee.

American unions face a growing crisis today. In the face of attacks by employers, union leaderships are retreating frantically.

In the process, the leaderships are splitting. Corruption and collaboration with the bosses, always a feature of American union, have become more and more visible to the rank and file.

And the rank and file is beginning to rebel.

Some years back, the corrupt leadership of the Mineworkers Union was thrown out by a group called Miners for Democracy.

Last year, reformer Ed Sadlowski formed a movement called Steelworkers Fight Back, and came close to booting out the right-wing leadership of the Steelworkers' Union.

limited

But these reform movements have severe limitations. They are largely limited to election-eering.

When Arnold Miller was elected President of the Mineworkers' Union, the Miners for Democracy were dissolved. Without a rank and file organisation to keep him honest, Miller has proved little better than the crooks he replaced.

In the Teamsters Union things look much better. The Teamsters for a Democratic Union was built, not by an electioneering carnival, but by a number of rank and file groups: the Fifth Wheel caucus in San Francisco, the Seattle Semi group in the Northwest, the UPSurge group at United Parcels, and many more.

In August, 1975 these groups held a national conference. They formed Teamsters for a Decent Contract, to fight for a better deal in that year's contract negotiations. (American unions negotiate awards, or contracts, with the employers for two or three years at a time.)

When Teamster leader Frank Fitzsimmons called a four-day national strike, it was widely agreed that TDC pressure had a lot to do with it. And when Fitzsimmons ended the strike, his own local stayed out on an unofficial strike for two more days.

In 1976, the TDC coalition agreed to form a permanent national rank and file movement. The TDC paper, CONVOY, became the voice of the new Teamsters for a Democratic Union.

TDU stands candidates for union office. Some have come close to winning in important locals. But the emphasis is on organising at the grassroots level.

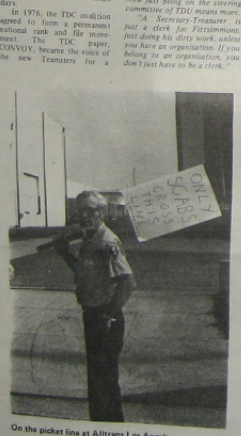
running

As TDU national leader Pete Camarata told CONVOY, "The rank and file is waking up. We're in our infancy right now, we're taken our first small steps ... It's not going to be long before we're running, so Frank Fitzsimmons, you better watch out!"

Dave Perry adds: *"Prior to our strike being Secretary-Treasurer of our local was the most important thing to me. Now just being on the steering committee of TDU means more.*

"A Secretary-Treasurer is just a clerk for Fitzsimmons, just doing his dirty work unless you have an organisation. If you belong to an organisation, you don't just have to be a clerk."

'The rank and file is waking up.'



On the picket line at Alltrans Los Angeles

THERE are a lot of myths around about the American working class.

According to these myths, American workers are rightwing, middle class and totally bought off by American Imperialism. Their unions are run by the mafia.

These myths suit not only American bosses dealing with their Australian workforce.

They also suit those who would try and convince us to hate America as a country and all things American, instead of the tiny clique who control America's national and multinational corporations, and who exploit American workers just as ruthlessly as workers elsewhere.

The American working class has a fine, fighting tradition. American workers were prominent in the struggle against British Imperialism in the 18th century.

America was the home of the IWW, the political party that led the fight against conscription in Australia during the first world war.

In 1920, Eugene Debs, one of America's greatest revolutionaries, stood for President of the United States while a political prisoner. As the candidate for the Socialist Party, he polled over a million votes.

And a massive strike wave during the late thirties led to the formation of the great industrial unions; the AutoWorkers, the Steel Workers, the Rubber Workers and the Teamsters.

The American bosses, like Henry Ford, tried to smash the new unions. When workers picketed, they were beaten up and shot at. Others were locked out.

The Secretary of the Auto Workers was beaten up by company guards outside a Detroit car factory.

There were sit-down strikes and occupations. The city of Minneapolis was placed under a state of emergency as the blossoming Teamsters Union fought for unionisation.

The Second World War ended the mass unemployment of the thirties. For millions, their first pay packet came when they signed up with the American Armed forces.

LEFT: One of 38 teachers in Jail who was jailed, finger printed and also defying a court order to return to work. RIGHT: A miner burns the contract between him and the mine bosses.

The post-war boom brought a taste of prosperity to the majority of American workers for the first time since the the twenties.

Although 40 million black and millions of other oppressed groups were still crowded into ghettoes of unemployment and misery, there was enough swell to keep the American working class relatively quite for a while.

The boom and the cold war saw socialists and revolutionaries hounded from every aspect of public life, including the unions.

Naturally they've turned to their unions. But weak and rusted from years of disuse, the union machines are more on the side of the bosses than the fighting workers.

So they're had to rely on their own strength. And there have been some magnificent struggles.

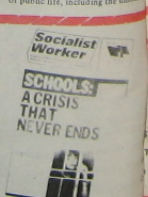
Already this year, The Battler has covered the four month miners' strike and the strike by women wire workers in Essex, Indiana.

Here we report on two militant rank and file organisations that support striking workers and fight for better unions.

The decisive battles against America's multi-national corporations will be fought in America itself.

Ford and General Motors will have to be smashed in Detroit, U.S. Steel in Pittsburgh.

And if the past year is any guide, we can be optimistic that that American working class will rise to the challenge.



Keep up with the Struggle in America....

...two newspapers in the United States that report day to day struggles of the working class.

...R POWER – Weekly paper of the American International Socialists. $30 per year

...T WORKER – Paper of the International Socialist Organisation. EVery month. $8 for a year.

...I.S. Books PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031 Victoria.

UNION W.A.G.E.

Waging the fight for womens equality

IN JUNE last year, workers went on strike at a supposedly liberal San Francisco newspaper.

They remained solid for nearly a year. Yet the union officials did little to help them win.

Fortunately the strikers, many of them women, weren't alone. They had the support of the Union Women's Alliance to Gain Equality — known as Union WAGE. Union WAGE is a militant rank and file body, and they came up with a suitably militant tactic to support the strike.

Joyce Maupin, a WAGE activist, tells the story.

"Starting about noon on Fridays, a group of people would sit at home and rip up the phone lines at the peak time for advertising. I used to get comfortable with a bottle of beer and a record player.

"You'd ring up and when one of the scabs answered, you'd say: 'Settle the strike! and put on a labour song. When they hung up you just kept ringing.

madly

"Half a dozen people could keep the 3 or 4 people in the newspaper office running madly from desk to desk answering 14 phones. It drove them absolutely mad.

"The obscenities you would get from them! It completely knocked them out on Friday afternoon when they wanted to get their advertising."

The strikers at the Bay Guardian were delighted. Not so the union officials.

When the Guardian owner threatened to use the union over these tactics, the officials told strike supporters to stop harassing the scabs because it was "bothering" union officers!

Through this kind of work, Union WAGE has got itself quite a reputation. Their willing help on picket lines has made them popular among rank and file workers. The union officials, however, see things differently.

"Union WAGE regularly criticises the union leadership", says Joyce. *"Sometimes the officials go into a rage over us. Sometimes they won't talk to me when I call to ask for information.*

Union WAGE was formed 7 years ago by a group of women trade unionists. They were concerned that unions paid little attention to women.

This problem is especially serious in the USA. During the McCarthy period of the 1950's, all radicals and progressives were driven out of the unions. What remained was an ultra-conservative leadership that remains to this day.

"Many young people, seeing nothing in the union but a bunch of corrupt old men, have become very antiunion. Some people say that unions would sign a contract to send people to the gas chambers if the wages were right. That's how bitter they feel."

As a result, union membership is dismally low: 22% of all workers and only 12% of women.

"This makes the position of women workers even worse. The officials have no real idea how to organise women.

sisters

"In a strike a couple of years ago, they had a sound truck. They were calling 'come down and join your sisters.' Somebody pointed out: 'How can they, there isn't a sister in the truck!'

"So they went nothing around madly to find a sister."

This is where Union WAGE comes in.

"Women don't take leadership roles in unions," Joyce Maupin points out. Often they don't even try, and that's because things are not made very easy for them. And women have difficulty functioning in unions because they don't know the ropes.

training

"What we feel is needed is a separate organisation, a place where women can have a training ground — learn to speak, learn meeting procedure, learn to organise, and the history of unionism."

Union WAGE runs classes and produces pamphlets to help women to organise themselves. They produce a regular bimonthly newspaper, which includes articles on strikes, how to organise, problems of women workers, and broader political questions.

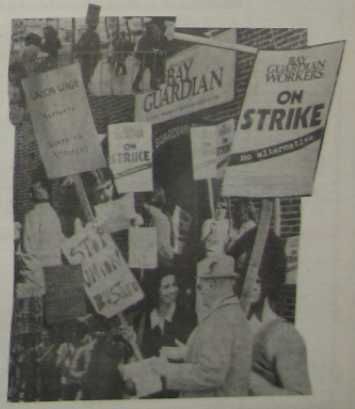
The group regularly intervenes in government hearings on wages and conditions, and in union conferences for women.

Union WAGE has about 8 branches, mostly on the West Coast of America. Membership is open to all working women, including housewives.

Although members emphasise activity within the unions, the organisation has no formal ties with the union structure. Joyce said this leaves them free to be critical.

"I have heard of one group that started rather similar to ours in San Diego. They joined the Labor Council and that's the last anyone ever heard of them — they had to have approval for everything they did."

WAGE intends to avoid that fate.



Piecework is Slavery

Dear Battlers;

Your article on the front page of No. 50 was of great interest to me because it highlighted in part, the plight of women in the textile industry who are forced to work under a piecework, bonus, or incentive scheme. (Any bloody name they bloody well call it, it bloody well stinks.)

Having been in the textile industry all my working life (approximately 29 years) I know from experience exactly how insidious this system of payment is to women, with their constant battle to drive themselves further in order to earn that little bit extra above the award rate.

I have also been in the situation where my rates were cut, supposedly because the correct rate had not been arrived at by the management. In fact I had earned more than they wanted to pay. My rate was cut without notification until pay day.

Recently I started work at Diamond Cut Lingerie Smith St. Fitzroy in the role of Supervisor. To my horror, it turned out to be a job not unlike a gaol warder. To whip the workers into a greater degree of action was the idea.

units

The machinists, lace cutters, belt turners, spaghetti makers, button holers, button sewers, pressers, packers, knot tyers, etc. etc. ad infinitum, you name 'em they got 'em, all had to make 350 UNITS per 8¾ hr. day as they term it, or 338 UNITS per 8 hr. day.

If the worker had not made the specified number of units, the Supervisor had to find out why, and was held responsible.

If a machine broke down the worker had to be immediately transferred to other work, in order to make sure there had been no slacking. As each job has a little sticker tag which the worker places on a work sheet, and tots up at the end of each day, there can be no excuse for idleness.

Should the worker not make the required number of units the Supervisor has to give a reason in the "Delay Time" column of the work sheet, and account for this loss of production. It all became a frenetic race, with workers in tears, or leaving because the pace and the pressure was so great.

Another way of keeping the women in line is to deny them O/T. For instance, if a worker had not made the required number of units, the Supervisor was not supposed to allow them to work O/T the next day. That taught the buggers to show a bit more enthusiasm!

pregnant

One lass who was pregnant, was hauled over the coals because her girl friend had been sacked for talking back over a minor issue to a Supervisor (This girl was leaving in a week anyway to return to her country of origin, and the firm did not want to pay her for the Anzac Day holiday) The pregnant lass had two Supers harrassing her, because they had got wind of a potential strike. Boy did they scare the shit out of her!

The organiser of the Union was called, but the bosses said they would not re-employ the girl even if she came back years later. The shop steward told me there was no solidarity, and anyway they were making too much money on bonus. Needless to say it is not a closed shop.

I got the feeling, that my refusal to work O/T because of the high unemployment rate did not meet with their idea of efficiency, and as a member of the Union they disliked my attitude to work.

These manufactur[...] nothing [...] shops, [...] knowledge [...] next to nil. A [...] file organizati[on] done to stop [...] ion, and if [...] Workers Union [...] more women [...] those at [...] certainly [...] deserve to be [...]

Verna [...]
Sandr[...]

Dear Battlers,

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state — parliament, courts, the law — is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries, or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party out of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation, and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If that's the sort of work you want to do — JOIN US!

ROADIES UNION NOT THE ANSWER

Dear Battlers,

I was disturbed to read your article entitled "Roadies Union Gets into Gear" on page 10 of the April 22nd issue. There are a number of inaccuracies and misconceptions in the article which I should point out.

Firstly, it is not true that the roadies Union, the Theatrical Employees Association doesn't do anything for roadies.

assisted

Several thousand dollars have been collected for members who have been ripped off by promoters, roadies with overseas bands have been assisted in many instances where local promoters have left them without fares etc.

the Union is currently attempting to discuss the whole question of outdoor concerts with the N.S.W. Government (though the Minister Einfield has so far refused to meet with us) support is always forthcoming when requested by the Musicians Union, assistance is given with workers' compensation and so on.

Further the union has had difficulty recruiting local roadies. While they remain non members they cannot expect support from the union.

I would also indicate that no Roadies Union will ever get registered due to Arbitration requirements. A separate union would be a disadvantage in any case.

The Theatrical Employees Association is an industrial Union and therefore has greater industrial strength to help roadies.

In N.S.W. it is anticipated that a Roadies meeting will take place shortly where our plans for an Award in the industry will be discussed.

Hopefully an Award, combined with rank and file action will begin to bring an end to the problems faced by "Ned" Kelly and other roadies.

Rod Pickette
Acting N.S.W. Secretary
Theatrical Employees Association.

Typo-Gremlins

Dear Battlers,

A few errors got edited into my report on the dumping of dioxin in Sydney, in the last issue of the Battler.

It is not correct to say that *"there isn't any supervision or monitoring of the dumps."*

The State Pollution Control Commission do monitor possible seepage from the tips.

Unfortunately, there are technical problems in monitoring dioxin, and it has to be done by monitoring its contaminants. This makes it hard to guarantee accurate monitoring.

My main point was that the sites are inadequately supervised. This is clear from the fact that the local councils didn't know that dioxin had been dumped there. And they have immediate responsibility for future use of the sites!

You also [...] mention of the [...] the Metropolit[an] Disposal Author[ity] gives the clearest [...] of a cover up.

Their spokes[man] that there is no [...] concern; that the [...] of seepage and [...] clay-lined pits [...] adequate safeguard[s].

But when the [...]tan Waste Dep[...]ty was constituted the first thing that was to ban the [...] any toxic industrial [...] council or private [...]

toxic

This shows [...] really think about [...] of using ordinary tips to dump [...] other toxic wastes.

Incidentally, [...] was dumped in [...] with any note [...] industrial [...] little is known [...] it is not known [...] react with other chemicals. This [...] cause for concern.

Finally — just a point — the site at [...] Bay, shown in the last Battler, [...] be a recreation area [...] children's playground.

Jan[...]

More Gremlins

Dear Battlers,

Once again I have been the victim of cruel typographical errors. In my article "Revolution in France" in the last Battler, that garbled fourth column of type should read as follows:

"Communist Party posters in all the Renault factories in France charged that the student groups were agents of the bosses.

"Meanwhile, the entire vast organisation of the Communist unions was mobilised to hold the strike movement within the limits of demands for better wages and conditions.

"The government was given a breathing space. The explosive potential of the strike was contained. . ."

Tom O'Lincoln
Ripponlea, Vic.

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 30[31]

HOW WE WORK

International Socialists

FURTIVE little people in trench-coats.

Conspriatorial cell meetings in dimly lit cellars. That's how many people imagine that left wing groups operate.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

The International Socialists is an open and democratic organisation. As a group that stands for workers' power, how could we be anything else? If you're interested in the Battler and IS, you might be interested in how we work.

discuss

The basic unit is the branch. We have six of those, located in five cities. Branches meet every week and discuss everything from sexuality to the latest strikes.

A frequent highlight of branch meetings is a critical look at the articles in the Battler, and the editor sometimes gets a long list of criticisms and suggestions from the branches.

Once a year all members get together for national conference, to set basic policy. And between conferences, major decisions are made by the National Committee. The N.C. meets every couple of months, and its 15 members thrash out policy over two days.

On a day to day basis, national decisions are made by the National Executive. There are four members of the N.E., all based in Melbourne. They meet at least once a week, and circulate minutes of all decisions. IS members have never been slow to criticise the N.E. when they thought it needed criticising.

But the most important part of our work isn't meetings. It's the struggles our members are involved in where they work, the fight against uranium mining, the fight for women's liberation, the struggle for civil liberties in Queensland. Wherever there's a fight on, IS members expect to be involved.

For this purpose, special committees called "fractions" are sometimes formed to organise our activity in a particular struggle.

All policy in the IS is decided after thorough discussion. Everyone is welcome to put their point of view, and to disagree with the majority. Once a decision is taken, everyone is naturally expected to pitch in and carry out the majority viewpoint.

interested

You don't have to be a member to come to IS meetings. Anyone who is interested in our work is welcome to come along and join in the discussion. And if you want to join, there's no long apprenticeship. Once you've got your membership card, you've got the same rights as everybody else.

Why not come along and see for yourself?

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL
PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031
24 hour answering and message machine

I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE
PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031

MELBOURNE
GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001

LATROBE VALLEY
P.O Box 15, Yallourn

SYDNEY
111 Enmore Rd., Newtown

CANBERRA
PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601

ADELAIDE
PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061

BRISBANE
PO Box 111, St Lucia, Qld, 4067

IPSWICH, QLD.

What's On

DEADLINE NEXT EDITION: 24 MAY

SYDNEY Sun May 21
Business Meeting. Friends of I.S. welcome. 111 Enmore Road Newtown.

SYDNEY May 27th
Italian-French dinner. Flat 34, 9 Nicholson St., Balmain. For invitation ring 51 3665 or 82 5469.

SYDNEY May 28th
Political economy of the health industry. Talk by Janey Stone. Friends of IS welcome. 111 Enmore Road, Newtown.

SYDNEY Sat & Sun June 3 and 4.
"Liberation Struggles in Africa." Seminar. Merewether Building, S[...] City Road. For contact S.A.L.C. [...] Castlereagh St., Syd[ney] 2000 ph. 617 089[...]

THE BATTLER is [...] Phil Griffiths of [...] Kensington Vic [...] by Media Press [...] Ave Marrickville, NSW

WHAT MAKES JOH TICK?

IN 1947 Johannes Bjelke-Petersen first entered the Queensland parliament.

Fred Paterson, the only communist ever to hold a seat in an Australian parliament, turned and pointing at Petersen said:

"There is the only man with less chance than I have of becoming premier of Queensland."

"Joh" by Hugh Lunn attempts to show how such an unlikely character became one of Australia's most powerful politicians.

Lunn brings Petersen before us as a thoroughly successful politician, skilled in the use of the media, shrewd in political judgement and triumphant over the Whitlam government, the Queensland Liberal party and small "l" liberalism generally.

In many ways this is an advance over the more common sneering at Petersen's manner and twisted phrases which is dished up as trendy liberal politics.

It shows Petersen as a man who, until last November's State election, was able to increase the vote for his party 10 per cent in 10 years and reduce to a skeleton all opposition to him, both inside and outside parliament.

The best thing about the book is that it does what most of his opponents have failed to do; it takes him seriously.

Petersen came into politics when the Labor Party had been in power for over 30 years. It had its base amongst miners, shearers and canecutters as well as industrial workers in the cities.

The ALP at the time held every seat west of the Great Dividing Range. After the 1974 election, it was Petersen's National Party which held all this area.

bosses

As the Country Party, its base had always been amongst farmers and graziers. It was the Liberal Party which had the confidence of the bulk of the real ruling class; the bosses of industry in the cities.

The pattern of development over the next twenty years was to change not only Queensland's social structure, but the political career of Bjelke-Petersen.

To begin with, the rural industries: wool, sugar, beef, where the ALP had the support of most of the workers, were rapidly being mechanised. The relative size of the rural population decreased and so did the ALP base.

Substantial investment in mining was coming into the state. On many things, the miners of silver, lead, zinc, coal and oil did not see eye to eye with the manufacturers in the cities.

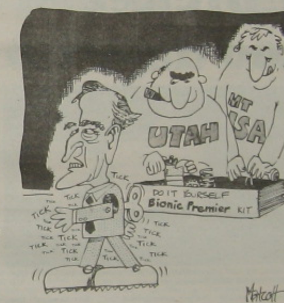
The old, local, protectionist establishment in Brisbane was unable to form a single political party with the export-oriented, often multi-national mining companies.

And so it was the Country Party, already heavily oriented toward export industries such as wool, beef and sugar, which came to represent the mine-owners as well.

In a book meant to be a biography of Bjelke-Petersen, you might expect this sort of background. But Lunn provides very little of it.

He is a journalist interested more in Petersen's style than the content of his policies. Lunn draws no conclusions about who Petersen's real backers are.

It is not simply because of personal preference that Peterson misses no opportunity to attack the union movement or push the claims of mining and some manufacturing companies like Utah, Comalco, Mt Isa Mines, Billington and General Electric. It is because his power rests on their support.



media

Yet after reading the book you are left with the strong impression that with the right media image and a good press secretary anyone could become premier of Queensland.

The book has a very good inside account of how Petersen makes use of the media.

For example, early in December 1975, on the eve of the Federal elections, the press was howling for anti-ALP headlines. Bjelke provided them, by initiating a "James Bond type mission" to try to get secret documents on the Khemlani loans affair from a Swiss bank.

He claimed that there could be "sensational developments" and arranged for State parliament to sit just before the election.

Nothing came of it then or since but for weeks the press had their rumors and the damage had been done.

Lunn puts particular emphasis on the importance of his press secretary, Allan Callaghan, for Petersen's success.

The biography constantly makes the error, repeated by the State ALP, of seeing many of Bjelke-Petersen's actions as publicity stunts or election ploys.

On the question of the ban on street marches announced by Petersen last September, he says, *"Petersen decided to rely on his old favourite, law and order, as an election issue.*

"He got this off to a good start by banning street marches, thereby reinforcing his image as a strong leader forcing his local opponents into the arms of waiting police.

"Before the election period was over almost a thousand marchers had been arrested."

Yet clearly, Petersen brought down the ban as a serious cut at the opposition building to his regime and especially his uranium policy.

John Minns reviews the new book, 'Joh' by Hugh Lunn

explained

In fact, a few days after announcing the ban he explained that his reasons were that *"we had heard that anti-uranium demonstrations like the one in Sydney were planned for Brisbane . . . that's why this action has been taken."*

And if it was partly an election trick it failed very badly. Even the most conservative papers rated the attempts to break the ban as the major factor in the big swing against Petersen in the election.

Most of the opposition to Petersen has spent 10 years carefully avoiding these supposed "traps" that Petersen had laid for them.

Much of it, the ALP in particular, has refused to be involved in a militant fight against Petersen of the sort waged by the marchers.

refused

State ALP leader Tom Burns even refused to speak at the anti-uranium mobilisation on October 22 because it was intended that a motion to march in defiance of the ban would be voted on.

The tragedy is that the ALP refuses to fight and instead looks for the moderate middle groups.

Not only is Petersen able to look even stronger, but the opposition itself begins to look and act like a paler reflection of the Bjelke-Petersen government.

Hollywood packages an anti-fascist

by Judy Turner

THEY'VE done it again!

The unscrupulous toadies who flourish in that cesspool of the imagination called Hollywood have gone and fleeced me of another $4.

I keep telling myself — *"you're old enough to know better", "exercise some self-discipline"* but they're stronger than I am — the pushers of poison and pap have got me hooked.

packaging

Julia's two main selling points were firstly the packaging: the way the film was wrapped up as something Deep and Meaningful (from Hollywood — ha!) and those glittering Oscars, lined up on the billboards as bold as Brasso.

Secondly it was the ingredients — a computer couldn't have done better: two controversial female stars, a touch of 30's decadence, a quick glimpse at the pre-war literary jet set in America, just a hint of lesbianism, and of course the baddest baddies of them all, Adolf and the boys.

The script had some vague connection with Lillian Hellman, one of America's foremost playwrights. But despite all these sure fire winners Julia was a flop, basically because nothing much happened and what did happen didn't matter much.

The junior versions of Julia and Lillian were too cute to be true — all glowing cheeks and misty moisty mornings and flickering firelight — and the relationship between Lillian and Dash was plain boring. So for the first two thirds the film looked to be a dead loss.

shivery

When it stopped trying to be meaningful and settled for being mildly exciting the film began to pick up.

Who in the English speaking world, after all, could fail to get pleasantly shivery at the sight of a jack-booted and horwastika'd thug? Who in the world doesn't hold his/her breath for the beautiful young spy and the 500 lives she carries in the lining of her hat?

And who in the world won't go away thinking they've had a moving experience because a film keeps them on the edge of a cliff for 15 minutes then drops them abruptly in the last 60 seconds ("Julia's dead. She was alive — that's all").

What makes me fume is not just that Hollywood reduces the fight against fascism to a wooden leg and an empty coffin, or that it reduces the menace of fascist violence to a pleasant chill in the spinal region.

What is more sinister is the way social movements arising from social situations are reduced to individual acts of good or evil, arising from individual social backgrounds.

In opposition to the decadence which is thrust at us from the screen, (see the Serpent's Egg for the latest in disease, debauchery and degradation in pre-war Germany), Hollywood has only romanticised do-goodism to offer.

poisonous

For those of us without the talent or the luck to be able to act out our private fantasies for an audience of millions, Hollywood offers nothing in this time of massive unemployment, economic crisis and military expansionism.

And why should it? If we're prepared to pay to have our heads stuffed with poisonous marshmallow, they're prepared to go on churning it out.

"WE'RE READY TO GO OUT AGAIN"

Members of the Sportscraft Works Committee give an interview during the strike

THE thirty-five women machinists at Sportscraft clothing factory in Melbourne are back at work for the moment.

But they are ready to go out again at the end of the week if the company doesn't withdraw its threat to cut their pay.

The company wants to cut their piecework rates by at least 10 per cent. The women have already struck for two weeks.

One Sportscraft workers told us, *"It was suggested by the union and the management that we go back to work.*

piecework

"We are not back on piecework rates – just the normal flat rates. The company says there is not enough work to give us piecework rates.

"Last Friday we met with management. There was nothing much to our satisfaction. The attitude of management was not very nice.

"Mr Egan, the production manager from Hawthorn, came down. He wanted to know if we had changed our attitude. We hadn't.

"We're back for two weeks. One week's gone – there's one week to go.

"Something will have to happen. I think most of the girls are prepared to go out again."

It's easy to see why the women at Sportscraft are angry with the company and determined not to give in.

Eighteen months ago, they accepted a pay cut of 5 per cent when the company cried poor. The company promised it would never happen.

Never again, that is, until they next wanted to make the workers pay for their own incompetence.

"Never on Sunday" say printers

ON Tuesday 9 May the PKIU members at the Canberra Times returned to the job after eleven days off work.

The dispute was over plans by the management of the Times (a Fairfax paper) to produce a Sunday edition. At present the paper only comes out six times a week.

by Dianne Fieldes

The company was refusing to pay adequate penalty rates for the extra work involved. The dispute was also about pay and conditions for all editions of the paper.

PKIU demands included a 12½% pay rise, double time for weekend work and sixth shifts worked Monday to Friday, treble time for sixth shifts worked on the weekends, and a seventh week of annual leave. (Printers work on public holidays).

To give some weight to their claims, the printers refused to work on the Sunday edition.

When the company heard this, all the printers were stood down (or as the Canberra Times quaintly put it, "taken off pay").

The Fairfax bosses then spent the remainder of the dispute making out that the printers were on strike!

They had the hide to say at the end of the dispute that they were sorry for the inconvenience to Canberra residents – even though they'd caused it.

Meetings of the printers throughout the period they were off work constantly rejected recommendations that they should go back to work on all editions including Sunday) in return for granting of some of their claims.

In reply to this the Canberra Times threatened to start laying off journalists and clerks.

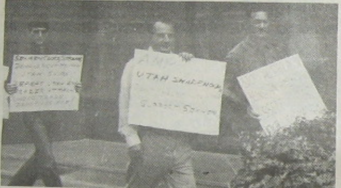
The Canberra Times allowed the printers back to work on 9th May only after they had agreed to accept the decision of Commissioner Sweeney on their claims.

So at the moment there is no Sunday Canberra Times, and the printers have put their trust in arbitration.

Which way the decision will go is fairly obvious from the way the Fairfax company has greeted the return to work. They're pretty confident that the decision will be to their advantage.

Utah picket – 300 days up

SEAMEN in Brisbane are now past the 300th day of their picket of the Utah head office in Eagle Street. And weekly pickets have started up in other capital cities as well.



Seamen picket the AMP office in Melbourne. AMP is a major shareholder in Utah, the company that has taken the union to court.

The seamen are fighting Utah's refusal to employ any Australian seamen on their ships. Their blackban on Utah has led to a court case which could result in $250,000 fines under the Trade Practices Act.

It's obvious that the seamen have been chosen as a test case in a union-bashing campaign by the Queensland government. In the face of these attacks, every worker has a stake in ensuring victory for the Seamen's Union.

Utah has been employing Spanish seamen on its ships, under a Liberian flag-of-convenience.

The Liberian flag, and the difficulty that Spanish seamen have had in organising under forty years of fascism, mean that Utah can get away with undermanning, pitiful wages and shocking conditions.

The Seamen's Union of Australia, to protect the jobs and conditions of its members, is demanding

1. That Utah abides by the I.L.O convention of having 40% of crews from the exporting country, and employs three Australian crews.

2. That Utah ships sail under the Australian flag, to guarantee Australian award conditions to its sailors.

These demands are fine except for one thing. If Utah implements the I.L.O. convention, it will mean firing three Spanish crews – who through no fault of their own are unorganized – and replacing them with Australians.

This will only be solving Australian unemployment at the expense of Spanish workers. It would be tragic – especially after the efforts of the Seamen's Union last year in regaining $49,000 in back-pay for one of the Spanish crews.

Seamen we've spoken to have made it very clear that they do not want this to happen. But so far the union has done nothing to prevent it.

The Seamen's Union should be in touch with the Spanish seamen's union to work out a combined campaign – so that workers of both nationalities can protect their jobs.

The Seamen's Union should be demanding – No sacking of Spanish crews – in addition to its other demands. Utah should have to take on the Australian crews as well as keeping its current crews, to make up for the undermanning it has practised in the past.

IT seems that council workers in gangs of less than five aren't as likely to be injured as their workmates in larger gangs. So goes the logic of the bosses at the Mitcham Council in SA.

After a garbo was injured a few months ago, some council workers asked the AWU to get the council to implement the Industrial Safety, Health and Welfare Act. Under the Act all gangs on the council should have first aid kits.

But the penny-pinching (Liberal) councillors only supplied kits to the larger gangs.

This excludes the garbage units which only have two workers.

The union has renewed its claims.

□□

INCIDENTALLY, the South Australian Industrial Safety, Health and Welfare Act is one of the Dunstan government's better pieces of legislation.

Very few workers realise the extent to which they are covered by the bill. It's now up to the unions to establish Health and Safety committees on the job to make sure that the act is implemented.

□□

FOR six years, VICRAIL has known of severe noise problems sending engine drivers deaf.

In 1972 a report showed that 15 out of 18 engines tested had noise levels higher than 90 dBa. Tests last year showed that nothing had been done.

The engine drivers union, the AFULE, has won 16 compensation cases for hearing losses for some of its retired members recently.

One worker had suffered over 50 per cent hearing loss and the average was 25 per cent hearing loss.

□□

A FURTHER problem for engine drivers was revealed in a recent report of the Victorian Ministry of Transport.

The report found that the drivers had to stand noises of 99 and 104 dBa from their engine whistles. The whistles are sounded at crossings and could be used as often as 100 times in a short period.

Medical authorities believe that 85 dBa is a "safe" level for 8 hours.

□□

For his help to the asbestos industry and misleading workers The Battler Falling Brick Award for Safety goes to Dr John Milne of the Victorian Division of Industrial Hygiene.

In The Age on 5 May he said, "Non-smokers in the asbestos industry suffer cancer at practically the same level as the rest of the population."

As one of the experts who wrote the World Health Organization report on asbestos he carried a lot of weight. However the report contradicts his statement.

"Both cigarette smoking and occupational exposure to asbestos fibres INDEPENDENTLY increase lung cancer incidence, but when they are present together they act in a multiplicative fashion."

Dr Milne was only talking of the common or brochial lung cancer. He conviently forgot two other asbestos related diseases: asbestosis and mesothelioma. Neither are associated with smoking.

The same WHO report notes that as many as 7-11 per cent of certain groups of asbestos workers may die from mesothelioma (an otherwise rare cancer).

To suggest an anti-smoking drive as an alternative to reducing exposure to asbestos is not only the worst of follies on Dr Milne's part, but criminally irresponsible.

by Steve Morgan

SEC job fight brewing

THE Latrobe Valley power workers may have lost last year's eleven week strike, but there is still a lot of anger simmering below the surface.

Many workers now have an attitude "Bugger the SEC" and "Anything is good enough", when in the past they would have taken a lot more care with the quality of their work.

Moves are afoot in Central Workshops Yallourn to launch a fight for more permanent staff positions.

filling

Workers there have decided they are no longer going to make themselves available for temporary staff jobs, like filling in for foremen for a month or so.

This means the SEC will have to take on the current temporary staff as permanents, or else put them back to their original positions by the end of the month.

But under the Metal Trades Award, workers can use these tactics.

Temporary staff are used by the SEC to avoid creating more permanent jobs. And they are cheaper too – for example, a temporary foreman who is injured gets compo at the normal workers' rate, rather than the staff rate.

Clyde strike wins $5

CLYDE G.M. metal workers at Rosewater in Adelaide have won a $5 rise from the boss.

Apprentices will get $2.50 under the settlement which is the latest in a series of victories for metal workers in Adelaide.

Shop Convenor Jimmy Finlay said *"Until this week management were adamant that there was just nothing in the barrel for us.*

"We had voted on a series of lightning stoppages and were out for most of Tuesday and part of Wednesday.

"The case went before Commissioner Heagney on Thursday and he recommended five dollars for us.

"On Friday morning the company called in the stewards and offered us the five dollars, as from this week.

"We recommended accepting this offer and the meeting at lunchtime was two to one in favour."

The campaign to get this increase had gone on for seven weeks.

difficult

Many who voted to accept the settlement did so not because they thought it was really enough, but because they felt that prolonging the dispute now would make it very difficult for others with heavy financial commitments.

The three week dispute last month over three sackings had really hit some workers hard and they needed time to recuperate.

But five dollars is five dollars. As Jimmy said *"After saying there was nothing for us for so long it's good to see that they looked and scraped a bit harder and found something."*

ALL THE NEWS ON THE BLF ELECTIONS

IT'S PANIC IN THE GALLAGHER CAMP

by David Shaw

ON Friday the Federal Court did what we all expected – ordered a court controlled ballot in the NSW BLF branch election.

The judge said that the officials had a cavalier attitude to the union rules. This was nothing new to us.

As one of their organisers, Laurie Skinner, told a Builders Labourers for Democratic Control member, "We didn't want a court-controlled ballot because that would mean we'd lose, and I would lose my job as an organiser."

The election campaign is continuing, with Builders Labourers for Democratic Control job visits and meetings throughout Sydney.

One hundred and thirty people, mainly builders labourers and their wives, came to the rank-and-file group's dance last weekend.

We'll have to really step up our campaign in the coming weeks, as the election gets finalised.

Gallagher's NSW secretary, Steve Black, and his mates are continuing their standover tactics and slanders, to cover up their lack of policies for the building industry.

They told a dogman at the Reserve Bank, a strong rank-and-file group supporter, that he would get no support on that job if he was sacked again.

They also threatened and stood over workers who refused to withdraw their names from a BL's for Democratic Control petition.

They had the employers ban workers with the scaffolding contractors on the major city sites. Some workers are being forced to work on FIA jobs.

slanders

They are keeping up the lies and slanders about Builders Labourers for Democratic Control too.

Their latest one is that we will be charging builders labourers an extra $30 in union dues.

These are all the acts of desperate men, and a sign of their weakness. One good thing, though, is that all these tactics are doing is strengthening the anger and disgust of BL's at the Gallagher-Black machine.

In Melbourne, Gallagher was so incensed by a rank and file election pottering that he sent his stooges out to Yarraville to put up his posters all over the home of Jocka Burns, a well-known militant in the industry and a supporter of Brian Rix.

Fun and games in Canberra

LAST Thursday we went to Canberra to campaign for Brian Rix for Federal Secretary of the BLF.

The week before we had given Canberra a pretty thorough going over with leaflets and how-to-votes. Now we came back to talk to the blokes again and maybe hold a couple of meetings.

We started off at 7.30 in the morning and visited all the sites in the Belconnen area, where we got a good response. Nearly every B.L. that we talked to said they would vote for Brian Rix.

At lunch-time we rolled up on the High Court-National Gallery site, Canberra's biggest job. The blokes there were pleased to see us and told us about the Gallagher officials' latest efforts.

The previous week the job had been leafletted with the B.L.s for Democratic Control leaflets. But A.C.T. BLF president, Tom McLennan, decided he would be the job censor.

Not only did he clean the leaflets out of the sheds, but he even went through blokes' own bags to make sure they had no literature in there.

The blokes were incensed. At the meeting out the gate they condemned McLennan's action.

rat

Gallagher organiser, Harry Williams, told the meeting that Rix was a rat and they should all vote for Gallagher. But Williams was the one who was made to look the rat. One worker said *"If this Rix is such a rat, then why don't you want us to read what he stands for? What are you afraid of?"*

Needless to say this job is now a solid Rix job.

Next we went to the Costain job at Deakin Telephone Exchange. Here we hit trouble. Just as we were going to see the job delegate we ran into A.C.T. Secretary, Peter O'Dea.

O'Dea went mental at the sight of us. He called us Russian spies, worms, germs, Clancy's men, etc. What's more he pushed and shoved us around, and then this great "militant" O'Dea got the boss to throw us off the job – the ultimate grub's act.

We hopped in our car and drove off with O'Dea tailing us. He followed us for the next 3½ hours. It was just like a car chase in "Homicide", but we couldn't get away.

We even went to the Chinese embassy, hoping he would want to see his mates, but he seemed more interested in us.

In the end we decided to drive back to Sydney with O'Dea hot on our tail. He followed us 60 Km nearly to Goulburn.

No doubt Peter O'Dea felt like the Wild West sheriff who had just driven us out of his territory. If he and his mates McLennan and Williams carry on like that much longer, it won't be their territory any more.

Lighting boss sacks steward

AMWSU workers at Associated Lighting in Smithfield (NSW) have been on strike now for over five weeks.

The strikers, about 80 women and 60 men, are fighting to win the reinstatement of their shop steward, Ron Zammit.

by Andy Milner

Ron has been a steward at Associated Lighting for 7½ years. In fact, he organised the job in the first place.

And it's precisely because he is a good shop steward that Associated Lighting wants him out. One woman striker told us, *"He's too hard for them to get past."*

"Because he speaks the truth", added one of the men.

Another woman worker pointed out, *"We went out in support of him because we need him. He's got a good record for 8 years . . . If we don't get him reinstated, they're going to walk all over us."*

support

The strike began in the metal shop, where most of the workers are men, but the following day the women in the wiring section came out in support.

The management's pretext for sacking Ron was that he'd sworn at a foreman. But all the strikers are convinced that was just an excuse.

Associated Lighting have been docking pay for time taken up by union meetings, and they've been making deductions from annual leave. Its no coincidence that Ron was sacked after trying to take this up with the management.

The man behind all of this is Ray Ives, the new production manager. His only previous claim to fame is sacking 150 workers at EMI.

Ives doesn't like unions, and he doesn't like opposition. One woman summed him up nicely – *"He thinks he's God, breaking up the fishes and the loaves."*

The management has tried every trick in the book to break the strike.

On May 1st they wrote to each striker. The letter contained both a bribe and a threat.

The bribe was an "advance" of $50 if they went back to work. The threat was clear enough – "Your whole future employment prospects at Associated Lighting could be at stake."

The strike stayed solid. The strike committee has produced leaflets, putting their case, which have been distributed to local factories.

And they've raised a lot of money through collections. Enough to worry Associated Lighting, who have been ringing round trying to check up where the money's coming from.

problem

But money is still a serious problem. One of the women strikers told us *"We've got a lot of women supporting themselves, about 5 married couples – they're finding it hard because they're getting nothing at all – a lot of the single women with children, divorced women and widows."*

IN THE BATTLER EVERY FORTNIGHT

Good riddance to the "ceasefire"!

THE VSTA Executive has called off its ceasefire on strike action from the start of second term. And about time too.

The ceasefire was supposed to allow discussion and negotiation on a number of issues, including inspection.

But, as always happens, it was worse than useless. From previous experience, they should have known that the discussions would get nowhere. Shears won't even meet with the union.

And in the meantime, schools that were taking action are back to square one. They have to start again with no guarantee that the Executive won't pull the same irresponsible 'stunt again.

A branch delegates meeting recently censured the Executive for calling the ceasefire without consulting the membership.

But then, that seems to have become a VSTA tradition. There is another, and possibly more serious instance.

Last year's Annual General Meeting voted for a policy of direct negotiations over all issues, including salaries. We're sick and tired of being fobbed off by the Department-run Tribunal.

This year, the VSTA ran a poll, asking if we should submit a salary claim to the Tribunal, in direct contravention of AGM policy.

Less than a third of the union membership voted in the poll. Yet the VSTA is going ahead and presenting a claim to the Tribunal.

proper

If the Executive really thought it was so urgent to change AGM policy, they should have called a Special General Meeting like the VSTA Constitution allows. That way there could have been proper discussion of their proposals.

Why is the leadership doing these things? One reason could be that they're scared.

Flashback – VSTA members shout at the chairman of the committee of classifiers, Alister Clark, during the early stages of the anti-inspection struggle. Now the VSTA has dropped the inspection fight during its "ceasefire".

Since we lost the "privilege" of having our union dues deducted from our pay, VSTA membership has dropped. (That's why the Department did it of course).

But the VSTA has fought and won battles with a smaller membership.

In fact, they are more likely to attract new members by taking an aggressive stand and fighting for their members than by disregarding their members wishes and turning in to a tame cat union.

by Tess Lee Ack, VSTA

EMERGENCY TEACHERS THREATENED

VICTORIAN emergency teachers are facing a mass sacking by the Government.

Headmasters have been getting around the ridiculous "staff ceilings" by employing emergency teachers on a casual basis to meet the most urgent needs at their schools.

by Marea Adler

We emergency teachers receive no added bonus to make up for lack of job security, no sick pay and no holiday pay. We're nothing more than cheap labour.

fiascos

But we're not cheap enough for the Victorian Government, who are more concerned to spend money on freeway fiascos than schools.

We now face mass dismissal. A new regulation states that no emergency teacher may be employed except as a replacement for a teacher who is absent, and then not for more than 30 days.

Already in areas such as music, migrant education and special remedial maths, classes have been cut back.

We are not taking this lying down, however. Despite the difficulties of organising teachers who are thinly spread over perhaps 50 different work-places, several meetings have already been held.

TTAV branches have taken up the issue and are calling for further action at a higher union level.

Footscray Tech branch has already held a strike which saved the job of an emergency teacher employed there, and got him employed as a full-time "temporary".

We don't particularly want to be re-instated as emergencies – we want to be employed as either proper temporaries or full-timers like everyone else.

600,000 metalworkers say:

STOP THE ROBBERY!

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

THIS Friday 600,000 metalworkers will strike for a day, to support their claims for a $25 rise and a 35 hour week.

The strike will be part of the third attempt to win the claims, most of which have been outstanding since 1975.

The Arbitration Commission is frothing at the mouth and threatening to hold up the latest indexation case.

They even tried to intimidate the unions into backing down. To their credit, they didn't. It's about time someone told Sir Justice Moore exactly where to get off.

cut

In fact, one of the primary reasons for the introduction of wage indexation and the guidelines in 1975 was to cut the ground from under the claim the metalworkers had in court at the time.

And it worked. The leadership of the metal trades federation was never wholehearted about fighting for the claim once the court threw it out.

And the left wing officials of the Metal Trades used the weakness of the right as an excuse to hold the strong elements back.

They staged a series of one-day stop-works and mass meetings which heard interesting speeches about how terrible everything was, and how we needed to get everyone behind the campaign.

destroy

But at no stage did they explain how the claim could be won. Not until they decided to destroy the campaign by launching a "guerilla campaign" of shop by shop stoppages.

At the time, this was criminal. Metalworkers were militant and just looking for some serious leadership. Instead they got hot air and disorganisation.

The guerilla campaign was a disaster. Very few shops won anything. Militants were victimised and there was no united response to growing redundancies and unemployment.

Now the unions are talking about the claim again. No doubt in response to a lot of pressure from militant members.

We would like to think they're going to be more serious about it this time. And we hope to see them doing something positive about the real wage campaign metalworkers *have* been waging.

But we're not going to hold our breath waiting.

They could have had every metalworker in the country behind the Latrobe Valley strikers. (Instead, they got John Halfpenny telling them the union movement would desert them if they didn't go back to work.)

They could be making a big push in support of those struggles actually taking place at the moment for higher wages – like the fight at Clyde Engineering in Adelaide that won $5.

They ought to be organising support and strike funds for every strike being waged at the moment, encouraging other metalworkers to take action.

We're supporting the strike. We think there should be more of them. Not just to fight for a claim that no-one expects to win. But to begin to hold the line against the bosses.

We need a fight to maintain the real value of our wages. We need a fight to stop further victimisations and sackings.

If the rank and file for a moment thought that the officials were going to organise this, there would be massive support for this campaign.

Adelaide

AFTER 3 years without an award increase, the SA Metal Trades Federation has begun a guerilla campaign in support of $180 for tradesmen and $148 for assistants.

A recent mass meeting of metalworkers endorsed the campaign.

The meeting of 500 could have been larger but a misunderstanding led to some shops only sending delegates instead of the whole workforce.

There have been a few breakthroughs in the campaign to date eg. Clyde Engineering have w[…] $5.

Some factories ha[…] increases without any […] strike. At John Perry's […] men were recently g[…] $7. This punches a h[…] the usual 'we can't aff[…] pay argument of the M[…]

But the campaign [...] been fragmented and [...] only the well organised [...] are likely to succeed [...] these tactics . . . and [...] often means prol[...] strikes.

A victory in the Latrobe Valley power workers' dispute last year would have been a major breakthrough against wage indexation.

WESTMEAD PROTEST AGAINST SUBBIES

CRANE drivers at the Westmead Hospital site in Sydney have taken up the fight against sub-contractors.

Last Saturday, they went out the gate in protest at the use of subbies on the Hospital job.

The electoral contractors on site, O'Donnel Griffin, had always used a Public Works crane with two dogmen for lifting their heavy drums.

outside

Last Saturday, however, they decided to bring in a crane from United Cranes, an outside subcontractor with only one dogman. This broke the established practice on the site of two doggies to a crane.

So the cranes stopped for the day on Monday just to give the boss the message about using subbies to break down conditions.

The crane drivers could see the effect of allowing subcontractors breathing space. That's why they acted.

And that's why the Builders Laborers rank and file committee has pledged a fight against sub-contracting.

Sub-contracting threatens every condition ever won by b[…] workers. That's [...] militants in the bu[...] industry have foug[...] long for an end t[...] practice and for the [...] contactor to d[...] hiring.

SAVED BY THE MEN FROM MARRS

LAST Week Max Coopers, the bosses at the Rawson Place site in Sydney, tried to break a long standing tradition in the building game.

They sacked two dogmen on the Favco Tower Crane before it had been pulled down.

In the past the two doggies have always stayed with their crane until the death. Two dogmen are needed to help the riggers pull a tower crane down.

Coopers had different ideas. They wanted to use the crew of the other crane on the site to pull the crane down.

The doggies approached the B.L.F. officials. As usual they got no support. Both are strong B.L.s for Democratic Control supporters.

But all was not lost. The Men from Marrs came to the rescue.

Marr Contracting supply riggers and heavy mobile cranes for the erection and dismantling of Favco Tower Cranes. The Marrs riggers told Coopers that no crane would come down at Rawson Place until the dogmen were reinstated.

Max Coopers said no, so the Marrs blokes put the acid on their own boss to start the Coopers doggies with them. Marrs agreed.

Unity between workers for the subby and for the main contractor won the day.

The two doggies [...] with their crane [...] pulled down. That [...] week's work and [...] standing tradition [...]

Ivor, one of the dogmen Max Coopers wanted to stand down.

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INSIDE All the news on the BLF election

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PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

HOW WE BROKE INTO LONG BAY Page 5

JUN 1978 … OF VICTORIA

ASBESTOS WRECKED MY LIFE

Power Worker tells....

INTERVIEW: STEVE MORGAN

HARRY Dowdall was a man who loved sport and dancing.

Today he is an industrial cripple.

He is often unable to work; he can't climb stairs without having dizzy spells; he couldn't walk a 100 yards for a king's ransom. Harry Dowdall is a victim of asbestosis.

"As the doctors explain to you the average person has a 4 inch intake (lung expansion) in your breathing.

"Mine is now down to one inch. You end up suffocating and dying.

"You're up at night coughing, disturbing your family. You go to your neice's wedding and you can't dance. You're totally gasping for breath.

"I'm not allowed to play sport. I'm not allowed to climb stairs because with only one inch of lung expansion it puts strain on your heart and gives you dizzy spells.

"As soon as I start walking up a small hill, I'm gasping and I'm suddenly a man of 75 years of age in his last throes of life."

Harry has worked with asbestos for 20 years. He is now at Munmorah Power Station near Newcastle working as a lagger.

That is, when he works. Harry is classified as 80 per cent incapacitated by the Dust Diseases Board.

cut

"I'm only 49 and I'm young. They've cut off my working life by 15 years plus whatever I may have lived after that.

"My own doctor looks after me when I'm sick but there is nothing he can do.

Munmorah Power Station

"All he can do is give pockets of penicillin. After a time you start worrying about taking too much penicillin.

"The penicillin is to stop infection because having asbestosis is like having the flu 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

"Even now, after 3½ years (since having asbestosis confirmed) I'm still, in the back of my mind, thinking it's only the flu and I'll one day get rid of it.

"But I know I can't because it is asbestosis.

"Once I get caught in the rain I can go immediately into double pneumonia. The penicillin is to stop the infection."

Harry Dowdall and the other laggers at Munmorah have been fighting the SEC over asbestos since 1975. They've won some protective equipment and allowances of 60 cents an hour of working with asbestos.

The Firemen and Engine Drivers (FEDFA) delegate at Munmorah, Mick Smith, told The Battler that they first knew of the asbestos dangers in 1975 during a wage claim.

"Dr Eva Francis from the Division of Occupational Health gave evidence of the dangers of asbestos. She was asked to testify that it was dangerous so we would get an increase."

"I introduced respirators in 1974 when I became a lagger. I didn't know anything about asbestos but I didn't like the dust."

The story of asbestos is the story of capitalism blithely murdering workers and their families around the world.

Workers on Victorian railways and power workers in Melbourne, at Swanbank in Queensland and at Munmorah all found out by accident that their lives were at risk.

killer

Yet the bosses and their governments have known asbestos is a killer for 75 years. The first regulations were introduced in Britain in the 1930's and then ignored.

The Australian Navy warned of asbestos dangers in 1943. Yet in the 1960s the NSW government built power stations with asbestos insulation. Blue asbestos, the most deadly, continued to be used up to 1974.

Recently there have been one day stoppages at Munmorah because management allowed safety ropes, which divided off areas affected with free asbestos dust, to be removed.

The laggers put the ropes up in October last year because they were concerned about workers entering the areas unaware of the dangers and without any protection.

In March of last year a Health Department test showed that these areas exceeded the official "safe" fibre levels but the SEC weren't doing anything about it.

Mick Smith said that a foreman told a worker to go into the affected areas and *"Don't take any notice of Mick Smith and Co – they're only alarmists."*

As if watching a workmate slowly dying isn't cause for alarm.

As if seeing a man, crippled by capitalism, struggle into work, strain even to walk, and losing all the pleasure in life, isn't cause for alarm.

For Harry Dowdall, there is only one thing to do: *"Rally the entire Trade Union movement around asbestos and try to have it totally banned."*

"In my opinion it's legalized murder."

HARRY DOWDALL: His life has been wrecked by asbestos. Notice the clubbing of his fingers, caused by lack of oxygen

"As soon as I start walking up a small hill, I'm gasping."

between the lines

IT'S Menzies reminiscences week. In order to properly celebrate his beloved demise we decided to publish our own favourite memories.

Like the time around 1940 when Menzies was having an affair with Vincent Fairfax's sister.

At the time, newsprint was severely rationed and all the newspaper publishers had quotas.

Truth newspaper, at that time run by Ezra Norton in Sydney, was running out of paper. And Norton knew of Menzies' liaison. So he went to Bob with a proposition.

He had just enough paper to print one more Truth. Naturally, he couldn't resist printing such a juicy scandal. Unless of course, Menzies found a way to rearrange the quotas and find him some more paper.

Menzies agreed, although it would mean taking paper from the other newspapers. When he came to investigate the Fairfax stocks, he found they'd been hoarding newsprint.

So, as justice would have it, Norton got his paper from the Fairfax stockpile.

□■

AT least Pig-Iron had a reputation. Some politicians don't, and they don't seem to care. Take Victoria's Vance Dickie, the Chief Secretary; surely a unique and endangered species.

Last week in Parliament, he was moaning about the vile letters and threats he'd been receiving since the land deals inquiry.

"I have been receiving threatening letters continually because of the huge rake-off that my colleague and I got out of these deals."

After a bit of prompting, he "corrected" his statement.

□■

GUESS who won the war in Zaire? Why, CRA of course!

It turns out that the fighting has halted production at the world's biggest mining complex around Kolwezi. And it will mean the first shortfall of copper for five years.

Already, the price of copper has risen from \$996 a tonne to \$1208 on the London Metals Exchange and some people expect it to go as high as \$1368.

□■

WITH all those lovely Menzies obituaries flying around, you'd think that somewhere, a grovelling quote would make it for our special, cancer-inducing Battler Plastic Straw.

But no. Against spirited opposition, this issue, our symbol of superb suckpower goes to a member of Bill Hayden's staff.

A week ago, the Labor Party set up a spectacular national seminar on unemployment (in which the unemployed were not, of course, invited).

Speakers included Rod Carnegie, from CRA, and Gordon Jackson from CSR. Workers employed by these companies will be able to tell us all about their contribution to the dole queues and the Liberal Party campaign fund.

One (uninvited) anti-Kalingal demonstrator, there to see Neville Wran, asked why there were no unemployed there.

This enterprising young Labor hack surveyed the well-heeled, immaculately groomed room full of trendies and replied, "These are the people handing out the jobs."

by Darth Vader

FEMINISTS ORGANISE

ON 19th May, 100 feminists had the first of a series of planned monthly meetings to discuss the struggle for Womens Liberation in Queensland.

Representatives from Rockhampton and Townsville movements and women's organisations in Brisbane were present.

The meeting was convened from the successful Lesbian/Feminist Conference held on 29-30th April this year.

Two rallies and marches are planned.

One on 22nd July will be around the demands of the Womens Liberation Movement.

abortion

The other in September is specifically around Abortion in support of New Zealand women who, with new legislation now in force, will find it virtually impossible to get an abortion even if they are pregnant as a result of being raped.

The next meeting will be held on 16th June, at 7.30pm in the E.G. Whitlam Room, Qld. University.

Women and Labour

FIFTEEN HUNDRED people, mostly women, attended the first Women and Labour Conference held in Sydney between 12 and 14 May. It discussed women and work, education, sexuality, religion and culture.

The conference was well organised, especially child-care, but there was too little time to discuss fully all questions raised in the sessions. The most interesting session was women and work. It was useful for assessing the involvement of the womens' movement in the struggles of working women.

Unfortunately, political debate was discouraged. Since many women have joined left-wing political parties, tensions arose because there are many who don't accept that women are divided along class lines. Attempts by organisers to brush over political questions created an unreal veneer of political unity.

This veneer was shattered by the organisers' attempts to ban political groups from selling books not connected with feminism.

BY CAROLE FERRIER

SEX E[DUCATION] THREA[TENED]

THE Battler has a copy of a memorandum to ...ian High ... Principals.

The memo, from ... Ford, the Director ... Secondary Education, ... careful and long-winded warning that liberal ... education will no longer be tolerated.

He writes, *"I believe principals should be ... alert (for) displacement ... traditional subjects by ... supposed "enrichment" purveyed by ... and often for ... lobbies.*

"Health" is probably the greatest current ... ive of (these)"....

"Health" is a well-known Education Department cliche for sex education.

He continues *"I ... Principals further to ... the judgement of ... and the security of ... ion ..."*

"I would be pleased to learn from a return ... that your school is alert ... vigilant in this matter."

As far as the Education Department bureaucracy is concerned, sex education does not belong on the school syllabus.

But if they have to tolerate it, it should ... of sermons about "getting into trouble" and "waiting ... you're properly grown up".

They are horrified ... some teachers are ... given their students ... information on contraception, sexual relationships ... well as alternatives such as homosexuality.

AMERICA MAKES A KILLEN

by John McLean

EXPANSION of American bases in Australia is going on all the time under a government which is too scared to ask Washington what the hell is going on.

The base at the North-West Cape, the CIA communications network at Pine Gap and the anti-missile installation at Nurrunga, near Woomera, are prime nuclear targets.

In the last few weeks, Killen, the defence minister, has revealed that he knows bugger all about what is happening at the bases and blames his department officials for not telling him.

expanded

Information that the base at North-West Cape is being expanded as part of a new satellite defence communications system is available in technical journals in America – but Killen didn't know about it.

Contracts have been let to build a new satellite terminal at the base but according to the American ambassador in Canberra that wasn't important enough to tell the government *"at a policy level."*

Expansion has been going on at other bases because the Americans know they can do whatever they like on the "joint" bases without even bothering to tell the Australian government.

Australian governments have been treated with contempt by the Americans for years over the bases because they know the multi-nationals will put on the squeeze if they are challenged.

Whitlam protested when he was Prime Minister that the bases were used during the Middle East crisis but never raised the question of why they were necessary and whether they should be here at all.

Fraser, due to fly out next month on Pan Am for another grovel at the feet of American leaders who can't even get his name right (Carter calls him "John"), has no qualms about the bases.

He was surprised by all the fuss in the last few weeks about the American bases and called a quick cabinet meeting to 'approve' what the Americans were doing – whatever it was.

The fact is that without the bases, there is nothing much to attack in Australia in the event of nuclear missiles being exchanged between Russia and America.

Only the American bases themselves are targets – and the Americans say they are here to guard against nuclear attack!

Nurrunga, for example, detects missiles as soon as they are fired around the world and relays photographs of them back to America where they decide whether to push the button.

If anyone was serious about knocking out American mainland targets they would obviously have to hit Nurrunga first – even if it takes a few missiles to get it.

Pine Gap is now the biggest and most important intelligence station outside America and is controlled by the CIA and the National Security Agency.

It picks up messages exchanged between Russian subs and their bases and relays the information it gets from them and from CIA stations, to America – it is a high priority nuclear target.

North-West Cape, when the work Killen doesn't know about is finished will be able to have "command and control capability" – in other words it can be used to fire missiles.

It doesn't require much imagination to work out why the Americans want the North-West Cape base to be able to do that – if a missile is successfully fired from there it has the same effect as if it was fired from the American mainland.

essential

But there is an added bonus – if things don't work out and an American base is hit, they would prefer it was here rather than there.

It is essential those bases are closed down – but it won't be done by Liberal and Labor governments.

above and right: North West Cape

How we lost 11kg of Uranium

AN American nuclear power plant has lost 11 kilograms of weapons-grade uranium.

The Babcock and Wilcox plant at Apollo, Pennsylvania has now lost a total of over 190 kilograms since 1968.

Government officials are blaming the loss on "accounting procedures". They are not planning any investigation since the plant is scheduled to close in a few months.

■

DOUG McCarty from the CANE Trade Union Lobby Group will be speaking at the next AWU monthly meeting on July 3.

Anyone interested in having similar meeting at work or at their union branch can contact the lobby group at the CANE office ... 223 6917.

■

HAVING problems finding arguments agianst uranium mining? Adelaide IS has come up with the answer. A set of straight forward speakers' notes which tear to bits the arguments of the federal government and the mining companies.

They won't cost you a cent and are available from 28 Ballantyne St. Thebarton or just phone 497 939.

■

BJELKE-Petersen is installing a solar hot water heating system at his home near Kingaroy.

But we shouldn't see this as support for alternative energy.

He refused to recognise International Sun Day on 3rd May, saying it was unofficial and organised by the anti-nuclear brigade in the U.S.

PAYING MORE AND GETTING LESS? YOU'RE A VICTIM OF FRASER'S MEDI-MANGLE

BY JANEY STONE

FROM July there will be some small but important changes in Medibank.

We will be refunded only 75% instead of 85% of doctors' fees. Bulk billing will be dropped.

And long term patients will have to make out of pocket payments as a "penalty for unauthorised stays in hospital."

Its true that health costs have risen dramatically in the last 5 years. But Federal Health Minister Hunt is not really interested in cutting costs.

transfer

He merely wants to transfer them from the government to the ordinary person, and then increase them.

Let's look a little closer at who will save what.

Of \$24 million "saved" by dropping bulk billing, \$7 million will go in increased administrative costs.

Dropping bulk billing and the increased charges will be the opposite of saving for us. We'll be getting less out of Medibank than before, while paying the same.

So Hunt has deliberately transferred costs to us. He claims that the best way to keep costs down is to have *"inbuilt incentives to create cost consciousness"*.

This mumbo jumbo is really a version of the theory that if individuals have to pay costs directly they won't "abuse" the health services.

Well, what "abuse" has taken place? Use of medical services has gone up 14% in the last 5 years. But most of this has been due to doctors ordering more tests, more specialist referrals and more hospital treatments.

poor

There has been plenty written about how the changes will be to the disadvantage of the poor and low income earners.

Even the Australian Medical Association (AMA), which is hardly interested in looking after the poor, has said the government's plans will lead to hardship.

But in fact these changes are really only the beginning. Around the time of the Budget we can expect to see these "savings":

* public hospital beds increase from \$40 to \$60 a day.
* higher Medibank levy.
* raised Medibank ceiling
* \$4 "bed tax" for hospital beds.

And what can we expect after that?

A hint came the other day from an unexpected source. The Metal Trades Industry Association (MTIA) called for a major reduction in government expenditure and stimulation of the private sector.

The main burden of spending restraint, they said, should fall in health, education and welfare.

So the government's effort at keeping health costs down is really an attack on our general welfare and standard of living.

In Britain, where the attack has been going on longer, several hospitals have been closed. Perhaps we'll be seeing that sooner that we expect.

AFTER the announced cuts a group met in Sydney to discuss actions and fight back against the Medibank costs.

Next meeting – Friday 2nd June, F.P.A. 161 Broadway, City. Top Floor.

EQUAL PAY UNDER ATTACK

EQUAL pay for women is a universally accepted right . . right?

Wrong!

The gentlemen of the Metal Trades Industry Association, one of the biggest employer groups in the country, beg to differ.

Looking ahead to 1950, this progressive group of bosses has asked the Arbitration Commission in Adelaide to freeze women's pay in the metal industry.

Not men's pay . . . just women's. The MTIA wants Arbitration to only consider wage rises for male workers. Women workers are to get nothing.

The MTIA in Adelaide has had a habit recently of putting in outrageous counter-claims to Arbitration whenever unions serve a claim. So it's hard to tell just how serious they are with this latest proposal.

But the South Australian AMWSU has quite rightly promised to call demonstrations if the MTIA proposal goes through.

Women workers have had to put up with this sort of crap from the bosses for long enough. There should be a lot more than just demonstrations if Arbitration takes up the MTIA submission.

Brian Rix gets 36%

BY PHIL GRIFFITHS

THE campaign to kick out Norm Gallagher as Federal Secretary of the BLF got a big boost on Monday.

In the court-controlled ballot, the rank and file candidate, Brian Rix, received 2,400 votes as against 4,200 for Gallagher.

That was a significantly better result than anyone expected. It proves that Gallagher can be challenged and he can be beaten in the future.

As we go to press, we do not have a state-by-state breakdown. But it is a safe bet that the majority of Brian Rix's vote, perhaps as many as 1,500, came from NSW.

sweep

If that's the case, it means the rank and file committee is set to make a sweep of the five casual positions being voted on next month in NSW.

But unfortunately, Sydney is the only area where the rank and file committee has strong organisation.

The main test of the Rix campaign has to be how successful the rank and file were in building groups in other states.

The campaign for the Federal position was important in getting the NSW group itself together.

In Queensland, a lively group was organised around the elections, largely based on the Gold Coast. There is little work in Brisbane itself.

In Canberra, Gallagher lost a lot of votes due to the paranoid tactics of the local secretary, Peter O'Dea, who went around looking for Rix material in bags belonging to rank and file BL's.

But in Melbourne and Adelaide, the campaign was a failure. Apart from some postering, there was no activity in Melbourne. No leaflets, no job meetings, no new militants.

The election result was close enough to suggest that if there had been some reasonable organisation working in Melbourne and Adelaide, Brian Rix could well have won.

It also means that when the rank and file committee starts winning positions in NSW, they are going to have to get some organisation going in the southern states to make it impossible for Gallagher to repeat his 1974 stunt.

Brian Rix

Pensioners will pay more too!

THOUSANDS of pensioners now getting free hospital treatment will be forced to pay up to \$45 a week under Federal government changes to the health insurance system.

The pensioners are long term hospital patients. After paying hospital fees they will be left with about \$7 a week.

The Federal government has caved in to pressures from the health funds. It announced that pensioners would be reclassified from hospital patients to nursing home patients.

This is a real killing for the funds, which as we all know are non-profit organizations who insure us out of the goodness of their hearts.

Instead of paying the \$40 a day hospital benefit to longterm aged patients in public hospitals, the health funds will only have to pay the general nursing care benefit of \$13.65 a day.

It started some weeks ago when the Hospital Contribution Fund (HCF), NSW's largest fund, discovered a loophole in their rules and threatened to stop the \$40 a day to its elderly long-term patients.

claimed

The HCF claimed it was "in the interests of their members" and was a "responsible action".

The NSW Premier, "Nifty" Neville Wran was "disgusted". The Federal Minister for Health, Ralph Hunt, threatened to deregister the HCF. The HCF backed down having made its point and confident that the final burial of Medibank the government is engineering will give them their due.

The HCF political sideshow brought some facts out about the health insurance industry in this country.

Last year the government introduced a new financing arrangement for nursing homes. It meant the government paid for patients' costs even if they were members of private funds.

HCF smelt a windfall and went about soliciting new members in nursing homes. The new members would pay their contributions to the funds, but benefits would actually be paid by the government.

pressure

But the HCF was in for a shock – it didn't work. For technical reasons the HCF found itself paying the benefit after all. So they put pressure on the government to change the arrangements – and the elderly patients became pawns in the profiteering game.

If you're fighting for safety at work...

EVERY fortnight in The Battler, you can read of the daily struggle for safety at work.

We covered the fight against asbestos. We exposed the council's prior knowledge of its danger.

And we've reported numerous safety struggles in the Building Industry.

Every fortnight, the Work Toll column, by Steve Morgan, tells you of the hidden dangers at work and what can be done to fight them.

The Battler reports all the struggles against the bosses and their system.

And if you want to be part of the movement for a socialist society, why not join us?

Just contact the local branch of the International Socialists listed on page 11.

Or fill in the coupon opposite.

the WORK TOLL

Asbestos lagging in the Melb City Powerhouse photographed exclusively by The Battler

...The Battler is YOUR paper!

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

PHONE NO. ....

TRADE UNION .... Postcode ....

Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 48 Flemington, 3031

FLM detachment in West Irian.

FOR 15 years a civil war has been simmering a few miles to the north of Australia.

The people of the Indonesian provence of Irian Jaya, or West Papua as they call it, have been fighting their rulers – the Indonesian dictatorship of Suharto.

INDONESIA'S SECRET WAR

by Steve Morgan

The area is under a news blackout by the Indonesian government, aided by the Australian and the Papua New Guinea governments who are afraid of upsetting 'big brother' Indonesia.

Until recently little was known of the fighting but with the lead up to last year's military-run 'elections' in Indonesia, reports of killings and intimidation of villagers, and their fight back, began appearing in the Australian press.

In April 2 Australian journalists returned from 2 weeks in the jungle with the military wing of the Irianese rebels of the OPM (Organisasi Papua Meredeka or Free West Papua Movement) with reports that 9,000 people have died in fighting since January 1976.

The OPM leader Yacob Prai claims he has 2000 full-time soldiers, including many women, and 8,000 more civilian fighters. Australian intelligence sources estimate his strength at 1800.

The extensive reports were attacked by Indonesian officials demanding that the Papua New Guinea government curb the freedom of journalists or face the consequences.

One official went so far as to say that Indonesia could invade Papua New Guinea, if it doesn't put a stop to the OPM using its border areas as training camps.

The struggle of the Free Papua Movement began in 1962 when the Dutch government gave the former colony of West New Guinea to Indonesia.

About this time the educated elite of the old Dutch colony – students, government officials, teachers and lawyers – formed the OPM.

vote

The economy, schools and roads were run down. There were acute food shortages, as corrupt Indonesian officials shipped all they could back to the black markets in Jakarta. Riots occured and military reinforcements were sent in, killing thousands. West Irian came under 'political quarantine' which stopped reports from the area.

In 1969, the Indonesian government announced that the West Papuans would be allowed an 'act of free choice' – a vote to decide whether to remain with Indonesia or not.

The 'act of free choice' was anything but free. It was executed at gun point, and most of the 800,000 Irianese coult not vote.

At this time the OPM resorted to a military campaign against Indonesian rule.

West Irian has become important to Indonesia because of its vast mineral resources, among them copper.

One of the largest concerns in the country, the Freeport Copper mine, which has its supply base at Cairns, has been attacked by the OPM. The attack caused over $1 million worth of damages. More recent attacks are believed to have stopped production for the last 4 months.

The bosses of the mine have been using their planes to transport troops and bomb villages.

The OPM is militarily weak compared to the sophisticated arms of Indonesia. Apparently, the freedom fighters have only 63 guns.

But one thing is clear: the OPM has won the support of large numbers of Irianese committed to ridding Irian of Indonesian rule.

FLM troops on patrol.

splits

The Irianese campaign has caused splits inside the ruling Papua New Guinea government and between the government and New Guinea defence force.

The defence force is reluctant to stop the OPM saying that they don't want "to shoot their brothers". This led to an attempt to sack the commander, Brigadier-General Diro last year.

The Australian government is actively involved in trying to suppress the OPM. The Army is mapping West Irian for the Indonesians and Australian spy organizations are active on both sides of the Papua-West Irian borders collaborating with Indonesia.

The struggle of the Irianese is a fight for self-determination and an end to Indonesian exploitation and violence. Not that independence will solve the backwardness and exploitation of the Irianese people.

But the victory of the OPM could be a nail in the coffin of the military dicatatorship in Indonesia.

African compromise crumbles

PEOPLE with illusions in 'peaceful settlements' for Southern Africa got a rude shock on May 4.

Early on that day, South African troops invaded Angola from South West Africa and temporarily captured Cassinga, a town 250 kilometres from the border.

The South Africans said that they were there to wipe out the bases of the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO). But the Angolans reported that they also managed to kill 504 South West African refugees, and leave a further 244 wounded.

One South African paper commented:

"South Africa's decision to strike has ample precedent in the modern theatres of undeclared war."

colony

In Vietnam, Cambodia and Palestine for example.

South West Africa is a former German colony which was given to South Africa in the carve-up that followed the first world war. Any 'legal' claim that the South African regime had on the territory expired years ago.

But South Africa doesn't want to give the territory up. For a start, it has vast mineral wealth including uranium, diamonds, copper, zinc, lead and silver.

By 1980, South West Africa's uranium could supply 10-15% of the West's energy needs. It also has the fifth largest known deposit of natural gas – still completely untapped.

In addition, it provides a comforting buffer zone between South Africa and neighbouring Angola.

For some months, the US, Britain, Canada, West Germany and France have been trying to get South Africa to the negotiating table to bring about a peaceful solution.

Their aim is not so much to end South African control of the territory, but to make sure that South West Africa's riches remain in the Western sphere of influence.

But South African Prime Minister Vorster refuses to negotiate with SWAPO. So a deal was worked out without SWAPO to hand over power to South West African 'moderates' – who of course would remain loyal to their western backers.

refused

Naturally enough, SWAPO refused to have any part of it. They promised to keep fighting.

South Africa needs a settlement urgently. It has thousands of troops tied down in the territory, at a time when increasingly it needs these troops at home.

In addition, the western nations cannot be seen to be supporting continued South African control.

So, while the west has been exerting discreet diplomatic pressure on SWAPO to accept the 'deal', South Africa has taken a rather more heavy handed approach by invading Angola and attempting to smash SWAPO into acceptance.

It is unlikely that either approach will work. For until South West Africans can control their own affairs, SWAPO's "undeclared war" for majority rule will continue.

by Nichola Catesby

ZAIRE: THE VICTIMS THE PAPERS FORGOT

OF course, the establish-ed press has been full of it.

'Rebels ...' 'Hell and horror'; 'the ... of death'; and so on.

Undoubtedly, the events in Kolwezi, capital of the Shaba province of Zaire have been most unpleasant for all concerned – there's nothing wrong in reporting that.

But we think a few other things should be pointed out as well.

There were about 2000 Europeans in Kolwezi. But there were many more Africans living in the town. And we can assume that many more Africans were killed in the fighting – after all, it is essentially their war.

We have to 'assume' this because while the Western press has been plastered with detailed body-counts of Europeans over their front pages, we can find no mention of how many Africans were killed.

concern

Is a dead European worth more concern than a dead African? It certainly seems that way.

Stories of who carried out the actual killing are getting less clear every day.

According to one refugee, the execution of Europeans in one house was performed by Zairean government troops, and not the rebels at all.

According to another French troops were responsible for at least some European deaths.

At any rate, the killing seems to have only started when the Zairean government announced that the town was about to be invaded by the French foreign legion.

obscure

Finally, the newfound concern of the western press for death in Africa tends to obscure the sort of government that the rebels are fighting.

Zaireans suffer under a ruthless military dictatorship, run by General Mobutu. Opposition is generally debated with bullets. Mobutu has diverted enough of Zaire's wealth into his personal coffers to become one of the world's richest men. While the rest of the country suffers economic collapse, he has built himself eleven palaces. He and his hangers-on import more Mercedes into the country than tractors.

In January, Mobutu's army massacred hundreds of villagers to put down unrest in Bandundu province.

There were no headlines then.

But of course, Mobutu is on 'our' side. And they were only Africans.

by David Lockwood

GASSING OUTRAGE AT KATINGAL JAIL

By Janet Vaux

IN yet another outrage, against human rights, warders at Katingal systematically gassed every prisoner in the jail.

On May 14, five prisoners organised a peaceful sit-in over a list of grievances, including a protest against the continued use of the Katingal jail as a maximum security prison.

The screws went berserk.

attacked

They attacked the prisoners with tear gas, MACE and C.S. gas.

These gasses cause nausea, vomiting, choking, difficulty in breathing, burning and streaming of the eyes. They can bring on attacks of asthma and bronchitis, and some of the effects can last for several days.

One prisoner was badly burned.

The screws then went ahead and gassed all the remaining prisoners in Katingal, who were locked in their cells at the time.

They piped the gases through the ventilation system. The screws themselves were wearing gas masks.

Gases of this type are supposedly used by the police to disperse crowds and move people out of a particular area – but the prisoners could not move.

If the gases are used in a closed space, people exposed to them need medical treatment. This involves the immediate removal of patients into the fresh air – but the Katingal prisoners remained locked in their cells.

There are no windows at Katingal.

The millionaire press in Sydney has completely covered up news of this crime. The same people who regard it as a principle to attack the militancy of most workers are worried by the militancy of the screws and the possibility of defamation.

smuggled

Twelve of the fourteen prisoners remaining in Katingal have written statements describing the attack. Their letters were smuggled out and reached the Close Katingal Group.

"Get those blankets off or we'll shoot you"

HERE'S how one prisoner, James Francis Murray, described the attack.

He was one of the five prisoners who had taken part in the sit-in.

'Later on that night, probably about midnight, Mark Motric and I were walking up and down the yard and I heard a noise on the roof on top of the yard.

I heard someone yell out from above. I think it was McTaggart from the Special Operations Division. *"Ed Murray."*

hit

As I looked up I was hit with a full flash of spray in my face. It continued to be sprayed on my head and over the upper part of my body. I tried to get out of the way of it but it continued to be trained on me as I ran around the yard for cover.

It was blinding me. It was an intense burning sensation and caused me excruciating pain. The substance was caked all over me.

I heard someone yell out *'You've got him, you've got him. Keep giving it to him.'*

The other blokes who had been able to cover themselves with blankets were being affected by the gas by this stage.

I screamed out *"Turn it up! What are you doing? You dogs! My eyes, my eyes, what's going on?"*

I heard a screw say *"This is just the beginning. You'll wish you were back at Grafton by the time we finish."* One of them was Craig.

A voice said *"Go into Upper Green. Go in the doors to Upper Green"* There were no doors open.

Some screw said *"Give 'em more, give 'em more."*

explosions

The gas just kept on coming. There were a few explosions. They were spraying something like a hose on us except it wasn't a hose – it was stinging. It was gas . . .'

The warders opened the doors, leaving an inner perspex door closed for another five minutes.

'Someone tried to break the perspex door with table tennis wooden bats but it just wouldn't break.

I heard some screw sing out *"That won't help"* Another said *"Give 'em more, I want to give 'em more."*

We were singing out *"Open the door."*

One screw said *"Get those blankets from over you, or we'll shoot you. Get them off from over you."* Another shouted out *"Shoot 'em if they don't drop the blankets, shoot 'em."*

I was singing out *"We'll shoot us."* The others were yelling *"Open the doors, open the doors."*

I fell to the ground three times. I have been flogged in Grafton, Maitland, Bathurst, Parramatta, O.B.S. I have never been in as much pain as I was the other night.

Then they started to use a third type of gas which I am told came out of a gun. It made me feel very nauseous so that I wanted to throw up.

Finally, they opened the door. We staggered in to Upper Green Workshop. I collapsed and vomitted for some time. Mark Motric was right beside me and he was vomitting too. I was crying with the pain.'

After the attack, the screws surrounded the prisoners and abused and threatened them for some time.

Murray spent a night of agony. Next day he was seen by a male nurse, who gave him some treatment, but said that he did not know what to do.

The day after, the nurse returned and arranged for him to go to the doctor where his hair was cut, but apparently no other treatment given.

MEANWHILE, THE FIGHT TO CLOSE THE JAIL GOES ON

FIFTEEN people have invaded Sydney's Long Bay jail as part of the Close Katingal Campaign.

On Sunday May 21, they climbed in through a wire fence and charged to the edge of the Katingal fortress, in the middle of Long Bay.

Twelve people were arrested and charged with trespass under the Prisons Act. They are on remand to appear in Central Sydney Court on 7 June.

The entering of Long Bay prison was planned with near military percision at the vigil outside the main jail gates.

At 12 noon cars left in various directions and all were to converge on a section of the jail fence near Katingal complex where there were holes in the fence.

At precisely 12.25 five cars arrived at the hole. Two people jump out and pulled back the wire fence while demonstrators climbed through.

The demonstrators marched around Katingal chanting "Close Katingal now" and "Stop the bashing and gassing" while they were followed by two screws.

At 12.35 George Brown, from Corrective Services, and the police arrived ordering the demonstrators to leave. The demonstrators sat down and chanted slogans.

The police and screws began throwing everyone into the waiting paddy wagons. It's illegal for screws to actually arrest or handle non-prisoners.

Earlier that day the demonstrators confronted "Nifty" Neville Wran who was opening a Labor Party National Seminar on Unemployment at the University of NSW.

Wran told them that he was going to close Katingal *"but the prison officers are taking a difficult course."*

Pictures and story by Steve Morgan, who was arrested whilst reporting the protest for The Battler.

"I was unable to breathe properly"

WILLIAM Lewis Sutton is another prisoners who was locked in his cell at the time of the gassing.

Here's how he described it:

'On the evening of the 14th May, I was confined in my cell, in the Upper Blue section of Katingal.

At around 10.20 to 10.30 pm, I smelt what I know to be tear gas, inside the unit. I became alarmed and moved to the window of my door.

I looked out, and on the corridor I saw Officers Clarke, Inkent, Cole, Skreen, Storey, Robinson, Baldwin, Fields and Craig, milling about with gas masks on.

The gas was becoming very intense and my eyes, nose and throat were starting to play up. I started knocking on my door, to get out of my cell, as it was starting to become unbearable with no fresh air, only gas.

I heard someone yell out to Mr Craig, I don't know who, as I'd wrapped a towel around my face and head.

The gas continued to build up, and I started to vomit very badly, this continued all through the night.

After the gassing had been going on for about 10 minutes, the air conditioners were turned on. At first I was relieved, but I soon realised that they were pumping more gas through the ventilation system into my cell.

It became so bad that I could not see at all for some time, and I was unable to breathe properly.

I heard later, Jeff Holmes in the next cell to me, asking for a doctor, as the screws walked past the back of our cells. He got no reply and was totally ignored.

That night I was unable to sleep due to nausea and my eyes. The next day, at around 1 o'clock, I saw the male nurse, through the main entry door.

I told him I was still suffering from stomach cramps. I was told that something would be given to me, but I never received anything.'

"INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY"

the fraud

This week, Don Dunstan and the South Australian government are running a seminar on "Industrial Democracy". But their aim is not more power for the workers, but tying the working class to their bosses and the capitalist state.

Here, Alan Briggs, an apprentice at GMH in Woodville, examines Dunstan's movement for "Industrial Democracy" and what really lies in store if we accept it.

By Alan Briggs (AMWSU)

THE ACTU is beginning negotiations to introduce "Industrial Democracy" into some companies in Australia.

The ACTU Executive decided in March that 5 major companies be approached to discuss the issue. Now negotiations are going on with two, as yet unnamed, companies.

The South Australian Government is also keen on bringing in worker participation in public enterprises in the State.

Don Dunstan has recently moved the Unit for Industrial Democracy from the Department of Labour to the Premiers' Department, so as to bring it under his personal supervision.

The first application of "industrial democracy" has been in the State Housing Trust. The proposed scheme has met with many objections.

Typical of many such schemes in other countries, the 17 member Joint Management Council did not have the final decision making powers.

Nonetheless, Dunstan believes that the scheme can work, and he wants to expand it to include such workplaces as the State Savings Bank, the Electricity Trust, and the State Government Insurance Commission.

The ACTU's policy on Industrial Democracy is just as bad as Dunstan's.

It is concerned with "equalising" power within the workplace; redistributing it in the power hierarchy.

slowly

Industrial Democracy should only be introduced slowly, the ACTU believes; because the workers have been alienated from the decision making process throughout the history of Capitalism.

The forces of resistance within society, says the ACTU, will not allow anything but gradual change.

This fraud of Industrial Democracy must be resisted, because if it is introduced seriously in Australia, it will be a major setback for trade union organisation on the shop floor.

Workers Participation means taking the strugges workers are waging today, off the shopfloor and into the boardrooms and managers offices.

It means further integration of the Trade Union bureaucracy and the shop stewards into the state and the management.

A good example of how Workers Participation schemes destroy the shop floor organisation is the situation at Leyland in England.

Here there are Joint Management Councils. But the workers involved are not workers at all. They are the Senior Shop Stewards – employees who have no specific job in the workplace but work full time as union reps.

They are provided with office facilities by the company, and are not subject to the same pressures of work as those they are representing.

They are completely divorced from the rank and file; in fact they usually spend more time with the management than the workers.

"Workers Participation" exists at Leylands in name only. There is no participation at all by the rank and file.

report

There are no report-back meetings by the delegates, and no job meetings to discuss business for the coming meetings. And the formation of the scheme was finalised without the rank and file having any say.

The structure of the participation scheme is 3-tier, with committees at plant, division and national level. Only senior stewards and staff reps. sit on the top two tiers.

At plant level, senior stewards have automatic places while other reps are elected.

There is no voting on Joint Management Councils. Instead they try to reach "mutual agreement", while recognising, just as in Dunstan's Housing Trust scheme, that management have the final say!

It is no surprise that the rank and file workers received this scheme with great suspicion. Several plants voted not to get involved, and many more would have rejected it but did not have a chance, because a ballot was not held.

Before participation, the bosses used to put out propaganda complaining about industrial activity, low production, and the like. The situation now is that the senior stewards add their signatures.

The destruction of the shop floor organisation is so great that the senior shop stewards actually opposed a strike by toolmakers in early 1977, and supported the bosses' threat to sack the strikers.

They also played a crucial role in defusing the shopfloor protests against wage controls in February 1977.

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[illegible] leading shop [illegible]onger independent, they tend not [illegible]he shopfloor strug[illegible]tually follow polic[illegible] thousands of work[illegible]k.

[illegible] of Industrial Dem[illegible] Co-operative.

[illegible]ative

This [illegible]w idea, it has been [illegible] the beginning of the [illegible]vement. It has often [illegible] forward as an alternative to nationalisation.

A Co-operative involves the ownership of the company by the workers. But the company still has to compete on the capitalist market.

Just as capitalism works on the exploitation of the working class, so must a co-operative company exploit its workers. In fact, the workers are forced to exploit themselves!

What's more, the co-operative is usually formed out of an already bankrupt industry, creating additional problems for the workers, such as at the Norton Villiers Triumph factory at Meridan, England.

Here the Government lent the workers the money to buy the plant and equipment to start the co-operative.

But because they found themselves taking over a bankrupt industry in a fierce market, the workers found they had to increase their productivity by 85%.

And the Labor Government loan had many strings attached, including wage limits and the right to appoint a manager as an adviser.

The above two examples relate to companies that were bankrupt or near to collapse, and Industrial Democracy was seen as a way to keep them in business and to save the workers jobs.

It may have helped the bosses profits but the workers were no better off.

In Australia, however, there are companies that are making steady profits, but are still keen to introduce Industrial Democracy.

destroyed

As can be seen at Leylands, Worker Participation has destroyed the trade union organisation on the shop floor. This is one reason.

But the schemes also tend to increase profits, as at Luv Pet Food company in Sydney. One of its owners, Linden Prowse, claims that since experiments in 1970 with worker participation and job enrichment, labour turnover, absenteeism, and costs have decreased while productivity rose.

But in 1972, when the scheme was abolished, the plant was forced to close down.

There's a deeper reason why the bosses want Industrial Democracy.

If they do not buy the workers off with some sort of participation scheme, they are scared they will some day try more drastic means to gain control over their workplaces.

The employers Central Industrial Secretariat puts it like this:

"If management were not prepared to take the initiative in this area they might eventually be confronted with externally imposed statutory provisions which could seriously hinder the development and viability of private enterprise".

We all know where the fight to defend our living standards can be won . . . on the shop floor.

At Vauxhall in England, the company for years controlled the shop floor by means of Management Advisory Committees, a form of participation.

But the workers there built up a shop steward organisation which successfully challenged the domination of these councils.

And in Germany, since the war, the management dominated Work Councils have been the sole "representatives" of the workers.

Now the workers are beginning to organise with shop stewards, because rank and file action is the only way to deal with the bosses.

We must fight to defend Trade Union organisation on the shop floor. Any means the bosses or the Government use to weaken rank and file unity must be resisted, and this includes Worker Participation.

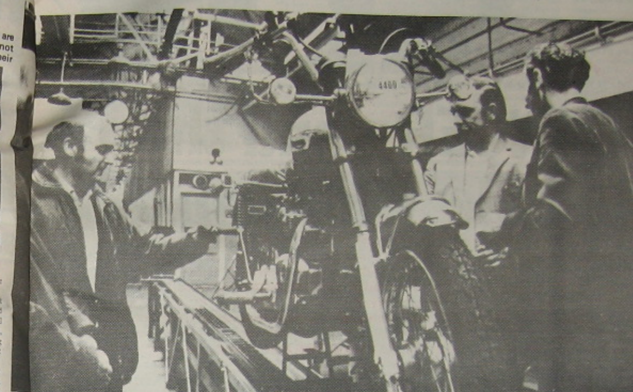
We cannot give priorities to profit and competition, and still fight for better conditions and pay in our workplaces.

control

What we really need is workers control.

Not just control over a few individual workplaces, but control over the whole of society, based on a system of Workers Councils and operating under a planned economy.

But without shop floor organisation we will never achieve the unity needed to attain this goal. And Worker Participation Schemes are a means of preventing this organisation.



[illegible]-Villiers-Triumph co-operative admire the product of their labour

"THE co-operative movement will never transform capitalist society.

To convert social production into one large and harminous system of free and co-operative labour general changes are needed, changes . . .

Never to be realised save by the transfer of state power, from the capitalists and land lords to the producers themselves.

KARL MARX

Leyland workers march for higher wages. Trade Union Bureaucrat Participation in management hasn't helped their struggle for a decent standard of living.

what we're fighting for

Members of the Carame Workers Commission in Portugal. Following the overthrow of fascism in 1974 the Portuguese workers set up real organs of industrial democracy, the workers' commissions. And like Donny Dunstan, the trendies in Portugal were scared of the power that real workers commissions represented. The bosses and their allies in Portugal's Socialist Party have been trying to crush the commissions ever since.

BY JANEY STONE

EVERY two minutes, in the USA, one person dies from cancer.

More people are killed by cancer in one year than were killed in battle during the whole of World War II.

Cancer is a modern epidemic. The death rate has tripled since the beginning of the century.

The fear of cancer, and the desperate hope for a cure, lie behind the furore over Milan Brych's visit to Australia.

But can cancer be cured?

Thousands of millions of dollars have been spent trying to find a cure, and more is spent every year.

Yet cancer patients have little better chance of surviving for five years now than they had twenty-five years ago.

The main improvements in cancer treatment happened before 1955, with advances in surgery, blood transfusion and antibiotics. Nowadays, attempts to discover a "cure" are confined to relatively minor areas, such as viruses and the immune system.

Though we have not found a cure for cancer we do know, in a general way, what causes it. And we know the sorts of steps that ought to be taken to prevent the disease.

Scientist now accept that 90 percent of cancers are caused by environmental factors. This includes air pollution, chemicals in water and food, radiation and smoking.

It also includes occupational causes? Dr. Alan Bell, of the NSW Division of Occupational Health estimates that there is an occupational factor in 50 percent of cases.

And yet less than a third of cancer research is concerned with environmental research and prevention.

And there is no routine testing of chemicals when they are first introduced into industry. So the workers themselves became guinea pigs, and millions of people die from cancer which is preventable.

With all the money going into a cure for cancer, very little is being done to prevent it. Let's look at some cases.

SOME cancers have been caused by medications prescribed by doctors.

A few years ago doctors found a number of cases of vaginal cancer in young women. The cause was eventually traced to a drug stilboestrol, given to their mothers during pregnancy.

But discovery of the link was not due to deep scientific research. A lift broke down in Boston, giving a gynaecologist and a pathologist time to exchange experiences.

Cancer of the scrotum (arrowed) caused by contact with oil: — L to R early, middle and late cancers.

CANCER – and the people who cause it

In 1775 a London doctor noticed that chimney sweeps got cancer of the scrotum from the soot.

Today, over 200 years later, thousands of workers are still dying of skin cancers caused by the same group of chemicals. They are found in petroleum oil, pitch and asphalt widely used today without protective clothing or any other precautions.

Employers give their workers no information about this danger, or else they talk about "skin rashes" or "nuisance complaints". Dr Castrol claims that the skin cancer from oil is "slight" tool-setters might not think slight, when they realise they run a risk of cancer at times the national average.

Then there is lung cancer, which has increased three times since the last twenty years. Air pollution is partly responsible.

For example, in Rahway (USA) residents of industrial areas have a lung cancer rate four times higher than the national average.

This is due to a carcinogenic cancer causing agent, escaping from a local factory which makes rocket fuel.

Lung cancer is also caused by carcinogens in the workplace. Asbestos, for instance, was known to be harmful over 75 years ago. Yet today, 50 percent of asbestos insulation workers get a form of lung cancer.

American uranium miners get lung cancer caused by radiation. Plans continue to mine uranium in Australia.

Oil Mist rising from a lathe. Doctors have known for 200 years that oil and related chemicals cause cancer of the scrotum, yet workers are still exposed to the danger.

sprays

Now let's look at a really clear case. Vinyl chloride has been used for 40 years to make plastic, and medical workers first noticed it affected health in 1930.

Yet nothing was done, and today several hundred thousand workers have been exposed to it. So have tens of thousands of people living near the factories. Unknown numbers of people have inhaled aerosol sprays containing vinyl chloride.

In 1971, experiments in Italy showed that it caused liver damage in rats. The US Manufacturers Chemists Association suppressed this data for three years, and undeniable cases of liver cancer occured in a Louisville rubber factory.

Now standards for maximum exposure were rapidly introduced. But since liver cancer often only appears 20 years after the first exposure, the new restrictions were no help to all the workers exposed before.

Milan Brych might have a cure for cancer, though more likely he's a quack. But that is not the most important question.

Cancer can be prevented. Why society takes the step to prevent it? Why hasn't society done so? Why is cancer allowed to remain a deadly killer?

This answer is not a medical one. It is economic, social and political.

Curtin: Position without Power

"THIS Party stands for the social overthrow of capitalism.

"The change may be accompanied with strife and violence as the manifestation of its arrival.

"Whatever comes it will be the evolution of the world reaching such a stage as to necessitate a complete revolution in which it shall advance.

revolutionary

"And Socialism, founded as it has been in the growth of capitalism, and having as its policy the abolition of the existing system, must be revolutionary, as well as international to accomplish its purpose."

These words appeared in "The Socialist", journal of the Victorian Socialist Party (V.S.P.) in 1906. They were written by a future Australian Prime Minister.

"Just another broken promise." Perhaps. But there's no doubt that John Curtin meant what he wrote in 1906, and it's quite possible that he still thought that way when he died in 1945.

Nevertheless, his wartime A.L.P. government did not introduce socialism into Australia.

As Victorian Secretary of the Timber Workers Union before and during World War I, Curtin had campaigned vigorously against their miserable working conditions and near-feudal state of debt to their employers.

attacked

As Prime Minister from 1941-45 he often attacked wharfies and miners who, in defiance of Communist Party Union leaders, "disrupted the war effort" with their wage claims.

Curtin had opposed World War I as imperialist and he campaigned tirelessly against conscription. But in 1942 he repealed conscription for overseas service as vital to Australia's defence against Japan. Eddie Ward, Arthur Calwell and a lot of the labour movement continued to oppose it, but Curtin brought conscription in during 1943.

That's not to say that Curtin did nothing for the working class. The introduction of uniform taxation in 1942 was basically to pay for the war effort. But it also allowed the introduction of many Federal Government pensions which we take for granted today.

answer

Don't expect Lloyd Ross's biography of Curtin to provide much of an answer to the question of why Curtin moved to the right. Ross seems to hold it down to little more than the fact that people grow more "realistic" as they grow older.

This is hardly surprising. Ross, like Curtin, is a "aged Socialist". Except that he lost the "faith" a lot faster and moved a lot quicker – all the way from the Communist Party to the Industrial Groups (in which Labor men like Ross worked with future D.L.P. types against the left in the unions.)

Unfortunately he concentrates more heavily on war diplomacy than some of the important issues which faced the Labor Party in Curtin's time.

For instance, a territorial agreement with New Zealand which upset the U.S. and Britain a little during 1944 gets a whole chapter. But the Powers Referendum of the same year gets less than two pages.

vigour

Yet had Curtin put more vigour into that campaign it could have enabled future Labor Governments to have achieved for greater reform than they have.

Power — lastly it is the essential powerlessness of the A.L.P. to change society with a Parliamentary majority which will cause any of its leaders to "betray his socialist past."

The real power in Australian society must have been clear enough to Curtin when the Federal Bank was able to use the High Court to flout the Labor Government's war-ownership regulations.

fines

This was in marked contrast to the fines and imprisonments which Curtin and other anti-conscription-ists copped for "offences" against World War I censorship regulations. But what was Curtin?

Curtin as a war time Prime Minister is probably taught against the working class in a way that Curtin the pre-war Socialist never earlier days would not have recognised.

But it wouldn't be fair to deny that that he remained a human being to the end. As Prime Minister he took the bus and sometimes hitch-hiked to work.

Could you imagine Malcolm Fraser hitch-hiking to work?

TONY ROBERTS reviews the biography of John Curtin by Lloyd Ross

Fred Astaire — stand aside! John Travolta goes through one of his brilliant dance routines in "Saturday Night Fever."

DISCO DILEMMA

Phil Griffiths gets a dose of Saturday Night Fever

YOUR name is Tony and you're into a religion called Saturday Night.

All week, six days your life drags along in the hardware shop where you work and at home where you're always fighting with your parents.

Then it's Saturday Night, you get cleaned up, carefully put on your chaps and climb into your pastel pants, your new silk shirt and platform shoes. You spend an hour getting your hair just right, then head for the 2001 Club.

wishes

For six days a week, you get put down. Your boss is putting you down, your mother wishes you were like your brother, Father Frank Jr. (who's a priest!) and your father yells at you for being late for tea.

But at the 2001 Club you're respected. You're somebody. You're the best dancer and all the girls want to dance with you. Everyone says "Tony! You oughta do something with your dancing."

It's easy to see why millions of young people can identify with Tony Manero from Brooklyn, New York. Tony's even better than ordinary: the one thing he's good at is the one thing that matters.

And in "Saturday Night Fever", Tony's dancing is brilliant, magical. John Travolta, who is supposed to have practised for three months for the part, has an incredible feel for disco.

The dancing gives new life to the Bee Gees' rather ordinary music and the sole spots are elegant and exciting.

Unfortunately, the rest of the movie just doesn't measure up.

Karen Gorney, the co-star, plays a mid-twenties, middle-class, middle-American public relations worker, who conventition is built around "I had lunch with David Bowie today" type remarks.

ignorant

The director couldn't make up his mind whether Tony was going to play brashly ignorant, awkward, embarrassed or sexually scheming towards the woman who becomes his dancing partner for the annual disco competition.

That's because in this movie, there are only two kinds of women; fucks and friends.

Tony tries to get off with her in the backseat of the gang's car, but she firmly resists his very vigorous advances. The rest of the movie, they spend patching it up and agreeing to be "friends", and doing it as if being friends never means sleeping together.

One of the best scenes in the movie comes when Tony wants to take a half day off work. The boss refuses to let him, so he goes anyway with the boss shouting out that he's fired.

Next day he turns up again, and, to his surprise, the boss has changed his mind. "You're a good kid, Tony," he says. "You've got a future here."

"I'll never forget the look on Tony's face as his boss points to the other workers, boasting that they'd all been there ten years, fifteen years. And they all look as if every ounce of life and energy has been drained from them.

The movie never asks why Tony's locked into a deadend job, why he's bored and alienated. It implies that it's got something to do with his poor Italian background. And the message is, "escape", into the middle class if you can, with your dancing.

But not everyone can be a dancing star. What are the rest of us supposed to do?

MY SHOUT

Dave Nadel's

WATCH for a huge orgy of renaming of public buildings and public places now that Menzies has finally croaked.

When Churchill snuffed it thirteen years ago a loyal Victorian government renamed the Latrobe Valley town of Hazelwood in his honour.

hated

The irony of that was that Churchill, the military genius who deserted up Gallipoli and caused the deaths of thousands of Australians, was always afraid to come out here because he was hated.

If the Australian ruling class will name a whole town after Churchill what won't they do for their very own Menzies.

First cab off the rank was Melbourne City Council's Ian Kiss (Civic Group and Liberal Party) who wants to call the city square the Sir Robert Menzies Square. Nice one Ian! Just what Melbourne needs: Pig Iron Plaza.

In his life Menzies was always very concerned about Universities. Whilst still alive he managed to get the Ming Wang at Monash and the library at A.N.U. named in his "honour".

Now that he is dead there will probably be a whole University named for him. After all his rival Casey has one.

Since Fraser is not about to build another Uni, watch for flying feathers as they try to rename Melbourne University after its former chancellor and most odious graduate.

Personally I think the Melbourne University Regiment would be more appropriate. Perhaps they could have a special Menzies commission for officers, which would become inoperative on event of war.

Since it is going to be impossible to stop the flow of Menzies Memorials we might as well join in. There are after all a few appropriate things that could be named after the fat bully from Jeparit.

For example BHP's Australian Iron and Steel plant in Port Kembla. It was there that they made the pig iron that Menzies sent to Japan.

A peculiarly symbolic act might be to name Melbourne's F19 the Menzies Freeway. Like Menzies, it is imposed on and hated by the working class residents of Collingwood.

Like the years of Menzies government, it appears to do a lot more than actually does for the middle class outer-suburbanites.

airborne

And like Bob Menzies, the only people it really benefits are the upper class from Kew. It even runs through his old electorate.

There are other possible memorials from his years in office. The Menzies Fill (rarely airborne) squadron. Or perhaps the Bob Menzies Security and Intelligence Organisation.

Menzies didn't set up ASIO – after all every ruling class has its spy force. But only Bob Menzies would use his to win an election.

Well, these are my suggestions but there must be loads more. So My Shout is running a special competition for the most appropriate Menzies memorial.

Entries close on June 19 and will be published in this column June 28. The winner will receive Menzies favourite pick-up, a portrait of the queen.

ALL THE NEWS ON THE BLF ELECTIONS

Burn the Black ballot !

THE Gallagher-Black leadership in the NSW BLF has decided to pretend the court-controlled election isn't happening.

They're going to run their own election instead for the State branch positions. They've already sent out their ballot papers.

by Janet Vaux

BLF members showed what they think of Black's bodgie ballot papers. They made a bonfire of them and burned them.

Black's ballot is certain to be rigged, to give him an excuse to pretend he didn't lose the real ballot.

What is worse, it's going to cause a lot of confusion among members who will get two sets of ballot papers for the same election.

And some BLs are being visited late at night by standover men offering to help them fill in the bodgie ballot.

steal

These are attempts to steal an election that they can't win fairly.

The workers are angry at these tactics and a number of sites have decided not to vote in Black's ballot.

The leadership aren't trying to hide the fact that it's a set-up.

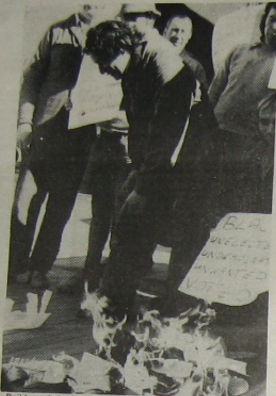
They sent telegrams to the BLs for Democratic Control candidates, telling them about the ballot, at twenty to five on 22nd May. The telegrams invited candidates to send their scrutineers along to supervise the posting out of ballots.

posted

But the ballot papers were actually posted out at five o'clock on the same day – before any of the telegrams were received!

Meanwhile it seems like Black doesn't want to be forgotten. Someone rang the cops just before the ballot papers were burnt at Qantas, and said there was a bomb in the riggers' shed.

It must be someone who doesn't care to go on the site much nowadays, as the riggers' shed was moved a few months back.



Builders Labourers burn the ballot papers for the rigged election the Black-Gallagher officials are trying to run.

Officials ban election rally

ON the 24th May Bob Petty, a BLs for Democratic Control election candidate, tried to set up a site meeting at Westmead, where he works as a dogman.

He asked co-delegate Jimmy Milligan to agree to a site meeting to discuss the current elections.

Milligan asked delegate Stan Casey (who's also on the state executive), and Casey rang up the state office.

At the state office, Dick Keenan instructed Casey that no meeting was to be held on the site regarding the election.

Six BLs on the site then signed a statutory declaration demanding a meeting. But Casey just replied by abusing Bob Petty. *"Bloody Pommie Commo bastard, you and all the wogs in Australia should be sent home."*

Workers on the site were incensed and three of them put out a leaflet written by Bob Petty, which said *"I ask all BLs on this site ... is this the way for a delegate and union official to treat the membership on the site."*

They plan to put out a weekly leaflet.

Casey only manages to hold on to his position because he doesn't turn up to the site whenever there's a meeting called to vote him out.

Pig sty a[t] Westfiel[d]

THE Westfield site at Hurstville ... Sydney's biggest jobs.

All in all there are about 150 workers including 50 or so BLF members.

by David Sh...

You would think that with a site this size the unions would have done their job to get decent conditions for the workers before the job even kicked off.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

When we arrived on the job to demolish some scaffolding, we found some of the most shocking conditions in Sydney.

The toilets had not been cleaned for weeks. There was no paper, no soap, no hand towels and the sinks were filthy.

missing

The formworkers had to eat their lunch in an air conditioned shed – i.e. one wall was missing.

No one on the site except the scaffolders was getting height money. And the job had piles of putrid rotting rubbish everywhere.

All in all, Westfield were getting away with murder.

We got BLF organiser Laurie Skinner on the job on Thursday, and told him we wanted a meeting the following day. At eleven o'clock on Friday we all stopped work.

The first thing Laurie Skinner did was apologise to the mass meeting ... way the BLF ... neglected the site. *"The unions have ... site down."*

It's good to h... from a supporter ... Gallagher-Black ... NSW.

Now if Laurie ... fair dinkum ... with Black and ... for Democratic ... because the BLF ... has let every site ... down.

Anyway at the ... we put a list of de... Westfields:

i) Toilets and ... brought up ... and cleaned ...

ii) Everyone ... proper award ... height money ... dated.

iii) No body ... All body ... be employed ... contractor ... and condition...

iv) No work ...

v) No all in ...

From the ... air-conditioned ... carpetted offices ... agreed to all the ... and we went back ... after two hours ...

We should ... some pressure ... instead of just ... word. This week ... things really are ...

Nevertheless ... the first importan... starting to ... had been a ... disorganised ...

The stoppage ... was the first ... history and there ... certainly be ... Westfield don't pull ... socks up.

NSW Teach...

The NSW Teachers' ... tion has used unem... teachers as shock ... its campaign over ...

Now Federation ... are trying to ... campaign down.

They first tried ... play the right ... ment issue.

Now the bureaucr... backtracking further ... ministrative Committee ... considering the sacking ... the Unemployed ... organiser.

The final decision ... made at Federation's ... council meeting.

Unemployed teachers ... non organise ... that their ... their interests.

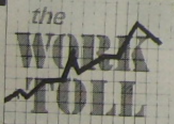
Ring 825... information.

THE 35 women machinists at Sportscraft in Melbourne are still awaiting the next move by the company in its attempts to cut their pay.

It is now a week since the "cooling-off period" of a fortnight expired. But there has still been no word from the company about its proposal for a 10 per cent cut in piece-rates.

Meanwhile, the Women's Right to Work Campaign picketed Sportsgirl, the company's retail outlet in the city, during lunchtimes last Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

About 15 women handed leaflets to shoppers explaining why they should boycott the store.



CHULLORA railway workers are fighting the NSW Public Transport Commission for results of medical tests done by the Division of Occupational Health.

The workers were concerned about the affects of fibre glass which is replacing asbestos. But now their past work with asbestos is worrying them.

It took bans and many meetings to get the tests. But the PTC only issued a list with 3 categories: workers who didn't need further tests; those who needed more tests (the majority) and those who needed them in 6 months.

The Workers Health Centre thinks many needed broader tests immediately. So they're doing a survey of the 3,000 railway workers to see how many are suffering from asbestos exposure.

The PTC isn't too happy about the survey. It tried to stop Dr Ben Bartlett from the Centre talking to the men – so they walked out the gate to hear him.

■

IN Victoria meatworkers are being denied the results of medical tests too.

About 200 meatworkers at Playfair Meats, Dromana, went on strike because some of them have contracted the disease brucellosis.

Brucellosis is a cattle disease which can be passed onto humans. It causes fever, weakness, headaches and can lead to severe nerve damage.

The Health Department sent letters to 57 workers via the company telling them they had been affected, and should see a doctor or go to the Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital.

But the bosses wouldn't pass the letters on. So they went on strike to try to force the company to reveal the results.

In most states of Australia Health and Labour and Industry Departments are only compelled to tell the bosses of any results. Workers are not entitled to know ... even though it's their health that's at stake!

■

HALF of the estimated 11 million American workers exposed to asbestos will contract deadly diseases.

This was announced in late April by Joseph Califano, Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. An "advisory letter" has been sent to the nation's 400,000 doctors.

They're a little late. For many years governments have known that asbestos is a killer but done nothing.

INDUSTRIAL murder in this country is something you'll rarely read about in the papers. But eight workers die each week in accidents often cause by bosses' negligence.

Even when the bosses are convicted, the penalties could easily be paid from petty cash.

A NSW building company was fined $240 for causing the death of a worker. It didn't provide safe access and the workers had to climb 20 feet up scaffolding.

The magistrate said "there seems to be a lamentable lack of concern for the men working in the situation."

A pet food company was fined $300 for unguarded machinery which led to a 16 year old losing his finger.

The maximum penalty for companies under NSW law is $500. The actual sum is fixed by the severity of the accident and the company's record. If the record is good, normally it's only $40 to $50.

Killing a worker is the ultimate in severity – what do they have to do to us before they get fined the maximum?

by Steve Morgan

Hatrick dismisses six... all out

AWU workers at Hatrick Chemicals, Homebush NSW aren't going to cop their bosses' dirty deals.

Report by Pam Townsend

Fifty men went out the gate on 18th May to protest against six men getting the sack despite the fact that the company is shorthanded in many areas.

Commissioner Johnson told the men to go back to work. He said that at the end of a week he would look at their workloads without the six men and re-consider.

The men met again on the 25th May to consider this proposal. As one worker said: *"This company proposal is a load of crap – if, we cop it for a week they'll say we don't need those six men."*

Workers at Hatrick Chemicals in Botany went out for 24 hours over the sacking of ten men.

decided

But the Homebush men have decided not to go back without the six men from their plant.

They know that ... job is safe and work... to fight hard. *"We ... ing at a couple of ... without pay. Think of ... six blokes surviving ... or more years on the ... They probably won't ... jobs in a hurry."*

The company would ... listen to the men's demands ... So they are out on the ... for another week at least.

PICKET, STRIKE BEATS J&W

WORKERS at John's and Waygood's Sandringham plant in Melbourne have cracked it for a victory over the bosses.

After three weeks out and a week-long picket, they forced the company to surrender and grant a four dollar rise and increases in service pay.

Bill Bardsley, convenor of the shop committee, told the Battler that the company had first offered them $2.50.

But this wasn't good enough. The 250 metal workers at John's and Waygood were only getting round $174, while other metal shops in the area average close to $180.

After two weeks, the company upped its offer to $3.50. But the workers were determined to hold out for a minimum of five dollars.

Bill told us they put on the picket to increase the pressure on the company. Another worker described how effective it had been.

"We're stopped about a hundred trucks since we started the picket.

"We're only had trouble from one. This bloke said he'd come all the way from Reservoir.

"He only had one small parcel and he wanted to know where he could drop it.

"We told him, off the end of Sandringham pier."

"We're stopping trucks that want to come in and use the weighbridge, also.

"The bloke who operates the weighbridge, he's out with us, and they had someone from Despatch rushing out and doing his job instead."

Another good feature of the strike was the financial support from other shops, when approached by the shop stewards.

Johns and Waygood in Clayton struck a $2 levy, Stanley Welding in Moorabbin a $5 levy, and the Williamstown Naval Dockyards donated $200 to the strike fund.

Johns and Waygood picketers turn away a truck. They got good co-operation from all but one driver.

We oppose this wage rise!

HERE'S one wage rise the Battler doesn't support.

The growing army of scabs on the supposedly black-banned Newport Power Station site in Melbourne – latest estimate 350 – got a whopping $19 increase from Arbitration last week.

And they scarcely did a thing to get it.

How can one explain this sudden, amazing burst of generosity from an Arbitration Commission that has played Uncle Scrooge with wage claims for years and years?

Especially when the scabs didn't even have anyone putting their case. The unions refused to represent them.

Presumably the ruling class got a pang of guilt that its loyal strikebreakers were getting about $20 less than any unionist in Melbourne.

disgusting

But what was almost as disgusting was the reaction from the trade union officials.

Or rather, the lack of it.

Certainly, there were the usual furious phrases and warlike words. John Halfpenny though it was "provocative" and Norm Gallagher said it showed what a joke indexation was, or something like that.

The fulminating of the trade union officials created just as much impact as usual. None.

And little wonder. A year ago there was a movement building up to stop Newport with mass pickets.

The trade union officials ignored it in their droves. They weren't prepared to do a thing to enforce their own bans.

Now the Arbitration Commission, in its own inimitable fashion, has rubbed Trades Hall's nose a little deeper in the dirt.

Meaties win in 15 mins

IT took only fifteen minutes for the boning room labourers to win back their overtime payments at Smorgon's Dinmore meatworks last week.

by Ian Rintoul AMIEU

Since early finishes were introduced at the shed, there has been a long-term understanding that the labourers start overtime half-an-hour after the boners finish the day.

But lately the labourers involved with glueing and strapping the boxes of boned meat have been held up. The glueing and strapping machines haven't been working properly, and some of the labourers have been expected to both feed and operate the machines themselves.

refused

The company refused to pay them overtime.

Management kept promising that the machinery problems would be fixed. In the meantime, they expected to keep the labourers there for eight hours to finish the work, even if some cartons had to go through the machines four or five times.

All this with no pay for overtime.

The labourers waited for the machines to be fixed. And waited. And waited.

So at a lunchtime meeting, they decided (overwhelmingly) that regardless of company excuses, they would not be going back to work till the company agreed to pay the overtime.

Fifteen minutes later, the company backed down and agreed!

All overtime will be paid properly from now on.

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self-confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If thats the sort of work you want to do-

JOIN US!

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

Building I.S. amongst women workers

THE Sportscraft women's struggle was a model of militancy and determination. I.S. members have been supporting them.

How can we develop this kind of relationship with working women throughout industry?

The I.S. National Committee, meeting in Sydney in last week, voted to strengthen the organisation's work among working women.

In the near future branches will be paying special attention to building women's struggles, and the Battler will carry special articles and features to back them up.

The National Committee also spent considerable time assessing the election campaign in the Builders Labourers Federation, and the work done by the IS in support.

We reaffirmed our policy of relying on the mobilisation of the BLF rank and file in action, with court action a legitimate tactic but not the key to victory.

The question of protectionism, and the recent struggles of meatworkers and seamen, took up part of the second sessions. IS has a traditional position opposed to protectionism, which is an attempt at a nationalist solution to a world economic crisis.

But where protection issues are intertwined with others, as in the Utah dispute, we may support the struggle.

But the NC also agreed that all IS members had to be able to discuss with workers the dangers of protectionist sentiments.

Finally, the NC voted to proceed with production of a revamped journal. For a small organisation like IS, it is a struggle to produce a journal, let alone support it financially.

The old Front Line appeared erratically. But a majority of the National Committee felt that the importance of developing our theory, in more depth than the Battler allows, justified the effort.

The new journal will appear every 6 months.

International Socialists

Fighting Fund

LAST month, we received $336 for the Battler Fighting Fund. This is good news, since it's the first time this year we've come close to our target of $400.

We'd like to thank:

PD	3.00
Anon	1.00
South Branch Vegetarian Dinner	69.00
Melbourne – May Day Food Stall	59.42
Sydney – May Day Food Stall	25.00
JR	5.00
Rae	2.00
Anon	20.00
JG	0.50
South Fundraiser	25.00
Melbourne – Film Night	20.00
Melbourne – May Day BBQ	28.00
Brisbane Fundraiser	48.00
Adelaide – Scottish Dinner	10.00
Adelaide – Film Night	20.00
TOTAL	336.72

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031	33-4142
24 hour answering and message machine	335-2783
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	335-2783
MELBOURNE GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	387 6351
SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown 2042	51-3665
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49-7939
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	49 6405
BRISBANE PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067	358 3978
IPSWICH, QLD.	281 6113

What's On

Deadline for next issue: 7th June.

BRISBANE Fri 16 June
General Womens Liberation Meeting 7.30pm E.G. Whitlam Room University of Queensland. For information contact Womens Rights Qld. Unit 371 1611 after hours 358 2283

BRISBANE Tue 13 June
Forum at Griffith University The Politics of Women's Liberation 12.30 the Undercroft. Contact Womens Group C/- Womens Room (above Refec).

THE BATTLER is edited by Phil Griffiths of 1a Wight St Kensington Vic and printed by Media Press, 7 Garners Ave Marrickville, NSW

QLD POWER BANS SPREAD

THE campaign by Queensland power workers for their log of claims is spreading.

Maintenance workers from the ETU, FIA, FEDFA, AMWSU and building trades unions at four other Queensland power stations have joined Swanbank workers in imposing overtime and call-out bans.

And not before time, in the view of the Swanbank workers.

After having waited for months for action over their log of claims, it took a mass meeting at Swanbank to impose the bans to get the ball rolling.

The delegates then contacted other power stations, informed them of their action, and asked for their support.

Initially there was little support from some union officials. Delegates received contradictory information about the progress of their log of claims.

Then ETU members found that Ray Dempsey, ETU assistant state secretary, had notified the radio and newspapers that bans had been lifted.

This caused confusion in at least two power stations – Bulimba and Tennyson, both in Brisbane. They lifted their bans because they thought Swanbank had caved in.

Gladstone remained firm, and Bulimba and Tennyson again gave support when notified of the misleading statement by Dempsey.

ignorance

Then Ray Dempsey fronted up at Swanbank. He pleaded ignorance to both the news and radio reports. Then he asked the shop stewards to lift the overtime bans!

The shop stewards rebuffed him in no uncertain manner.

At the same time, AMWSU state secretary Vaughan went to Bulimba and persuaded the men there to lift their bans.

As one power worker commented on this piece of sabotage, *"Who needs enemies with friends like these? Now we know how our brothers in Victoria were treated!"*

As a result of the Swanbank workers' bans, a meeting was held with the State Electricity Commission. In less than two hours, the Commission threw out the log completely.

The Trades Hall officials met and revised the log to make it "more negotiable."

They removed the 35 hour week and the forty dollar wage claim, saying these would have to have separate campaigns.

After a mass meeting endorsed the changes, the bans were officially re-imposed – although some of the stations hadn't lifted them.

Despite the little support offered to the power workers at the start of the campaign, the ETU, AMWSU and FIA have taken the opportunity of the Swanbank action to also push for a flow-on of the Victorian power workers' increases won last year.

seminar

The rank-and-file action has also resulted in a seminar in early June for power workers to meet and discuss the situation.

So the fight is on. And while the Generating Board has been making noises about "black-outs" and "sabotage", the workers have made it clear where the responsibility for the situation lies.

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

VICTORY AT VICKERS

OVER one hundred metal tradesmen packed into Melbourne's arbitration court last week to hear the Vickers company's answer to their pay claim.

The tradesmen won five dollars across-the-board for the whole staying out a week.

The claim was basically to catch up with other metal shops doing who were getting around $184.

Vickers was only paying the tradesmen at its Richmond plant $179.

Before the strike, the company wasn't even prepared to offer a tried to stall the workers with empty promises.

Vickers workers discuss tactics during a mass meeting at the plant.

Melbourne's Arbitration court is packed out by Vickers strikers during the hearing.

During the were out, an tic was packing ration Court hearings.

Most of the hushed and a by the courtro phere when they in.

One workers whisper, "Look at suits – the damage be enormous."

But with hundreds of eyes boring company even more voices scarcely whisper each spoke.

And by the the workers were encircling the table.

The Clerk of looked decidedly about it all. The reps and Brown couldn't without staring the eyes of a strikers.

The company completely unable the unions' case With their contra further and further they tried to and offered $4

The Commission the company court-room while held a quick discuss tactics.

They decided company's bluff out for the full And since the company obviously weakening decided to raise other inequities well.

When the resumed, Commissioner Brown decided to *inevitable. He ruled* full five dollar rise, and company agreed to the other problems also.

The Vickers workers because the strike timed. Vickers has work right now Government contracts they can't afford any

But the tactic the court was also ant, and well strikers considering

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Pancakes on the floor

PANCAKES on the Rocks in Sydney have recently spent a lot of money renovating their kitchen area.

Sounds great – except that they still claim that paying proper adult wages would send them broke.

The new floor covering in the staff area is rumoured to have cost $2,500. It is so slippery that workers keep falling over.

One waitress said: *"It is really slippery. Lots of people have slipped down the steps, and the last kid apparently broke her leg.*

"People are always falling down the stairs."

Another waitress added: *"And they've got the cheek to put up this notice in the staff area that no-one's allowed to smoke, until they can figure out some way of stopping people stubbing their cigarettes out on this expensive floor covering.*

"No-one takes any notice of it, though."

shifts

Meanwhile Pancakes' boss Roger Meadmore is trying to save money by shortening people's shifts, so that he doesn't have to give them a meal break.

And then he's getting them to do nearly twice as much work.

At week-ends, most of the casuals' shifts have been shortened to 5 hours – the legal maximum you can work without a meal break.

And most waitresses have been given at least seven tables, instead of four.

"It means that people wait a long time. And it means that the supervisor writes in her little staff note-book that you've been slack – or so I heard, via the grapevine.

"We were always run off all the time anyway."

About 13 workers at Pancakes have now joined the union. But members find it difficult to talk to others at work about the union, because they're afraid that Meadmore will find some excuse to sack them.

Chrysler five saved

TWO THOUSAND carworkers at Chrysler's Tonsley plant in Adelaide have won a three-day strike to save the jobs of five workmates.

The strike was in support of the 45 workers in the gateline section in bodybuild, who went out over the sacking of the five from their area.

Chrysler had made the preposterous claim that worker in the gateline section had 3¼ hours spare time day.

The attempted sackings were part of Chrysler's of the workforce, which has already cost around 1000 jobs

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PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

STOP PRESS

Duncan Williams

BL CAND. SACKED

THERE'S no end to the dirty tricks being played in the NSW BLF elections.

Rank and file candidate for organiser, Duncan Williams, has been sacked from his job on the Qantas site.

Duncan was addressing an election meeting at the Commonwealth Bank job in Castlereagh St.

He was talking to builders' labourers employed by A.W. Edwards at 9am when two bosses from the Dillingham company turned up.

The bosses, John Pond and Ross Martin sacked Duncan on the spot.

Another member of the rank and file committee, David Shaw, has also been sacked.

On Page 12, David tells how the scab union officials led by Steve Black have combined with the bosses to get him banned from every site in Sydney.

Meanwhile, the result of the fake ballot has just been announced. Black has given himself victory 560 to 160 for Noel Olive.

The "vote" was a joke since the rank and file committee organised a boycott of it and burned their ballot papers.

Then Black organised a branch meeting to try and get the fake ballot ratified.

The meeting, held on Tuesday night turned into an uproar with Black outnumbered two to one.

There were 110 BL's at the meeting. Black's men refused to move any motions at all because they knew they'd lose.

That afternoon, the men on the Rawson Place job had voted at an election meeting to make attendance at the branch meeting compulsory. They all turned up.

Black's latest diversion has failed for the moment.

But until he is rolled at the coming election, rank and file BL's will continue to face harrassment from both the bosses and the union office.

FRASER'S EXPORT "TRIUMPH"- MEAT PRICES SET TO ZOOM!

by Alec Kahn

What a bloody scandal!

IN the middle of his trout-fishing junket overseas, Malcolm Fraser manages to snare a 50,000 tonne boost in Australian beef exports to America.

Then he tells us it's a triumph for the whole country. Except that we're all going to be paying round 10 per cent more for meat as a result!

Marvellous, isn't it. On top of every other cut we've had to take in the last three years – to Medibank, wages, education, hospitals – we're now going to have the food taken off our dinner tables by higher prices.

And they're calling it a breakthrough!

reassuring

Doug Anthony was of course reassuring about it all.

"I hope that people, if they do have to pay higher prices for meat, recognise that the beef producers of this country have been on a very low income or on a negative income situation for about three or four years."

Who is Anthony trying to kid? The real winners are going to be his mates in the meat processing and export industry.

Bosses like Gilbertsons, Metro Meat, and the hated J.H. Ralph – and the giant beef graziers like Lord Vestey and Art Linkletter.

They're the ones who'll make the real rake-off. The small producers have been running down their herds for four years now because of the rural crisis. They won't be able to suddenly turn around and exploit the price rise.

One of Anthony's own party, cattleman Les McFarlane who is the Country Liberal Party speaker in the Northern Territory Assembly, showed just what a liar Anthony was.

"It's good news for the processors and exporters," McFarlane told the Press.

"It can't help the Territory's cattlemen because we don't have the meatworks to take advantage of the increases.

"The cattlemen have never been able to trust the meatworks to work in their interest."

force

The real scandal is that both the Australian and American beef industry have been running down their herds for the last few years to try and force prices up.

In Australia, cattlemen have even been paid by the Government to shoot their cattle.

Yet two-thirds of the world is starving. Even in "advanced" countries like England, meat is a luxury available to workers once a week if they're lucky.

And now that there's an "upturn" in the Australian meat industry, Australian workers have to pay the price as well.

Crazy, isn't it? Criminal, wanton lunacy.

But that's capitalism. The system of profit amidst misery, the system of starvation amidst plenty.

The system that takes food off our plates to put money in their pockets.

August 1976 – and while two-thirds of the world goes hungry, Australian farmers are paid to shoot their beef cattle.

Processors make a killing

between the lines

LAST week, the government gave a social worker the Order of Australia. This week, they cut off her funds.

Dorothy McDonald, who works for the Helping Hand Association, received her OA for services to the mentally retarded in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

But the government's new austerity policy for the School's Commission means that the Helping Hand's grant will be cut for the first time in 27 years.

THE charming collection of garbage generals currently inflicting themselves on Argentina have found a new friend – China.

The Chinese minister of foreign trade spoke at a banquet in Peking in honour of a visiting Argentine delegation.

"We share the same stand on many important international issues and have enjoyed excellent co-operation." The Argentinians responded by pointing out that the two countries could also co-operate by exchanging technical information.

WE all know that the Hamer government believes in protecting the environment. And it has also forcefully reminded us that laws are made to be obeyed.

It's a pity then that Carrum Primary school has been illegally pumping poor quality sewerage effluent into local Carrum Creek for discharge into Port Phillip Bay.

Needless to say, there will be no prosecuting the Education Department. And asking for that new toilet block? The people of Carrum may as well piss in the wind.

FROM the land of straight bananas and bent politicians comes the news that Premier Joh has finally got his priorities right.

He's put car registration fees up again.

In 1976, the government collected $76 million from car rego fees and $41 million from all mineral royalties.

At this rate, he'll be able to abolish royalties altogether. Not that Utah would even notice. They only ever came out of petty cash anyway.

WELL, Bob Hawke has finally won his first Battler Plastic Straw. And not before time.

No-one knows how to suck up to the bosses and the government the way Bob does.

So what's he done now that's so special? The man who recently told us that we have no special interest in maintaining the capitalist system has teamed up with arch right-winger, Jim Killen to promote the Army Reserve.

In a series of drum beating commercials, our very own champion of the oppressed has now descended to recruiting for the army that invaded Vietnam, maintained imperialist rule in Malaysia and Korea and keeps Niugini and the South Pacific safe for plunderers like the Burns Philp company.

Unfortunately, Bob, we don't think the ads will work. The kind of right-wing, patriotic proto-fascists likely to leap into the Army Reserve will hardly be impressed by your appeals.

by Darth Vader

INDEXATION: Bosses argue over crumbs

THE Arbitration Commission ruffled a few ruling class feathers last week by giving us the full 1.3% indexation flow-on.

Treasurer John Howard said it was most disappointing, the Confederation of Australian Industry thought it was unfortunate, and the Financial Review said *"it could not have been worse"*.

We're all used to a bit of hot air from the ruling class after any wage rises. But this time they meant it.

stupid

From the bosses' point of view, the decision was a stupid error by their friends in Arbitration.

Why did Arbitration give the full flow-on this time?

Firstly, because there has been a lot of action for wage rises in the last few months. Wharfies, armoured car drivers, scores of metal shops have all won useful gains.

The Commission wanted to try and calm down this wave of action against the guidelines.

Secondly, the Commission has decided to hold off the next indexation decision till after a full review of the whole system.

This will mean a wait of up to six months. The Commission wanted to give the ACTU a few crumbs to keep the rank-and-file quiet for that long delay.

Thirdly, the Commission figured the amount was so small, it wouldn't hurt to give the lot and try and rekindle a bit of faith in the system.

So why didn't the ruling class like the decision?

For a start, they didn't like the way Arbitration was back-tracking. The Commission has spent a long time building up the expectation of partial indexation rises – two years in fact.

Now they have wavered off that course, and the bosses don't like this vacillation.

asking

If the Commission had granted 0.5% – like the Victorian Government was asking – the bosses would have been happy.

After all, the union officials are hardly going to lead a mass campaign to recover the other 0.8%. Especially when they've let so much more slip by in the past two years.

And the bosses al[so know] that "no matter how [much] was granted this would make little d[ifference] to rank-and-file str[uggle]...

All of us who['ve been] through indexation [are] going to have our [wages] restored by a m[ere] 1.3%. We're certainly [not] going to drop any campaigns on account..."

annoyed

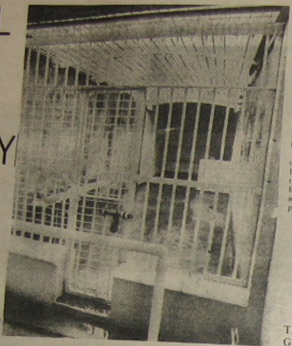
So the bosses [are] annoyed at being ... pay out a couple of ... that they got ...

The Commission have got away ... out less. The f... is encouraging.

It shows they['re worried] about the strength of the unofficial wage struggle ... is being waged ... across Australia, despite [the] slackness and cowardice of the ACTU.

KATINGAL CLOSED - BUT THE BRUTALITY GOES ON

by Janet Vaux



The Maitland Tracs.

THE hell-hole called Katingal Jail in Sydney has at last been closed down.

Two days after the last prisoners were moved out of Katingal, several of them were demonstrating against the barbarous conditions at the Maitland Tracs.

Most of the Katingal prisoners were moved to the Maitland Tracs or Parramatta Circle – security units which are no improvement on Katingal.

Ironically, the prisoners were moved out of Katingal after a break-in attempt which had even the Daily Telegraph calling for the jail to be closed – on the grounds that it was "insecure".

And despite the damning evidence amassed in the Nagle Report, nothing has yet been done to implement its provisions, or ease the brutality in NSW prisons.

The Maitland Tracs are among the worst sores in our prison system. And as for the Parramatta Circle, here's as description from Kevin Storey, who's spent some time there:

"Out of Katingal into the 'Circle' is like jumping out of the fire into the frying pan.

"The Parramatta Circle is a place where each day runs into the next; where, even without the screws treating you like an animal, the only pastime is looking at the structure of your cage.

"Being in the 'circle' means spending eighteen hours in an unsewered cell – built sometime in the last century – and the rest of the time in a wedge-shaped cage with a three-foot opening in a yard you can't see out of and the only face you see is the face of your Keeper; the screw looking down on you from his gun tower.

"Where there is no contact with other prisoners; no radio; no newspapers; no contact with the world outside. The gun-toting screw ready to blast your head off at the smallest infraction.

"Where your food is placed on the floor outside the cell – not so much different to the way people feed their domestic animals.

"Where you'll be searched every night and suffer the humiliation of the screw looking up and fingering your arse. His excuse is that he's looking for contraband – maybe he's looking to see where he came from!"

JAIL news

Kevin Storey's account of the Parramatta Circle is reprinted from the first issue of Jail News. This is a new fortnightly newspaper bringing you the truth about prisons in New South Wales. A year's subscription to Jail News costs $4. For subscriptions, or more information, write to Jail News, Box 215, Glebe, NSW 2037.

JOH BASHES TEACHERS

THE Queensland Government's 19th century attitudes to education are legendary.

In recent months, "Man: A Course of Study" (MACOS), and the "Social Education Materials Project" (SEMP), have both been banned from use in Qld schools. Both MACOS and SEMP are used extensively in schools throughout Australia, including private and Catholic schools.

religious

However, in the view of the religious fundamentalists of the Queensland cabinet, both suffer from the defect that they encourage children to think critically about our existing society and both promote (horror!) hu[man] values.

Teachers who want to continue using MACOS w[ere] told that they would be sacked and warned ... by Bjelke-Petersen that they could readily be replaced [by] some of the hundreds [of] unemployed teachers *"around the ridges."*

In other words, unemployed teachers don't dare step out of line. Teachers have seen the case of Bill W..., acting principal of Mo... State School, and unsuccessful ALP candidate in the Federal election, who [was] sacked at the start of [the] school year.

Unless teachers [and] others take determined action, to stop the ... on education and to ... of the reactionary Bjelke-Petersen government, [the] philosophy of such groups [as] STOP (Society to Outlaw Pornography) and CARE (Campaign Against Regressive Education) will be enforced in the schools.

tragic

The consequences will be frightening, and tragic for education: large class sizes, inadequate remedial teaching, a return to external exams, a restoration of the hierarchical authority of the headmaster and bureaucracy, interference with teachers' rights and ... a view that government has a right to impose its own values all the way through the education system.

As Bjelke-Petersen has said: *"There is someone in the Education Department who does not know what the Government wants to be taught . . . We expect the Department to do what the Government wants."*

ETHNIC RADIO - IN THE HANDS OF THE RIGHT

DISCONTENT has been growing in Sydney's migrant communities about the control and use of ethnic radio.

The radio programmes combine bland entertainment – music and jokes – with illicit advertising for businessmen, who exchange gifts for a chance to be "interviewed."

Meanwhile, broadcasts which might give a real community service are banned.

refused

For example, the Greek programme refused to broadcast details of their social security and legal rights for people caught up in the recent pensions "racket".

The Spanish programme also refused some important announcements about the plight of elderly people who had been thrown out by their families. Apparently the co-ordinators didn't want to admit there could be problems like that in the Spanish community.

And a group which was trying to organise activities for old people couldn't get an announcement over the radio.

Ethnic radio in NSW is run by the Special Broadcasting Service. The co-ordinators were originally nominated by Al Grassby. They were, as one migrant activist put it, *"people who knew people who knew Grassby."*

There are 2 bodies which are supposed to act as watchdogs – The National Ethnic Broadcasting Advisory Committee (NEBAC) and the State Ethnic Broadcasting Advisory Committee (SEBAC). So far they have done nothing to ensure broad community coverage.

corruption

And they have done less than nothing to put a stop to the corruption which allows real estate agents, travel companies and so on to buy air time. The price is a gold pen, or similar gift, to the programme co-ordinators.

Now many people in Sydney's migrant communities are worried that the proposed ethnic TV service will be taken over by the same mob.

An action group has been set up to try to stop this happening. At the moment they are having problems even getting their questions answered by federal authorities.

THE Fraser government is embarrassed. The government deficit, that sacred cow to which Medibank was sacrificed, is out of control.

The deficit is going to be $1,000 million more than predicted.

And according to Fraser's economic gurus that means more inflation as the government borrows or prints money to pay its bills.

But WHY has the deficit ballooned?

It seems that Fraser's wage restraint policies have worked too well. There is less paid in wages, less paid in tax, less money for the government. And there are more unemployed claiming government benefits.

Computer centre de-railed

By Dave Nadel

IT'S amazing the things that happen to Hamer! If there weren't workers jobs and everyones taxes involved you couldn't help laughing.

You can see how alert and observant the Victorian government is: Vicrail's controversial computer building is being built in Jolimont Railyards two blocks from Parliament house and the state offices.

The superstructure reached seven stories before someone noticed it, decided that they did not like it and told the government they had not issued a permit for it.

So we have one State Authority (Vicrail) building a structure that is opposed by another semi-state authority (the Board of Works), the State Cabinet, and Melbourne City Council (which is dominated by the same people who run the State Government).

The plot thickens: Vicrail claims they showed plans for the computer building to the Government, MMBW and the MCC over two years ago.

"Rubbish" say the Government and the Council, "the plans would interfere with our plans to develop Flinders Street and build office blocks and shops over Jolimont railyards at great profit to ourselves and our Developer mates.

objected

"If we'd seen them we would have objected". Someone, it appears, is lying.

Given the track record of Hamer, Gibbs of V[icrail], Croxford of the MMBW [and] Rockman of the Co[uncil] they could all be lying.

All of which would be very funny except that twelve building workers have already been sacked due to the Governments confusion and another seventeen are likely to lose their jobs.

And $13.5 million of our taxes has been thrown down the drain.

THE RIGHT TO MARCH issue continues to simmer in Queensland. Two hundred students from Griffith joined by some students from Queensland University marched from Griffith at lunchtime on May 31 and circumvented the usual turnout of hundreds of cops by turning off in the opposite direction. They managed to march for several hundred metres before the cops could rush into buses and drive around to block the road. Eight people were arrested and several more issued with summonses. The next march keeping up the pressure on Bjelke will be a women's march at the end of June.

DISARM FRASER!

FOR sheer hypocrisy, Malcolm Fraser's speech on disarmament at the U.N has to take the cake.

For the man who supported the invasion of Vietnam, who has sent the armed forces on a wild spending spree, to talk about "our disarmament efforts" is nothing but humbug.

But there was a purpose in his speech. Fraser is anxious to present Australia as the champion of "safe" nuclear power.

For the ruling class, this means nuclear material that stays in its control, and isn't "acquired" by some desperate third world government or international terrorist group.

consideration

But since Fraser has raised the question of disarmament, we think it deserves careful consideration.

We do not believe there can ever be peace whilst the world is ruled by capitalism, whilst international monopolies dictate whether the poor shall eat or starve, while the desperate struggle for bigger markets dominates national policies.

In the past 65 years, imperialist competition has led to two world wars and a continuing series of "minor" wars to decide who shall control every corner of the globe.

At the moment, the great rivals are Russia and the United States, who are locked into a vicious circle of military and economic competition.

Both have accumulated enough weapons to destroy the world many times over, and yet they continue to spend more; in case the other side gets an "advantage".

needs

It's the needs of private capitalism in America and state capitalism in Russia that determine military policy, not appeals for disarmament and peace.

The minor capitalist powers and the countries of the third world are also locked into this system.

We believe there is only one road to disarmament; and that is for the working classes of the world to disarm their own bosses and rulers.

That's why we're for war against the capitalist system and not "pacifism" or "disarmament".

We believe the working classes will need military as well as economic weapons to wrest power from the ruling elite.

For it's only when the workers, who have no interest in conquest, rule the world that armies become obsolete and peace a possibility.

S.A. ALP VOTES FOR 35 HR WEEK

THE Sth. Australian ALP has committed itself on paper to a fight for a 35 hour week.

At its state convention over the long week-end, a motion from the Liquor and Allied Trades Union called for *'an ongoing campaign in relation to unemployment'* and that the *'government implement a 35 hour week as one of the needs to overcome this man-made tragedy.'*

The motion won with strong union support.

However, it will be industrial action rather than fine sentiments and stirring words which will get this campaign off the ground.

Strong opposition to the motion came from Labor and Industry minister Jack Wright, Federal Shadow Minister for Employment Mick Young and former Labor minister Clyde Cameron.

objections

Their objections show just how far Labor parliamentarians have drifted from the needs and demands of workers.

These three very influential men argued that if SA introduces a 35 hour week, we'll be isolated from the rest of the country . . . so the Dunstan Government will not feel bound by the decision.

This attempt to maintain 'national unity' received instant support from the SA Chamber of Commerce.

Glowing praise also came from the Adelaide Advertiser who stated that,

'The only way to achieve a permanent reduction in working hours . . . it to increase productivity.'

In other words, Chrysler would solve all their problems by making more cars; though they can't sell the ones they've already got.

This is the logic of money-grubbing, callous lunatics who have no respect for our living standards.

And these are the people the leading members of the ALP are trying to please.

Mike Grewcock
AWU member.

but who will implement it?

THIS MAGNIFICENT POSTER could be YOURS. The Battler has obtained just 100 of these powerful 20" by 30", three colour posters for sale at just $1-50, or $2 including postage ($1-50 ea for orders of four or more).

ORDER: From Battler Posters, PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031.

If you're fighting for decent pay...

LAST year, the Latrobe Valley Power workers launched the most determined assault on the indexation system since it was brought in.

The Battler was in the thick of the struggle. Not just reporting it, but printing special leaflets defending the strike, organising collections, arranging job-site meetings for power workers to address.

Every fortnight, we bring you the latest reports on the struggle for better wages and living standards. Our industrial coverage is probably the most comprehensive of any paper in Australia.

Because we don't rely on the bosses or the union officials for our facts – we go straight to the workers for your side of the story. And many of our reports are contributed by the workers themselves.

If you want to be part of the movement for a socialist society – a society where workers don't have to fight time and again to protect themselves – why not join us? Just contact the local branch of the International Socialists (see p8) or fill in the coupon below.

...The Battler is YOUR paper!

I want to join the International Socialists

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PHONE NO. ....
TRADE UNION ....
Postcode ....

Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary

HOW THEY BROUGHT POLITICS INTO OUR SPORT

By Paddy Crerand, ex Manchester United and Celtic

I WENT to Beunos Aires in Argentina in 1969 [illegible] for Manchester United.

Two aspects of that trip to South America rema[illegible] indelibly printed on my mind.

The most obvious [illegible] was the lack of free[illegible] Everywhere we went [illegible] most places were [illegible] bounds – we [illegible] accompanied by [illegible] men per player.

The other thing [illegible] me was the fanatic[illegible] fans supported the[illegible] They were football [illegible] the exclusion of ev[illegible] else.

Now I'm used to [illegible] But I'd never seen an[illegible] like that fanaticism [illegible] really was the opium [illegible] people. And the two [illegible] connected.

worse

Now all that was ten years ago. But [illegible] that the situation [illegible] Argentina today is worse.

Anyone who [illegible] anything about [illegible] (apart from the [illegible] will know what I'm [illegible] about – about the [illegible] ists and trade [illegible] arrested, the people [illegible] have been locked up [illegible] murdered.

About the thousands [illegible] have disappeared and [illegible] misery that's left [illegible] who have lost their love[illegible]

repression

The government [illegible] Argentina is set on using [illegible] World Cup and the [illegible] that it brings to cover [illegible] their repression, to paint [illegible] picture [illegible] regime as a benevolent [illegible] democratic [illegible]

They have brought politics into the World Cup.

So what should be done?

Some advocate a boycott of the competition. [illegible] seems crazy to me. [illegible] start you'd never get [illegible] players behind it. The point is that if you refuse [illegible] play against a country because it is repressive you'd never play anyone.

simple

But what can be done and what should be done is very simple. Turn the [illegible] on its head. Use the [illegible] the spotlight is on Argentina to highlight the awful [illegible] that have been going on there.

That doesn't mean forgetting about football. But it does mean closing our eyes to every[illegible] thing else.

Reprinted from Socialist Worker

World Cup or not.... YOU CAN'T HIDE THESE CRIMES

By David Lockwood

"SPORT and politics don't mix" people say.

But if you've been watching the World Cup football matches on TV then you've been joining an estimated 1000 million other viewers in a planned public relations exercise by the Argentinian government.

Dictatorship would be a better word. And it's a dictatorship that is willing to spend $700 million on preparations for the World Cup while large numbers of its own population cannot afford enough to eat.

The Argentinian government has lavished funds on the visiting sports writers and journalists, treating them to sumptuous accommodation, free booze and plenty of entertainment.

The reason for this is simple. For Argentina's military rulers, the World Cup isn't just a series of football matches.

It's a chance to project a favourable image of the country – with the hope that that image will attract foreign investment.

And it's only during an event like the World Cup – when most attention is focussed on the pitch – that they can achieve this. The rest of the time the realities of Argentina are all too clear.

Players hit the turf in Argentina to avoid tear gas used by armed soldiers to disperse fans.

dictatorships

As dictatorships go, Argentina has an impressive track record. The government admits to over 3000 political prisoners – while Argentinian sources say that at least 15,000 people have simply 'disappeared'; either the government is holding them, or they are dead. That's 1,363 football teams.

Those who have escaped tell of torture, of rats put on fresh wounds and of prisoners savaged by police dogs.

But it's unlikely that we'll hear much about this during the next few weeks of the Cup – *which is just what the dictatorship would like.*

When the military junta seized control in March 1976, its main objective was to crush the workers' movement – one of the oldest and biggest in the continent.

Death squads of plain clothes army officers had been active for months before, murdering trade unionists.

After the coup, the factories were declared to be 'military objectives' and surrounded by troops. One factory in Cordoba had 110 shop stewards before the coup. After two months, there were only four left.

But the workers movement has not disappeared. Despite the fact that working conditions have severely deteriorated, and the average wage has been reduced to about $14 a month, workers' resistance continues.

strikes

There are still go-slows and even strikes.

Some of these have happened in the town of Cordoba – where such well known firms as Chrysler, General Motors, Fiat and Ford have their car plants; all reaping huge profits from the exploitation of Argentinian workers. It is also where some of the World Cup matches are to be played.

In countries which are fielding teams in the current matches, some have suggested that the World Cup should be boycotted. This wouldn't have worked, if only because the World Cup is too important for all the countries involved for any of them to boycott it.

propaganda

But the propaganda aims of the Argentinian dictators could be foiled, if the journalists reporting the Cup were prepared to ignore the 4 star treatment being handed out by the regime, and were determined not to be used to cover up the junta's crimes.

In other words, if they would look beyond the goals and into the jails, then perhaps the Cup, as well as being good football, could also be a good exposure of Argentina's dictatorship.

Abortion: We haven't won yet

By Janey Stone

RECENT legal gains in Britain and Italy give the misleading impression that we are well on the way to an international victory in women's struggle to control their own bodies.

In Italy, abortion has finally been legalised after years of struggle involving tens of thousands of women.

The new law will provide abortion on demand. However this will only be during the first three months of pregnancy, and only to women over 18.

interrogation

In addition, women will have to submit to interrogation by a "family advisory unit" and then wait a week for the operation.

The law was rushed through parliament by the Christian Democrats and the Communist Party – just in time to prevent a referendum which would have meant an even more liberal law.

And it was opposed by the Radical Party and the revolutionary left, who claim that the new law is so restricted that it will force more and more women to seek back street abortions.

In Britain, another legal gain has been heralded as a victory for women. This is the recent court ruling that the father does not have the right to prevent an abortion.

However, outside the Court House, there were anti-abortion, as well as pro-abortion demonstrators. Anti-abortionists such as Malcolm Muggeridge, Mary Whitehouse and The Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) have been trying to make abortion illegal again, since the Abortion Act was passed in 1967.

barbaric

And in fact the British law on abortion is still barbaric. Last year a girl of 14 and her brother were prosecuted under a law from 1861, for trying to procure an abortion.

Many women in Britain have to pay up to $400 for a private operation, and women still die from back street abortions.

In the USA, where abortion was legalized in 1973, anti-abortionists are well organised.

funding

Medicaid funding of abortions for the poor has been ended. And several states have introduced severe restrictions. A particularly horrifying situation exists in Akron, Ohio, where women have to take the foetal remains to a licensed funeral director.

American anti-abortion groups use militant tactics in their campaigns. Several abortion clinics have been fire bombed. In Alaska, 4 people chained themselves to operating tables. And in Chicago, several people confronted a waiting patient in a clinic.

This is what the Right to Life did to an abortion clinic in Cleveland U.S.A.

crucified

Children stood with flowers and a "crucified" doll, while the adults read a Mother's Day proclamation denouncing abortion.

Clearly, the plans by Fraser and the private health funds to stop payments for abortions aren't isolated – they're part of a continuing world-wide attack on our abortion rights.

FRASER'S 1984 VISION

THE hysteria and security bezzazz which followed the Hilton bombing earlier this year could become a permanent feature of life in Australia if uranium mining goes ahead.

The Fraser government's Environment Protection (Nuclear Codes) Act went through both houses of Parliament in the last sittings before Mal went on his world tour.

Coupled with anti-union legislation of the past 2 years the government and mining companies have a formidable array of draconian laws to shackle all trade union and anti-uranium activists with imprisonment of up to 20 years and fines of $50,000.

vague

The Nuclear Codes Act is vague and open to wide interpretation. Under section 13 of the Act the Governor-General can create a state of emergency with a stroke of a pen.

The Governor-General need only be satisfied (told by the government) that the health and safety of people, or the environment,

"Is likely to be harmed by a situation resulting from a nuclear activity", and the existing laws are considered not effective, to

"By order, authorise a minister . . . to give such directions and take such actions as . . . the minister considers necessary to control and eliminate the situation" likely to cause *"harm"*.

Now you might think that such a law makes sense particularly if there is a nuclear bungle of some sort; nuclear bungles being pretty frightening things which don't discriminate between the likes of Fraser and an innocent bystander.

But the term *"nuclear activity"* in the Act includes just about anything to do with uranium or nuclear power in which the Commonwealth government has any involvement.

situation

It does not say that the *"situation"* should be one involving some extraordinary emergency or disaster. Legally, a nuclear "situation" can include any anti-uranium demonstration or protest activity.

And we know only too well from the many nuclear bungles that continue to occur that "harmful situations" are likely to become a daily event. What's more, for the government and the mining companies, the continued opposition to uranium mining by anti-uranium groups and unions are likely to be considered one of the *"hazards associated with the situation"*.

The power granted to the government minister will permit virtually unrestricted surveillance of anti-uranium activists.

It will censor all information about the nuclear industry and any leaking of information carries penalties of $50,000 or 5 year jail. A person who continues to leak information can be fined up to $50,000 a day.

Dissidents can be locked up without trial. Under the pernicious Section 13, an arrested person loses all normal rights.

They may be detained anywhere; no one need be told that the person has been arrested, they can be held incommunicado; and they are assumed "guilty" until they can prove their innocence – if they get a trial at all.

Report Steve Morgan

Australian Uranium? NO THANKS!

RIGHT: British anti-uranium activists leafletting the "Act One" ship at London's Tilbury docks. The "Act One" was loaded with Australian yellowcake.

BELOW: Anti-uranium protest, Kashiwazaki, Japan

ABOVE: Joan Coxsedge speaking at the Williamstown (Vic) Naval Dockyard anti-uranium meeting.

THE NEW LAWS: WHAT THEY MEAN

Frightening as these new laws sound, they are nothing more than an updating of existing laws from which they were drawn.

The Nuclear Codes Act is based on the Atomic Energy Act (1953) and the Approved Defence Projects Protection Act (1947) which was brought in by the Labor government during the cold war of the late forties.

In fact, last year the government granted the authority to mine at the Ranger site under the Atomic Energy Act. Originally a defence act, it has now been broadened to cover trade and commerce, and shows the special relationship which exists between the uranium industry and the government.

The "security" section of the Atomic Energy Act carries penalties of 20 years imprisonment for talking about, possessing or taking any *"restricted information with intent to prejudice defence."*

The meaning of *"restricted information"* is so broad as to include anything dealing with the mining through to the many uses of nuclear materials. Its intent and effect is to stop any facts about the nuclear industry going beyond the gates of mines, processing plants etc.

As to the meaning of *"prejudicial"*, a case occurred in England (which usually sets precedence for Australian laws) in 1961 in which the House of Lords ruled that it was a "political question" and not a question of fact.

Hence, it was beyond the competence of the courts and was bound by the view of the relevant minister of the government.

So under this Act, whatever the government decides is *"prejudicial"* to defence will be accepted by the courts. Furthermore, a person charged under the Act looses all normal rights.

Firstly, the accused has to DISPROVE that they intended to prejudice, and secondly, an circumstantial character evidence can be introduced to prove their guilt contrary to normal practice in criminal trials.

The Atomic Energy Act also carries some "minor" offences with penalties up to 7 years imprisonment.

Any demonstrators who marched on uranium facilities could be considered to be committing "sabotage" in acting to

"Interfere(s) with or do(es) an act which is likely to . . . impair the efficiency" of any nuclear facility.

Also, it is a "minor" offence for any worker with the Atomic Energy Commission or with a contractor to the Commission (as it would appear the mining companies will be) to disclose any information they come in contact with while working, to those outside. An iron-curtain of secrecy is to be created.

sweeping

The police are given sweeping powers of search and seizure. No warrants are required and the police need only "reasonably suspect" an offence. There will be no redress for wrongful search or arrest.

The crowning glory of this repressive legislation is Section 60. It says that the Approved Defence Projects Protection Act (1947) applies to any work carried on by the Commission "as if" it was an approved defence project.

For this act to apply to commercial uranium mining all that is necessary is for the government mining agreements to say so.

Then any boycotts or hindering, any publications calling for boycotts or threatening boycotts, any speech or writing advocating hindering, and any "violence" or "unlawful" acts against "defence" person or property will carry fines of $10,000 or one year imprisonment.

Hiroshima Days: August 4-6

ANTI-URANIUM groups around Australia are gearing up for mass demonstrations on Hiroshima Day on 6 August.

A group of Canberra public servants formed Public Servants against Uranium Mining last week.

They will participate in the Australian Commonwealth Officers Association (ACOA) national plebiscite on uranium.

plebiscite

The ACOA plebiscite, to be held in August, is to decide firstly, whether the union should have a policy on uranium mining, and secondly, if the policy should be in favour, opposed or a 3 year moratorium on mining.

The Public Servants against Uranium Mining will be holding lunch-time meetings and films during the plebiscite campaign. They can be contacted at the Environment Centre, P.O. Box 1875, Canberra City or phone 47 6251 (a/h).

In South Australia the Campaign Against Nuclear Energy (CANE) is building neighbourhood branches. These are holding slide shows, leafleting shopping centres, and organizing speakers to talk to service groups, churches, trade unions and others.

This week CANE will fix the venue for the Hiroshima Day activities.

In Brisbane the Campaign Against Nuclear Power (CANP) has formed a co-ordinating committee to organize picketing and occupations. As a lead up to Hiroshima Day they're pressing forward with on-job meetings in meatworks, metal shops and building sites.

On 12 June a small demonstration marched on the Philippines Consul protesting about the sale of Australian uranium to the Philippines.

lull

In both Melbourne and Sydney there seems to be a general lull in activity.

A National Anti-Uranium Activists Conference will be held in Sydney on June 24 and 25 at the Merewether Building, Sydney University. It will discuss recent legislation and mining developments, ways to build the movement and the strategy of the movement.

In Melbourne some local MAUM branches are organizing on-job meetings at workplaces. At the Naval Dockyards the MAUM group and Combined Unions Committee held a successful meeting.

From July to August, court cases concerning those arrested at the Queenfish demonstration earlier this year are being held.

THE NATIONAL FRONT

Tom O'Lincoln looks at fascism and the National Front

"Fascism is a product of crisis ... society polarises between the two great class[es] ... [capit]al and labour."

IT [illegible] ... ies [illegible] ...nar- ... bas[ed] to ... British ... Fro[nt] ...onal

In [illegible] ... ty, [p]ublici- ... have ... [Mel]bourne ... own ... very ... surpris[e] ... not

What [illegible] ... surpris[ing] ... more ... are ... they ... impor[tant] ...a. The ... in your ... have ... we now ... in Aust[ralia] ... National Front ... it will ... [foll]owers. ... them on ... the ... [Me]lbourne Age ... story, ... edit[or] ... out the ... danger ... is the same ... which ran ... banner ... ut the "white Zaire".) The ... a great danger ... the extreme ...

The ... t. It is true that ... National Front's ... British model ... It calls for wh[ite] ... [wh]ere, and holds up South Africa as a model.

The NF is opposed to legalising homosexuality, and will undoubtedly join the growing chorus of union-bashers in Australia.

What is more, it may grow. If it looks at all viable, the collection of rightwing riff-raff which has hung around groups like People Against Communism and the Nazi Party will probably pour into it. Like any small right wing group, it could become dangerous.

twits

For the moment, however, it is just a little group of upper class twits and their hangers-on, who get a bang out of playing Fuehrer. And so far at least, they are too afraid of the left to hold public meetings.

But since the National Front is news, it is worth discussing the question of fascism. For the past few years in Britain, not to speak of the crimes of the Chilean junta, prove that fascism is not just an historical curiosity.

Fascism is a product of capitalist crisis. In a crisis, society is polarised between the two great social classes – capital and labour. We got our first recent indication of this polarisation during the Constitutional Crisis of 1975.

In between the capitalist class and the working class are many middle layers: shopkeepers, doctors and lawyers, students, and the better paid white collar workers. Because they have very little power, they are often the first to be ruined by a crisis. As a result they can become very radical.

Any serious strategy for socialist revolution involves winning over a large part of the middle classes to the side of the working class.

But the ruling class is not idle. With every means at their disposal, they attempt to portray workers as responsible for the crisis, especially the most oppressed. They try to rally the middle classes to their side with "law and order" hysteria.

serious

If things become serious enough, the employers begin to consider building a fascist movement.

This is when the right wing groups become really dangerous. It was when the German bosses began to finance Hitler that he was on his way to the top. The employers used sections of the middle classes, and the most backward workers, as shock troops to smash working class organisation.

If the employers in this country become that desperate, groups like the National Front can develop into a mass movement.

For that reason, it is important to smash right-wing groups whenever they try to mobilise.

One reason the Australian Nazis have been inconspicuous in recent years is that they had their Melbourne headquarters wrecked by demonstrators in 1972. And the powerful anti-National Front mobilisations in Britain have led to a sharp decline in the NF vote in recent elections. But for us today, fighting the fascists is hardly the main emphasis.

Today, the employers have plenty of less drastic measures up their sleeve. The ordinary methods like anti-union laws, police intervention on picket lines and press slander are still a viable option.

Trade union officials, right, left and centre, are prepared to sell out often enough, and a majority of workers are not prepared to thrust those leaders aside.

The economic crisis is not serious enough, the radicalisation of workers is not great enough to make anything resembling facist measures necessary.

The danger today is not the Australian National Front. There are many large organisations, all of them racist, sexist and anti-working class. There is the National Civic Council, and Eric Butler's League of Rights for example.

Liberal

And above all there is the Liberal Party, established by the late unlamented fascist sympathiser, Robert Menzies.

To be sure, we don't expect the Age to attack them. But we can attack them, and must.

And for the time being, attention devoted to our own Aussie fascists at the expense of that more important fight could be a very damaging waste of time and resources.

Colonel Eric Campbell, addressing a respectable New Guard meeting in Sydney Town Hall, September 1931. Fascism arose naturally as the product of the great crisis of the 1930's. In all countries including Australia, it represented the bosses' ultimate weapon for disciplining the working class.

WHAT WE THINK

THE REAL MENACE

"Today the employers have plenty of less drastic measures up their sleeves. The ordinary methods like anti-union laws, police intervention on picket lines and press slander are still viable . . .

". . . And above all, there is the Liberal Party, established by that late, unlamented, fascist sympathiser, Robert Menzies."

AUST. FASCISM? HERE ARE SOME PEOPLE WHO'LL BE IN THE THICK OF IT.

LANG HANCOCK: The money behind the Workers Party, the Liberal Students attack on AUS and most worthy ultra-right wing causes.

The National Civic Council's Brian Harradine from the Tasmanian TLC.

Sir William Hall of the RSL.

Jennifer MacCallum, the "ordinary housewife", (married to an airforce officer), who runs People Against Communism.

Ustasha supporters picketing the Yugoslav embassy in Canberra.

The League of Rights' Eric Butler with a long-standing friend, Ian Smith of Rhodesia. Butler's group is country based and includes a para-military youth organisation.

In Britain, they're the new Nazis

By Martin Tomkinson, who has written a book about the National Front

THE British National Front is a fascist party. Its aim is to smash the organised working-class, take state power and carry out policies just like those of Hitler.

If the Front ever came to power its victims, as in Germany, would not be confined to one racial group.

The Front is the latest in a succession of British fascist groups. The most famous was the pre-war British Union of Fascists, headed by Oswald Mosley.

At the same time there existed a rival Imperial Fascist League. This was headed by Arnold Spencer Leese, who accused Mosley of being a 'kosher fascist'. After the war, Leese kept fascist ideas alive, and passed them on to Colin Jordan.

Jordan helped to found the White Defence League which was actively inciting violence in Notting Hill in 1958-9. He attracted two notable recruits – John Tyndall and Martin Webster, respectively, chairman and national activities organiser of today's National Front.

nazi

In 1962 Jordan formed a new organisation, the National Socialist Movement, explicitly Nazi in orientation and politics. The flavour of the NSM can be obtained from the following statement by John Tyndall in an article entitled Principles of National Socialist ideology.

'The pitiful heaps of physical degeneration which we see littering our country today, particularly in the large cities, are the social heritage that Democracy has handed down.

'It is now the task of National Socialism to replace this human wreckage with a new type of man: the type proclaimed by Adolf Hitler in his memorable speech to the Hitler Youth at Nuremberg in the zenith days of the Third Reich – fleet as a greyhound, tough as leather and hard as Krupp steel'.

ENOCH POWELL: His respectable racist diatribes inspired the National Front.

The same issue of The National Socialist carried a description of the wedding of Francoise Dior to Colin Jordan. The two were married 'behind a table draped with a swastika flag.

'Each in turn, with hand outstretched over the open blade of a dagger in the manner of our forefathers, made a pledge to the other starting, 'I, Francoise Dior declaring myself to be of Aryan descent and free from hereditary defect.'

Next each in turn made a small incision in the upper part of the ring-finger, and the two fingers were held together for a moment to symbolise the union of the blood. A drop of the blood so mixed was then allowed to fall on to the blank fore-page of a copy of 'Mein Kampf' belonging to the couple.

'The gathering gave the Nazi salute and the Nazi anthem 'The Horst Wessel' was played. The wedded couple were toasted in Mead, the ancient drink of the Nordic peoples'.

Jordan's 'two best men' at this ceremony were John Tyndall and Martin Webster. Both men referred to Jews as 'sub-humanity'.

Tyndall stated 'The SS man has been our model. The SS state is now our aim'.

But there was only room for one Fuehrer in the NSM. So in 1963 Tyndall and Webster broke with Jordan and formed the Greater Britain Movement.

respectable

In 1967, a group of fascists, including Webster, formed the National Front. The new organisation was meant to have a respectable image.

Because of his known love for violence, Tyndall was not immediately allowed to join. But 12 months later he quietly slipped in and almost immediately his magazine, Spearhead, became the NF's official ideological publication.

Since that time, and greatly aided by the economic crisis and the speeches of Enoch Powell and other politicians, the Front has grown.

Webster and Tyndall imply that they have changed their views about Hitler, the Nazis and the suitability of outright fascist policies for Britain. But in fact nothing has changed.

Webster says today: 'We need to kick our way into the headlines'.

The real face of the Nazi National Front was shown at their televised election meeting in Brixton where the mere presence of black people drove them into paroxysms of rage and violence. There, stripped bare, is National Front policy – violence against black people, Jews, socialists and trade unions. That is the truth behind the hundreds of words in Spearhead about a 'world conspiracy' and about world 'money power'.

The NF leadership make a great show of disciplining or publicly reprimanding members who are violent. But the offenders know that this is just political window-dressing. They know that the Front must pretend to be a respectable political party, and unleash violence at the same time. They know that Hitler gave the SA full rein for street violence, while protesting non-violence to his rich supporters.

There is scarcely any political debate within the Front because they have little to talk ... they have ... Their propaga[nda] ... to stimulat[e] ... to provide ... for organ[isers] ... and tra[ining] ...

The ... and ... always ... storm[ing] ... party ... The ... said ... 'Mein Kampf' ... line' is still chairman ...

In ... member ... Brian ... ed to ... the ... murder ... Hector Smith ...

... referr[ing] ... down ... the ... astic ... our ... programme ... Common[wealth] ... of the ... That is ... meaning ... National Front ... of its policies.

The ransacked offices of Des Perdes, Britain's most important Punjab[i] ... slogans were painted on the walls following an Enoch Powell speech ... town weeks earlier.

LEFT: National Front chairman, John Tyndall ... taped speech to the founding meeting of ... National Front. Notice the badge. Last year ... the British "Sunday Mirror" if it was true ... Jewish people as parasites. "No", he retorted ... was 'poisonous maggots feeding on a body ... state of decay'."

Gurdip Singh Chagger, a Sikh stude[nt] ... in Southall (London) in June 1976 ... million to go" said the National Party's ... Read.

"There will be an unanswerable case ... comes for the great cleanup, to imple[ment] ... solution against these subhuman ele[ments] ... of the gas chamber system."

NF Magazine, "Spearhead", on ...

Jack's award last straw

Dear Battlers

I think it was pretty poor giving the Battler Plastic Straw to four left union officials in NSW in "Between the Lines" last month.

For a start I'd never take much notice of the comments of a drunken ex-cop to a bunch of drunken business people.

If Jack Mundey was such good mates with Inspector Longbottom why was he arrested so many times when he was a BLF official? Why were the cops so co-operative in helping Gallagher and the MBA take over the NSW branch of the BLF?

Save the Battler Plastic Straw for the real sell out merchants and class traitors. Don't use it for sectarian attacks on some of our best union officials.

David Shaw

CES HANDS OUT FINE ON THE DO[LE]

Dear Battlers

Have you ever forgotten a birthday, wedding or dinner engagement? Last week I forgot to put my dole form in . . . this cost me $102.90 and left me in the position of having to borrow money from friends to pay my rent and eat.

The day my form was due in was changed twice by the CES or the Social Security Department. I wasn't given any reason for this and when I asked, no-one seemed to know. My money was stopped for handing in the form a week late.

I didn't realise it hadn't gone in until I found the form amongst some papers.

shunted

I immediately took it in and was shunted from one end of town to another . . . twice to the CES and twice to Social Security.

The first time I went to the SS, I was given a number and told to wait my turn. I had to wait with 40 other people.

It was 12.45 and some people I spoke to had been there since 8 o'clock.

I was lucky . . . I only had to wait 2 hours . . . this was because a lot of the people had given up and walked out.

But they told me to go back to the CES to get another form and so on.

After two days of this they then said 'tuff [...] a fortnights dole [...]'

I have put [...] the appeals tribun[al ...] be heard in 2 [...] lucky.

Jeff Wa[...]

A[...]

What We Stand For

Workers' Power
Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism
We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State
The state — parliament, courts, the law — is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism
A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation
For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party
To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation
Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self-confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If that's the sort of work you want to do-

JOIN US!

JULIA: review was wrong

Dear Battlers,

I would like to comment on the review of "Julia" in issue no 51.

One of the most striking aspects of the review (and here it conforms strictly with the socialist realist genre) is the ignorance and narrowness of vision it displays.

On the first point, the reviewer makes a fundamental mistake in stating unequivocably that "Julia" *"has some vague connection with Lillian Hellman."*

In fact, the film is a faithful translation to the screen of Lillian Hellman's short story of the same title.

One reasonable objection is made in the review. The film can indeed be seen to portray *"the way social movements are reduced to individual acts of good or evil, arising from individual social backgrounds."*

However this weakness is more than adequately covered by the writer's introduction to her story. She explains that the story is written from her critical impressions of events.

"The odd conception, replaced by a later choice, is a way of seeing and then seeing again." This does not reduce the validity of her critical, albeit naive reactions or make them any less a commentary on the political events protrayed.

indulge

I didn't want to indulge here in a lengthy analysis of the differences . . . between art and propaganda.

Obviously anyone with a revolutionary perspective deplores the rose coloured, ruling class biased view of reality, constantly served up by Hollywood.

But the socialist realism served up as a review in the last Battler does a great disservice to the artistic achievements of the film-makers.

error

This sort of factual error is a direct result of the second point I make – that extreme narrowness of vision is displayed. This arises from the simple fact that anyone with a strictly functionalist approach cannot conceive of reality outside this framework.

So, the easily verifiable fact of how far the film deviates from the original story simply does not occur to anyone with this approach.

Dianne Minnis
Darlinghurst (NSW)

Dear Battlers,

Women meet on legal rights

Dear Battlers,

As a follow up to last years "Women and Law" conference, we are holding a series of discussions each Sunday afternoon for eight weeks at Melbourne University.

discussion

We hope that people who are interested or affected by the law and in the areas under discussion will come. For each seminar, there will be a panel of speakers and then open discussion which we hope will be followed by workshops.

We anticipate that these workshops will encourage us all to join or form action groups.

Childcare is available. For further information, you can contact Bebe (527-7558) Amanda (419 7150) or Deborah (487 221)

Yours in sisterhood
Deborah Vallance
Melbourne

Details:
Venue: Melbourne University Union Building, Mixed Lounge (1st floor) at 1.30pm on Sundays.
June 11: "Women and Housing" including tenancy, Tenants Union, [...] Housing [...] Aboriginal Housing [...] Refuges.
June 18: "Le[gal ...] women in [...] including: marriage [...] relationships, [...] children, lesbians.
June 25: "Unemployment and Women" [...] youth unemployment [...] the overrepresentation [...] girls, job availability [...] stereotyping of [...] promotional [...] and the sexist [...] career counselling for [...] girls.
(Future dates [...] in Whats On.)

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 303[1]

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

MELBOURNE-WIDE GENERAL MEETING
UNITARIAN CHURCH

GREY ST., EAST MELBOURNE
MONDAY, 19 JUNE
7:30 PM

URANIUM AND THE NEW LAWS

SPEAKER: JIM FALK

ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE I.S. WELCOME

International Socialists

WE might be bruised black and blue, but for the Melbourne South Branch football team it was worth it. Last Saturday, we ran out easy winners over North Branch 6-3 (39) to 2-4 (16).

The victory was sweet revenge for the one-point win by North Branch last year. And it was even sweeter to beat the team that had spent weeks boasting about the hiding they were going to hand out.

South won because its players were fitter all round. Alec Kahn dominated the packs for South and was easily best on the ground. Paul McMahon took a dozen brilliant and courageous marks, stemming many a North attack.

North's brief moment of glory was in the first quarter when they led. They got good drive from Paul Matcott on the ball and Mark Matcott in defence kept us away from the goals.

Despite the grizzles of some North Branch players, the umpiring was of a high standard, and not too technical for a social game. Unfortunately, the umpire did his job with a plastic whistle (nothing like a plastic straw) and could hardly be heard.

After the game, we all retired to a nearby barbeque, where the experts came into their own; ignoring mouths full of steak and salad to explain the result.

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 24 hour answering and message machine	33[...] 335[...]
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	335 2[...]
MELBOURNE GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	387 63[...]
SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown, 2042	51 36[...]
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49 7938
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	49 64[...]
BRISBANE PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067	358 3[...]
IPSWICH, QLD.	281 6[...]

What's On

Deadline for next issue: 21st June.

ADELAIDE
Clare and Doug McCarty are pleased to announce that Rose Clare McCarty joined Adelaide Branch at 3.20pm on Wednesday 7 June.

ADELAIDE Sun 18 June
CANE General Policy Group Meeting, 2 pm, Conservation Centre. Major thing to be discussed is the use of a $2,500 donation to the campaign.

ADELAIDE Tues 19 June
IS Branch Meetings, 28 Ballantyne St., Thebarton, 7.30pm. Battler Writing Workshop and General Business.

ADELAIDE Fri 23 June
Rape, Pornography and Prostitution are the subjects of a conference to be held at Adelaide Uni. at 6 pm. Full details are available from the Rape Crisis Centre.

ADELAIDE Tues 26 June
Discussion on Aboriginal Land Rights.

CANBERRA Mon 19 June
Branch meeting, AINSLIE. 'phone 496405 for details.

CANBERRA Mon 26 June
Branch meeting, LYNEHAM. 'phone 476251 or 496405 for details.

CANBERRA Wed 28 June
Movement Against Uranium Mining. Fortnightly general meeting Environment centre 8pm.

CANBERRA Wed 28 June
Public Servants Against Uranium Mining general meeting 12.30 Environment centre. 'phone 473064 for more info.

MELB Mon 19 June
Melbourne I.S. General Meeting. On Uranium. Conference Room Unitarian Church, Grey St., East Melbourne. Members and Friends of I.S. welcome. 7.30 pm

MELB Wed 21 June
Anti-uranium film, in Italian, "Condannati dal Successo". Sponsored by MAUM. Clayton Hall, 266 Clayton Road Clayton at 8 pm. Venue may change. Contact Kris 568-3772 for late details. Free.

MELB Wed 14 June
Melbourne North-West Branch Discussion meeting: 'Queensland: Militant tactics and mass movements' Introductory speaker: David Lockwood. All friends of IS welcome. 7.30pm. Phone 387 6351 for further details.

SYDNEY Sun 11 June
IS business meeting. 111 Enmore Road Newtown. 7.30 Friends of IS welcome.

SYDNEY Sun 18 June
I.S. Branch meeting. Friends of IS welcome. 7 pm 111 Enmore Road, Newtown.

SYDNEY 24 & 25 June
National Uranium Activists' Meeting Merewether Building, Sydney Uni.

SYDNEY Sun 25 June
I.S. Education. The Party. Friends of IS welcome 7 pm 111 Enmore Road, Newtown.

SYDNEY Sat 1[...]
Rally Against Medibank C[...] 11 am Town Hall Square.

SYDNEY NOTICE WORKERS CENTRE NEEDS [...]
Female collective [...] work 3 to 4 days [...] the Lidcombe [...] Health Centre, N.S.W. [...] is diverse & challenging [...] Previous experience [...] area not essential [...] approx. $3.00 hour [...] are not an affluent [...] Sense of humour essential [...] interested phone [...] 6463233 soon as possible.

As it was in the beginning....

EVERYONE knows what Karl Marx said about religion. He called it "the opium of the people".

Marx actually said more than that. Here is the full passage:

"Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the opium of the people."

Socialists are hostile to religion, and with good reason. Christianity, from its inception, has carried with it a message of obedience to authority.

meek

"Render unto Caesar what is Caeser's", Christ told the Jews who opposed Roman oppression. "The meek shall inherit the earth", say the Beatitudes.

Towards women, Christianity has always been contemptuous. Eve gets blamed for the existence of sin itself, and women are portrayed as its embodiment. As one preacher put it some centuries ago: "A woman is nothing but a bag of muck."

How does it come that millions of people believe in rot like that?

To begin with, primitive religion offered an explanation of the forces of nature. Early religions were full of gods and goddesses of thunder, the sea, fertility, the sun and moon.

rituals

Through rituals, people hoped to get control of these forces, or at least make them friendlier.

With the growth of civilisation, god became something more complicated. While people still prayed for rain or a good harvest, they also sought in the idea of god a solution to problems of the human heart.

For most of human history, no real solutions were possible to the problems of most of humanity, so religion was an understandable "opium".

Moreover, it was propagated by powerful institutions, especially the Catholic hierarchy.

This hierarchy was responsible for some of the worst abominations of the middle ages, including the Spanish Inquisition. But it retained its hold on the minds of millions.

crisis

With the growth of capitalism, organised religion came into crisis. In the 1600's, there was the protestant reformation which destroyed the domination of the Vatican in northern Europe, and which often took on a tone of political radicalism — especially during the English revolution.

With the growth of science, urban life and education, religion inevitably lost favour among progressive minded people. With the growth of science, it was no longer needed to "explain" the world.

Its hold on the working class today is steadily declining, even in Southern Europe.

With the development of modern industry, and the socialist movement, it has become possible for the first time to reshape the world, and create a humane existence for all its population. Religion is obsolete.

Pope Paul blesses a child (left) and the Hare Krishnas (right). Religion is obselete, but in the face of the economic crisis, many people have turned to mystical solutions.

Simon Good looks at Religion

Not that it's about to disappear by itself. In fact, with the growth of the capitalist crisis there has been a religious revival in the USA, and even in Australia we see a flowering of mystical cults.

And the church hierarchies remain as a major obstacle to progress. The Vatican possesses a major financial empire — indeed, despite its hostility to birth control, it used to be a major shareholder in Italy's largest manufacturer of contraceptive pills!

However, by comparison with the old days of the socialist movement, the head-on struggle against the churches is a bit less central to our socialist work today. This allows us to tackle a more subtle problem.

Among the people who have become radicalised in the past decade, many are Christians. There have been guerilla priests in South America, for example. And here in Australia a lot of useful rank and file work in factories is done by Young Christian Workers.

As the socialist movement grows, we can expect to find quite a few Christians joining us.

sectarian

It is important that we are not sectarian towards them. We should make clear that personal beliefs will not be an obstacle to united work.

At the same time, we need to find tactful ways to win them away from their beliefs. Religion is, after all, nonsense — and sexist and authoritarian nonsense at that.

Perhaps the best way is to tackle the contradictions which these people face. As consistent revolutionaries, how can they "render unto Caesar"? How can they believe that the "meek shall inherit the earth"?

In past times, when Christians became revolutionaries, they developed ideas which pointed beyond their religion. In Oliver Cromwell's day there was a religious writer named Hansord Knollys, who wrote these words:

"It is the work of the day to give God no rest till he sets up Jerusalem as the praise of the whole world."

Despite their religious beliefs, the puritan revolutionaries knew it was human beings who made change. Far from relying on god, they gave him no rest — they fought for the "kingdom of god on earth".

message

Our message for Christian revolutionaries is much the same: praise god and pass the ammunition.

And once you reach that position — you can begin to forget about god and seek salvation in the fight of the working class for human freedom.

....and shall be evermore?

The signing of the 1933 Concordat, the Catholic Church's deal with the Nazis, by Nazi Foreign Secretary, and Cardinal Pacelli, later to be Pope Pius XII.

Dave Nadel's

MY SHOUT

IT'S the Queen's Birthday but you get the presents – if you are a prominent businessman, a retired politician, a police officer, a senior member of the armed forces, a charity worker, local councillor or sporting personality.

If you are an ordinary worker, housewife or member of the unemployed these presents are not for you, for these are Honours with a capital H. And you have to be a special sort of person to be honoured.

This Queen's Birthday (which is actually not Lizzies' at all but Vickies' . . . we just celebrated the birthday of a woman who has been dead for 77 years) the honours list came in two parts: imperial honours for those who still believe in the British Empire and honours in the Order of Australia for those who do not.

As usual there were some people, mostly charity workers and researchers, who probably did deserve some sort of honour and fund raisers for the Liberal Party who undoubtedly did not.

Then there were the interesting awards.

For example, from the Commonwealth list, Brigadier John McKinna received a CMG for service to veterans. One of the services McKinna performed while South Australian chief of police was to smash up the 1970 Moratorium in direct defiance of orders from Premier Dunstan.

In the same vein Reverend Guildford Young, Archbishop of Tasmania received a KBE for services to the church. Not to mention the Liberal Party who were well served when Young suspended a couple of clerics for opposing the Vietnam War.

Highlight of the Commonwealth list however is the OBE awarded to Victor Albert Jennings of Mt Eliza for services to the building industry. Young Victor is of course boss of A.V. Jennings who build all those lovely estates and whose chief service to the building industry other than making profits for themselves has been to lead a war of attrition against any form of environmental planning.

Big winners in this year's honours are the mineral industry bosses. That figures. They have been big winners in everything since Fraser got office. John Seymour Proud of Peko-Wallsend was made a knight by the Commonwealth. Rod Carnegie of CRA got his big K from the Victorian Government. Sir Rod is well known as a friend to the Bougainvilleans, the Aboriginals, the environment (and Bob Hawke).

Hamer's government also made a knight of "Punchy" Rossiter, former right-wing Chief Secretary, currently Agent-General for Victoria in London. Rossiter is best known outside Victoria for his jet-setting daughter Susan and his ex-son-in-law the appalling Andrew Peacock.

The NSW honours list is especially entertaining, particularly as NSW has a Labor Government which is not supposed to believe in imperial honours. Actually when you look at the people they have awarded them to it is possible that they don't.

The absolute highlight is the award of a CBE to John Laws for his services to broadcasting and charity. Whoever drew up that list obviously does not listen to Sydney talkback shows. Still it could be worse. They could have awarded it to him for his singing.

NSW also awarded OBEs to rock promoter Ken Brodziak and John Newcombe. The latter for services to sport and Cinzano.

The Order of Australia list includes Ron Barassi and Bob Simpson who got their awards for sport rather than business practices. It also includes a string of retired Labor politicians. You can't quibble about Gough Whitlam. After all he invented the Order of Australia so you have to let him have one.

I might even be prepared to accept awards to Fred Daly, Tony Luchetti and former Tasmanian Premier Bill Nelson.

But surely there's something a bit odd about awarding a medal to Pat Kennelly for "distinguished service to the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Victoria." Pat's distinguished service consisted of about thirty-five years of "having the numbers".

"We've been conned!"

WORKERS at Queensland's Swanbank power station are stunned.

"We've been conned, it's been a real snow job. After seven weeks bans and a two-day strike they offered us a pair of boots. The management will be laughing."

This was how one worker described the meeting at which union officials pushed the SEC's barrow and recommended accepting the SEC's proposals.

When two weeks ago the Swanbank power workers initiated a two day strike, other power stations were quick to follow. It seemed there would be no looking back.

Suddenly the SEC couldn't get to a meeting quick enough, after weeks and weeks of delays in considering the power workers' demands.

original

Yet of the original 17 points of the log of claims, only seven were accepted.

And some of these were already common practice (boots and work clothes) or have strings attached (increased compassionate leave is at the management's discretion).

In the case of the power station allowance, only $1.19 was granted instead of $6.61 — an amount which barely covers that lost through wage indexation decisions.

Another two of the points may be the subject of some vague future consideration.

But you wouldn't have thought it, listening to the union officials' report.

There was plenty of long-winded evasion and talk about great achievements for the workers.

Even though three times the officials ruled out of order motions from the workers at the meeting to refuse the offer.

The voted showed there was confusion — the SEC proposals were accepted by a small majority.

against

Almost half voted against acceptance — although calls for a recount were rejected.

Many workers at Bulimba and Tennyson, two smaller power stations, seemed to fall for the "achievement" line of the officials.

At Collinsville and Gladstone, workers have refused the offer.

And now that many at the other stations are discovering what they have been sold, the Generating Board may not have seen the last of the action.

The mass meeting at Swanbank Power Station — long-winded waffle and evasions from the officials.

Qld power workers sold out

GMH … for t… gimm…

GMH are go… with their PR… their factories… Australia.

Banners hav… saying "Do… Together we'll … roar".

We've also … lapel badges say… and ballpoint pe… ing the new Gemini…

Holden's … director, Chuck … says we should … lapel badges proud… of the team that … the 'Dominate '78' a… a reality."

A prom… up in the … Woodville. It sh… Holden's sales … states "Let's … together to make … stays in the … month."

Unfortunately, bosses' pleas for … do not stretch to giv… wage rise or a 35 hour… Both these claims have … rejected and are part … '78 log.

by Alan …
GMH W…

CONDOR JOB FIGHT

ANWSU members at Condor Steel in Campbelltown, NSW, went out the gate over the sacking of a boiler maker.

The bosses replied by sacking them all.

The sacked boilermaker, Lloyd Caldwell, was the victim of a new foreman who reckoned he was "*working too slowly*".

The men don't think much of the foreman's performance either.

"*As soon as he walked in he tried to change things.*" "*He's got to keep it going all the time.*"

sacked

Lloyd Caldwell was sacked on Thursday May 18th, the day before the metal trades stoppage. The following Monday Lloyd came into work with the other men.

When management ordered him to leave the premises, the workers held a stop work meeting and all 13 came out in support.

Now they all have notice from the bosses from the 13th June.

They'll be taking whatever action is necessary when they see how the court case goes on Monday.

The Condor stri… been meeting at th… Union Centre at Par… and have been to a … of workshops raising …

fund

Donations to the fund can be sent … Trade Union Cen… Hunter St., Parramatta…

SEATAINERS CLERKS STRIKE

SHIPPING clerks at Seatainers, at White Bay in Sydney, are taking a firm stand against wet weather work.

They were on strike for three days and nights during the downpours a couple of weeks ago.

They're demanding adequate shelters and a wet weather loading, before they do any more work during heavy rain.

flaring

The issue of wet weather work has been flaring up over the past nine years.

From time to time management have responded by erecting various ricketty sheds, which were completely unsatisfactory shelters.

The men want the matter settled now. As they have tried to explain to management — clerical work can't be done in the rain.

"*You just can't write in the rain. We're expected to put down important details.*"

In addition, with their two-year consent agreement coming up for negotiation, the clerks are fighting to get a wet weather loading.

This would bring them in line with the four other major unions on the wharves. They all get recognition for wet weather work in the consolidated allowance written into their awards.

Administration clerks at White Bay were also out on strike for a day, to get a permanent replacement for the paymaster when he resigned.

Seatainers has been cutting down on replacements in this section. They are moving work to the Chullora depot, where it is computerised.

But they didn't get away with it this time.

When the administration clerks went on strike on pay day, the rest of the workers refused to … pay … staff scab.

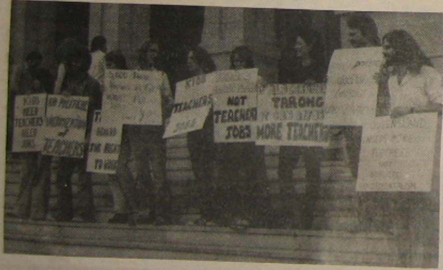
The electricians were … better, and … couldn't do any work … they had money in the …

provide

So management … caved in.

They will pro… permanent replace… the paymaster, and … scheduled to go to Ch… will stay at White Bay.

"We're not working in the rain"



Qld unemployed teachers picket

By Kate Boulden

ON June 1, members of the Unemployed Teachers' Co-ordinating Committee held a lunchtime picket outside the offices of the Queensland State Department of Education.

There are more than 700 unemployed teachers in Queensland.

And the situation can only get worse if the Bjelke-Petersen government goes ahead with its stated policy of reducing the number of teachers from 21,500 to 19,940.

Leaflets and placards at the picket highlighted the government's callous disregard of educational needs and the cynicism of its financial priorities.

Hundreds of teaching graduates are pouring out of the universities and colleges in July and December, only to join the dole queues.

The government is not even replacing those teachers who leave the service.

And it is taking no action whatsoever to reduce class sizes to a maximum of 30, as promised in 1972.

A teacher-pupil ratio of approximately 1:35 has been claimed satisfactory by Education Minister Bird.

This tallies with the recently-expressed opinion of Rona Joyner, Queensland's most avid and successful campaigner for a return to the 'good old days', that "*Children don't go to school to learn to think.*"

School enrolments in Queensland are 5,000 more than last year.

Yet Government policy — as stated by Acting Minister for Education Newbery — is based on the premise that school enrolments are declining!

"The Queensland authorities have been planning a modest surplus of teachers in the state during the period of declining enrolment in order to ensure an adequate supply when the demand picks up after the middle 1980's."

POWER workers in the NSW Electricity Commission are getting ready for a fight against asbestos in the power stations.

The Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association (FEDFA) delegates meeting in Sydney next week will discuss asbestos and begin planning a campaign to educate members and get on-job action.

Concern has been mounting. Mick Smith, delegate at Munmorah power station and secretary of the Electricity Commission Combined Union Delegates Organization (ECCUDO), is a campaigner against asbestos.

He was recently invited by the operators at Tallawarra power station to speak to them.

Mick found appalling conditions with loose and exposed asbestos, and dust, everywhere.

The Tallawarra workers were worried about the asbestos lagging stripped from one of the turbines lying all over the floor and being trodden around the power house.

When they learnt of the dangers they complained and management quickly cleaned up the turbine room.

■ *BUT many workers don't know of the dangers and often think it's just scare talk by a few cranks.*

Even at Munmorah where Mick Smith works, many thought the dangers were exaggerated.

Mick Smith said, "But they're taking it more seriously since last week, when it was discovered that a mechanical fitter had asbestosis (scarring of the lungs).

"He's worked at Munmorah 10 years, and it's the only place he could have been exposed to it".

■ IF workers threatened to throw a boss off a bridge for failing to have safety rails, they'd probably be sacked.

But if a foreman carrying out the bosses' orders threatens a shop steward with the very same fate, he keeps his job.

That is what happened at the Swanport Bridge site near Murray Bridge (SA) where Builders Labourers have been on strike for two weeks over the running down of conditions.

The bosses of Transbridge Pty Ltd refused to install handrails on the bridge. Although the company admitted they were wrong, they're refusing to sack the foreman who threatened to throw the shop steward off the bridge.

The strike is continuing although some of the men attempted to return to work in opposition to the union ban.

■ *THE BLF has blacked the Bedford Industries site at Daw Park (SA). Fourteen of their members were sacked for refusing to work in the rain.*

Most outdoor awards have a "no wet-work" clause in them. After all, you don't get compo for cold and flu.

But with high unemployment, more and more bosses are prepared to ignore our health and defend their right to get away with it.

the WORK TOLL

■ AMERICAN President Jimmy Carter has sentenced up to 200,000 cotton workers to death from Brown Lung.

Brown Lung, or byssinosis, is caused by breathing cotton dust in textile mills. It leads to chronic coughing, reduced breathing capacity, total disability and ultimately death.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration promised a federal judge that regulations to force the textile mills to clean up the cotton dust would be published on 31 May.

But Carter in collusion with the textile owners has postponed the regulations because stopping Brown Lung might have "an inflationary impact."

The bosses claim that it would cost $400,000 for each case of Brown Lung prevented.

In the cotton country of Carolina the victims of the bosses' greed have organized a Brown Lung Association. But "down South" textile workers not only have to fight against Brown Lung, they're also fighting for a union.

■ *TIP-TOP Bakeries wins this edition's coveted Battler Falling Brick Award for Safety.*

Sydney consumers of Tip-Top bread are being treated to a few unadvertised extras from the Chatswood bakery.

It's being re-built, and bread production is carrying on while construction takes place overhead.

One worker says that he was putting up scaffolding above an unprotected production line.

Grease and scaffold fittings fell on the bread, as well as mud from the planks, which had just come from being used at the Dylan concert in the Showground.

Then painters came along after the scaffolders, and the bread was spattered with a final coat of paint.

Demolition work has also taken place over the conveyor lines, spraying them with pieces of the asbestos-cement roofing, and molten metal from oxy-cutting steel work.

The scaffolders — who were disgusted by the conditions, but isolated and unable to take action — also got a good lungful of asbestos.

They were working on the oven roofs, where the lagging was damaged, and stirring up asbestos dust with every step they took.

by Steve Morgan

DANGER a asbestos

- All forms of asbestos dust cause cancer when inhaled.
- There is no safe level of exposure.
- Many trade unions demand that asbestos be replaced by alternative materials.

For information contact
Workers' Health Action Group
P.O. Box 150 Carlton South

THE Workers Health Action Group in Victoria has just opened an office in Room 18 at the Melbourne Trades Hall.

If you have worries about noise levels, possible unsafe chemicals, dust etc — contact your union to ask WHAG to investigate. Or contact WHAG direct (phone 662 3926) or drop in.

The Workers Health Action Group in Victoria have produce "DANGER ASBESTOS" stickers.

The stickers are a bright yellow and appear on the left.

The stickers are available from: WHAG, P.O. Box 150 Carlton South Vic. or ring 662 3926.

BOSSES ATTACK AT QANTAS

Major struggle looms

IT'S on again at the Qantas site.

As soon as the workers resolve one problem on the site, the company serves up a new lot.

smartie

Dillingham's smartie project manager, John Falkner, is trying to deliberately provoke trouble on the job.

Then he blames the workers instead of management incompetence for the delays.

Some of the latest attacks on the workers' conditions include:

i) docking delegates when they are involved in union business.
ii) knocking off Saturday work
iii) moving workers to different sheds, causing over-crowding problems.
iv) banning some of Beejay's Scaffolders off the job, in collaboration with the BLF leadership.

BLF and BWIU members on site have had enough.

guerilla

The delegates have been authorised to co-ordinate a campaign of on-the-job guerilla tactics to defend the conditions on the site.

As usual BLF officials have offered no support.

Last Friday Dillinghams still wouldn't back down. Instead, in another provocation, they stated that they wanted to scrap the seniority on the site.

So it was out the gate for the rest of the day in protest.

It's quite clear that Dillinghams are going to continue these attacks on the workers.

And it's also clear that there's a long struggle ahead.

TTAV threatened-for *NOT* making a pay claim

Delegates at the TTAV Conference. A two-thirds majority voted to meet the Teacher Tribunal's threats head-on.

A REMARKABLE situation has occurred in the never-ending battle between technical teachers and the Victorian Government.

The Teachers Tribunal is threatening to "de-recognise" the Tech Teachers Association (TTAV) — for not putting in a pay claim!

De-recognition will mean two things.

The scab Victorian Association of Teachers will probably be recognised in the TTAV's place.

And the Government will stop deducting union dues from salaries. The TTAV will have to devote 30 per cent of its central resources just to get the dues from the members.

Earlier this year, the Tribunal gave a 3 per cent rise to the Victorian Teachers Union. This was a pay-off to the VTU after they broke ranks with the other teacher unions, who were campaigning for abolition of the Tribunal, and direct negotiations with the Government instead.

Now the Tribunal expects the TTAV to abandon its direct negotiations campaign too, and put in a claim to the Tribunal for a flow-on of the 3 per cent.

ultimatum

Their latest ultimatum to the TTAV is that it cannot put submissions in to anyone apart from the Tribunal. (Despite the fact that for years, the TTAV has put in submissions to the Minister and the Technical Division of the Education Department.)

The mood at the TTAV Annual Conference last month was that to put in a pay claim to the Tribunal right now would be a capitulation.

Even though the claim would probably succeed, it would be at the expense of all of last year's action against the Tribunal.

And if the Tribunal is really out to de-recognise the union, it will find an excuse anyway when the political climate is right.

Some TTAV members at the Conference argued against defying the Tribunal right now, on tactical grounds.

They feared that giving up the pay rise would disunite the membership, and that it would be better to fight the Tribunal over staffing or some other issue where the membership would be 100% solid.

But the Conference voted by a two-thirds majority against any form of retreat.

The TTAV Executive appears to be trying to buy time at the moment to avoid the inevitable confrontation.

approached

They have approached the Government rep on the Tribunal and asked him to apply for the flow-on to be implemented.

This puts the ball back in the Government's court, since it claims to be concerned about teachers' interests not being protected.

But it is also a way of implementing the Conference decision in a less head-on fashion than Conference intended.

The Executive is not putting in a salary claim, but it is not openly defying the Tribunal. It has told the Tribunal that the union's research officer is currently looking into the whole question at the moment.

There are signs of a right-wing backlash in some TTAV branches. Motions from one-fifth of the branches are needed for recommital of the Conference decision.

It will be vital for militants in the union to argue against any moves to get this recommital and break up the union's principled stand.

STONE ROLLED OVER HARVEY

KEN Stone, the right-wing arch manipulator of the Victorian Trades Hall, has brought his little empire down around his own ears.

For the first time in history, the left and centre unions have won control of the Trades Hall Executive.

And it's largely due to Stone's own arrogance and pig-headedness.

Four weeks ago, Stone used his position as secretary to appoint grouper Keith Harvey to the position of Trades Hall Research Officer.

Harvey, a former member of the Monash University DLP Club and then secretary of the rightwing Rope & Cordage Union, now disguises himself as an ALP member.

The left and centre unions were up in arms at the appointment. They tried to overturn it on the floor of Trades Hall.

But under the incredibly bureaucratic rules of the Trades Hall (drawn up by Ken Stone himself), virtually the only way to do that is to reject the Executive Report at the start of the meeting.

tried

So for three weeks, that's what the centre and left tried to do.

But each time, even though they had the numbers, the right stonewalled till 9.30pm using points of order, procedural motions, divisions and any other delaying tactics they could think of.

And under Stone's rules, each meeting automatically closes at 9.30pm (so the officials can all adjourn to the pub for a beer).

Meanwhile, Stone smugly refused to withdraw Harvey's appointment.

But last week, it was time for the half-yearly Executive elections. The Right seemed safe enough — they had a 14-4 majority and only seven positions were up for election.

But the centre-left made a totally unexpected clean sweep, to go to a 10-8 majority on the Executive.

Stone and the Right had lost control.

Now it looks as though Stone is out to rebuild his bridges with the centre unions.

sacked

On Monday he sacked Harvey. The next day, after some speculation that Stone's own position would be made subject to regular election (it's virtually a life appointment now), the new THC President and centre unionist Alf Zanno said he was glad Ken Stone was staying on because he was such a capable administrator with so much to offer the unions!

With that sort of chumminess only four days after being elected, it's hard to see the new Executive doing anything serious over Newport, wages or the other urgent issues confronting the Victorian trade union movement.

VICTORY!

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

J&W BEATEN AGAIN

LAST issue we reported how a strike at Johns & Waygood engineering in Sandringham (Melbourne) had won $5.

Now the workers at the Clayton plant a few miles away have won a flow-on after one week out the gate.

John Tully, the AMWSU steward at the Clayton plant, told us that the company had offered them three dollars during the strike at Sandringham.

But last Friday at a meeting at morning teatime, the 130 men and women at Clayton decided to go out for another $2.45 to bring them up to the new Sandringham rate.

After two days, the company offered a dollar – as an allowance for cleaning overalls.

This wasn't good enough, so the workers stayed out. After another three days, the company offered a further dollar.

No-one was going to quibble over the last 45 cents, so the workers accepted this offer.

A worker in the machine shop told us that earlier Johns and Waygood were arguing that the initial three dollar was enough.

"The company says Clayton is now up to the area average, just like Sandringham is.

"But this probably doesn't mean much. They'd know the lowest paid companies and just ring them up to get their area average."

In the settlement, the company was anxious to make the point that it was not guaranteeing automatic flow-ons from Sandringham to Clayton in the future.

But Sandringham's rise paved the way for Clayton. This should encourage more joint action between the shops in future.

Up to date, militancy has been greater at Sandringham. This meant, for example, that last year Johns and Waygood were able to sack thirty workers at Clayton but were not able to do likewise at Sandringham.

This latest victory will hopefully give a big boost to militancy and morale at the Clayton plant.

Hatrick–Back for a second innings

By Pam Townsend

"WE'VE won. The men have been reinstated at Hatrick Chemicals after only a week and a half on strike".

Hatrick Chemicals last month sacked six men because "there wasn't enough work for them."

Every person at the place knew that wasn't true.

The company was in fact understaffed. Men would have to be shuffled around and transferred from the yards to the stores and back, to keep the place running.

A week ago at a strike meeting the men voted to stay out the gate. "The company hasn't changed its mind – why the hell should we?"

company

The company offered an alternative – put two men on shift work to allow two of the sacked men back on.

Nobody would cop this and it was proposed to stay out for another week. The majority agreed.

Then, just a couple of days into the second week of the strike, the company gave the men their jobs back. (Unfortunately two had quit and gone to find other jobs.)

But it was a great victory all the same.

United action by the blokes won the day (and clean – bowled the bosses!).

STRIKE FLATTENS RESCHS

WORKERS at Resch's brewery in [...] haved forced the company to reinstate [...] workers sacked last week.

On Tuesday night a Liquor Trades [...] was sacked when he refused to do maint[...] was a fitter's job.

The whole brewery came out on strike in his support.

Arbitration Commissioner Wells ordered the company to reinstate the sacked worker.

No sooner had the workers voted to go back to work on Friday morning, than the company sacked a FEDFA member, Johnny Gregory.

The excuse this time – supposedly refusing to clean a machine.

According to FEDFA delegates Jim and Bill Cockburn, Johnny had no hope of cleaning the engine.

Jim Cockburn said, *"He was the outside greaser and his duties were to look after the cellars.*

"During the eight-hour shift, he was hardly in the engine-room at all.

"So how the hell could he be outside and cleaning the machines at the same time?

"In any case, he'd been rostered off on the Tuesday and Wednesday, and was on strike on Thursday. And over the long weekend there was no cleaning [...] available."

Jim explained [...] reasons for the [...]

"This [...] worried. They can't [...] beer.

"Their beer's [...] We were down [...] brewery the other [...] they had trucks com[...] with bad beer on them."

The unity among workers foiled [...] company's plans.

agreed

Bill Cockburn [...] was the first time [...] years all the unions [...] together and agreed [...] everything."

The delegates quickly [...] support at Kent brewery [...] from FEDFA members [...] the Resch's depots.

This foiled [...] company's plans. They [...] not move beer out of [...] depots to be sold.

By Friday afternoon [...] company caved in and [...] Johnny back [...]

ALL THE NEWS ON THE BLF ELECTIONS

More dirty tricks from Black

By David Shaw, BLF

THE Gallagher-Black leadership is playing more grubby tricks in its attempts to steal the election in the NSW BLF.

It's latest acts include:

1) Taking receipt books off delegates who support BL's for Democratic control – e.g. Reserve Bank, Costains at Haymarket.

2) Putting out a fake leaflet supposedly signed by 95 delegates. This leaflet a complete fraud.

3) The BLF "after hours service". Officials visiting members at night to "assist" them to fill in ballot papers in the bogus election Black is running.

merchant

Two of the after hours specialists are Sean Cody, a well known Iron Bar Merchant, and Peter Galvin.

Finally, the BLF officials and the main-contractors combined to have me sacked from my job with Beejay Scaffolding.

The bosses of Beejays never tried to sack me. Instead I got banned off every site where Beejays had sub-contracts. In the end they had nowhere to send me.

What did the BLF officials do? BLF office boy, John Kirby, told my delegate that none of the organisers had time to deal with my case.

No doubt they were too busy arranging for other workers to be victimised.

Meanwhile the BL's for Democratic Control will continue campaigning for the real election, now under the control of the Federal Court. We hope that will come up in a few weeks.

The Federal Court has issued orders to prevent the Gallagher-Black officials continuing with their rigged election or declaring the results. The court has also ordered Australia Post to freeze postal boxes being used for the election.

It appears that Steve Black could defy these orders and try to get himself jailed to make a martyr of himself.

He has already sent one lot of writs back to the court with "Get Nicked" written on them.

It's a pity the Gallagher officials never show the same militancy when it comes to defending their own members.

Black's desperate p[...] shouldn't fool anyone. [...] his record, he couldn't [...] any sort of fair election.

defending

And posing as some k[ind] of knight in shining armour defending the independence of the union that he himself has delivered to the bosses [...] time and again, won't work either.

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IN THE BATTLER EVERY FORTNIGHT

NO 54
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PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

20c

INSIDE

A CRIPPLING INDUSTRIAL DISEASE P.6

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STOP THE KILLER CUTS!

By Phil Griffiths

DON'T plan on getting sick this year.

It's going to hurt a lot more than you think. Malcolm Fraser the man who has raised cruelty to new heights, is cutting Medibank and Hospital rebates to shreds.

Don't plan on having kids any more. The Federal government is sending our schools back to the nineteenth century.

And it has now cut $15 million more from the funds used to run childcare centres.

Try not to have any accidents this year. You may have trouble getting treated.

Malcolm Fraser has decided that the deficit is to be reduced by scrapping all hospital projects except one in Tasmania.

Try not to be poor or disadvantaged this year – if you can help it. Welfare housing grants are slashed by another $70 million.

Drive your car everywhere and stay well. Urban Transport grants are cut and $17 million has come off the community health program.

But the sickest thing about it is that the government's economic strategy is not going to work. It was tried in the 1930s and failed.

The price we paid then was 33 per cent unemployment.

It's been tried here for the last three years; first by the Whitlam government in 1975 and now Fraser and it's failing again.

Wages have been cut, government spending has been cut yet unemployment still rises.

Even the Liberal Premiers are upset about it – Charles Court says it's a recipe for recession.

This is to be Malcolm Fraser's Australia. A land of sickness, poverty, slums and illiteracy amidst the enormous wealth of a few.

A land of people whose jobs are being stolen by the march of "efficiency and progress".

A great place to live if you're a millionaire capitalist.

But it can be stopped.

Already Medibank Action Campaign groups are forming in Melbourne and Sydney to organize the fight-back.

We've already had one go at defending Medibank.

We lost – but only due to the treachery of the ACTU.

This time, we can't afford to lose. Our health, our living standards – even our lives – may depend on it.

MORE P3

NURSES SAY "WE WON'T PAY"

from a Brisbane nurse

ON JUNE 22, sixty nurses staged a spirited picket outside Brisbane's Health Administration building.

They were protesting at plans for 200% increases in living and eating charges for nurses in Queensland public hospitals.

Rent could rocket from $8.53 per week to $25 per week. Meals could be trebling from 31c to $1.00 per meal.

The nurses chanted *"High rent, low pay, dedication doesn't pay"*, and sang *"Don't be too polite, Nurses!"* Meanwhile a delegation of 4 nurses met with the Health Minister Dr. Llew Edwards inside.

Earlier in the day, Edwards attacked the nurses who were to attend the rally as *"irresponsible"*.

He told the delegation that they were an embarrassment to themselves and to the nursing profession. But it was obvious who was embarrassed!

One nurse from the picket commented, *"these were bread and butter issues that "professionalism" had nothing to do with.*

"Edwards clearly didn't like his carefully cultivated media image being tainted by bad publicity from ordinary rank and file nurses."

asked

Many nurses have asked what their union, the R.A.N.F. is doing. Virtually nothing, as one high-ranking union official doesn't want "too much publicity".

We've already driven quite a wedge into the union. We're helping form a reform committee to take control of the RANF away from matrons and high up administrators. And of course we'll all be fighting to stop these rent and meal rises.

The initiative and activism of nurses already has forced the industrial court to lay down a hearing date at last. And our protest there will be even more forceful.

"We'll pack out the courtroom inside, and stage another picket outside", said another nurse.

"Nurses never got anywhere in the past by being ladylike", said one older nurse.

"They were exploited under the guise of dedication and sacrifice. Higher pay for nurses was argued against by saying that it would attract 'undesirable' members into the job".

INSIDE: HOW SHIFTS DESTROY NURSES. P5.

between the lines

WE hear that someone at Myers in Brisbane had a good idea. Wouldn't it be great publicity for the store to have a photo in the papers of kids in hospital getting Myer Easter Eggs.

It was all set up with the Brisbane Telegraph and the Brisbane Children's hospital. But after the photos were taken, the kids were told to give the Easter Eggs back.

No kidding!

A sister in the ward complained, so the hospital gave the kids replacement eggs from its own supplies.

However, it was all a bit much even for the Tele. When they heard about it, they decided not to run the story. Myers couldn't have that, so in a fit of generosity they changed their minds and decided to actually donate some eggs.

Well done Myers. A BTL Ebenezer Scrooge award for christian charity is on its way – C.O.D.

IN America, there's been a lot of controversy about police acting as decoys, posing as people wanting to buy drugs, setting themselves up as victims for bash and rob thugs then, with the aid of other cops hidden nearby, arresting the pusher attacker.

But in Denver, the whole scheme backfired. An undercover cop, posing as a helpless drunk in a parking lot had $307 in marked notes stolen from him.

By another Denver policemen assigned to patrol the parking lot!

But a jury acquitted the cop turned basher. They agreed he had been "illegally entrapped" and "would not have committed the crime without the inducement of the authorities."

Isn't it nice to be protected by people like that.

IT appears that several Liberal Party student politicians have been house guests of Lang Hancock's.

For instance, Michael Yabbsley, secretary of the Australian Liberal Student's Federation, who is currently involved in several court actions against the ANU Students' Association.

Can the rumours that Lang Hancock has donated $50,000 to help fight these court cases be true?

In any case, Mike is still keeping up close ties with his mates in South Africa; he attended the "National Day" celebrations recently.

We wonder if it was like the old days when he went to the embassy, not for drinkies, but to put names to faces for BOSS (South African security) photographers.

LANG Hancock certainly believes in giving the liberal press something to ooh-ah about. But the real problem is that Hancock says straight out what the rest of the ruling class does and thinks.

Where is the outrage against the existing asbestos mine at Barraba in NSW? Where is the outrage against conditions in asbestos factories around Australia that are spreading cancer day after day?

We don't remember reading any daily paper that supported the strike action of Victorian railway workers against their asbestos danger.

A giant champagne-resistant, cancer-inducing plastic straw to the editors of Australia's daily papers. May CSR be eternally grateful.

by Darth Vader

ACOA TO VOTE ON URANIUM

PUBLIC SERVANTS will soon vote on their union's policy towards uranium mining.

Members of the 48,000 strong Administrative and Clerical Officers' Association (ACOA) will soon be voting in a nation-wide plebiscite to determine the union's policy on uranium mining and ACTU affiliation.

The union's leadership is sharply divided on these questions; hence their decision to resolve the matters by plebiscite.

first

This will be the first time ACOA members will have the opportunity to vote on major policy items by rank-and-file ballot.

The uranium vote will be taken in two parts. First, the members will be asked if the union should have a policy on uranium mining.

If a majority say "yes", there will be the choice between a policy in favour of mining or for a moratorium "until adequate safeguards are devised".

The ACTU question also includes affiliation of branches to state trades and labour councils. At present, ACOA is not affiliated to any of these bodies.

The plebiscites represent an important step forward in the changing internal life of the union.

They reflect the first glimmerings of recognition by ACOA, a traditionally conservative union with a long history of NCC infestation, of the validity of union involvement in social issues and the need for closer links with the broader trade union movement.

The campaign in favour of "yes" votes is being spearheaded by the ACOA Reform Group in Melbourne which has most consistently promoted these ideas inside the Association.

ALL THE NEWS ON THE URANIUM STRUGGLE

WHAT WE THINK

THE ACOA plebiscite proves that uranium is still a live issue inside the union movement.

The ACTU sell-out, which committed the unions to fulfilling existing contracts, has little support amongst union activists.

With two months before voting, the uranium movement has the chance to build strong active groups inside this strategic union.

Because if we do win the ACOA to opposition to uranium mining, we can begin the struggle for effective boycotts.

ACOA members, who include most middle-level government officials, are perfectly placed to disrupt the government's uranium selling.

EVERY FORTNIGHT IN THE BATTLER

A number of social workers and sympathisers demonstrated outside Central Criminal Court in Sydney, in support of Greeks who were being charged in connection with the so-called "pensions racket".

As we reported in The Battler on 20th May, several hundred members of the Greek community were harrassed by the police and the Department of Social Security.

They were denied rights in relation to interviewing and interpreters, and subjected to police bullying during search and arrest.

Up to 500 people had their pensions cut off before any case had been proved against them.

SACKED for wearing a sticker

A BANK clerk of the Bank of N.S.W. h[...] threatened with his job because he is an opp[...] nuclear power.

The worker, Greg Van Dam works at the Queen Street Brisbane Branch. He is also active in the anti-uranium movement and attends demonstrations regularly.

Greg's boss warned him that *"some of the bank's best customers are people who mine uranium and if you're recognised at demonstrations, it affects the Bank's standing."*

Greg told our Battler reporter that if he were arrested he'd be out on his ear.

On several occasions he has even been ordered to remove a 'STOP URANIUM' sticker from the bag he carries to work.

Today, after 4½ months of working at the Branch, he was issued with a memo to resign or get the sack.

His boss's reason was that *"he did not have the right attitude to his work"*.

but Greg said "he[...] *I'm a socialist and* [...] *it in for me from* [...] *beginning."*

"Everyone at the [...] *agrees it is a clear* [...] *persecution."*

Greg was given [...] to refute these [...] manager would not [...] the memo, but instead [...] Greg he must [...] immediately.

difficult

However, Greg [...] make it difficult [...] boss. He approached [...] union, the A.B.O.A. [...] advised him that he [...] have to resign so quickly [...] that they would discuss [...] matter with the [...] Manager.

Greg mightn't win, [...] he said *"at least I'll mak[e ...] tough for them"*.

BUT WHERE'S THE A.L.P.?

THE ALP has been remarkably quiet in Adelaide's uranium campaign. Only small delegations have turned up at the demonstrations over the past twelve months.

One of the reasons for this could be the attitude of the state government. Although they have a "policy" of not encouraging uranium mining in this state, the evidence seems to be pointing in the other direction.

Firstly, they openly issued prospecting licences to the German firm Uranez for testing in the Adelaide hills. Despite widespread protests, this is still going on.

Secondly, there's the operations of the Australian Mineral Development Corporation in Thebarton.

The AMDEL premises were used as a dump for tailings in the 1950's. When brought up in parliament in 1976, Mines minister Hugh Hudson fobbed it off by saying that it was low level waste and below established safety levels.

One of AMDEL's backers is the state government. AMDEL's clients include Uranez and Pan-Continental.

effects

AMDEL is currently carrying out specialist research into the effects of radiation.

One of their directors last year attended the World Atomic Energy Commission's conference in the US.

There are also supposed to be five dumping grounds in the Adelaide area for uranium waste.

All of this information is readily available from AMDEL's annual rep[...]

What we don't kn[...] what the state govern[...] not making at all p[...] the effect this is ha[...] the people in the area.

How many unexp[...] cancer deaths have [...] in Thebarton and sur[...]ing areas?

We don't know [...] the state government [...] clean and displays a [...] honesty on the question [...] their moral platitudes [...] uranium mining [...] completely useless.

CAN[...] NEWS

PLANS are under way for a week of action before the Hiroshima Day demonstration in Adelaide.

We will be picketing [...] offices of companies [...] shares in uranium [...] (like the ANZ bank) [...] be leafletting [...] centres and trying [...] organise more work[...] meetings.

Regional groups have [...] been encouraged to [...] smaller demonstrations [...] their own before the [...] march on the Saturday.

The trade union [...] group has begun meeting [...] the fourth Wednesday of [...] month at the Trades [...] We've produced a [...] which we want all [...] regional groups to [...] to distribute.

We're also aiming [...] increasing the level of [...] union involvement in [...] campaign and urge all [...] to send delegations [...] March.

The march will [...] starting at Victoria [...] at 10.30 Sat. Aug 5.

GOVT RAIDS REPCO

COMMONWEALTH cops have arrested twenty Malaysian workers at the Repco PBR factory in East Bentleigh in Melbourne.

The workers have been arrested under Australia's racist immigration laws for being "illegal immigrants".

The workers are almost certain to be deported. Immigration Minister Mackellar has told the industrial officer at the factory that there was no way he would let them stay.

The Commonwealth cops seized the workers from off the job during a surprise raid on the factory last week.

AMWSU shop convenor at Repco PBR, Don Silverstein, was disgusted at what happened.

"I thought it had all the appearances of a Gestapo exercise," he said.

"The Commonwealth Police came and surrounded the building. They weren't uniformed police, they were in plain clothes.

"They had a Greyhound bus outside to take them away in.

"The workers were told, 'Personnel wants to see you' and they were taken out a side door."

The Malaysian workers had been at the factory since April. Most of them lived in the same block of flats in nearby Carnegie.

"They were probably dobbed in.

"They were very nice people. They were working illegally, so they had to toe the line.

"If they had to produce a quota of a hundred, they'd do 110.

"But they all joined the union. They approached me – I didn't have to approach them."

Feeling at the factory is strongly in support of the Malaysian workers being allowed to stay, Don told us.

"I'd say the majority of the people there are for them. But what can you do?

"The majority say, 'They're here, they're good people, they're workers, they should be allowed to stay.'

"There's only a small minority against them. And most of them are Liberals.

"They say things like 'There's too much unemployment here . . . yellow bastards . . . they'll take the country over'.

"But they're only a small minority.

"After seeing what happened, you can really understand what it was like with Hitler and the Gestapo."

Migrants face deportation

SYDNEY COPS GO BESERK

from Dianne Minnis

SYDNEY cops went crazy in a gay-bashing riot last Saturday night.

Fifty-three people – 30 men and 23 women – were arrested after a squad of police heavies attacked the "Mardi Gras" march of gay solidarity.

Several hundred of us were marching through Kings Cross. We marched straight into a blockade of paddy wagons.

Then half a dozen more came up behind and sandwiched us in between.

The cops just laid into people – throwing them roughly into paddy wagons and breaking several bones in the process.

Many of us could hear the thudding of bodies as they hit paddy wagon floors.

At least one person was thrown bodily across Darlinghurst Road by three burly cops.

We fought back with things like garbage cans. We opened up one van and pulled a lot of people back.

rescued

Many more were rescued from arrest.

After this debacle, 400 of us marched up to Darlinghurst police station where there were more scuffles and arrests.

One man was badly bashed in the cells and had to be taken to hospital for treatment to his face.

Many others were battered and bruised.

The cops resisted all our attempts to bail our people out. They weren't telling us who was inside or how much the bail was.

The amazing thing about the demo was the incredible solidarity.

We were a pretty diverse group ranging from old-time gay activists to bar queens on their first demo.

One participant commented that at least homosexuals were now being bashed by cops in public, rather than in parks and police cells, which happens all the time.

from Page 1....Fraser's cuts....

A DISASTER FOR WOMEN

EVERYONE has noticed that poor and socially disadvantaged people will be directly affected by Fraser's latest cuts.

But no-one has commented that these cuts particularly hit women.

Children's services are to be cut back $15 million. This will mean fewer childcare and pre-school centres.

Some existing childcare centres will have to close because the main cuts are in recurrent costs – the money needed for day to day running.

Welfare housing is to be cut by at least $70 million. At the moment there is a three year wait for Housing Commission houses and this will now get longer.

Ninety thousand families are on the waiting list. When families have to live a long time in inadequate housing, most of the burden falls on the woman.

dropped

The hospital development program is being dropped except for $6 million to the Launceston Hospital.

This will affect fifty projects in Victoria alone. One of the main projects affected is the Queen Victoria Hospital, which is being moved from the heart of the city to Clayton.

The Clayton area was first promised a hospital in 1957. The new Queen Vic was due to open in 1981. Who knows how long it will now be delayed? The Queen Vic is one of the two main women's hospitals in Melbourne.

The community health program is being cut $17 million. This comes on top of the abolition of bulk-billing and may amount to a death blow. Most of Australia's 58 community health centres are in low income areas.

The Leichhardt and Liverpool Women's Health Centres in Sydney will certainly be badly hit. As it is, they go through a crisis around the time of their grant.

They may now have to close or at least cut back severely on services.

Urban public transport will lose $11 million. This may mean higher fares (already exorbitant in Melbourne) and delay in renewing rolling stock.

How long before disasters like Granville become commonplace?

HOW THEY'LL CAUSE INFLATION

FRASER is wrecking the economy!

This might not sound like news to you, but look who's saying it.

Sir Charles Court, Dick Hamer, and Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Along with the three Labor Premiers, they were insisting last week that the latest cuts outlined by the Fraser government would mean more unemployment and further stagnation.

Of course we expect a little grousing from all the Premiers at this time of year, but this time we are hearing strong language.

Bjelke-Petersen said the cuts were *"the most horrifying thing I have heard in Canberra."* And Charles Court called them *"a prescription for recession"*.

Not bad, Charles. Of course, most of us thought we were already in a recession. But it is good to see even the most gruesome reactionaries in the country complaining about Fraser's economic butchery.

Fraser, of course, justifies the latest cuts as steps to *"fight inflation"*. To this end he is prepared to force unemployment higher than the present disastrous levels, axe hospitals and housing to the bone, and give pensioners another twist of the knife.

impose

The cuts will force the States to look very hard at their finance. They can impose a State income tax, but that will probably be impossible politically.

Or they can axe thousands of jobs among hospitals employees, teachers and other government workers.

But the great irony is that the cuts may contribute to the very inflation they are supposed to help cure.

One of the options open to the States, and the one that will be most attractive to many, is to raise state charges.

That will be worse than State income tax, because it won't be progressive. The poor will pay the same charges as the rich. And it will feed directly into inflation.

Another measure open to the States is – horrors – overseas loans. But a growing public indebtedness will also bring inflationary pressures.

It all adds up to an economic mess considerably worse then in most other western countries. And it's a mess that all of us are paying for in money and jobs, and in the future of our children.

All in the name of *"economic responsibility"*, of making capitalism work. It's about time we stopped capitalism working – and got Australian workers working again.

by Tom O'Lincoln

Liberal scabs lose at ANU

THREE Liberal students at the Australian National University in Canberra are refusing to pay union fees.

Normally they would have to pay up or get out.

But Education Minister Carrick has intervened to save them.

The campus Liberal society has been heavily harrassing the Student Association (SA).

They have taken the SA to court, stolen 5000 copies of a student journal, and constantly disrupted SA general meetings.

The day after Carrick intervened, he got a rude shock. Students began to organise a fight back.

We quickly gained support from other student unions, the TLC and other bodies.

defence

We set up a defence committee and called a general meeting of students on both Canberra campuses.

At a mass lunchtime meeting, Canberra College voted overwhelmingly in favour of compulsory unionism and for a militant campaign to defend their rights.

The Liberals took fright and flew in speakers for the University meeting. They even went to the expense of printing a couple of smear sheets.

It was no use to them. Almost 300 students turned out to the meeting on Wednesday 7 June.

When the vote came it was a solid six-to-one in favour of compulsory membership.

The Libs had friends in Parliament and the courts, and wealthy backers.

But they never looked so shocked as when those votes were counted.

Now we have planned a mass rally for August 15 – to coincide with Budget day.

by Ian Jordan, convenor ANU Students Defence Committee.

FIFTEEN Sydney University social work students picketed their graduation ceremony and refused to accept their degrees.

As the messages on their t-shirts and leaflets said, they were protesting against the lousy education provided by the Social Work department.

If you're a working woman, fighting for your rights

AT Pancakes on the Rocks in Sydney, waitresses are fighting for a union. Our Sydney correspondent, Janet Vaux, has kept you up-to-date.

In Melbourne, the women at Sportscraft held a militant strike when the boss tried to cut their pay. The Battler brought the story to you in a special report.

All over Australia, women are fighting for their rights. Whether the issue is abortion, equal pay, childcare or trade union rights, we bring you the story.

And most of the time, our stories are closest to the action – because we don't get our information from the boss, or rely on the union office.

Our reporters are down on the picket line and the news comes from the workers themselves.

The growing struggles of working women are an important part of the movement to change society. The International Socialists are fighting for a world free from the oppression of women.

Why not join us?

the battler is your paper

I want to join the International Socialists

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PORTUGAL....

Revolution grinds to a halt

What went wrong in Portugal?

Three years after the revolution many of the gains have been rolled back.

By Nichola Catesby

PORTUGAL 1975, saw the overthrow of fascism. Portuguese workers and peasants moved into action. Factories were occupied, land was taken over. The bosses were thrown out. For the first time, the workers and peasants started running their own lives.

PORTUGAL 1978, sees unemployment running at 12%, and the currency losing 1% of its value every month. The country is now ruled by a right-wing 'social-democratic' coalition. The factories and estates are being returned to their 'legitimate' owners. The bosses are back.

What happened?

The Portuguese revolution began on April 25, 1974. A group of officers in the Portuguese army formed the Movement of the Armed Forces (MFA). They had had enough of a brutal and barbarous war in Africa.

Their actions toppled the regime. In the months that followed, massive strikes swept the country. The workers kicked out known fascists, helped dismantle the secret police, demanded and won better wages and conditions.

Other factories were occupied and run under workers' control. The workers not only produced the goods, they arranged the distribution and fixed the prices according to what was needed to pay wages.

discipline

Agricultural workers took over the land and sold the produce through co-operatives. Hospitals, health clinics and nurseries were set up and run free for all who needed them.

In the army, discipline began to crack. In many units fascist officers were kicked out. Officers could no longer depend on their orders being obeyed. New recruits gave the clenched fist salute at joining up ceremonies.

Portugal showed what could be done. It reminded workers that they could run their own factories, that goods produced could be distributed equally, that there was an alternative to capitalism's endless search for profit.

But it also showed that the revolution had to go on to the end, or go under.

Although many firms were taken over by the workers, the economy was still controlled by the capitalists. Although rank and file soldiers were moving rapidly to the left, the hierarchy in the army was never smashed.

realised

Thousands of workers realised that if they were going to win they would have to take over the running of the country.

But the essential element for this - a mass party with its sights fixed on uniting and leading Portugal's workers and soldiers to victory was never built.

The strongest party of the left, the Communist Party, entered the government. To stay there, it bargained away worker's advances.

Finally on 25 November 1975 the right wing succeeded. A coup destroyed the base that had been built by the revolutionary soldiers.

Portugal is now governed by a coalition of the Socialist Party and the Centre Social Democrats – two right wing parties which opposed the revolutionary process every step of the way.

The government has started to roll back the gains made since 1975. Factory and land-owners are being invited back to re-take 'their' property.

In an attempt to remove its huge budget deficit of $US1300 million, a loan has been negotiated with the International Monetary Fund.

cut

Conditions for a loan will be that workers' wages and living standards are cut.

The memories of 1975 are not blotted out as easily as the gains. We may yet see the Portuguese revolution carried through to the end.

Above: Portuguese Socialist party leader, Mario Soares.

Below: The workers, soldiers and farmers he sold out.

Fight goes on at Renault

Elections come and go, but the need to fight for wages and conditions remains.

That's the lesson that workers in France's Renault car plants are teaching the rest of the country.

Workers have occupied the second largest car factory in France, just outside Paris Twenty Thousand work there.

safer

They're on strike for better wages - a minimum of 3,000 francs a month, a 35 hour week, a fifth week's paid holiday and retirement at 60. Above all, the workers want better, safer conditions.

"The line speed has been increased by 25 per cent and more over the last year", one worker said, "The noise is indescribable. There are accidents all the time."

For some time before the French elections in March this year, workers were unwilling to take industrial action – they preferred to wait and see whether a Left government was elected, and then see what it could do. Of course, they were encouraged in this attitude by the Left Parties - the Communists and Socialists.

But when the Left was beaten, the workers could wait no longer. They had to start taking action on their own behalf.

The Renault strikes began near Paris, but they are spreading. Seventy-five miles away near Rouen, another Renault factory is under occupation. In spite of a court injunction the workers held the factory for more than two weeks.

chained

The gates were locked and chained and pickets were able to turn away any potential strike break[illegible] then the French riot p[illegible] butted in and threw [illegible] strikers out.

Workers at the [illegible] plant are out now. S[illegible] strikes have been [illegible] in other Renault pl[illegible] over France [illegible] workers have demonstrated in support of the occup[illegible] ions.

Many of the wo[illegible] involved are migrants. W[illegible] ers from North Africa [illegible] up a quarter of Ren[illegible] 100,000 work force [illegible] like migrants in most [illegible] countries, they get [illegible] dirtiest, lowest paid [illegible] more than half the w[illegible] in the press shop, the [illegible] dries and the assembly [illegible] are immigrants.

So France, it's not [illegible] fight for wages [illegible] struggle against [illegible] racism as well.

Shah feels the carpet begin to slip

By David Lockwood

"NOBODY can overthrow me", the Shah of Iran told us last week.

And I suppose if you had ruthlessly crushed all opposition, had tens of thousands of political prisoners rotting in jail and maintained your control through a Gestapo-style secret police, you'd feel pretty safe too.

The Shah was giving an interview to an American magazine. He said:

"I have the support of 700,000 troops, all the workers and most of the people."

Leaving aside the first category how does he know he has all this support? After all, he's never bothered to ask anyone.

repression

And life in Iran under the Shah isn't all that good. As well as repression, living standards are deteriorating.

Water and electricity supplies are cut off for months at a time to counter-act shortages. Because of land speculation by the Shah's family [illegible] other parasites, rents [illegible] risen to about 7[illegible] workers' wages.

Meanwhile the S[illegible] busy spending other p[illegible] money on arms. He a[illegible] buy $25 billion wor[illegible] military hardware from [illegible] US over the next 2 y[illegible] so he can police the [illegible] Gulf more effectively [illegible] western backers.

But why was the Shah talking about such an un[illegible] pleasant subject (for him) as opposition?

"I have the support of 700,000 troops..."

Since the beginning [illegible] this year, there have be[illegible] a series of demonstr[illegible] against the regime - [illegible] demonstrations that [illegible] resulted in over 50 d[illegible] Just after the Shah sp[illegible] last week, a university [illegible] was killed at the [illegible] campus at Mashad in a [illegible] outbreak of anti-Sh[illegible] violence.

shaken

The demonstrations [illegible] shaken the regime['s] foundations. So [illegible] the Shah isn't so all-po[illegible] after all.

Belief in their invincibility has been [illegible] feature of every desp[illegible] the French monarchy [illegible] Russian Tsar.

And just look w[illegible] happened to them.

Shiftwork is dangerous!

WE hear a lot these days about the problem of "jet-lag" – what happens to people when they fly long distances into different time zones.

Shift-lag is like this only worse. It's not like an occasional flight. It affects your body and your mind every day, every week, year in, year out.

Although it involves millions of workers instead of a few thousand business people, shift-lag hasn't attracted the same publicity as the fashionable executive's complaint.

It's already been proven that people suffering from jet-lag lose 7% of their muscular strength and 5% of their nervous efficiency. Often it takes up to six days to get back to normal mental performance and sleep patterns.

Our basic biological functions are governed by a "biological clock". Every part of your body is tied into this clock.

Lack of sleep and disruption of eating habits are the two main ways shift work affects workers' health. Rotating shifts are worse, but permanent afternoon and night shift are also harmful.

Tiredness, lack of sleep and nervousness are the most commonly felt problems. *"Because I get up really tired and nervous, we have more arguments as I just explode sometimes."*

sleep

In one survey of women shiftworkers, 70% complained of tiredness and 65% of nervousness. 80% got less than six hours sleep when on night shift. *"When I sleep late during the day my daughter comes, opens my eyes and says, 'Mummy wake-up, wake-up!'."*

In the survey mentioned, 40% of women working rotating shifts had stomach upsets. On afternoon shift, you miss the main meal and few workplaces have hot meals in the canteen.

"It messes up your whole life. I have too much of the wrong kind of food. I can't be bothered cooking when I come home so I have toast."

Not having normal meals can cause peptic ulcers, constipation as well as the common stomach upsets. The poor diet resulting from shiftwork causes weight loss and menstrual disturbances.

Shiftwork upsets people's relationships with husbands and wives, with friends and causes many psychological disturbances.

"When I'm on night shift, we have nothing in bed. We communicate with letters."

When people are tired and lethargic, they have accidents. The highest accidents rates are after midnight.

And some people just never get used to working shifts. Only a third of the workers can adjust their sleeping and eating habits within a few days.

And another third can never adjust.

SHIFTWORK - IT'S DESTROYING YOUNG NURSES

Special Report: Pam Townshend who used to be a trainee nurse at Sydney's Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

"I HATE it. Shiftwork totally screws up my body, my social life and my family life."

This is the standard response when you ask nurses how they like shiftwork – particularly night shift.

"Night shift just turns me into a vegetable. All I seem to do is work and sleep and I feel permanently exhausted. Even on my days off I want to sleep all day".

In N.S.W., night duty is mostly done in blocks of one month. The Nurses Award states that a nurse must have at least the same length of time on day or evening duty before starting night duty again.

This award is frequently broken when nurses change from one ward to another.

"After 5 weeks night duty in the Chest Pavilion I was put on to night duty again in Neurosurgery where they have a rotating roster.

"I only had seven days in between – this was just enough time to get back into the old sleeping pattern – then back on night duty. I didn't know it was illegal, it happens quite often".

clock

Shift work does screw your body up, it's not just your imagination. Our bodies are governed by an "internal clock". This clock controls our metabolic rate, excretion, heart beat, body temperature and blood pressure.

Our bodies are geared to a routine of work and play during the day, sleep at night. When this routine is interrupted, our bodies suffer.

Many people feel chronically tired and yet can't get to sleep because of noise during the day. Telephones ring, people drop by and the light – all stop you from sleeping.

Many trained nurses work permanent night shift so they can look after their children during the day. Some nurse/mothers only get 3-5 hours sleep per day after their husbands come home.

duty

For trainee nurses there are several possible roster shifts starting in the morning or afternoon, and night duty. The only law governing this is that there must be 8 hours between shifts. (Too bad if you need 8 hours sleep).

As for trainee nurses living in the nurses homes – cleaners are working all day and other boarders are talking and moving around.

"It's impossible when I'm on night duty. I just write off that whole month. I don't go out or see anybody. By the end of the month I feel like quitting."

Most nurses lose weight on night-duty. The meals provided by the hospital are prepared for the 5pm meal and kept hot until 11pm. You can imagine how appetising and nutritious they are!

No proper food is provided in the wards, only biscuits and tea or coffee.

"I feel so tired and nauseated in the morning that I never eat breakfast, sleep through lunch and wake up in time for a late tea. So I usually eat one proper meal a day." Apart from feeling exhausted and run down, this inadequate diet leads to gastric upsets, peptic ulcers and constipation.

Many women experience a change in their menstrual cycle. This can be increased pain and bleeding or total lack of periods.

To cope with depression, headaches and insomnia there is lots of "pill-popping". Nurses take sleeping tablets which doctors happily prescribe.

I know a few nurses who have a couple of brandies in the morning to knock themselves out for the day!! Many are on antidepressants and pain killers, despite knowledge of the side effects of these drugs.

A luxury that daytime workers take for granted is spending evenings and weekends with family and friends. Our society is geared to an evening social life which nurses can rarely participate in.

Couples living together find the tension builds up and that there is little time to talk and work things out.

Shift workers suffer in other areas too. *"One of the things I particularly miss is playing team sport. Basketball was my favourite sport, and now I only get one Saturday in every five so they won't have me in the team."*

Transport to and from work is often a problem. Especially in one car families. Public transport does not always cater for irregular shift times, when its dark and women are at risk.

Often its a long walk to bus stops, car parks and nurses homes and security at hospitals is poor.

Nurses are continually being attacked and raped. At Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, there are 2 security officers to protect about 200 nurses at shift changes.

demands

Changes in working conditions are slow or non-existent in the nursing industry. There are several concrete demands that we could win with some organisation.

1. Shorter hours (6 hour shifts on night duty).
2. Longer holidays.
3. Extra days off to recover from night duty.
4. More sick leave. Nurses are particularly vulnerable to illness. At RPAH you are lucky to get more than 5 days off without being threatened with dismissal.
5. Increased shift payments.

Nurses are easy to exploit. They are mainly young women with no experience in on-the-job struggles.

The sisters who make it to the top are picked because they are from "the old school", i.e. they rave on about how nurses are dedicated and should put up with awful conditions because its a "caring profession". This is bullshit.

True, most of the girls (there are very few men) who start out do care, but they are very quickly hardened by the system.

"When you are sick and tired and the sisters and doctors are push, push, push and there's not enough nurses on, I couldn't care less about the patients.

"That makes me depressed too, because if we don't care about these sick people what are we here for – glorified bed makers?".

"Nightshift just turns me into a vegetable"

The shift-worker's nightmare: "It messes up your whole life. I have to much of the wrong king of food. . . . . . I feel permanently exhausted."

THERE is little union organisation and very poor union meeting attendance. People can't get to the meetings because of shift times or they are on days off.

Quite often the union branches are controlled by right wing bureaucrats who don't want to see any changes.

In Queensland there isn't an industrial union, only the RANF (Royal Australian Nurses Federation). This "fine" institution has a grand history.

During the 1930's when workers took a 10% across the board wage cut the RANF appealed for a 25% cut and got it!! They also continually lobbied for longer shift hours.

This subservience and dedication all stems back to the Victorian era when upper-class ladies like Florence Nightingale and Dorothea Dix created the nursing "profession".

"When she (Florence) arrived in the Crimea with her newly trained nurses, the doctors at first ignored them all. Nightingale refused to let her women lift a finger to help the thousands of sick and wounded soldiers until the doctors gave an order". (Nurses, Witches and Midwives – Barbara Ehrenreich and Deidre English).

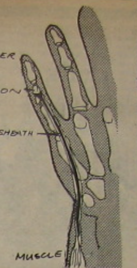
All right – so things are bad but they're not hopeless. There are pre-existing organisations to work in, for example Student Nurses Associations, RANF, N.S.W.N.A. to fight for changes in the Nursing industry.

As well, in Brisbane, there is a rank and file group which publishes the Hospital Worker and groups of radical healthworkers in most capital cities, including the Health Workers Collective and P.A. Diary (Sydney).

Get in contact with these groups and be active.

Florence Nightingale

"Sometimes my hands get so bad I could cry!"



THIS is just one of the kinds of work that can lead to painful and crippling tenosynovitis.

THREE WOMEN TALK ABOUT A CRIPPLING INDUSTRIAL DISEASE — TENOSYNOVITIS

THAT'S what one woman had to [say] about tenosynovitis.

She used to work at Steggles, the [chicken] processing plant, in N.S.W. She developed this crippling disease as a result of doing the same process, thousands of times a day, week in, week out.

Tenosynovitis (pronounced Ten-o-sin-o-vitis) is an inflammation of the tendons and tendon sheaths caused by rapid repetitive movements of the fingers, hand or arm.

Tendons are tough pieces of tissue which connect to, for example, fingerbones allowing the finger to bend. They pass through a sheath which provides lubrication.

However rapid, repetitive movements [dry] the lubrication and result in inflammation of [the ten]dons and sheaths. This causes swelling [and pai]n whenever the hand or arm is used.

[You] can get it typing, doing process [work,] operating punch card machines or [a]ny job involving thousands of [repetitiv]e actions each day.

[The] bosses often say it's "housework" or [write it] off as "problems with the hands." and doctors too, often diagnose it as muscle strain or arthritis.

[So] often it is accepted as part of the [job an]d with high unemployment many [women] are afraid to report it, let alone [demand] something be done to stop [it].

[Treat]ment is difficult, similar to the [problem]s associated with a strained back. [Most] importantly a person needs rest, sometimes combined with ultrasound physiotherapy to reduce the inflammation. In severe cases drugs may be needed to alleviate the pain.

Often doctors, being sticklers for scientific precision, are reluctant to say that the disease is caused by work until the pain reaches a stage where the "general correlation" with the work is obvious to all but the simple or the malicious.

luck

Many doctors believe that people will recover and can work at the same job again. But it's all a matter of luck.

However many unionists say that once you get it you'll never do that work again.

Employers could reduce the possibility of getting it. Rotating jobs, frequent rest periods, proper tools and working positions, conveyors and equipment adjusted for the individual worker's size, and slowing down the production line.

But this means fighting the bosses whose profits are threatened by our demands for safe working conditions.

Many women process workers' awards are low and this compels the women to work faster to get the bonus payments under the various "incentive schemes"

Bosses sometimes put fast workers at the beginning and the end of the production lines to add further pressure for speed – the fear of the sack if you can't keep up.

On these pages The Battler talks to three women about their experiences and about what can be done to stop tenosynovitis.

"Suddenly my wrists started to ache..."

Interview

By Steve Morgan

HAVE you ever thought that the humble zipper on your trousers, jeans or dresse could be crippling workers?

But that humble zip is one of the thousands turned out each day. Every zip is tested by a woman pulling it down, and then packing it in boxes.

The Battler spoke to Thelma, a shop steward at a zipper factory in the western suburbs of Melbourne. Fifteen years ago she had tenosynovitis but she was luckier than many women.

"I had been working in a packing job about 6 years and suddenly my wrists started to ache and I couldn't keep packing.

"So I went to first aid and they sent me to the works doctor. He gave me aspirin (to stop the pain) and bandaged my wrist, and put me off work for a fortnight.

"Then I had to go back to see how I went. I still wasn't terribly good so I asked to go back to some other work I had been trained for.

pain

"I did that for 8 years and my wrist had got better – I was one of the lucky ones – and I went back onto packing which I've been on ever since."

Thelma tells how it comes on. *"You suddenly get pain, and you can't do the work as quickly as you would normally.*

"If you keep doing the work, it get's aggravated and worse. If you don't get attention it gets worse and you'll feel you can't do the job, or any job, until you can get some treatment or go off the job.

"It slows you down. Like lifting a pot off a stove you'd have to be very careful and it's painful. The wrists have to be tightly bandaged and in severe cases you'll need injections of pain killers."

"A lot of workers won't report it because they're frightened ... they're frightened they won't be able to do the job."

The fight against tenosynovitis is plagued by language barriers (many process workers are migrants), ignored by unions, health authorities and bosses, but undermined by one single thing – fear for a job.

"They're frightened they may be put off and that if they can't do that particular job – it might be the only job they know – they don't know what else they might be able to do.

"A lot are afraid to go to first aid because they might lose their jobs. We're told management and they say it's rubbish. We say, 'Yes, it might be rubbish, but that is how we feel.'

"We've got girls who are very sick and yet they won't go. Yet we fought to get a nursing sister 5 or 6 years ago.

"Some go to their own doctors. They don't want others to know. There's a great fear at the moment because of unemployment."

trained

If the type of work they do has to be done Thelma thinks that women would feel easier if they were trained to do other jobs.

But the bosses are always crying poor, saying they can't keep training people for all sorts of jobs.

"If you are in this continuous work all the time, and you were trained to do something else, and you did get hurt and could go onto another job, you wouldn't feel so worried about what's going to happen to you."

HERE'S WHERE IT GETS YOU

[Ericss]on shop steward Yvonne Neill, shows the parts of the arm and hand [tenosy]novitis can attack.

[Wor]kers at Ericsson's have won an important struggle against the kind of [work that ca]uses tenosynovitis.

It used to be called 'Ericsson's Disease'

TENOSYNOVITIS was so rampant amongst the women workers at LM Ericsson's some years ago that is was called "Ericsson's Disease".

L M Ericsson is a large Swedish-based company manufacturing telecommunications products, employing several thousand women.

They didn't take much notice of the women, or care about what happened to them. But that all changed, at least at the Broadmeadows (Vic.) plant, in 1971 when the women went on strike for three weeks.

They won union recognition, improved working conditions and tools which have lessened the risks of getting tenosynovitis.

ETU shop steward, Yvonne Neil told us about the strike and after.

"We wanted 100 per cent unionism, that's why we had the strike, mainly here at the Broadmeadows plant.

"Tenosynovitis was mainly brought from Morwell plant.

frightened

"After we went to court it was all brought out how many cases of people having it and being frightened to report it. But mainly it was an issue at Morwell."

They won union recognition, including a union office, half an hour paid each day for shop stewards to collect dues and see their members and better conditions.

"It (the strike) made the firm look at us different. We are now 95 per cent union.

"We have different work positions, different chairs, better tools. Now you rarely hear of cases of tenosynovitis but you still get the odd one.

"We had about 3400 workers in Victoria at the time (1971) – that included Morwell, Broadmeadows, Coburg and Fawkner plants and only 300 union members – and I'd say about one out of every ten would have got tenosynovitis.

"Many had an operation and later would be retrenched. As soon as they had a problem the company would give them medical treatment but as soon as their treatment finished they were gone because the company didn't want any recurrence.

"And it was put down on their resignation that [they were] unfit for repetitive w[ork].

"I've known [since] the strike) to get w[omen to sign] a form saying they['re unfit] to repetitive wo[rk ...] would be bett[er] somewhere else. W[ith lack] of understanding of [the] language, and at [times no] shop steward would [help,] they'd sign.

"After the strike [it] got better becau[se ...] people you got [...] and more they [...] could help them [...] they'll come to y[ou].

sneak

"But before I [...] into the toilets [...] wanted to join [...] Yvonne wasn't [...]

tenosynovitis was more of a problem at Morwell but it's "Because of a lot more cable forming and greater pressure."

Cable making put a lot of strain on the wrists because the woman had to pull special string very tightly, with inadequate tools, and wrap it around the wires to form cables.

"The real sweat labour has gone now," Yvonne said, but they still do a lot of wiring and soldering, cable forming, assembly work, and coil winding.

"All our work we use our fingers."

Yvonne tells how "Ericsson's disease hits. "Really, it starts in the elbow and works up to the shoulders, but it can start in the fingers and the hand you use the most."

Many women use to leave Ericsson. "The women left because the work and pressure got too much and this business with the arm.

"But in the last 4 years you'd think very seriously about giving it away. Because once you report your arm, if there is any retrenchments, you're the first to go.

check

"They check your medical and compo file and then – I don't agree with this – they call the leading hands together and the shop stewards, then they let them make the decision about who should go so it's off their conscience.

"That's no leading hands job; that's no shop stewards job. You can be there to vouch for the worker but they've given them the sore arm in the first place.

"She loses time off, her wages, her bonus and she gets a settlement from the courts worth about $3000, and then her job.

"Every woman who has come to me who has had this, the company gives them 26 weeks compensation pay (as laid down in compo laws). They go to court but mainly settle out of court.

"They think it's beaut because it's $3000. But they don't realise they could have a recurrence later in life and put them off again.

"And once you've had anything wrong with yourself at Ericsson it's pretty hard to get a job anywhere."

We asked Yvonne how workers were treated.

"I think people are scared to report because they think once they report it, the medical centre sees it, and something could happen to them.

"And people shove it off because they think once I've reported it, what am I going to do without a job? So they just nurse it along as best they can.

wrong

"There's no rotation of jobs. Just the same positions. This is wrong. People should be moved around. If they were moved around more the repetition goes!"

And so the incidence of "Ericsson's disease" would be lowered, instead of artificially being held down by womens' fear of unemployment.

"I'm getting very adept at using my left hand."

Interview

By Janet Vaux

"I can't grip anything. I can't unscrew bottles. I can't knit.

"My hand goes in a spasm and I just have to wait for it to relax.

"Even turning potatoes gives me hell."

Cecily has been crippled in her right hand because of four years' work as a school cleaner in Sydney.

She is a victim of tenosynovitis, a common industrial disease amongst women, caused by repetitive hand movements.

damage

In Cecily's case, the damage was caused by a polishing machine with a power switch on the handle. She had to grip this tightly to keep the power on while she was polishing.

After three years of this sort of work, Cecily began to get a tingling sensation in her right hand.

This developed into a swelling and general pain around the wrist area and in the fingers, and within 12 months she was unable to use her right hand.

"It's not just that you can't work. It affects your personal life as well.

"I used to do a lot of knitting and fancy work. It's an effort just to take up a hem at the moment."

And house-work doesn't disappear. "I'm getting very adept at using my left hand. Though the spring cleaning doesn't get done."

operation

Cecily stopped work last December. She had an operation in February, and was back at work in March, doing the same job, with the same sort of machine "I think it's a standard type".

The tenosynovitis flared up again immediately. "It was never right, I could feel it all the time.

"Then Kevin Baker of the Misco's (Miscellaneous Workers Union) told me to come to the Workers Health Centre at Lidcombe. The doctor told me it was not healed and in fact I'd done more damage."

Now she's off work again and doesn't know when her hand will be healed. It is in a plaster half cast and she has ultrasonic treatment three times a week.

delays

On top of all this, Cecily had incredibly long delays before she got her compensation payments.

"I was off work in December and it was the end of February before I received any money.

"I kept ringing up the Government Stores and the Government Insurance Office. The G.I.O. have to admit liability and it took them three months.

"I wasn't too badly off, because I have my husband who's earning. But a lot of women are widows and they can't wait that long.

"It's just the luck of the draw whether it goes through in a fortnight or three months."

The march to Versailles... "begun by a small girl beating a drum and led by thousands of angry women from the working classes.

WHEN CAPITALISM WAS REVOLUTIONARY....

JULY is a revolutionary month.

Within ten days of each other, we celebrate two of the great revolutions of all time: the American independence struggle on July 4, and the earth-shaking events capped by the storming of the Bastille in France on July 14.

Both the American and the French revolutions were milestones in the creation of modern democracy. Today, capitalism is an obstacle to human progress and freedom. But in the 18th century, the capitalist system was a vast improvement over feudalism.

The greatest beneficiaries of both revolutions were the capitalists themselves. Predictably they try to rewrite history to suit themselves.

History books concentrate on individuals rather than the masses: George Washington, Lafayette, Robespierre. Almost always they build up the importance of the rich landowners and merchants. Almost always they ignore the role of the workers, the farmers, and the role of women.

But at the key turning points it was the poor masses who took the lead, and often it was the women.

The militant striking force in the American revolution were the Sons and Daughters of Liberty. Led by a militant lawyer, Sam Adams, their members were mostly poor people: mechanics, carpenters, day labourers, seamen. There were also blacks among them.

Tom O'Lincoln writes on the anniversary of two great revolutions: July 4: American Independence July 14: French Revolution

Their bold actions shocked the rich colonists. At one point they marched right onto a British warship in New York and insisted on the surrender of an officer who had insulted them. They stood ready to fight the British troops.

led

Crispus Attucks, an ex-slave from Massachusetts, led a crowd of sailors and porters against the British troops in Boston, and fell as the first revolutionary martyr in the "Boston Massacre".

Another key figure, seldom mentioned, was a women named Mercy Otis Warren – a polemicist and playwright whose home became an organising centre for the revolutionaries. Her plays, widely read throughout the colonies, created a ferment of hostility to the British rulers.

The French revolution really began, not with the middle class deputies assembled in Paris in 1789, but with the food riots of the previous summer. Although a working class as we know it was only beginning to develop, arrest records indicate that about half the rioters were wage earners.

In the following April, thousands of workers took to the streets, when two employers made speeches suggesting that wages were too high. The demonstrations turned into full scale rioting throughout the suburb of Saint Antoine. Troops dispersed them with many dead.

In the summer of the same year, matters came to a head with the capture of the king at Versailles and the storming of the Bastille.

The march to Versailles was begun by a small girl beating a drum, and led by thousands of angry women of the working classes.

The disturbances leading up to the march, too, were led by women, "commenting loudly on their men had no idea what to do so they would take a hand in things themselves."

Throughout both revolutions, in France and in America, the capitalists had to be continually pushed and prodded by the poor people. Though it was their class that benefitted the most, the merchants and manufacturers feared the revolutionary action of the masses as much as they hated the old regime.

Marx

Here is how Karl Marx described the capitalists of the time:

"... inclined from the very beginning to betray the people and compromise the with the crowned representatives of the old society ... at the steering wheel not because the people stood behind them but because they needed them as a screen behind which they could hide from the people, because they represented, on initiative of a new revolution the rancour of an old society epoch..."

In the early days of the capitalist system, the working people had to make the bourgeois revolutions for them. Today, in the age of capitalist decline, it is high time we made a revolution for our own.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

LAST Saturday, a few of us had the opportunity to play Doolgitie and talk to the animals. We were at a party which was also attended by four footballers from St.Kilda Football Club.

For those of you who don't follow Victorian football, St. Kilda get named as animals after a particularly violent match a few weeks ago. The club president didn't like the epithet and began legal proceedings.

A few hours before the party St.Kilda had just been beaten by the unusually large margin of 100 points. This may explain, though it does not excuse, the extremely unpleasant behaviour of its four representatives at the party that night.

I couldn't say whether they earned the title of animals for their game against Essendon. I didn't see the game. However at least two of their players, a ruckman named Jeff and a superstar named Gary, did their level best to earn the title at a party last Saturday.

Obviously they had decided to soothe egos bruised by the defeat by getting drunk and "scoring" a woman. They decided to go about this in an extremely sexist fashion, as if the only way that they could prove that they were men was by humiliating women.

Unfortunately, a lot of footy clubs create this kind of atmosphere and a lot of the bullshit that sporting club coaches go on with, puts players under pressure to conform with that mould. What makes it worse is that competitive Australian Rules Football is far too entertaining a game to need any of that crap.

But the sad point for these particular animals was that it did not work. There were enough people at that party who were football fans, that if they had behaved themselves, they would have basked in the admiration of many males present.

And if they had behaved like humans instead of animals and approached the women present as humans instead of sex objects, they may even have found some company for the evening.

Instead of which, the whole evening turned into a disaster for them. Some women were intimidated by the large men with the wandering hands and foul mouths. Rather more responded by treating the "boyz" with contempt. So instead of putting down women they found themselves put down by women.

As for the men's response ... Perhaps the high point of the evening came when a friend of mine, who might have been the keenest footy fan present, made a loud comment about animals in front of them.

"Are you calling us animals?" inquired Big Jeff, easily the most offensive of the four.

"I'm not the only one," replied my mate, who must be at least eight inches shorter and five stone lighter than big Jeff.

He was however quite safe. Jeff was not stupid. By this stage it would have been obvious that he had only three friends at this party. He had made at least forty enemies.

The moral of the story? Not only does macho sexism defeat its purpose but it's harder to get away with nowadays.

FROM THE SHELF

"LOVE OF WORKER BEES" Alexandra Kollontai.

Love of Worker Bees is a collection comprising a novel ("Vasilisa Malygina") and two short stories, "Three Generations" and "Sisters".

Alexandra Kollontai wrote them in 1927 and when published in Russia they were generally regarded as unwholesomely preoccupied with sexual matters.

For the reader in 1978 her writing about sex often seems naive compared with today's hard core stuff.

However the themes Kollontai explores apply to today's world. Kollontai was fascinated with the idea of "one great love" based on friendship and trust. Vasilisa Malygina's one great love was Vladimir.

They were married just after the Russian Revolution. Vladimir was an anarchist who eventually joined the Bolshevik Party but was always in hot water with the Party committee.

During the Civil War from 1918 - 1921 Vasilisa stayed in her home town and set up a communal house. She fought for better working conditions with her comrades (mostly women).

Vladimir was in Leningrad, where he was made a director under the New Economic Policy. When Vasilisa goes to live with him she finds that he is not living "like a communist". He lives in a mansion with servants and secretly keeps a mistress.

Vasilisa is shattered by this experience. She eventually gets enough strength to leave him and return to her comrades at home.

This story contains many parallels with Kollontai's life. She had to leave her own husband after she found that she had major political disagreements with him.

It was through contacts with large numbers of militant working class women in St.Petersburg that she got the courage to leave and pursue her own life.

Kollontai fought for greater interest and commitment to women workers' liberation within the Communist Party. She knew that an economic revolution would not automatically release women from their subservient role.

Women and men must actively work towards "a fundamental restructuring of the psyche" (An Autobiography of a Sexually Emancipated Woman).

In Love of Worker Bees we are given a vital, lively, first hand account of life in the first years after the revolution.

We see the beginning of the downfall of the Revolution and the people involved - NEP men, Party hacks, the petty bureaucrats, the idealists and the fighters.

by Pam Townshead

LAST OF THE OLD STYLE LABOUR LEADERS

By Mick Armstrong

Arthur Calwell was Australian politicians ALP between the two great 'splits' of World War I and the mid-fifties.

Involved in the Young Ireland Society he was radicalised by the crushing of the 1916 Easter uprising in Dublin by British troops.

He became active in the anti-conscription campaign and joined the ALP. Calwell was to remain a life long anti-conscriptionist.

In alliance with his friend Pat Kennelly (and presumably with the support of John Wren) he gained control of the Victorian ALP machine in the 1920's and 30's.

However his entry into Federal parliament was delayed by the longevity of the member for Melbourne, Dr.Maloney.

Calwell always regarded himself as a socialist and he clashed often with World War II ALP Prime Minister Curtin for failing to introduce social reforms.

He saw England as "the capital of Australian economic exploitation" and the war as a diversion by British interests to prevent socialism.

In reality, Calwell's "socialism" was a radical populism which looked on government intervention into the economy as a panacea for eliminating capitalism.

Thus he could see no contradiction in the 40's between his support for nationalising the banks and the mines and the Labour government's use of troops to crush the miners' strike.

scheme

Calwell's pioneering of the post war immigration scheme was his major claim to fame. He encouraged European migration (though not the opening of the "Asian floodgates") as a means of stimulating economic growth and securing Australia's defences.

Calwell also wanted to change Australia from being a "little England" in the southern hemisphere.

The ALP split of the 1955 was traumatic for Calwell. For a start, it ruined his hopes of becoming Prime Minister. This largely explains his subsequent hatred of the DLP and B.A. Santamaria.

At the same time he was subjected to a personal vendetta by fellow catholics who supported the right wing split.

Many people today are surprised that Calwell and Pat Kennelly did not go with the DLP. After all Calwell was not exactly a friend of the communists and had wavered over Menzies' attempt to ban the CPA.

fanatical

Calwell was from a different generation of Irish catholics to the "groupers". He could not understand their fanatical opposition to communism which he did not see as a threat to Australia.

He was a fabian socialist who believed the way to fight communism was to remove the social causes such as war and poverty which led to revolution.

The groupers also represented different social forces to Calwell and Kennelly. The younger and much larger Irish Catholic middle class of the 1950s which led the Movement, was trying to build a party on the lines of the European Christian Democrats to represent their interests directly.

They sought to do this via the Labour Party rather than the Liberals which was closed to them because of its domination by the protestant establishment.

By the time Calwell became leader of the ALP in 1960 he was 64 and well past his prime. However he only lost the 1961 election by one seat.

He was hung on as leader till 1967 when he was replaced by his deputy Whitlam, whom he despised as a careerist and opportunist who could never be trusted.

His final political campaign was in 1966 when he strongly opposed conscription and Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war. The war was still then popular and the Liberals had a landslide victory.

Colin Kiernan's biography is basically an apology for Calwell. Yet it gives some interesting insights into the man and what passed as socialism in the ALP for forty years.

Calwell was aware of the injustices that capitalism imposed on workers. He believed that these could be overcome by relying on a Labor government rather than the organised strength of the working class. His own career shows the hopelessness of his approach.

Arthur Calwell: supported bank nationalisation – and breaking the miners' strike with troops.

GOD IN A WHITE COAT

By Janey Stone

A hospital is a peculiarly suitable place to set a thriller.

The strange equipment, the long empty corridors, the dead bodies in the morgue form an ideal background.

Even thinking of an injection is enough to send a chill down most people's spines. Incomprehensible technical language adds to the mystery of medicine and the mystique of doctors.

Dr Susan Wheeler, a young surgeon in training, discovers that there have been a number of unexplained comas in healthy young adults following routine minor surgery.

impenetrable

Trying to follow this up she runs into an almost impenetrable wall.

No-one is prepared to admit there's anything wrong. One of the authorities she complains to tells her to calm down and look into the situation. When she leaves his office he turns around and says, "Damned women."

As "Coma" continues the real nature of hospitals is revealed.

The story is almost entirely carried out by doctors. This reflects the view most doctors have of health care. In reality most of the patient care is done by nurses. Hospitals are run on the backs of the cleaners, kitchen, laundry, and maintenance workers.

But bottom of the whole hospital hierarchy comes the patient. In one scene a doctor gives instructions over the phone, "*Give him sacro and tell him it's morphine. He won't know the difference. He's a pain in the arse anyway.*"

In a hospital your body doesn't belong to you. It belongs to the doctor. As a doctor says about one coma case, "*It's excellent teaching material.*"

When Dr Harris, the Head of Surgery, explains himself towards the end of the film these are not merely the evil ravings of a mad criminal.

"*The hospital is the modern cathedral*" he declares.

Most doctors do think they are God or at least gods. "*Ordinary people are our children. We have to make decisions for them.*"

These are not paranoid delusions of grandeur. Doctors actually have civil power to make decisions involving radical changes in people's lives. This power comes from the way hospitals fit into social structure.

The film only touches on the political ramifications. Dr Harris is in constant conflict with government ministers. The head of Anaesthesiology has important financial connections.

Who can stand up against such authority? In the traditional manner of the fascist movie, Susan is in search of the truth, Susan Wheeler does.

usually

The only difference is that usually this is a role for a man. But men have to have a disappointment.

Susan Wheeler has all the class with determination and courage. In the face of her own disbelief and threats to her job. But after she's shot in the back and her boyfriend is suddenly worn round to her side she is ready to carry on and saves the day.

This is not only a capitulation to sexism (to be expected). It is also a cop-out on other questions of hospitals and health care which deserve to be covered more fully.

Dr Susan Wheeler discovers that in a hospital, your body doesn't belong to you.

Storemen & Packers defy Court

Woolworths storemen and packers meet to defy the court order.

MEMBERS of the Storemen and Packers Union have given a resounding "No" to a Court Order that they should return to work.

Last week, workers at Woolworths and Flemings depots in Sydney voted to stay on strike indefinitely over a claim for a paid meal break for day workers.

They rejected a recommendation from the Union's State Secretary that they should abide by the Court Order and return to work without a single concession on the part of management.

Nor are they being intimidated by threats to de-register the union and bring actions against organisers and delegates.

As one delegate put it: *"The court recommendation made the workers more adamant, more strongly united."*

The paid meal break is not the only issue.

break

Management is trying to break a long-standing flow-on practice, which applies to improvements of pay or conditions won by workers under the same award.

A few weeks ago Storemen and Packers at John David's Holdings won a paid meal break.

So the Woolworths and Flemings workers put in a claim as soon as they heard about the gain.

They were angered by the company's response. *"They just gave us a flat no. They weren't even willing to negotiate."*

Now the workers are ready to face a long strike.

RIPPING OFF THE JOB HUNTERS

LAST week I was out of a job.

Like other unemployed building workers, I had to get up very early and get the Herald to look for jobs.

In the Herald last Monday, an ad. appeared: "Scaffolders. Must be reliable. Phone 922 366."

rang

I rang the number and the bloke at the other end said he was in the "contract labour business." That's bosses' talk for "body hire".

He told me there were no vacancies, but to ring back that afternoon. So I rang back about 4pm.

The boss said I was to go to the V.H.Y. job at Edgecliff. I asked if I would start.

The boss said he only wanted to send scaffolders and there were already there.

But maybe if I went to the site I could talk V.H.Y. into hiring me from the body hire merchant also.

In other words, my job was to get more business for this parasite.

Demarcation is in a way in the construction industry. I've heard of rigger-dogman, scaffolder-dogman and rigger-scaffolder-dogman.

But this is the first time I've heard of rigger-scaffolder-dogman-personnel manager-salesman!

by an unemployed BLF member

ALL THE NEWS ON THE BLF ELECTIONS

CANDIDATE SACKED

BLF and BWIU members at the Qantas site are striking until BLF rank and file candidate for organiser, Duncan Williams, gets his job back.

At a meeting on Monday 19 June, the men decided to defy a court order telling them to lift bans and limitations.

Bosses compile smear dossiers at Qantas

In return, the court was "generously" going to reinstate Duncan for a week while his case went before the anti-discrimination court.

The bans and limitations are nothing to do with the current dispute, but had been placed over a number of issues including the docking of delegates' pay whenever they're on union duty.

Duncan's sacking is a clear case of victimisation.

The company says that he shouldn't have been speaking at an election meeting on another site, when he'd taken the day off work. In court they presented a 22 page dossier on him.

campaign

Duncan's reply is: *"The real reason for the sacking is being a candidate in the elections, and taking time off to campaign in the election.*

"They use the dossiers that they have compiled whenever they want to sack someone.

"They've compiled dossiers on every worker in the site. But there's no right of reply.

"Warnings are handed out indiscriminately on the site and build up over a period of time – the points are never argued out till the worker is sacked, maybe a year later."

Meanwhile the BLF officials are still colluding with the bosses.

They refused to speak for Duncan in Court, because they said they had not been informed of the matter.

Then they hung around after the court hearing, chatting with the bosses. They didn't even bother to come to court for Friday's hearing.

Black declares himself "elected"

BUILDERS labourers are still waiting for the announcement of the date for the court controlled ballot in NSW.

Meanwhile Black and Co have declared themselves elected in the fraud ballot they held a few weeks ago.

They are holding the next branch meeting in Newcastle. Maybe they will try to get the bodgie ballot ratified there, since they couldn't get it ratified in Sydney even ringing in votes at $10 a go.

They know there is no way most Builder's Labourers can get to a meeting at 4.30 pm being held over a hundred miles from Sydney.

gutter

The officials are continuing their gutter tactics in the election campaign.

They followed up the violence and disruption of the June branch meeting by letting all the tyres down on Bob Petty's car. Bob is a rank and file candidate for organiser in the elections.

They know they will lose the court ballot, but it's now clear they may refuse to vacate office.

Then BLs will be justified in using every means at their disposal to get them out of the Trades Hall.

GMH workers vote at the Dandenong plant last week. But the campaign doesn't look like getting out of first gear.

GMH campaign stalls

THE Vehicle Builders Unions campaign for its log of claims at GMH has started, not with a bang but a whimper.

VBU members at six GMH plants round the country heard their officials report to stopwork meetings that they were displeased with the company's attitude.

agree

The only offer GMH has made is a demand that the union agree that 20 per cent of the workforce be employed on a temporary basis.

This will mean one in five vehicle builders could face the sack at short notice and won't be entitled to holiday pay and long service.

When the Battler asked union official Con Zaglas why no specific actions were proposed to win the claim, he said, *"We are trying to gauge our members opinion. The vote shows our members are unhappy with the company."*

Officials told the mass meeting at GMH Dandenong in Melbourne that job security and industrial democracy were "number one priority" for the federal VBU".

VBU members could be forgiven for being a little cynical about this statement. You only need to recall how workers sacked at Chrysler have been sold out over the last eighteen months to understand why.

And will the VBU proposal for one year contracts (originally put up by GMH itself) really protect jobs?

Or will it just mean a mass sacking every 12 months instead of sackings throughout the year?

phoney

As for "industrial democracy", that just means the phoney "worker participation" schemes that trendy bosses round the country are starting to tout as the solution to industrial conflict.

So it looks like the VBU's real game is to forget about the claims like wages that will involve a real struggle.

Instead they will try to hoodwink the members with a couple of big sounding but meaningless "gains" that won't hurt GMH anyway.

Officials "displeased"

IN THE BATTLER EVERY FORTNIGHT

the WORK TOLL

THE Victorian Public Health Commission is hell bent on sending workers deaf.

It has bowed to bosses' pressure and set noise limits at 90 decibels (dBa) for an eight hour shift.

Victoria's "safe" noise level is three times higher than the standard recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council in 1973.

It recommended that the legal noise level be set at 85 dBa. (For every 3 dBa increase the noise levels doubles. A 5 dBa increase is a three fold increase in noise.)

■

NINE out of 10 factory workers are exposed to unsafe noise levels. Noise deafness is the most widespread industrial disease in Australia and is estimated to affect half a million workers.

The argument around whether the standard should be 90 or 85 is crucial for all workers.

With a 90 dBa limit, thirty out of every one hundred industrial workers will suffer industrial deafness.

With an 85 dBa limit, this will drop to twenty in a hundred.

Victoria's health officials don't seem to be in too much of a hurry about it, though.

The State's deputy chief health officer, Dr Nick Sloan, said, "If we can get industry down to 90 decibels, maybe in 10 or 15 years we can look at it and think about 85."

■

INDUSTRIAL deafness is permanent and incurable.

Those who suffer from noise deafness experience the loss of high frequency sound because the hearing cells in the inner ear are damaged.

The loss of these high frequency sounds inhibits conversation. The most meaningful components of words are consonants (b, f, k, t etc.) and most of the high frequency sounds are consonants.

This means that a person can't distinguish between words like "Boy" and "Toy". All you hear is -oy and consequently make mistakes.

Because noise deafness is due to damaged nerve cells it is irreversible.

Hearing aids are useless. An aid can only be of help if something is stopping the sound reaching the hearing cells.

But when the hearing cells are damaged, no amount of amplifying can help.

■

THIS edition's column has looked at noise, but we have to give a whole truckload of Falling Bricks for Safety to Lang Hancock.

All readers were probably angered by his statement that "Some people have to suffer so the majority can benefit from asbestos."

Hancock made a packet out of the Wittenoom asbestos mine in Western Australia.

Since the mine closed in 1966, 45 people have died from the rare lung cancer, mesothelioma (you literally drown in your own body fluids) and another 200 are suffering numerous lung diseases.

He sold the mine to CSR in 1943. CSR has set up a $2 million trust to provide a social worker to help families suffering from asbestos related diseases. Hancock refuses to contribute to the trust.

We hope he puts The Battler Falling Bricks to good use and [illegible] himself – for the benefit of the majority of us, of course.

Steve M[illegible]

Why NOT boycott the Cup?

Dear Battler,

I thought the two articles on the World Cup in Battler No 53 were weak.

Both of them explain how the Argentine junta is using the Cup as window dressing for its brutal repression.

But when it comes to the 64 dollar question, "How do we fight it?", they both go to water.

Paddy Crerand says it's "crazy" to advocate a boycott of the World Cup. Why? Because "you'd never get many of the players behind it".

For a start, it's good to see that Paddy carefully says "many players" rather than "any players".

Because two prominent international players are boycotting the current World Cup. Beveren, the Dutch goalkeeper, has refused to go to Argentina because of the nature of the regime.

And Parviz Ghylchkhani - who was selected as captain of Iran's team - also refused to play in protest at the Shah of Iran's repression at home.

Maybe Paddy thinks they're "crazy". I think they should be applauded for their courage.

Those who remember the anti-Springbok campaign in 1971 here in Australia might recall how the stand by just one player, Tony Abrahams, played a valuable part in exposing the South African rugby tour and building the movement against it.

They might also remember hearing Paddy's second argument thrown at them - If you boycott one country, you have to boycott all.

blatant

But not all international sporting contests are such blatant attempts to buy respectability as the current World Cup is for Argentina, or the Springbok tour was for South Africa.

And besides, we are not theologians playing around with moral absolutes. The job of the left is (or should be) to build struggles where they can be built.

And in the case of the current World Cup, a campaign has taken place in France, Holland, and Scandinavia for a total boycott.

The campaign hasn't been successful, it's true. But it certainly hasn't been irrelevant, either. In Amsterdam, 3500 demonstrated when the Dutch team left, for example. And the fact that the campaign was based across three countries also won it international attention.

Paddy Crerand wants us to "use the fact that the spotlight is on Argentina to highlight the awful things that have been going on there". But he doesn't tell us how.

I'd venture to suggest that the "crazy" campaign for a boycott has been at least as effective as his own wishful admonitions "not to close our eyes".

As for David Lockwood's suggestion, that instead of campaigning for a boycott, the left should try and get the journalists covering the Cup to expose Argentina's repression - what a joke!

One can just imagine the reaction of a sports editor on a capitalist paper in London or Melbourne or Paris getting – instead of a kick by kick account of the final – a blow by blow account of some torture session.

A quick scrunching of paper, a well-flighted corner kick into the waste paper basket, and a choicely worded telegram saying "Don't Come Back - You're on the Transfer List".

Come on Battler. We mightn't be able to do much about the World Cup here in Australia.

But let's not denigrate the efforts of our comrades overseas, who have managed to raise the whole question of Argentina's repression, by sticking their necks out and saying "Boycott!"

Alec Kahn
Oakleigh, Vic.

CONFUSED

Dear Battlers,

Can you please tell me what is the point of the latest ads on the TV for HBA?

When I rang and asked them how much it would cost to take out a policy covering me in case my son becomes a drug addict (You know - "leave the boy alone!"), or my husband turns alcoholic, they acted as if I was mad.

So what did they put those ads on TV for?

Confused
Carlton, Vic.

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society; based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party out of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If that's the sort of work you want to do-

JOIN US!

Dear Battlers,

COME TO THE HOMOSEXUAL CONFERENCE

Dear Battlers

The Fourth National Homosexual Conference is being organised in Sydney for August 25th -27th at the Paddington Town Hall Centre, around the theme "Homosexuals at Work."

An open collective of homosexual activists is responsible for planning the conference.

The conference offers a possibility for homosexual socialists to make an effective intervention in the homosexual movement, and to build a radical and activist movement of significant size and strength.

The conference is the first of its kind in Australia. None of the three previous conferences have had a specific theme.

But this conference gives the opportunity to discuss in detail a real area of oppression and to build campaigns to fight that oppression.

treating

Moreover, it is treating an area of oppression – the workplace - that can easily be related to the economic factors that give rise to the oppression.

Socialists can establish the link between sexual politics and economic politics, and thereby provide the potential for large broad-based political campaigns.

This is particularly important when considering the threats posed by the establishment of the National Front in Australia, and the Mary Whitehouse tour later this year.

Also, a new group has been set up in Sydney called the Gay Solidarity Group. Their first action was to organise a large number of activities to commemorate the very first Gay Liberation demonstrations on New York's Christopher Street in June 1969.

These activities were held over the weekend on June 23rd - 25th. They include a rally in the Town Hall Square on Saturday morning, and a "Fiesta" procession on Saturday night, which began at Taylor Square, went down Oxford Street, through the heart of the "Gay Ghetto" and ended up in Hyde Park.

position

There was also a public meeting in the afternoon, on the position of Homosexuals both internationally and in Australia, and a fund-raising dance on the Friday night, for the forthcoming National Conference.

On the same weekend, homosexual groups in Adelaide organised a conference on "Homosexuality and Children."

Yet in spite of the general re-vitalisation, socialists within the homosexual movement seem to be relatively disorganised.

Reflecting this, the Sydney group, Socialist Lesbians/Male Homosexuals has been allowed to wither away to non-existence.

After discussing this situation, Ad Hoc, the Sydney University Socialist-feminist homosexual group realised that it had become pressing to set up a left caucus.

Consequently Ad Hoc has called for a national Left Homosexual Caucus meeting to be held on the weekend of July 8th-9th.

This is short notice for a national meeting, but with the conference coming up, a number of other activities going on, and the threats from the right, it was felt that speed was the most important thing.

meetings

The Caucus meetings will be held at the Stanley Palmer Culture Palace, Cnr. Stanley and Palmer Street, Darlinghurst. It will begin at 2pm on Saturday July 8th.

Gary Bennett
Sydney

For any further information (on this or any other homosexual activities in Sydney) please contact Ad Hoc, Box 166, Wentworth Building, Sydney University, 2006. Or ring Sydney Uni SRC, 660.5051, and ask for Gary Bennett or anyone else from Ad Hoc

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

FIGHTING THE NEW URANIUM LAWS

ON Monday, June 19, a Melbourne general meeting of the IS heard Jim Falk, of the Movement Against Uranium Mining, warn of the dangerous and repressive legislation now being passed as part of the Fraser government's attempt to defeat the uranium movement.

Tom O'Lincoln of the IS executive spoke about prospects for building the movement, and the work of IS members.

There was general agreement that the movement had hit a lull, after the election defeat in December and the sell-out by the special union conference in February.

Some activists were dissatisfied, and some groups have collapsed. But in Melbourne, at least, things appear to be picking up.

IS members are now involved in a growing number of local groups.

Janey Stone of the IS Women's Commission spoke briefly on work among women workers – a topic which both Melbourne branches will discuss in more depth in the coming weeks.

■

AS part of Telecom's billion-dollar fun and games with the phone system, our phone numbers have all been changed.

The line for The Battler editorial is now (03) 376-9142 and for International Socialists National Office, plus 24-hour answering machine, 376-2783.

■

CANBERRA Branch has its largest sale regularly at the Lower Molongolo Water Quality Control Centre.

On average we now sell a dozen papers to construction workers (mainly AWU and AMWSU members) even though the site is almost wound down. At its height we sold around 30 an issue.

During that time the site was extremely militant and the Battler regularly reported their struggles. Although we no longer have any members on the site, the BATTLER is still very enthusiastically received.

The comrade who sells there regularly says that she always receives a friendly and non-sexist response from the workers on the job.

■

WE'RE sorry that there hasn't been a fighting fund for the last two issues but our fighting fund director is away.

We're still poor so keep it rolling in.

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 24 hour answering and message machine	376-9142 376 2783
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	376-2783
MELBOURNE GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	387 6351
SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown 2042	51-3665
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49-7939
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	49 6405
BRISBANE PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067	358 3978
IPSWICH, QLD.	281 6113

What's On

Deadline for next issue 5th July

MELBOURNE SUN 2 JULY
Women and Law Seminars: Women and Industrial Health; covering legislative protection, migrant workers, mental stress and houseworkers. Melb Uni Mixed Lounge 1-30pm Childcare Available.

MELBOURNE SUN 9 JULY
Women and Law seminars: Prostitution incl Decriminalisation, licensing, feminist theory and prostitution. Melb Uni Union Mixed Lounge, 1-30pm. Childcare available.

MELB SUN 16 JULY
Police treatment of politically active women. What crimes are political, Aboriginal women as political prisoners. Women in Law Seminar: 1-30pm Melb Uni Union Lounge Childcare available.

MELB SUN 23 JULY
St Kilda MAUM Public meeting on new uranium legislation PLUS "Sentenced to Success", the new film made by workers at a French Nuclear Power plant. 2-30pm. All welcome. Collection. At St.Kilda Library Community Room, Carlisle St.

SYDNEY SAT 1 JULY
Rally against Medibank cuts. 11am Town Hall Square.

SYDNEY SUN 2 JULY
I.S. Business meeting. Friends of I.S. Welcome. 7pm 111 Enmore Rd Newtown.

SYDNEY SAT 8 JULY
National Left Homosexual Caucus meeting. Begins 2pm Saturday and runs through Sunday. Further details, Sydney Uni SRC 6605051, ask for Garry Bennett or anyone else from Ad Hoc. Or write Ad Hoc, Box 166 Wentworth Bldg Sydney Uni 2006.

SYDNEY SUN 9 JULY
I.S. meeting. Max Hobbs talks on the London Night Cleaners Strike. Friends of I.S. welcome. 7pm 111 Enmore Rd Newtown.

SYDNEY AUG 25-27
"Homosexuals at work". The fourth National Homosexual Conference. Paddington Town Hall Centre.

BUILDING WORKERS FIGHT PAY CUT

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Construction workers meet beside the Yallourn W power station site to fight the pay cut.

THE State Electricity Commission of Victoria has hit one thousand building workers on the Yallourn W site with a pay cut of up to eighty dollars.

The SEC has sent round a notice saying it is cutting out over-award allowances till the workers behave themselves.

claim

The SEC wants the workers, employed by contractors on the site, to drop all action for the $6 travelling allowance claim in the building industry.

The workers have been out 1½ weeks to try and get the allowances restored.

One building worker from Yallourn W told us, *"Some people would be down $70-$80. It knocks a big hole in your pay.*

"This blue started off over the 6 dollar travelling allowance and the 19 dollars they got at Newport.

"We took a coup[illegible] half-days off for stoppages so they took our allowance off us.

"This is a [illegible] claim, but they're [illegible] site allowances off [illegible]

"The 6 dollar [illegible] granted to [illegible] Commissioner [illegible] back in February.

"Then the [illegible] appealed against it, and the courts took it off us."

Another [illegible] worker from the site [illegible] come from down in [illegible] – there's a few of [illegible] down there.

"We're getting [illegible] day travelling allowance [illegible]

"That's be flat out [illegible] for petrol, wouldn't it [illegible] be sixty miles a day [illegible] and back."

The Yallourn W [illegible] are refusing to be [illegible]ed by the SEC's [illegible]

They don't [illegible] back till the SEC [illegible] negotiate the [illegible] allowance as part of [illegible] annual log of claims.

And just so the S[illegible] doesn't do all the attacking, they have served this year's log six weeks early.

by Alec Kah[illegible]

New election ordered for meatworkers

THERE is to be another election for Queensland meat-workers.

After we waited weeks and weeks for a decision, the Federal Court last Thursday finally ruled there had been an invalidity in the last *AMIEU* ballot.

The former president and three organisers, all Reform candidates, have been reinstated.

issues

With policies covering issues like permanency, compensation, superannuation and long service, as well as its commitment to on-the-job organisation, the Reform Committee should win the new election.

Especially with meat-workers having experienced 12 months of the Maxwell-Lette group's right-wing leadership.

Sheds round Brisbane and to the North are already demonstrating their support by stepping up fund-raising for the campaign.

The bosses are obviously worried about losing the co-operation offered by the Maxwell-Lette officials (like ordering pickets to be lifted, and sacking job delegates from their union positions.)

The bosses' have made veiled threats of trouble now that the Reform organizers are on the scene.

At Bremer River, the company has made blatantly provocative attacks on the shed organization. It is trying to force slicers to work extra tasks, in spite of there being clear job descriptions for the shed.

The works officials at Bremer have even had trouble getting an organizer to their meetings to back up the action they have taken on the job.

Although it looks like being a couple of months till the election, situations like these will make it well worth while getting onto the job and building rank-and-file support for the Reform candidates and their policies.

by a Queensland AMIEU member

ACTU CRECHE: JUST A START - OR JUST A TOKEN?

THE ACTU is trying to get a creche established for workers in Moorabbin, a Melbourne suburb.

But the scheme leaves quite a bit to be desired.

Early in June some factory workers and teachers in the area received forms from their unions surveying their need for the creche.

At my school, Moorleigh High, there are two teachers with a need.

One is a father with a three-year-old child, the other is a mother with a year-old baby.

At Philip Morris, the biggest employer in the area, between forty and fifty forms were sent back.

A few filled in the form even though their children go to school. This is because some mothers want their children minded before and after school.

After all, the morning shifts at Philip Morris start at 7.10 am and 7.40am.

The ACTU has been asking the Federal Government to fund a creche for some time.

Suddenly a few weeks ago, Margaret Guilfoyle turned round and said the ACUT could have a grant if they established the need for a creche before the end of June.

That's why the forms were filled in and whipped off to the ACTU.

Details of the creche have not yet been made clear. But it is probably going to be just one house, with about twenty places.

Parents now worry if the creche will provide for all or just a lucky few. Will it open early enough? Will it be close enough for all parents? (This is especially important if parents want to leave the factory and check on a sick child at lunchtime).

Obviously the be[illegible] system would be for ev[illegible] workplace to have a cr[illegible] This is what that A[illegible] should have pushed f[illegible] cover everybody's need.

We might get one cr[illegible] but there will be hundr[illegible] small children and parents in need.

by Barbara Hall, VSTA

Sacked? They've got to be joking!

IRONWORKERS at Steelmains in Brisbane have been on strike for almost two weeks to prevent the sacking of a worker for "horseplay".

The sacked worker, Dave Dunleavy, made the mistake of playing a harmless practical joke.

He threw a lighted piece of paper into a toilet cubicle where he thought a friend had gone.

As it turned out, the occupant of the cubicle was the foreman.

The foreman promptly threatened to smack Dave in the mouth. Then he arranged for Dave to get the sack.

another

FIA delegate Terry Farr told the Battler that another worker was involved in the incident but was not even reprimanded.

The sacking of Dave Dunleavy was obviously a case of victimisation.

During the strike, the Steelmains workers established a strike committee and a food co-op.

Now they have been forced back to work. But they have authorised their delegates to call two snap half-day stoppages and to set up a shop strike fund.

There is also an overtime ban, and a ban on new labour being employed to do Dave Dunleavy's job.

Terry Farr believes that Steelmains has been so stubborn in this dispute because it wants to weaken the workers and prevent them pushing an outstanding $15 wage claim.

But the Steelmains workers are prepared to fight it nevertheless. And this time they'll be ready.

Clerks give air lines the bird

AIRLINE clerks in Sydney are waging a series of lightning rolling strikes against TAA and Ansett.

At a stop work meeting at Mascot last Wednesday, they voted overwhelmingly for indefinite strike action in support of improved conditions.

The main claims are for improvements in their grading system, job reviews and increased travelling money.

When they went back to work after Wednesday's meeting Ansetts took the clerks cards for the bundies out of the racks and would not let them start work.

In the face of this lock out, the TAA clerks and Transport Workers Union members walked out in support.

T.W.U. members also held a stop work meeting that morning in support of their own log of claims.

The clerks are trying to hit the airlines when it hurts them most – during busy periods.

So on Friday Ansett stopped between 6am and 7.30am, while TAA struck from 8 am to 9.30 am.

They plan to keep up the strikes till they see some decent response from the companies.

by Mick Armstrong

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No. 55
15 July 1978

the battler

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

20 cents

INSIDE:
The bigots who want to ban abortion

Fifth week out

2000 MINERS FIGHT UTAH BLACKMAIL

Utah miners have another fight on their hands as well. The Federal Government is going to tax their rent subsidies – effectively a wage cut of about $40. This protest march took place in Moranbah.

TWO thousand Central Queensland miners are now locked in a bitter struggle with Utah, Australia's biggest company.

If they win, it will mean a smashing blow against the indexation guidelines. But they are up against a multinational giant that made $182 million last year.

Utah is trying to force a seven day roster on the miners. It is demanding the miners accept this disruption of their home and community life, before it will raise over-award payments frozen since 1972.

The Utah miners are now in week five of their struggle. They voted 1150 to 5 to reject Utah's bribe of $30 bonus in return for the continuous shifts.

Instead they are demanding a $50 increase with no strings attached, to compensate for the six years their over-award pay has been frozen.

support

The Utah miners are receiving magnificent support from their wives and other miners around Australia.

A mass meeting of miners' wives in Moranbah voted 284-5 to back the strike. In Dysart, the women's vote was unanimous.

Fraser calls in Hawke

And Max Tanzer, acting area chairman of the Combined Mining Unions, reports that, *"Coalminers at every pit in Australia have levied themselves from $5 to $10 a week.*

"We now expect to receive $200,000 per week from these pledges to our strike fund.

"Each worker will receive about $120 per week as sustenance.

Utah has been spreading distortions and lies about the miners' wages to try and discredit the strike.

They have claimed the average wage of a miner is between $19,000 and $21,000.

Max Tanzer says, *"A shift-man can only earn $19,000 a year if he works extensive overtime. Unskilled workers, who form the majority of Utah employees, earn $14,000 per year if they work at least five hours overtime."*

prices

"Prices in Central Queensland are at least 25 per cent higher than the capital cities.

"We pay 25 cents per litre for our petrol. And you can't go anywhere here without using a car."

Bob Hawke and the ACTU are now intervening in the dispute, which has stopped Utah's coal exports.

The miners didn't invite Hawke in. It was Malcolm Fraser – after an approach from Utah!

But with the solidarity and determination the miners are displaying – even Bob Hawke will have trouble selling them out.

SANYO SIT-IN CRUSHED

By Steve Morgan

THE courageous sit-in for jobs by the workers at the Sanyo colour TV factory in Wodonga,(Vic) has been defeated.

The occupying workers accepted an agreement reached in private conference between the bosses, union officials and some workers, and Commissioner Brown.

They agreed to 15 immediate "voluntary" retrenchments with 4 more to leave in the next two weeks. The bosses got the 19 retrenchments they were after.

Although the company agreed to no more sackings for 6 months, the unions were forced to accept a no-strike agreement as part of the "bargain".

The Arbitration Commission hearing began in the canteen where the occupation was taking place. Sanyo's manager Bob Joy said it would become a "circus" if the workers were present. It was later transferred outside the factory.

The workers voted unanimously for the agreement because things seemed hopeless.

The bosses wouldn't budge, they were tired, financial strains were mounting and the only help was supporting telegrams, which you can't eat.

One worker said, "If the vote was taken yesterday, the decision would have been different. But now most people feel they don't want to work here anymore and they've had it."

Another said, "I don't think our jobs are very safe here."

For an on-the-spot report turn to pages 6 and 7.

More page 6

between the lines

A NEW award! Will they never cease? The BTL Palmolive "Wet Behind The Ears" Award for political sophistication goes to the Queensland Health Minister, Llew Edwards.

It seems that he was lobbied by some nurses protesting at the proposed rises in rent and meal charges. One of the nurses asked if they could tape the conversation.

But another nurse (obviously a BTL reader) got a bit smart. "I suppose," he ventured, "that the conversation is being taped anyway."

No way, said Dr Edwards, "that kind of thing doesn't happen in Queensland!"

PLANNING a trip to Israel soon? We suggest you think twice about it. Sami Esmail, an American citizen, has just been sentenced to nine months in an Israeli prison, on top of six months in jail already, for "membership in an unlawful organisation".

It seems that Sami was active at Michigan State University raising money and distributing newspapers in support of the Palestinian cause.

He was arrested last December on a trip to visit his dying father who lived in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

The prosecutor conceded that he had not gone to Israel to commit any "criminal" act.

He is in jail for his perfectly legal activities back home in America, over which Israel claims jurisdiction!

WHILE we're overseas . . . Percy Robinson of Yorkshire in England was sentenced for stealing to 100 hours of community work. Cleaning and washing up at a seamen's mission, to be precise.

So he sent his wife. After all . . . it's women's work, isn't it?

BUT that wasn't nearly as bad as the Coventry Turned Parts factory.

They rejected an application for a job from Timothy Veasey . . . because, according to managing director Ivor Jones, the job was so boring it should go to an older woman!

A Birmingham industrial tribunal then accepted the firm's argument — "The work was so boring a monkey could learn to do it."

THE Battler Plastic Straw, our unique way of recognising a true suck, has found a most worthy recipient.

Ken Turbet, formerly general secretary of the ATEA, the union covering Telecom linesmen and technicians, has just been made an Arbitration Commissioner.

Ken served his apprenticeship well. As well as being union secretary, he was a boss — one of the Telecom Commissioners. He always made sure the ATEA's gains didn't cost Telecom anything.

Now the ruling class is employing his talents full time.

Ken, your bright blue, yellow striped Mickey Mouse BTL plastic straw is on its way. And suck harder. It takes many years to earn one as elegant as John Moore's.

Darth Vader

Cops blockade the court to keep gay rights supporters out

WRAN COVERS UP FOR COPS

FOLLOWING last month's police riot against Sydney gays, there has been a huge upsurge in activity in the gay rights movement.

Gay Solidarity Group meetings, which used to attract about a dozen people, now number 80 to 100.

And on the Saturday following the riot, a meeting of about 400 gays and supporters decided to stage another major demonstration on Saturday July 15th.

The meeting which decided on the demonstration was angry and militant. Despite some tactical differences, it reached an amazing degree of unity on future action.

Sydney gays fight back

It was unfortunate that people decided not to march at night, because this would be a more direct challenge to Wran and the police.

But it's understandable that many are reluctant to risk more cop violence. Everyone arrested was bashed in some way by the cops. At least two people were badly hurt and needed hospital treatment.

Neville Wran has made no public statement since his wild claim that two cops had been hospitalised following the Saturday night riot. Further checks showed that no cops went to hospital.

murmur

Wran hasn't let out a murmur about the police take-over of the courts on the following Monday morning. The cops refused to let in friends and supporters of people charged. They even blocked some of the accused and witnesses from entering!

During the police blockade of the court, another seven people were arrested, bringing the total to 60.

In action since then, about 100 people picketted a talk by Don Dunstan on "The Right to Dissent", to encourage him to pass the news on to Nifty Nev.

If you want to join in the struggle, Gay Solidarity Group meets each Thursday at 6pm at CAMP, 33A Glebe Point Road, Glebe.

Attendance isn't strictly limited to gays. It involves a number of supporters, including socialist organisations.

The only qualification is support for the five demands:

Drop the charges.
Repeal all anti-homosexual laws.
End police harrassment and victimisation of lesbians and male homosexuals.
No discrimination against lesbians and male homosexuals in employment, especially teaching.
Enact a charter of rights, which includes sexual preference, to protect the democratic rights of lesbians and male homosexuals.

And we'll be marching again on Saturday 15th July, leaving Martin Plaza 11 am, through Kings Cross to Taylor square.

by Dianne Minnis

Wran's finest drag off a protester from the court. Notice the firm grip on his hair.

Sunday Mail exploits rape cases

LAST Friday night more than 100 women rallied in Adelaide's Rundle Mall to demonstrate against the media's handling of rape.

Carrying around placards and chanting, they marched through the streets to the office of the "Sunday Mail".

The "Sunday Mail", is jointly produced by the only two daily papers in Adelaide, "The Advertiser" and "The News".

The "Sunday Sun" has recently run articles on rape. "A Recipe for ..." outlined the methods and tactics used by rapists in the suburbs of Adelaide.

This type of ... papers. It ignores the ... and the situation of ... who have been raped ... rape.

Instead, it ... raises certain aspects ... to capture the ... attention.

The motive behind ... articles is an attempt ... show that rape is only ... by gangs of "sick" ... that is not really a ... or usual occurrence ... society.

luh...

Rather, we are ... into feeling that our ... is really alright, that ... certain elements ... "sick".

But most rape ... done by pathological ... but by a neighbour, friend ... acquaintance.

These are men ... see at work, at home ... the shopping centre ... aren't a minority who ... come out after dark.

We were ... against rape as ... mode of sexuality ... society.

Rape victims are ... treated seriously or sympathetically. They are ... disbelieved, or said to ... "asked for it" ... indulging in "every ... fantasy".

Rape is still ... good fuck and ... women need and ... a natural product ... society that treats ... sex objects and ...

But in Adelaide ... fighting back. A group ... Women Against Rape (W...) is actively attacking ... attitudes about rape.

WAR can be contacted by ringing the Adelaide Rape Crisis Centre on ...

by Ngairie J...

VIETNAMESE REFUGEES – LET'S CUT THE RACISM!

WHEN right wing fanatics say that Vietnamese refugees should be sent home, most of us probably ignore them.

But when sections of the labour movement start saying the same thing, it becomes a bit more serious.

By the end of June, 10,000 refugees had entered Australia. And the usual racist arguements had been trotted out against them.

culture

We were told that their culture and our culture can't mix — though no-one really says why, and it would appear that different cultures (and for that matter, colours) mix all over Europe and Asia.

Then it was suggested that the refugees would bring in strange new diseases that we just wouldn't be able to handle. But there is no real evidence that they are any more diseased than we are. And none of the people that argue this way suggest that we should improve our health service rather than kick out the refugees.

But more important are the arguments raised in the labour movement. In times of high unemployment, workers are worried that if we let in large numbers of immigrants they may take our jobs.

But the numbers of refugees that have entered the country are tiny compared to the rest of the population.

Unemployment is a government policy, designed to boost profits and tame workers. It won't disappear by keeping out refugees — it has to be fought by workers. And that means, by *all* workers.

The fact is that the refugees are not coming here with lots of money squeezed from the flesh-pots of Saigon.

In a Sydney and Wollongong survey, at least one third were from peasant or working class backgrounds. Many refugees are still unemployed, but most of the others have got blue collar jobs and have been quite prepared to join trade unions.

This means that the refugees are going to be involved in the same struggles as Australian workers. They can be a force for strengthening our trade unions, not dividing them.

The South Coast Labour Council has another idea. They think that refugees have been "deluded by western propaganda regarding the nature of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam" and should be "offered the opportunity to return".

How much western propaganda gets into Vietnam is anybody's guess, and I'm sure the Labour Council delegates have a much better idea of what it's like in Vietnam than the refugees.

But I wonder how many of the delegates would like to live there themselves. After all, it's not a country noted for its tolerance of opposition, or of action by workers.

racist

The Council secretary, Merv Nixon says he's worried about a "racist backlash of people who oppose the Vietnamese because of their colour".

But the way to stop such a backlash is to take a clear line against racism. To say that the refugees are welcome to come to Australia if they wish — and not to dress up anti-refugee prejudice in left-over rhetoric from the Vietnam war.

Anything less than this simply encourages racism. We should remember that it was Australian and ... can intervention in V... that largely created ... economic and social ... that exists there today.

Australia should ... be willing to take ... refugees than it is doing ... take some responsibility ... the situation we helped ... about.

by David Lock...

The Fraser-Carnegie connection

Rod Carnegie

MALCOLM Fraser's new guidelines on foreign investment are a windfall for overseas capitalists.

And one of the biggest winners has been Conzinc Rio Tinto. Which may just explain why "Sir Rod" Carnegie, CRA's boss, has been playing Fraser's public relations man recently.

Under Fraser's new guidelines, instead of having to be half-owned by Australian capitalists to start joint ventures without government permission, companies can now be 25 per cent owned.

CRA benefits because it is 30 per cent owned by Australian and 70 per cent owned by British capitalists.

How fortunate for Rod!

No wonder he has been echoing Fraser and calling for Budget cuts. Like abolition of family allowances above a certain level, a means test on pensions for those over 70, and removal of indexation of pensions and benefits.

But then, when you're as wealthy as Sir Rod, you don't really need these social services anyway.

Fraser's desire to make life easier for CRA and other capitalists at home and abroad will also show up soon in moves to relax exchange laws.

This will make the movement of money between Australia and other countries easier.

formula

Malcolm has even come out with his own little formula. For every new public sector job, three or four will be lost by the refusal of foreign capitalists to invest here.

Presumably this works in reverse too. So Malcolm is really saying — Sack the whole Public Service, and there'll be no unemployment in Australia!

Fraser's plan for recovery is to remove every hindrance his mates find a nuisance in their drive for profits.

But will bigger profits mean more jobs for us?

They haven't so far. And listen to Rod Carnegie again, as he unwittingly refutes Fraser's propaganda.

"We have a shift towards more capital intensive industry — which will require us to mobilize much more capital to employ each person in future for each new job."

Another way of putting that is, *"The more we invest, the fewer jobs we create."*

bosses

So the hand-outs the bosses get in the Budget won't be used to employ us. Instead they'll go towards more and more fancy machines to replace us!

by John McLean

CRA's favourite PM

ALL THE NEWS ON THE URANIUM STRUGGLE

LET'S TAKE A STAND TO STOP THIS HORROR

SHOULD public servants take a stand against uranium mining?

That question is going to confront every member of the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association in the next few weeks.

And we can expect all the right-wing arguments to be trotted out to keep us quiet.

First ACOA members will vote in a ballot to decide whether we should take a stand at all.

The right's first line of defence will be the old chestnut — "Public servants have to be neutral and carry out Government policy."

But atom bombs and radiation poisoning don't distinguish between "neutrals" and others.

And saying that public servants have to carry out Government policy no matter what, is rubbish. Would the Right expect us to build the gas chambers for the Nazis if this was Germany in the 1930's?

If we win the first ballot and decide to take a stand, we'll then have another one — to decide what our stand should be.

export

It's then that we'll be able to get down to the nitty-gritty of the uranium question. Unfortunately, we're only being given a choice between a moratorium on mining and export, and no moratorium.

We won't be able to vote for an all-out, permanent ban. But a moratorium is better than nothing.

Uranium mining is a threat to our fellow workers everywhere.

The dangers of waste disposal, of nuclear war, of reactor malfunctions — and of the mining itself — are too much for us to allow uranium out of the ground.

The referendums are just the start of the battle to get a total ACOA ban on any clerical work connected with uranium export.

by Tony Roberts, ACOA

Above and right — the horror that the nuclear lobby wants us to risk. Badly burned survivors of the Hiroshima bomb.

AWU to march on Hiroshima Day

THE South Australian branch of the Australian Workers Union will be marching under its banner at the Hiroshima Day demonstration in Adelaide.

This follows a successful talk by Doug McCarty from the CANE Trade Union Lobby Group at the July monthly meeting.

Doug's talk was the first in a series that the Lobby Group is hoping to organise.

We've approached the Trades and Labor Council and asked them if we can address one of their fortnightly meetings to urge other unions to follow the lead of the AWU.

We'll also be sending a telegram to the Japanese trade unions expressing solidarity with them on Hiroshima Day.

The major aim of the trade union group is to build workplace branches of CANE (Campaign Against Nuclear Energy) like the one at the Islington Railway workshops.

We're organised for CANE branches to distribute our workplace leaflet, which calls for an immediate trade union ban on uranium mining and export.

We may also be producing a leaflet specially for women workers and hope to organise some talks for the Trade Union Training Authority.

Hiroshima Week will be the big chance for CANE to not only publicise the demo but to build for the future.

by Mike Grewcock, AWU

Qld ALP gets cold feet

IN the space of one week, the Queensland ALP has applied for, got, and refused a permit to march!

It was only the second permit for a political street march since last September.

The ALP applied for the permit at the start of the month, for a march on July 8th.

The march was scheduled for the Saturday afternoon, and was to be around one quite deserted city block.

executive

The ALP agreed not to hand out leaflets, and not to carry placards bigger than two feet by two feet.

A week before the march, the inner executive of the Queensland executive decided to cancel it.

The reason? Supposedly that Joh might provoke trouble at the march.

This was just a cover for the real objection. . . . that the marchers might decide on more radical action than the ALP was proposing.

Bjelke - Peterson responded by calling the ALP wishy-washy, and saying that they were afraid to march because the demonstration would be dominated by the left.

Actually, Bjelke for once is right! No one believes the ALP's stated reason for backing down.

When the ALP first applied for the march permit, most Civil Liberties activists were highly critical.

It certainly appeared as a show of faith in the permit system that has always been used in a discriminatory manner.

What made the Executive's action even worse, was that in March, every ALP area conference voted for abolition of the permit system.

massive

However, the Civil Liberties Committee proposed to turn the march into a massive demonstration against the entire system of political restrictions on street marches.

The ALP does not want a militant fight for civil liberties. The whole direction of their efforts since the ban last September, has been to sabotage and defuse the militant campaign.

If you're a working woman, fighting for your rights

AT Pancakes on the Rocks in Sydney, waitresses are fighting for a union. Our Sydney correspondent, Janet Vaux, has kept you up-to-date.

In Melbourne, the women at Sportscraft held a militant strike when the boss tried to cut their pay. The Battler brought the story to you in a special report.

All over Australia, women are fighting for their rights. Whether the issue is abortion, equal pay, childcare or trade union rights, we bring you the story.

And most of the time, our stories are closest to the action — because we don't get our information from the boss, or rely on the union office.

Our reporters are down on the picket line and the news comes from the workers themselves.

The growing struggles of working women are an important part of the movement to change society. The International Socialists are fighting for a world free from the oppression of women.

Why not join us?

the battler is your paper

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME
ADDRESS
Postcode
PHONE NO.
TRADE UNION

Cut and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, 3031

FRENCH WORKERS FIGHT THE SLAVE DRIVERS

THE women workers of the French company Moulinex are part of a great wave of strikes which has spread throughout the whole of Northern France.

Moulinex owns a chain of factories in this area, mainly producing kitchen equipment.

The women in the press shop at Alencon are chained to their machines with manacles.

They work long hours in appalling conditions. Because they are women they are paid unskilled wages.

On June 17 the Alencon women occupied their factory. So did the women working in the Moulinex Fresnay factory 15 miles away.

Forty miles to the north, workers from the factory at Caen demonstrated in support of the occupations. By the weekend, several of the Moulinex factories were occupied by unskilled women workers.

There are twenty Moulinex factories in Normandy North France. The two biggest at Alencon and Caen employ 2,000 workers – the rest are small sweatshops.

Conditions are medieval. Most of the workers are women.

Moulinex products are cheaper than their competitors' because up till now they've got away with paying the women slave wages.

The Moulinex women are demanding an extra $56 a month, retirement at 60, a forty hour week without loss of pay and a fifth week's paid holiday.

These are similar to the demands of the Renault workers at Flins and ... who also occupied factories.

Like the women at Moulinex, the ... workers were unskilled, slave wages and working hazardous conditions.

Both the Flins and Cleon workers were evicted by the CRS, the French police, in the early hours of the morning, armed with guns, dogs and teargas.

At Flins the workers reoccupied the ... day. That occupation ... evicted again by the ... The factory has been ... for over a ... occupation has ... 15,000 vehicles ... police are on ... the workers ... time.

The Moulinex ... Alencon have ... ordered out by ... and face CRS eviction.

INSIDE THE OIL RACKET

There's no way out for the Third World

THE economically advanced countries all watched nervously last month when the member nations of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) held their biannual meeting.

But they needn't have worried. For the third time, OPEC decided not to raise the price of oil – in spite of world wide inflation and a sagging American dollar which are both eating into their profits.

By David Lockwood

Some of the members, like Iraq, Libya and Algeria, demanded that either the price should be raised, or that oil producers should stop charging in US dollars.

But they were defeated by Saudi Arabia and Iran, who between them control 40% of OPEC's output, and are more closely allied with America.

Although it was founded in 1960, OPEC only gained world attention in 1973.

In that year, following war in the Middle East, the OPEC countries banned oil exports to America and Holland.

They reduced their output by 25% and then raised the price of crude oil by 128%.

The bans to America and Holland were soon lifted. But the massive oil price rise contributed to the beginnings of the recession in the west.

Everybody started talking about the "energy crisis", and complaining that "militant Arabs" were holding the rest of the world to ransom.

exploitation

It seemed as though, after years of exploitation by others, the underdeveloped countries were finally hitting back.

Yet since the early militancy of the 1970's, the OPEC countries have become almost as concerned about the state of the western countries as they are themselves.

They are now unwilling to raise their prices in case they damage those economies.

The problem is that the OPEC countries do not, and never have, controlled their own oil.

The world oil industry is dominated by seven enormous corporations – the "Seven Sisters". They are: Exxon, British Petroleum, Gulf Oil, Mobil, Socal, Shell and Texaco.

They have controlled the industry since the 1920's and between them they monopolise all production, refining and marketing of oil.

They act together to squeeze out any competition. They fixed the price of oil for the entire world.

The price was determined by the price of crude oil in Texas (of all places!), plus freight charges from the Texas ports to the port of destination.

producing

The price of producing a barrel of oil in Texas is more than double that in the Middle East. So the price fixing arrangement meant windfall profits for the "Sisters".

Amidst all the fuss surrounding the price rises of 1973, one group was strangely silent – the oil companies themselves.

They had a 50/50 profit sharing arrangement with the producing countries. They had nothing to lose and everything to gain from sky-rocketing oil prices.

Delegates to OPEC meet.

In fact the profits of all the oil companies in 1973 rose by at least 30% (and sometimes as high as 60%).

It is in the interests of the companies to create "shortages" in order to keep prices up. In fact, it's doubtful whether there actually was a shortage even in 1973-74 – the companies just deliberately withheld oil.

We've now moved from a "shortage" to a "glut" – which is another reason why the OPEC countries are wary of raising prices.

The companies control the oil industry, and the OPEC nations, far from holding them (or us) to ransom, are totally dependent on them to make any money out of their oil.

For the producers still rely on the west for equipment, skilled labour and expertise.

And if they ever seriously threatened the west's interests, the companies would simply say: *"The oil is yours. When you want to sell it, look us up."*

Of course, in the long term, we are faced with a real oil shortage.

Some predict that the west will be faced, possibly as early as the 1980's, with a shortage that will grow by the year 2000 to fifteen ... twenty million barrels a day.

worried

But the oil companies aren't worried. After all, by 1965 the top 15 oil companies controlled over 53% of American coal production. By 1970, the companies had 40% of uranium reserves.

In 1973 ... thought that the OPEC countries were blazing new trails in redistribution of the world's wealth. But they find themselves neatly into a world capitalist system.

And the only way to break that system – to achieve a real redistribution – is to attack it in its heartlands of America, and Europe.

Stranglehold in the west

3000 pelt Chicago Nazis

IN America, the Nazis want everyone to know that they're Nazis.

Not for them the sham disguises of Britain's National Front, or Australia's League of Rights.

Their members parade in brown shirts and swastikas, and make no bones about the final solution they have in mind for blacks and jews.

But like Nazis anywhere, they don't go unchallenged.

demonstrators

At the end of June, some three thousand demonstrators threw eggs, rocks and more than once broke through police lines to attack a Nazi rally in Chicago.

The demonstrations successfully limited the Nazis to a ten minute rally behind a wall of police – and showed that even their swaggering uniforms don't stand up to mass opposition.

Chicago police and the Federal government brought out massive forces to protect the Nazis.

These forces were directed against the anti-Nazi demonstrators, leading people in the crowd to protest against the "Fascists in blue".

Part of the Chicago demonstration against the Nazis

angry

Meanwhile, in Detroit 200 angry demonstrators told the nazis that they were unwelcome in that city.

The message was delivered loud and clear by a mass picket outside the Nazis' new headquarters in north-west Detroit.

The Nazis' nest has been the scene of many confrontations between the community, which is outraged by the Nazi presence, and the police who are protecting the Nazis.

The mass picket, on June 25, was no exception. When demonstrators attempted to paint out swastikas on the building, police swooped and arrested two people.

When windows were broken, several more were arrested.

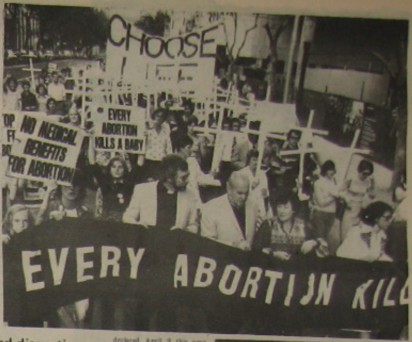
Fifty demonstrators marched to the police station chanting *"Arrest the Nazis, not the people"*. They were met by three more arrests.

American anti-Nazis say that wherever the Nazis go, they'll be met with demonstrations.

The Nazis say later this month, they'll be rallying in a Chicago park – where in fact they've had numerous rallies over the past years, and where attacks on the neighbouring black population have become more frequent as a result.

This time, the anti-Nazi demonstrators promise to be there.

THE BIGOTS WHO WANT TO BAN ABORTION



THESE middle-class bigots are on the march – to take away women's rights to abortion.

And they've been getting more dangerous.

This particular march took place in Melbourne in April.

by Alec Kahn

Like all anti-abortion marches, it took place on a Sunday – so the organizers could bus people in straight from church.

Like all anti-abortion marches, it was swelled out by hundreds of schoolkids – conscripted along by Catholic schools and parents. (About a third of those present were children and infants).

Like all anti-abortion marches, there were plenty of nuns and priests in attendance.

Behind it was the well organised, reactionary Right To Life Association. And behind the Right To Life Association is the well-organised, reactionary Roman Catholic Church.

The bigots in this march have had plenty to celebrate recently.

In America, Congress has withdrawn Medicaid funding of abortions to the poor.

And here in Australia, after months of their campaigning, Malcom Fraser has begun to follow suit.

He is allowing private health funds to remove item 6469, which covers abortion, from the medical benefits schedule.

abortion

And the abolition of bulk billing will make things much harder for abortion clinics.

For working class women this will be a major blow.

Rich women will be able to produce the $150 odd and wait for a refund (if their health fund gives it.)

Poorer women will be driven into the backyards.

The availability of abortion in Australia has not been ideal. Although it is legal in some states, many working class women still don't know where to go.

However in New Zealand women are even worse off. There the bigots have been successful.

There, they've had abortion almost totally banned. Even if you are raped, you can't get an abortion.

Your life or health has to be in serious danger – and *even then*, you can only get an abortion if there are no other means of saving you.

The result? Every month, between 200 and 300 New Zealand women are spending hundreds of dollars each to come across to Australia to get an abortion.

The local Right to Lifers don't just rely on polite tactics like Sunday afternoon marches and orchestrated letter-writing campaigns to MPs.

They've tried disruption, vote-stacking, fire-bombs – and they've got the Church to back them up

For several years now, they've been holding regular pickets at Bertram Wainer's Fertility Control Clinic in Melbourne.

They used to photograph women going in, and shout at them. (They've toned it down now because of the bad publicity).

clinics

In Sydney, they've been more surreptitious. They disrupted abortion clinics and referral services by making bulk false bookings.

Now the abortion clinics carefully screen them out.

Last year they tried to stack the boards of Melbourne's Queen Victoria and Royal Women's Hospitals to stop them performing abortions. They got their supporters to buy votes in the board elections by becoming "contributors" at $2 each.

They lost. Their scheme was thwarted by the Australia Party and the Womens Electoral Lobby, who learned of their plans and beat them at their own game so badly that the final margin was 5 to 1.

But the more extreme fringes of the Right To Life Association don't stop at that.

The Right To Lifers declared April 9 this year "Right To Life Sunday".

To celebrate, some of their supporters set fire to the Preterm Abortion Clinic in Potts Point, Sydney, for the second time in two years. The result – $50,000 worth of damage.

In America and New Zealand too, the anti-abortion forces have fire-bombed clinics and referral centres. In America, they have even dragged women off operating tables!

And why all this fervour for banning abortion?

Partly, it's their curious attitude that a foetus is a human being, a fully-fledged person, and killing it is murder.

Partly, it's their conviction that they have the right to force their personal morals onto others.

But most of all, it's their desire to enforce and glorify motherhood as women's primary role.

Fireman sifts through the rubble after anti-abortionists fire-bombed an NZ abortion referral centre at Easter.

...and these are the women who'll suffer

"Golda" – propositioned on the operating table by an illegal abortionist.

WHAT if the Right To Lifers get their way?

It will mean a return to the days of the back-yard abortionist. Of knitting needles and fear. Of compulsory pregnancy and enforced motherhood.

Here are some of the women who stand to lose.

"Theresa" was in a terrible position – after nine children she decided to get herself sterilised.

But her local doctor in a country town refused on religious grounds to help her in any way.

She gave birth to a tenth child and her husband's wage was beginning to look pitifully inadequate.

The local doctor again refused help. So "Theresa" was forced to trek to Melbourne where she found help.

The anti-abortion lobby would prefer her to go on bearing children. Even if it meant nervous breakdowns, malnourished children, impossible financial burdens and deterioration of her marriage.

"Andrea" was a 17-year old girl in a convent school.

She asked her doctor in the Frankston area near Melbourne for a prescription for the pill.

He wouldn't give it to her.

Instead he told her to stay out of dark corners and come back when she was married.

Six months later she came back . . . pregnant and unmarried.

He refused to see her.

"Golda" found out just what illegal abortionists could get away with.

"My first abortion cost twenty pounds ($40). It was all the money I had in the world.

"It was during the war and I didn't want a child then. I was working in a clothing factory making two pounds fifteen. ($5.50)

"My friends told me where to go. It was a Collins St doctor.

"When I was lying there on the table, he suggested that if he had intercourse with me, the excitement might bring it on and I wouldn't need an abortion.

"I kicked up such a fuss the nurse came in.

"So the doctor said to her that they'd have to give me an anaesthetic as I was nervous!

"It turned out afterwards that he'd done the same to all the other women.

"But there was nothing we could do about it.

"There weren't many doctors around who'd do illegal abortions, so we had to put up with it."

"Rachel" was going through a difficult period in her life when she fell pregnant for the fourth time.

She was already busy with six kids (three of them her second husband's) and a job as a teacher.

She had neither the inclination nor the time to give birth to a child some 15 years younger than any of the others.

To go ahead with the pregnancy would mean giving up the job she had worked at nights to qualify for, and going back into the home after a brief but exciting period in the workforce.

If the anti-abortionists had made the decision for her, they would have condemned her to a further 15 years subjection to an unwanted child when she was keen to sample the rest of life outside the home.

Luckily for her career and the happiness of her adolescent children, she was able to have the pregnancy terminated.

powerful

The threat of the Right To Lifers is a real one – because of the powerful forces backing them.

Dropping bulk billing and removing abortion from health fund benefits are only the beginning. What has happened in New Zealand could happen here too.

Rich women will be able to jet to a country where abortion is legal. (European upper class women have been flying to Britain for years). Or they'll pay for expensive but safe illegal clinics.

Those who'll be hit will be ordinary women like Golda, Theresa, Rachel and Andrea. Working class women have the most to lose from the attacks of the Right to Life.

by Maria Adler

Stop the Right To Lifers!

GET YOUR PRO-ABORTION BADGE

FREE ABORTION ON DEMAND

Send 30 cents per badge, plus postage, to your local I.S branch. (Badge is actual size shown.)

LET'S FIGHT BACK!

THE fight-back has already started against the attacks on abortion.

On Friday June 30th, one hundred of us picketed the Federal Health Department in Brisbane to protest at the changes to Medibank, particularly the ones affecting abortion.

Three busloads of police were on hand "in case of trouble".

But the only trouble was started by police.

When a street theatre group tried to entertain us, their equipment was damaged and confiscated.

As soon as we crowded round to watch the street theatre, the police moved in and pushed us to either side of the footpath.

A woman began to speak using a megaphone. Within minutes, the cops moved in and grabbed it.

When she continued without any amplifying equipment, the police attempted to arrest her. They failed – after a chase across Anzac Park.

The same thing happened when a man addressed the crowd.

He was also chased – and later informed he would be summonsed for "using his voice as an amplifying apparatus"!

We eventually moved to King George Square, under the close scrutiny of police and Special Branch.

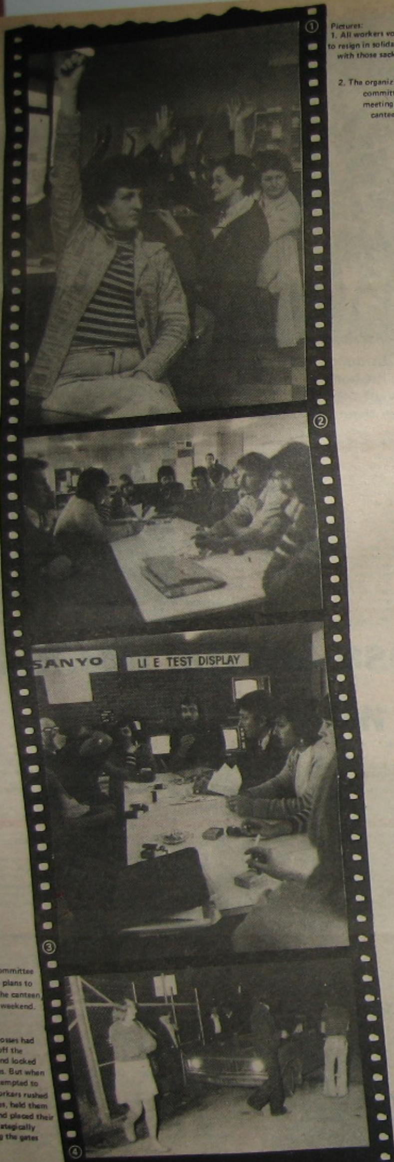
And the whole event was recorded on the new police video equipment.

But we're not going to be intimidated by these bully-boy super-snoop tactics.

On July 22 we're holding a major demonstration in defence of our rights to abortion.

by Judy McVey

A magnificent fight for jobs



Pictures:
1. All workers voted to resign in solidarity with those sacked.

2. The organizing committee meeting in canteen.

3. The committee discusses plans to occupy the canteen over the weekend.

4. The bosses had turned off the power and locked the gates. But when they attempted to leave workers rushed the gates, held them open and placed their cars strategically keeping the gates open.

THE SANYO SIT-IN

WORKERS at Sanyo's colour TV factory in Wodonga, Victoria, in an unprecedented fight for jobs in this country refused to accept the sack, occupied the factory canteen and started a "work-in" to save their jobs.

After ten days, they were beaten. But their fight had paved a new road. Everyday throughout Australia, workers are sacrificed on the altar of company profits in the name of economic recovery.

Until now the only fight back has been some fake militant rhetoric from union officials.

When the crunch comes, like at the Chrysler car plant earlier this year, the officials chickened on any move to occupy the plants. Hundreds of car workers lost their jobs and in despair chucked it in with *"but what could we do?"*

Now the workers at Sanyo have shown the way. Here's how they fought .

Sto[ry and pi]ctures from on the spot reporters, Steve [...] and Jeff Wallmann.

The workers began occupying the factory canteen on Wednesday June 28, after they found out that Sanyo planned to sack up to thirty workers.

They worked normally during the day and about 70 of the 140 workers slept in at night. The company was so shaken that it was forced to reduce the sackings from 30 to 19 (17 women and 2 men).

On Friday, the 140 workers marched to the administration building and resigned en masse in an act of solidarity with the sacked workers.

They refused to accept the sacking, and that afternoon burned the dismissal notices. To prevent the company locking them out, the workers voted to stay the weekend.

On Friday night, the Sanyo bosses tried to force them out. They cut off the electricity to the canteen, locked up the work areas and locked the gates.

gates

But when the gates were opened to let the bosses' cars out, the workers kept them open and placed a car strategically so they couldn't be shut again.

In less than two hours of the electricity being cut off, the canteen resembled a camp site.

Workers brought in bundles of candles, gas lights and stoves, and from food stores and bakeries loads of food rolled in.

Sanyo workers told The Battler that this was the fourth retrenchment since October last year. The workforce has been ruthlessly pruned from over 300 workers to the present 140 in the bosses' bid to keep up profits in a flagging market for TVs and electronic goods.

Beverly Brew, ETU shop steward, explained why they took action.

"We've already accepted it three times with conditions that last time there'll be no more retrenchments. Each time that has been a great big lie, and now we're on for the fourth time.

"And this time we're just not going to cop it.

"We needed strong and positive action. Not only to try to force the hand of the company but also

Beverley Brew

to draw the attention of the media to the plight of the industry at the moment and how the average worker is suffering.

"And we need to draw as much attention to it and this is the only way we could achieve our aim."

Sandra Macintosh, a member of the organising committee who is one of the 19 facing retrench-ment, said:

"At first it (the work-in) showed we wanted to work and at that time we didn't know who was going to be retrenched. I think it showed everybody it wasn't our fault we were losing our jobs."

Sandra said that the first job of the organising committee *"was to work out a plan of action. We met [...] at the Provincial [...] decided on a work-in.*

"Once [...]f the workers passed [...]n to stay, the committ[...] organise food, check up [...] who would stay and [...] couldn't, so we knew [...] doing what.

"There [...]ding arrangements [...]de; pillows, blankets [...] to organise.

"It w[...]easy because most of [...] had started making [...] to get their own bed[...]essities as far as sleeping [...]

"We [...] from the Trade [...]ge (TUTA), and peo[...]uldn't stay, to get [...]ment. It was quite [...]. We had a quick [...] among ourselves [...]ere supported by [...] and Labour Council.

"We [...] child minding on the [...] On the second night [...] at home who couldn't [...]ook care of child [...] actual child minding [...]as set up."

The [...]ssed without incidents [...]s, no cops, just drun[...] and a few more ha[...] or another game of ch[...].

About [...]kers slept in the cant[...]unday night. The [...] mounting as the worker[...]red about the crunch [...] the morning: will the [...] the factory?

Sandra [...] *"I'm feeling pretty sick [...] about going back into [...].*

"I hop[...]hing happens early so we [...]lax."

At the 7.30 starting time all but one of the sacked workers were gathered in the canteen waiting with the rest. There was a meeting at which all voted to start work doing only the jobs they normally would.

The factory doors had opened and they all went in. During the day union officials and worker reps met with the bosses. But for those who were sacked the tension was nerve wracking.

Lesley Clark, one of the 17 sacked women talked about her feelings.

Sandra Macintosh

"I feel sick. You don't know when someone is going to tap you on the back, or drag you out by the hair.

"I'm really tempted to go in there and tell them to stuff it .. but not now. Some nerve tablets on the menu wouldn't go amiss. Really!"

But the bosses' war of nerves, far from weakening the fighting spirit, only hardened it for people like Lesley. *"I'm going to sit it out. Not going to give up now."*

The Sanyo factory opened in 1974 when the AlburyWodonga region looked like becoming another Canberra. It had been earmarked by the former Labor government for accelerated development. Lucrative tax and services concessions were granted to companies.

Now that the Fraser government has slashed funds, plus the economic crisis, the job outlook for sacked Sanyo workers is bleak. Only 3 situations vacant were advertised in the paper on Saturday.

spirits

ON Monday evening spirits were high and it seemed it would end the next day. It looked like Sanyo would accept nine voluntary retrenchments.

Some of the nine volunteers were leaving the district soon, others were pregnant. A few were fed up with the company and just wanted out — but they did want to keep working.

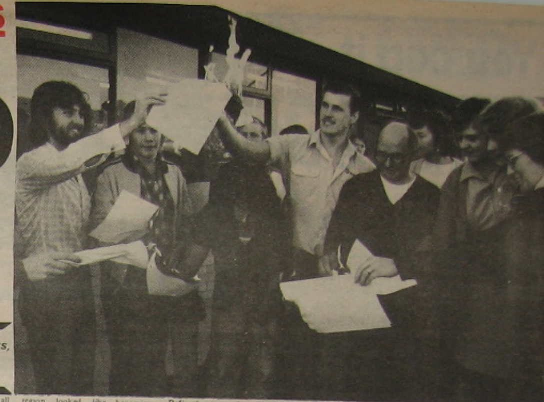
Tuesday morning anger flared. The bosses put the knife in and claimed that the unions were *"under a misapprehension."* They said 19 would be sacked, no matter what.

Nine had volunteered and that left 10 to be sacked, said company officials.

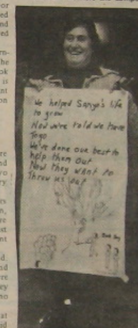
In protest the workers refused to return to work. On Wednesday morning they discovered the doors to the factory were closed. They were now locked out.,

Bosses said that they would open the factory if the 19 retrenched workers didn't attempt to return to work.

The workers rejected this and a group of them started writing a leaflet to explain their actions to the people of Albury Wodonga.



Defiantly the workers burn the lists of those being sacked. Unable to serve the dismissal notices on the individual workers the company sent out telegrams. Many workers refused to even open the telegrams.



The workers fought a poster war with the bosses. Dot Drage holds a poem poster she wrote after Sanyo's knife in the back on Tuesday morning.

WHAT WE THINK

THE "work-in" by the Sanyo workers was a magnificent example to us all.

It showed that a militant fight against sackings is possible — even in this period of mass unemployment and recession.

For ten days the 140 workers held out to save their fellow workers' jobs. They were beaten, not through any lack of determination but because of their isolation and the failure to build support for their struggle.

Any large company like Sanyo that is thinking of sacking workers in a period of economic recession can easily withstand closing one factory. That is why the Sanyo workers decided to "work-in" and demand to be paid, rather than go on strike.

But that is not going to affect a large company with large stockpiles, many plants and retail outlets. The fight must be spread. Workers at other plants, in wharehouses and on the wharves must be told and asked for help.

moral

A "work-in" can put moral pressure on a company to withdraw its sackings. But moral pressure is rarely enough.

Companies like Sanyo have no morality anyway.

That is why it is so important to occupy the work areas of the factory. With their precious machinery suddenly at risk, bosses become a lot more unsettled.

The question of putting out a leaflet for support did come up during the dispute. But even a week after the sit-in started, the union officials were cold on the idea. The workers went ahead and produced one anyhow.

By then it was too late. With the officials chasing the mirage of tariff protection and looking for compromises, morale sunk.

It would be wrong to pretend that the Sanyo struggle was in any way a victory. But by their courage and resourcefulness, the Sanyo workers have shown us a way to fight.

If we follow their example — and learn the lessons from it — their struggle won't be in vain.

Undeterred by the sackings the workers re[...] on Monday morning. The "work-in" d[...] normal jobs [...] the Sanyo bosses'power to sack them.

Two hours after the bosses cut off the lights the canteen was aglow with gas lights. From bakeries, food stores and fast-food shops, food poured in. Meanwhile, in the supermarkets the bosses were hissed.

Friday — 10 pm. Over forty people huddle together around tables in an air thickening with the warming smell of kero heaters. Gas lights and candlesalmost make a campingscene with workers playing chess, cards or simply talking by the dim light. There is a feeling of strength and good humour. Many are smiling, confident and determined to win.

You cop it every day behind the bar

"COME over here a minute, will ya?"

"The boys and I are having a little bet. Have ya got knickers on or haven't ya?"

Being in prison isn't the only way to be incarcerated behind bars. Bar "maids" have to put up with this sort of abuse every day.

By Janey Stone and Carole Ferrier, with Kay, Maria and Lindy, three Brisbane bar "maids"

Kay worked in a Brisbane pub, where the workers were mostly

Not only did they think they owned the pub – they thought they owned the barmaids.

"You do what we tell you, then, and you'll be okay." Kay was told the day she started.

"Now you're new going to leave, are you? We have got them trained and they're good.

"You'll be all right as long as you don't step out of line. We get rid of the last one who got straight."

It turned out that one barmaid hadn't like their "training" and had told them so. The "boys" then put up a petition demanding her sacking, and she lost her job.

These men are all workers themselves. Wharfies, brewery workers, tradesmen.

They wouldn't dream of accepting such treatment at work. Why do they act this way to other workers?

orders

All day at work they take orders. And often their work is not particularly dignified or satisfying.

The finishing up siren is a signal for release. The pub is a chance to escape from their problems – and even to get a bit of their own back.

It allows them to be "neat" in the Marlboro mould. Of course, it is only an illusion.

And to complete the illusion, the barmaids have to look like the women in the cigarette ads.

Maria works in a bowls club. When she started, there were lots of comments because she didn't shave under her arms.

The sexual abuse and insults were continuous.

"What's the matter with ya? Ya never wear dresses – something wrong with ya legs?"

Barmaids must look pretty, dress provocatively, smile continuously. They must flatter and titillate the customers (but not too much) and never get angry or tired.

From childhood, we are taught there are two types of women.

Wives and mothers, on the one hand, who everyone respects. (Who would ask their mother if she had knickers on?)

But wives and mothers wear themselves out struggling to keep the family afloat. Children, housework, often factory work, are not very sexy.

So many men go to the pub to escape – not just from work, but from their wives and families. And barmaids, like prostitutes, don't have to be respected. They can be used and discarded.

sexism

Kay has tried fighting the sexism in the bar.

"I scrutinised myself before going to work to make sure my clothes would not invite any vocal lechery. But there was no way to beat it.

"If I attempted to converse rationally with them, I was regarded with fear and suspicion.

"So I sang. In order to avoid talking, I spent eight hours a day singing."

One afternoon a woman friend of Kay's came in for a drink.

After she'd gone, a man grabbed Kay's arm over the bar and said, *"So that's what's wrong with ya. You're butch!"*

Kay began to dread going to work. *"I was afraid to leave the pub at closing time to go to my car.*

"I could no longer pretend to be a liberated woman. I realised there was no such thing as personal, individual liberation."

Kay was able to find another job and leave. But the other women had to stay. Although they see the job as temporary, many keep coming in and out of work for ten or twenty years.

Kay was disappointed that the other women only responded with blank resistance or hostility. But barmaids regard sexist abuse as an occupational hazard.

And as mostly casual workers in a poorly unionized industry, they see little alternative. Accepting sexism is just part of surviving.

The Liquor and Allied Trades Union has been of little use. The woman fired because of the petition by the customers got no help.

ignored

And a woman sacked from the Royal Exchange Hotel last year after being arrested in a Civil Liberties march was also ignored.

We seem to be up against a solid wall here. The woman are forced to accept their degrading position – and the men seem to need it.

But it is possible to break through, at least to some extent.

Kay found one group of men was less sexist than the rest. They went some way towards accepting her as a person.

"They were seamen from the Irish picket line. They had some appreciation, through that experience, of working politically with women."

This suggests a way. When people feel isolated and oppressive ways of life. When men are insecure and feeling their male strength, they seem to need so much to "Marlboro men".

But women have to can't wait for all to make this breakthrough.

Once they start organizing, they'll be able to demand the respect from men they deserve, it has beings.

WE'RE WOMEN ... AND WE'RE SICK OF SEXIST INSULTS!

... and it's one of the 'joys' of motherhood

By Clare McCarty, who recently had a bouncing baby daughter.

SUDDENLY you're admired, joked about, the centre of attraction. You're pregnant.

Large companies, manufacturers of baby products, make glossy booklets about baby care and give them to you.

At last, everybody can talk to you with ease. People you never had anything in common with before become quite chatty.

Relatives, who were never quite sure about your suitability as a wife or partner, suddenly turn warm care and consideration.

celebration

This celebration of motherhood in our society has a hollow sound if you are the one in the middle. The contradiction and hypocrisy will hit you every step of the way.

In the first place, if parenthood is so related, why do most jobs in most states can you not get paid maternity leave?

Could it be that from now on you are expected to join the great unpaid work-force – the house-wives?

You will usually discover that the central figure in the birth process will not be considered important enough to know about her own pregnancy from the doctor.

Even your direct requests for information may be met with *"Mmmm"* or *"Every-thing seems to be in order – see you in a month's time."*

This may not necessarily be the doctor's fault.

The Government cuts in health spending may mean that he or she has 30 patients to see in one hour, making discussion out of the question.

In an attempt to have at least some control over the birth when it happens, you may attend physiotherapy classes.

These are usually held in the day time.

Which prevents you and your friend or husband attending if you are working.

This is despite the talk in all the pamphlets which encourage you to have a companion with you at the birth.

Perhaps funds aren't made available to employ physiotherapists in the evenings as well as the days.

Assuming you manage to attend, you may find some confusion in the role you are expected to play.

Pre-natal exercises are to help you control the birth of the child effectively.

With post-natal exercises there can be talk of regaining your figure. "To please him", improving that muscle tone for continued sexual attractiveness.

You are promised status as a sex object again only after six weeks of exercise!

Perhaps the best-ever excuse of all – one which can only exist in the most chauvinist of societies – is that moment when you discover that it is NOT a boy.

look

You know then that few people will come to your bedside from the family. You know your husband will look at but not hold the baby.

You know that you have to try again – go through the ordeal again – and perhaps hospitals for luck.

Finally, at home with the child, perhaps you will see your husband TV ads looking like a happy "Mum".

Somehow you don't or feel like that.

At least the Mother will call and be Mother-ing and realistic.

The last body to be MBHA, which is a non-existent statutory body in South Australia, is partly a charity.

"You will see yourself in the ads looking like a fresh, happy Mum ....."

THE CHANT OF FRED SCHEPISI

"The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith" is a well made, well acted and well produced movie.

It is also a racist and thoroughly negative production.

Dave Nadel axes the producer of "The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith"

It's easy to see why Fred Schepisi made the movie. Schepisi is after critical recognition and commercial success.

Jimmie Blacksmith has all the ingredients. Violence, ruined scenery, a touch of the exotic (Aboriginal ceremonies), a genuine incident from Australia's past and two previously unknown stars.

And of all, the story appeals to white guilt without demanding real respect for blacks, which is the perfect formula to appeal to all those guilt-ridden white middle-class liberals who are the people who support the film industry both here and overseas.

You can get some idea of what sort of person Schepisi is from the fact that Jimmie Blacksmith was almost not shown in Australia.

The Theatrical Employees Union threatened to put it under a black ban because of Schepisi's reluctance to use union labor in making the film.

It's harder to see why Thomas Kennally wrote the book on which the film is based.

Kennally is genuinely concerned about the position of blacks in Australia.

Yet the story of the Governor gang (the historical incident on which "The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith" is based) reflects no credit on any of its participants, black or white.

As told in the book and film Jimmie Blacksmith is a half-caste raised in the black's camp by white missionaries.

He attempts to make it in the world of rural whites at the turn of last century. In the process he becomes something of a sick, rejecting his own relatives.

It does not work anyway, because he is constantly chented and humiliated by whites.

revenge

Finally he is mistreated once too often and seeks revenge. He declares war.

His army consists of his brother and his uncles, none of whom are particularly willing soldiers.

Jack Thompson as a missionary, intimidating blacks

His weapon is mostly an axe. His victims are mostly children and old women, and mostly unarmed.

While the movie certainly shows the racism and inhumanity of outback whites, it does nothing for blacks. Most full-bloods in the movie are shown as drunk and confused.

Blacksmith himself is a psychotic axe-murderer. He may have been driven mad by whites but that does not make him any saner or more admirable.

If Kennally wanted to say something useful about white racism and black resistance there are lots of episodes from Australian history that he could have used.

Jimmie Governor's savings were not black resistance. To suggest they were, is to demean resistance struggles waged against white settlers by tribes in the North and West last century.

Unfortunately, bad politics does not necessarily mean lack of talent. Schepisi has produced a very well made film.

Tommy Lewis gives a superb performance as Jimmie Blacksmith and Freddy Reynolds is excellent as his brother Jacob.

Most of the supporting cast are also excellent, especially Angela Punch as Jimmy's white wife and Jack Thompson as the missionary.

Schepisi has also finally learnt something about continuity.

There are none of the disjointed scenes that disrupted the flow of the story in his previous movie "The Devil's Playground" and that still spoil a lot of Australian films.

He may not have won any prizes at Cannes, but Schepisi has definitely become a film maker of international standard.

What a pity he is such a useless reactionary!

The young Jimmie Blacksmith – mistreated by whites once too often

The weaker sex .... *says who?*

FEMALE athletes are rapidly catching up with men.

In 1934, the best male runners were 13.6 percent faster than the best women over 100 metres.

Four years ago, the difference was only 9 percent.

In swimming, the pattern is the same. While men were 12 percent faster than women in top swimming events in 1956, the difference had fallen to 9 percent two years ago.

record

And women already hold the record for swimming the English channel, in both directions. The statistics make it pretty clear that women are going to be equal to men in many sports by the end of the century.

Striking news — but perhaps not the most important developments. After all, how many of us are likely to make it to the Olympics – not to speak of swimming the English channel? The most important thing about sport is having fun and keeping fit.

From that point of view, perhaps the most significant news is the numbers of girls I see kicking a football around at lunchtime at the local primary school.

Am I wrong, or are there a lot more of them than I used to see a few years ago?

Also encouraging, and a sign of the times, is a cookbook distributed by Victoria's three teacher unions.

The booklet is called "Women and Sport", written by Pam Bishop, Judy Munro and Diana Wilson.

Tom O'Lincoln reviews "Women and Sport"

You can get it through the VSTA, VTU or TTAV.

The booklet covers a tremendous range of topics, many of them in the form of personal reminiscences.

One woman's article, "Surviving Humiliation", will appeal to a lot of us male and female, who never seemed to be any good at the glamour sports.

In "Cutting the Old School Tie", Noni Hellmes relates her experiences at a girls' school, where so many girls developed a clumsy running style that was obscene — and twice as slow.

An American cheerleader tells us what it's like to wiggle and wave pom-poms at those curious spectators they call football games across the Pacific.

health

The second half of the booklet gets a bit heavy with a university study done of three inner-city high schools, concerned with health and fitness, and a look at the media.

A lot of myths are demolished.

Is it true that women are more fragile than men? Not necessarily.

Women broke more easily, but men are more vulnerable in other ways.

And besides, all that is needed is a little protective equipment for women in many sports.

Does exercising give women bulging muscles?

Not at all. These thighs (like tree trunks) which score top athletes have, but most of the rest of us don't, are probably something they were born with.

Research has suggested that your basic physique is genetically determined.

As for the media, we're used to distortion and sexist bias. But it's a bit much when Delly only recommends outdoor sport because it "can lead to the indoor variety".

"Women and Sport" is good reading for anyone, but specially designed for teachers. Not only will it be an education for anyone involved with school sport, but most of it is suitable for use in lessons.

Younger students will like the personal stories, and the further articles would make good documentary material for older classes.

It comes together with fine colour posters showing great moments in women's sport, and a sticker to match.

Easily available from any Victorian teachers' union (except wealthy old VATI), and teachers in other States should put the latest on their unions to "order a few thousand too.

NINE year old Tracy Martin pictured after having been told that her football career was over. The previous week she had been named the best on the ground in her first game of Australian Rules for the Sunshine under 10 team. So Footscray and District Football League changed their constitution to outlaw female players. Tracy has the support of her coach and club but they have been ordered to say nothing or face $1,000 fine.

FROM THE SHELF

News from Nowhere

I have just seen Kubrick's "2001 – Space Odyssey", a film about the 21st century created late in our century.

William Morris wrote "News from Nowhere" – his novel about life in the 21st century – in 1891, and it's quite incredible how different the two views are.

Morris writes about a man who wakes up to find a developed communist society in London.

Money is unheard of, there are no ads, no hedging off the cost, no princes. Even the dustmen are free in finely worked gear.

The best part of the book is when Morris describes the revolution which ushered communism in some time being.

Before they can make their revolution, the workers have to repeal what Morris called "State Socialism".

These are politicians who sympathise with socialist ideals but have no faith in the masses' ability to achieve it.

But in spite of the excitement of building that revolution, Morris's workers of the future live in a boring world where everyone is NICE.

The most challenging experience appears to be a punt along the Thames.

Morris believed that under communism we would all go back to being peasants and traditional machines would become too important.

inventions

"This is not an age of inventions," says one of his characters.

Surely workers in some of the biggest industries of today's world, when they dream of the future when workers control all of industry, would not dream of dismantling the complex factories of today and going back to the hoes and cart.

Surely they want more inventions to make work easier.

Kubrick makes machines the enemy too. He has the computer murderer and kill astronauts.

But they are both wrong! In spite of their insights, neither Kubrick nor Morris can get over the way machines enslave humans.

Morris in his own day rejected "State Socialism" because it would have "the present system of capital and wages slightly modified in operation".

He missed seeing that it is precisely that system that keeps the control of machines out of the workers' grasp.

When workers control the means, people will stop worrying about the future where machines take over.

But as William Morris says, the only way to win that control is by a revolution!

TRAIN DRIVERS DERAILED

TRAIN drivers and firemen have voted to return to work after a two day strike in all states except West Australia.

The strike was called by the Australian Federated Union of Locomotive Enginemen (AFULE) to catch up on wages lost by partial indexation.

Melbourne AFULE members read the official motion.

by Jeff Wallmann

After the Melbourne meeting, one driver said: *"The vote to go back to work was by no means unanimous.*

"The people who spoke against the return to work were not prepared because we were told that the strike would be indefinite.

"The union bureaucrats only won the decision to go back because they were able to present their points more clearly.

"They had already made up their minds for only a 48 hour strike."

Another factor in the vote to return was possibly the fear that the railways could lose business in a prolonged strike, resulting in lay-offs.

A fireman said: *"If we continue with the strike, the truckies will have time to organise themselves.*

demands

And they could take away business from the freight department. This happened in a strike in 1951."

But he went on to say that *"If they don't meet our demands in three weeks, we will strike again."*

Another driver commented on their conditions. *"The other week, I worked 90 hours (a fortnight) and my take-home pay was only $385.*

This was including shift load and overtime, plus the added responsibility of driving trains.

We have to do five and a half years shit work and pass seven exams before we can even drive the bloody things."

He rejected the criticism in the media.

"I feel we have the right to strike at least to catch up with what we missed out on through part wage indexation. After all, look at what the pilots get."

The Sydney meeting also endorsed the official motion to go back to work at midnight.

But there was a lot of dissatisfaction with the way the leadership pushed the motion through, and misrepresented an alternative move to extend the strike to the weekend.

One worker said *"Lots of the men wanted the strike to go on for another day.*

"On the platform they were saying we wanted an indefinite strike, that there shouldn't be an indefinite strike, but that wasn't the issue.

"There's a lot of dissatisfaction with the way the Federal office had the matter all tied up.

"It's not just this meeting either — the bloke that moved the motion to go back, you'll see him moving the motion at every meeting."

Store strike - it could have been won

by Mick Armstrong

AFTER three weeks on strike, storemen and packers at Flemings and Woolworths warehouses in Sydney have returned to work.

The strike was for a flow-on of a paid meal break granted to storemen at David's Holdings.

The claim could have been won if the strike had been spread to Coles and the other major food chains.

officials

The Storemen and Packers union officials were hostile to the strike from the start. They isolated it to the more militant Flemings and Woolworths workers.

Then they gradually wore the workers down as the strike dragged on with no victory in sight.

At the Monday meeting the day before the workers voted to go back SPU State Secretary Gordon made a vicious red-baiting attack on Flemings delegate Ron MacIntyre, the leading militant in the dispute.

Gordon claimed that he was not going to sell out the strike but supported them staying out till Tuesday. Instead he sold them out the next day.

Now negotiations are taking place. The meal break claim has now been included in the award negotiations where it is likely to be buried.

Negotiations over the award will drag on for ages and what was a winnable claim has been thrown out the window.

Woolworths and Flemings storemen after the meeting

PLUMBERS SACKED

QUEENSLAND plumbers have put bans on all major building sites in and around Brisbane.

The dispute began last November. Queensland plumbers were granted an interim award by Federal Arbitration.

The Master Plumbers Association appealed against it — even though the plumbers were still $23 short of the Victorian award.

Now the Arbitration Commission is hearing the award again. But the plumbing bosses have said they will appeal again if a similar decision comes down!

The Plumbers and Gasfitters imposed bans on a large number of jobs in retaliation against this provocative tactic.

The Master Plumbers met a fortnight ago. They decided that on each job where there were union bans, two Plumbers Union members would be ordered to work on the banned areas.

When they refused, they were to be sacked.

The result — 38 men have been sacked for refusing to scab.

Now plumbers say they will retain the bans until the 38 are reinstated and the award is renegotiated in their favour.

Showpiece school - no teacher!

NORTHCOTE Technical School is one of the Victorian Education Department showpieces.

It is only four years old, with buidings full of expensive audio-visual equipment and even an indoor swimming pool.

The only problem is they don't have the teachers to staff it.

(The swimming pool is closed most of the time because they have one phys ed teacher for 800 kids!)

Last month the teachers decided that things had gone far enough and they refused to take extra classes for eight teachers who had either died, resigned or been transferred without being replaced.

When the principal instructed them to keep taking extras, they called a stopwork meeting and sent delegations to the Education Department.

Northcote TTAV president Red Moran told The Battler that during the negotiations it became obvious that the Education Department was far more concerned with balancing books than with the education needs of kids.

shortage

The staff shortage was so bad, the second form class had a different science teacher every period since the start of second term.

The third formers had fifteen different humanities teachers pass through their classroom.

The Department agreed that Northcote could hire one more maths/science teacher provided the school could find the teacher.

It seems that sudden[illegible] the famous glut of teache[illegible] has turned [illegible] under-supply and there [illegible] no more teachers to [illegible] desperate needs in scho[illegible]

According to Rod Mo[illegible] *"There's a very de[illegible] Government campaign [illegible] keep people out of teach[illegible] by spreading stories of a [illegible] called glut.*

"There are lots of "unemployed" teachers a[illegible] around, but most of them have had to take other jobs.

"Insurance companies have even been advertising for unemployed teachers."

department

The teachers' reaction [illegible] the Department offer wa[illegible] call a public meeting [illegible] parents to demand that [illegible] Department staff Northco[illegible] Tech according to its nee[illegible]

The mood of the meeting was militant and one pa[illegible] said: *"If you say "demand" they know you mean [illegible]*

John, a student in 3C9, said *"We defin[illegible] supported the teachers [illegible] they went on strike.*

"It's the students [illegible] suffer in the end becau[illegible] we don't have a reg[illegible] teacher we can't do [illegible] proper work and we have [illegible] repeat the year."

The meeting decided to set up a parent-teacher work[illegible] group to organise further de[illegible]putations to the Departme[illegible]

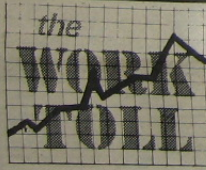
The teachers are hopin[illegible] that the Department wi[illegible] stop playing games and fi[illegible] them the teachers they ne[illegible]

Only a week befo[illegible] two maths/science teache[illegible] were "discovered" for a [illegible] more prestigious school [illegible] the eastern suburbs.

If the department doe[illegible] not come good, the teachers at Northcote will be taking militant action.

by Maria Mille[illegible]

the WORK TOLL



THIS column usually reports on current struggles over health and safety. But this time we look at an impressive struggle from the past.

At Mary Kathleen in Queensland, health standards reached an all-time low in early 1957. In February, 130 people came down with a throat infection. Dysentary raged.

The little township decided they'd had enough of the lack of medical facilities and hygiene, and a string of broken promises from Rio Tinto.

On 6 February, 600 workers and townspeople held a mass meeting and called a strike of all unions.

The company reacted immediately. Mr Kleist, Managering Director of Rio Tinto, rushed to Queensland to negotiate. He met the township's demands for a resident doctor, immediate provision of a temporary hospital and prompt construction of a permanent hospital.

Other gains from the strike included a fully equipped ambulance and a whole string of minor health measures.

▼

WORKERS at James Hardie Asbestos plants in Sunshine and Brooklyn (Vic) went on strike for several days last week in protest at management's refusal to grant special financial payments to workers suffering from asbestos related diseases.

In December 1976 the Miscellaneous Union put a claim in for special financial consideration to be given in the case of any member losing his health or to dependants of any member who died.

James Hardie rejected the claim but said it was prepared to discuss it on a national basis. It was not prepared to agree in principle to the payment.

The time is past for talks, the unions want action. Recent x-rays of workers resulted in one confirmed case of asbestosis (scarring of the lungs) and 3 possible cases.

The fight for special payments for asbestos illnesses at James Hardie has now broadened into a combined unions campaign involving metal workers, electricians, storemen and miscellaneous workers.

The unions are calling a combined delegates meeting to plan the next step in the campaign.

▼

IF ONLY everyone stopped eating fats, stopped smoking and exercised, then there'd be no heart disease. Right? Wrong.

Doctors claim we have "turned the corner in the epidemic of heart disease because of changing life-styles."

Yet things like fat and smoking only account for about a quarter of all heart disease. The most important factors are work satisfaction and overall "happiness".

A group of doctors in the Doctor's Reform Society compared unemployment and the rate of heart disease. They found that increases in unemployment during the Depression of the 1930's were followed by a corresponding increase in deaths from heart disease.

It seems that the real reason we have "turned the corner in the heart disease" in recent years is because of low unemployment during the post war boom.

It won't be long before we'll see another side of the human wreckage unemployment creates: a rise in heart disease.

by Steve Morgan

What's On

ADELAIDE SAT 15 JULY
Bastille Dinner, French Food BYO cost $3.00. Proceeds to Battler, 15 5th Terrace Semaphore, 49 7939 for further details.

ADELAIDE MON 17 JULY
Special Branch Meeting on 'Militant Tactics and Building the Revolutionary Movement.' All readers welcome. Phone 497939 for more details.

ADELAIDE WED 19 JULY
Special Meeting of CANE Pre Group. Final consultation before rally. Lady Symon Building 7.30 Adel. Uni.

CANBERRA MON 17 JULY
Branch Meeting 8pm, Lyneham. Ring 476 251 (a.h.) for details.

BRISBANE SAT 22 JU[illegible]
Women's demonstration [illegible] support of free abortion [illegible] demand, free 24 hr ch[illegible] care, freedom from [illegible] threat of rape, the right [illegible] women to work, an end [illegible] job discrimination. 10[illegible] City Square.

CANBERRA TUES 18 JU[illegible]
Defend student union[illegible] Public meeting in [illegible] Haydon-Allen tank, A.N[illegible] at 1 pm. Ian Jordan [illegible] speak.

CANBERRA MON [illegible]
Branch Meeting [illegible] Ainslie. Ring 496 [illegible] details.

SYDNEY SAT 22 [illegible]
Gay Rights Demon[illegible] in support of [illegible] arrested on Gay Mar[illegible] and outside the [illegible] Assemble at 10 am in [illegible] Plaza march to Kings Cr[illegible]

SYDNEY SUN 23 JU[illegible]
I.S. Branch Meeting [illegible] 111 Enmore Rd [illegible] 2042. Friends [illegible] welcome.

CHARITY... IT'S THE EASY WAY OUT

IT'S amazing the amount of faith that people have got in charity.

I teach at a tech school in Melbourne.

Last week the Principal had about fifteen of us in at a heads-of-department meeting — I was there for the humanities department.

The Boss announced that the next day, all the form one and two kids would have to attend a special half-hour session.

This session would consist of a film and a talk about the Salvation Army "Red Shield" appeal.

The whole aim was obviously to get the kids to volunteer to collect for the Salvos.

The Boss made his announcement, then asked for comments and questions.

Like most socialists, I'm against charity. Whenever some-one knocks at the front door or shakes a tin at me at some traffic lights, I explain to them that I think the Government should be taking the responsibility.

So I waited for about ten seconds, and when no-one said anything, I said, *"The Government ought to provide these things. It's an abuse of school time to enlist kids for charity work."*

You should have seen the reaction.

Nearly all of them were Labor voters. But everybody — except for one other left-winger — was aghast.

"Well! You'd be against the barrowthon too," said one bloke. (Our school had a wheelbarrow-pushing marathon to raise money for charity).

"Yes," I replied.

He was stunned. *"Well! Where does it end . . . ?!"*

"Some of the needy kids in our own school are probably being helped by the Salvos," said someone else.

"The Salvation Army does a lot of good work," the principal chimed in.

"I reckon it would be a very bad thing if the Government did everything," said a guy who's involved with his local church.

"There's not enough personal involvement these days. It's the least we can do."

So my objections got shot down in flames pretty quickly.

But what these people didn't realise is that the Government shells out for all sorts of things . . . horse-racing, tourism, weapons of war.

beg

And BHP never has to beg.

But the most vulnerable people in our society have to rely on charity.

Sure, we don't have people begging on the streets.

But we have them rattling tin cans on street corners. It's only one step removed — like begging by proxy.

Like I told the church guy later, as long as people do it, they're just letting the government off the hook.

As for his objection about lack of personal involvement — that's one of the worst spin-offs of Stalinism and reformism.

The idea that all Government — including socialism — has to be remote and impersonal.

But *real* socialism would encourage co-operation and assistance between people.

And it would put an end to the whole system of production for profit, that lies at the very root of all poverty.

And that's something charity can never do.

"Tech Teacher",
Melbourne

While the Government slashes millions off social welfare spending, school-kids are dragooned into stunts like this recent wheelbarrow-pushing marathon to raise a few dollars for charity.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

DID you hear how the train drivers caused the record smog in Melbourne last week?

According to the daily papers the smog was caused by car exhausts and because of the train strike more people went to work by car than normal. Hence the smog.

There are a few holes in this story. For one thing the smog began at the beginning of the week and got steadily worse.

The train strike was on Wednesday and Thursday but by Tuesday, a whole day before the strike, Melbourne had already experienced record levels of smog pollution.

People in Melbourne are pretty unhappy about the smog. Melbourne has never really had bad smog before. Sydney has smog but Melbourne has clean air. It's one of the compensations for the lousy weather.

The Environmental Protection Authority which not so long ago distinguished itself by lowering its standards so that it could tell the state government that Newport Power station was safe, told us that the problem was cars (only).

It also said that the problem was not too serious because the smog was not as bad as Los Angeles, Tokyo or London during the fifties. Terrific!

The EPA also said the only people whose health was at risk were "fat old men with bronchitis and young children with asthma". That makes it all right then doesn't it. After all ninety percent of the population is safe.

You might find it strange that a government authority is drawing attention to pollution caused by cars.

After all the government, by its systematic neglect of public transport and its love of freeways helped to put all those cars on the road. There are two explanations.

Firstly there was the rail strike. Secondly the government would rather have people worrying about cars than industrial pollution. The major reason for massive smog is the lack of safety standards governing factories outpourings.

On Wednesday, the day of the train strike, the five o'clock news announced that the smog had lifted in the South-Eastern suburbs but still covered the Northern and Western Suburbs.

If the smog had been caused by cars you would have expected it to be the other way around. Public transport is worse in the outer Eastern suburbs, more of the population lives in the South East and there are more freeways on that side of town.

People live further from their work on that side of town and more of them drive to work (more of them can afford to drive).

On the other hand the vast majority of Melbourne's factories are in the North and West including virtually all of the really bad pollutors like the oil and Petro-chemical industries.

Right in the centre of the whole zone is Newport where they are building a power station that they would have had to close for the whole week under their own legislation.

We had some beautiful sunsets out in the North-Western suburbs last week.

There is nothing in the world as beautiful as sunlit smog brought to you by courtesy of ICI, Mobil, John Lysaght, Dick Hamer and the Environmental Protection Authority.

"Nothing so beautiful as sunlit smog."

What We Stand For

Workers' Power
Workers' control over the whole of society; based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism
We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State
The state — parliament, courts, the law — is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism
A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation
For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party
To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation
Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If that's the sort of work you want to do:

JOIN US!

WOMEN WORKERS IN ACTION

WOMEN workers in action — that is increasingly the keynote for IS branches all over Australia.

A highlight of the past fortnight has been the dramatic struggle to save the jobs of the Sanyo workers, mostly women, in Wodonga.

Battler reporters have been on the spot almost continuously. IS branches and friends have been distributing a leaflet putting the Sanyo workers case in workplaces all over the country.

In Melbourne, the film "Me and Daphne" has been shown in Brunswick and at Monash. Melbourne branches are now gearing up for a campaign around women's health and the attacks on Medibank and Abortion.

In Sydney, we've organised a meeting where May Hobbs, a leader of the famous London night cleaners strike, will be speaking.

Sydney will also be stepping up its work amongst nurses and hospital workers.

In Brisbane, we're working towards the important Abortion Demonstration on July 22.

Thanks to Bjelke's anti-march laws, we could be facing a full scale attack on the Brisbane women's movement.

■

TWENTY-EIGHT people came to the last Melbourne South Branch meeting to see the film 'Me and Daphne' and discuss the struggles of women workers.

'Me and Daphne' is a dramatic study of the conditions of work for women in a Sydney chicken processing plant. It is enough to turn anyone off Kentucky Fried for life.

After the film, Janey Stone reported to the meeting on the strike at Sanyo. IS branches have been involved in building support for the Sanyo strikers.

South Branch members are active in the anti-uranium campaign — both in local MAUM groups, where we play a leading role, and in building on-the-job MAUM groups.

The next South Branch meeting is on Tuesday 18 July at 11 Colonel St., Clayton, at 7.30 pm. We're having a Battler writing workshop — so come along and develop your propagandizing talents!

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL	
PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031	376-9142
24 hour answering and message machine	376 2783
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE	
PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	376-2783
MELBOURNE	
GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	387 6351
SYDNEY	
111 Enmore Rd., Newtown 2042	51-3665
ADELAIDE	
PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49-7939
CANBERRA	
PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	49 6405
BRISBANE	
PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067	358 3978
IPSWICH, QLD	281 6113

International Socialists

Fighting Fund

LAST month's fighting fund raised $284-77. That's still a long way short of our target of $400.

This month, those lovely tax refund cheques should start rolling in. Of course, they won't be as much as they should be, thanks to Malcolm's tax indexation fraud.

But what nicer way to get back at the bastard than with a donation to your favourite left-wing newspaper . . . ?

Our thanks for last month's donations to:

Melbourne Football Match	21.40
Canberra Branch	150.00
Sydney Dinner	57.00
Anon	7.23
JG	0.50
WM	1.00
Canberra Branch	1.75
Sydney Branch	1.09
Adelaide Branch	2.80
JS	18.00
RM	24.00
Total	$284.77

GMH still refuses to budge

WE NEED A FIGHTING CAMPAIGN

THE national 24 hour strike by seven car industry unions has failed to force any more offers from GMH.

GMH has put a "package deal" to us.

This means that we will only get the claims agreed to by Holden if other points, raised by the company, are included.

By Alan Briggs AMWSU,GMH.

GMH's main point is a three year life of the award – which is just not on.

So in effect, Holden has offered nothing that can be accepted.

The main areas where they have made offers are in job security, pensions, severance pay and sick leave.

The offer on severance pay is one week's notice for each year of service, up to a maximum of 26 weeks.

Holden is also willing to allow us to present a statutory declaration (signed by a JP) instead of a doctor's certificate, for sick leave.

And even though the value of our pensions has eroded over 200% since 1969, Holden has offered only a 25% increase.

GMH boss Charles Chapman – as usual, sticking his tongue out at workers

claims

We have won some of the minor claims – including slight improvements to annual leave under certain conditions.

But all in all, no great things have been achieved.

General Motors has continually stated throughout this campaign, that any offers must bear in mind the "depressed state of the economy".

Apparently we must not place Holden at a cost disadvantage to its competitors.

A strong campaign of industrial action will shift the company from these views, and get some decent improvements in the award.

involve

But a strong campaign must involve all the unions.

The Vehicle Builders Union has, unfortunately, refused to join the seven other unions to hold combined stopwork meetings.

This resulted in many thousands of VBU members being stood down for the 24 hour stoppage.

Instead of giving support to the strike and joining it, the VBU officials condemned us for "putting their members out of work".

Canberra cleaners sweep to victory

CANBERRA public service cleaners have won a fight to save jobs.

Three months ago, the Department of Defence and Administrative Services announced they were going to relet cleaning contracts for their offices.

The new contracts made no provision for continuity – of employment, over-award agreements, pro-rata long service leave or sick leave credits.

There was also the threat of sackings.

The cleaners, members of the Miscellaneous Workers Union, went on indefinite strike.

Garbage piled up in the offices. Toilets went uncleaned. The offices became unfit to work in.

The departments backed down. Details of the agreement were released a couple of weeks ago.

The present contracts will go for another five years. Two cleaners who were to be sacked will stay on.

Over-award agreements will be maintained with no loss of earnings, and enough part-time work is guaranteed to employ everyone.

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the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Fifty demonstrators picketed Presbyterian Ladies College in Melbourne last week, protesting at Fraser's decision to cut $8 million from Government schools and boost private by $13.5 million. The picket was the first in 'Operation Outrage', being organized by teacher unions and two parent organizations. More pickets will follow at other wealthy schools in Melbourne.

ALL THE NEWS ON THE BLF ELECTIONS

COSTLY ERROR AT QANTAS

"WE'LL never make the mistake of trusting the courts again, that's for sure. Next time someone's sacked, it'll be out the gate till we win."

That was the mood of militants on the Qantas site after a badly judged "tactical" decision – to return to work and abide by a Commissioner's decision – resulted in defeat.

The defeat meant the loss of his job for Duncan Williams. Duncan is a rank and file candidate for organiser in the BLF election.

site

He was sacked by Dillingham for addressing an election meeting on another site when he'd phoned in to say he wouldn't be in to work.

After the men had been out for two weeks over Duncan's sacking, Commissioner Heffernan began trying to make a show of strength.

A fiery mass meeting decided, against a lot of opposition, to accept a return to work.

The terms were that Duncan kept his job while the hearing continued, but that the Commi[...] final decision be acc[...]

Commissioner Heffe[...] soon dispelled th[...] that this move [...] any favours.

On the first day [...] hearing was resumed he [...] no attention to [...] arguments presented by [...] BLF delegate.

chop

Instead he took a [...] and a half to read [...] prepared statement [...] Duncan the chop.

BWIU organisers [...] had helped initiate [...] return to work tactic [...] clearly stunned by [...] that events took.

In a mass [...] day after the co[...] feeling was strong [...] Hefferman.

A motion to accept [...] recommendation was [...] narrowly won.

(Heffernan is suppo[...] a "socialist". But he [...] blatantly sided with [...] bosses in the dispute.

help

He's also given a lot of help to Black and his mates by deciding the rank and file workers don't have the right to time off for campaigning.

Black's got several full time officials to campaign for him, the BLs [...] Democratic Control [...] none.

The BLF officials [...] support to Duncan [...] struggle to keep his [...]

BLs at Qantas are [...] fighting over a number [...] other important issues.

These include [...] struggle against [...] "warning" system, [...] against inside work [...] wet weather, when [...] usually several inches [...] water on the floor.

And there'll probably [...] more action [...] treatment given to a [...] who got into a fight [...] foreman.

He was sacked, [...] foreman was only [...] for a couple of [...]

by Ja[...]

Qantas site building workers meet during the strike

Now for the real BLF election

By David Shaw, BLF

THE real NSW BLF branch elections start on July 17th and run to August 4th.

Builders labourers have been waiting for the Electoral Office to announce the dates for many weeks.

Now the dates have been announced, the election campaign will really hot up.

Already the Gallagher-Black officials are stepping up their campaign of standover tactics and intimidation.

Three BLs for Democratic Control members were attacked by seven of Black's thugs while putting up posters on the L.W. Giles job in Broadway.

A Gallagher hoaxer rang my home saying I had fallen off a scaffold and had a broken spine.

To cap it off, the next day they rang my employers, Ferndell Cranes, and told them to sack me.

The Gallagher forces have collaborated with Dillinghams to have two Democratic Control candidates sacked.

They have also been threatening migrant members who support rank and file candidates with expulsion from the union.

In any case, it seems likely that Steve Black and company will not accept the result of the election when it goes against them.

Their organisers told a Democratic Control supporter at the Hornibrooks job in Minto that they would not accept the result of the ballot, if it did not match their own bodgie rigged ballot.

The coming weeks are the most crucial for the campaign. Let's use them to put the final nails in Steve Blacks coffin.

IN THE BATTLER EVERY FORTNIGHT

No. 56
29 July 1978

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

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March on Hiroshima Day

SYDNEY	Saturday August 5, 10.30 am, Circular Quay Park
MELBOURNE	Sunday August 6, 1.00 pm, Parliament House
BRISBANE	Saturday August 5, 10.00 am, King George Square
ADELAIDE	Saturday August 5, 10.30 am, Victoria Square
HOBART	Friday August 4, 5.00 pm, Royal Hobart Hospital
CANBERRA	Sunday August 6, 1.00 pm, forum at Environment Centre, Kingsley St.

THE NEW URANIUM DEALS..... FINLAND..... BRITAIN.....

FRASER'S CONTRACT OF DEATH

FOR gruesome timing, you have to hand it to Malcolm Fraser.

He has given the go-ahead to two uranium contracts . . . both within a fortnight of Hiroshima Day.

Just as we're remembering the mass slaughter of the first nuclear bomb, Fraser tears up his "strict" safeguards policy to sell uranium to Britain and Finland.

By Alec Kahn

The Finland deal signed by nuclear cowboy Doug Anthony has been made fully public. And it is a scandal.

Reprocessing – which is hazardous in itself and opens the door to the highly-dangerous fast-breeder reactors – is no longer banned outright.

In a letter accompanying the contract, the Government even said it was willing to agree years in advance to enrichment, conversion and fuel fabrication. Enrichment means a country can readily produce nuclear weapons.

model

Since the Finland contract is a model for others to come, that means the same loophole will be there for everyone else.

How is Australia going to check that Finland is complying with the safeguards that do exist?

Through the International Atomic Energy Agency, which has already been exposed by the American Government Accounting Office as negligent in its checking procedures.

Any safeguard can be dropped by mutual consent between Finland and the Australian Government of the day.

The details of the British deal are not yet fully public. But it looks like they will be even worse!

Britain will probably be allowed to transfer the uranium it buys to other members of the European Economic Community.

And since they don't sign the contract – they can use the uranium how they like!

The deadly logic of the world capitalist market means that uranium safeguards will continue to get slacker.

Canada started off the loosening of safeguards to try and get a headstart in uranium sales to Europe and Japan.

Now Fraser has followed suit.

The whole safeguards shemozzle makes it clear Australia's uranium policy is not some "mistake" by the Government.

It is the logical result of selling minerals on the capitalist market . . . of putting profits ahead of the safety of humanity.

fob

The only reason Malcolm Fraser actually has to go through all these elaborate pretences to try and fob us off, is the strength of the anti-uranium movement.

On August 5 and 6, Hiroshima Day, we've got another chance to tell him we don't want uranium mining.

Malcolm Fraser can keep his Contracts of Death.

Our safety – and the safety of the rest of the world – is more important.

The Agony of Hiroshima – pages 6,7

Anti-uranium activists picket the Finnish Consul's house in the posh Melbourne suburb of Toorak after the deal with Finland was announced.

between the lines

Who said the following?

1. "NO foreign nuclear plant will be affected by the disruption of Australian uranium supplies since there is at the moment an abundance of uranium exports on offer from other countries."
"If Australian unionists somehow contrive to ensure that no Australian uranium is ever mined again, they will not make a jot of difference to the world situation."
2. "WE have a duty to a world facing an immediate energy crisis of catastrophic proportions to make our uranium available."
3. "THERE is a long-term danger of Australia missing the boat unless an energetic start is made to mining projects quite soon."

Answers:
1. Rupert Murdoch's "Australian", May 1977
2. Rupert Murdoch's "Weekend Australian" October 1977
3. Rupert Murdoch's "Australian" March 1978

It helps to know that Rupert Murdoch has shares in a company holding a uranium lease in Western Australia.

HERE's someone else who knows which side his bread is buttered on. Dick, a Keen an' young organiser for Gallagher's NSW branch of the BLF, has just bought a house near Campbelltown.

Dick used to work for PDC, a subsidiary of Parkes Development, well known for their benevolent attitude towards builders laborers.

Well, Dick must have been a fabulous employee. Because Parkes are helping him out with his mortgage. With a total repayment of $126,000, Parkes have given him a loan on $3,000 deposit with extremely low interest.

And Dick is also highly regarded by the union . . . they've put up the $3,000.

It's a pity he can't swing deals like that for the membership.

SOMEONE'S been peddling dangerous ideas amongst professional cyclists. Last week, during the classic Tour de France, all the competitors staged a "go-slow strike" and refused to cross the finishing line.

At the hub of their grievances was having to get up at 5-30am the day after riding over the mountains. They had not been consulted over the early start.

THE Battler Plastic Straw this week goes to the worthy officials from the Federated Clerks Union and the Shop Assistants' Union.

These NCC operatives, well known for their concern that the unions are properly run and funds used for the correct purpose, have just given the Norwich Union Insurance group $12 million for a rundown building in downtown Melbourne. (Darth Vader used to work in it!)

And to add insult to injury, they invited that symbol of working class organisation, the Governor General, to open it.

By Darth Vader

Cop this, Neville Wran!

2,000 MARCH FOR GAY RIGHTS

THE fight back by gays against recent police attacks in Sydney has gained new momentum.

Nearly two thousand people took part in the latest gay solidarity march to King's Cross and Darlinghurst police station.

We were supporting gay rights and defending the sixty people arrested at previous demonstrations.

By Martin Hirst and Di Minnis

What had initially been a spirited and cohesive march became disorganised once we reached Darlinghurst police station. We were there for a long time without any focus for the demonstrations activities.

There was eventually a brief scuffle with police, some banging on the door of the police station, and some flour was thrown by a few people.

The march then started to move off in a fairly disorganised way towards the dispersal point at Hyde Park.

attack

Bus loads of cops screamed up and started to attack the march. Most people did not know what was going on.

So instead of linking arms and forming up to prevent arrests, the crowd tended to scatter. This allowed the cops to split the march and pick off who they liked.

What could have been a disciplined retreat turned into a rout. In all, fourteen arrests were made.

Some people blamed small groups of "anarchists" for provoking police to break up the march.

But there were only minor incidents. The real reason for the attack was that the cops were just itching to get stuck into a group of homosexuals.

The cops already had plenty of "excuses" to break up the march.

We did not have a permit to go to the police station (only to Taylor Square, 50 yards away) and we stayed there for a long time.

The cops only held back as long as they did because Wran was embarrassed by the previous police attacks.

There is always the possibility that people will get angry and do something that will "provoke" the police. We can't prevent that.

What we can do is organise ourselves to prevent unnecessary arrests.

There was also some concern about the "bad" media coverage the demo got. People were worried that we would appear as a bunch of "ratbags" to the general community.

But just being on a gay solidarity march means you must be a "ratbag" to the captialist press.

We are seen as a threat to the family and to the whole system the media supports. That's why the press plays up a couple of minor incidents and ignores the rest of the march.

agreement

Over 100 people thrashed out these issues at last Thursday's Gay Solidarity Group meeting. There was overwhelming agreement that in future we must organise marches better.

An IS proposal of using defensive tactics like linking arms to prevent arrests was adopted.

To educate people in these tactics, there will be speakers at future rallies and leaflets produced outlining demonstration tactics.

The meetings appears to have resolved some of the conflict within the movement. Hopefully we can get on with building a cohesive campaign.

It is essential that the movement does not become demoralised by the Saturday's events. We have to keep up the pressure on Wran and the cops to drop the charges against the people arrested.

action

A number of good suggestions were made for future action.

On-going trade union work in defence of victimised gays was emphasised.

Tables turned on sexist louts

A young woman in Brisbane is "fighting fire with fire" against sexist youths who have been harrassing her for attending technical college.

She is the only woman at the college, and the boys in her class have been *"tripping me, throwing soft drinks and other stuff"*, as well as making comments like *"Is that a chick or what?" . . . "Has she got balls?"* . . .

"In the past few weeks they've heavied up their attacks . . . started smashing my work. All my carpentry work, a brick wall I built . . . and pelting stones at me on the way to the station."

It wasn't worthwhile telling the principal because that wouldn't stop the boys harrassing her on the way home.

Instead the woman talked to some friends and her mother. They decided to *"beat the college boys on their own terms"* and show the boys that *"I wasn't easy prey, isolated and without support."*

So twenty women went to the train station after college to intimidate the boys.

"The women warned them that they would have the shit beaten out of them next time if anyone at college touched either me or my work.

"The thing that was funny about it was that the boys didn't give any support to each other . . . every man for himself."

scared

"They were scared stiff and we had a go at them for acting so tough in a group of boys against one woman."

At college the next day, lots of rumours started going around – some suggested the women were armed, or part of a bikie gang.

"One kid told me he was offered $5 for information on our future plans of attack."

The woman got into trouble for not telling the school staff.

By Judy McVey

"And now a lot of the boys give me dirty looks, and the principal put me in another class who are supposed to be my 'protectors'.

"The principal's solution is a typical non-attack on sexism, as if the boys in my first class were particularly naughty, nasty things.

"I mean, they're boys learning [illegible] masculinity, and [illegible]

The woman has [illegible] gross sexism from [illegible] Commonwealth Employment Service.

When she left [illegible] went to the dole office and asked about the possibility of getting an apprenticeship as a mechanic or carpenter.

The dole office told her that the dole would not be available until she was realistic about the [illegible] she wanted – hairdressing or cooking would be more suitable.

toilets

Women are not supposed to be motor mechanics or carpenters – they are too weak, and there'd probably be no female toilets!

POLICE ATTACK WOMENS RALLY

POLICE have attacked a women's movement protest in Brisbane.

Three hundred women rallied at King George Square last Saturday.

They were supporting the demands of the women's movement – for abortion on demand, free 24-hour child care, genuine equal pay, the right to work for all women, government funded refuges, and freedom from rape, sexism and oppression of lesbians.

The usual several hundred cops massed at nearby Lang Park and arrived at the square in buses.

Plainclothes police arrested a member of the street theatre troupe, and then several others, for alleged obscene language.

The women in the square responded by chanting "Give us an F, give us a U," etc.

The cops weren't game to arrest the whole rally, but moved in and picked off individuals.

In the melee some of the cops secretly cut the leads of the speaking equipment.

After about 35 arrests had been made, the women repeated their demands and moved to picket the watchhouse.

Defending law and order . . . one of Bjelke's uniformed thugs in action at the Women's Rally.

This is the first of several planned rallies to be held in the next few weeks around issues such as unemployment, uranium, attacks on student unions.

They will initiate a new round of militant rallies to put the pressure on Petersen and his government, which apparently needs to be propped up with massive shows of police force.

By Carole Ferrier

Fraser slashes maternity leave

YET another attack on working women is being spearheaded by the Federal Government.

They have slashed public servants' maternity leave. This will force women out of the public service.

Until now public servants were on a good wicket. They had twelve weeks paid maternity leave and another forty weeks unpaid leave.

They could also take other accumulated leave and allowances like sick pay, holiday pay and long service leave, which gave some women up to five months paid leave.

forces

Now all other leave has been ruled out by the government. This forces women to go on leave six weeks before their child is due and return to [illegible] weeks after.

Women public [illegible] will be forced to [illegible] the end of their [illegible] weeks paid leave [illegible] go back to work.

abolished

The five weeks [illegible] leave has also [illegible] abolished. Yet men always take time [illegible] the women lose their [illegible]

Unfortunately [illegible] look like there will [illegible] fight back. Some [illegible] the public service [illegible] meeting, but [illegible] Federal Secretary [illegible] ACOA, has ruled [illegible] industrial action.

Rumors of the [illegible] been circulating for [illegible] months, and the [illegible] accepts it as an accomplished fact.

By Steve [illegible]

CUTS, CUTS, CUTS, CUTS, CUTS, CUTS, CUTS

MALCOLM Fraser has a very clear strategy about who will pay for the economic recession. Anyone but him and the parasites he represents.

Among all his lies and floundering, one strand emerges clearly. The blame for the crisis should be lumped on the shoulders of Australian workers and their families.

The Liberal Economic 'Strategy'

IT CAN'T WORK . . .

Not that he says so in quite those terms. He has a handy phrase for it that he's flogged to death since he was elected – "fighting inflation."

Fraser's major justification for all the cuts he is making, is that inflation has fallen a few points since he came in.

Inflation has fallen slightly. Not as a result of Fraser's policies, though. But as part of the world-wide recession that capitalism is in.

switched

Lack of demand, high unemployment and capital being switched away from manufacturing industry are all elements of the crisis which have slowed economic growth and forced down inflation.

Those factors affect all the Western capitalist states. They also make nonsense of Fraser's major catch-cry for economic recovery here – that if Australia makes it easy enough for the owners of capital to amass profits they will invest.

There has been no "foreign investment-led" recovery, nor is there likely to be, as the recent Bonn conference of super-powers demonstrated.

It is as ludicrous a suggestion as Fraser's other brilliant strategy, now quietly forgotten – "the consumer led recovery."

How the hell did Fraser think people were going to spend their way out of recession with 500,000 unemployed and widespread insecurity about jobs?

The answer is of course – he didn't. But he has no answer to the crisis. It was just another in the series of lies the man has served up for threes years.

Latest of them is the size of the Budget deficit, which he predicted before the last election would be about $2 billion.

Instead, of course, it is expected to be nearer $4 billion.

No prizes for guessing who will pay the difference. Fraser has said as much.

Asked if the rumours about cuts in family allowances were true, Fraser's advice was to *"take them with a pinch of salt."*

In Malcolm Fraser's language, that's as near as a straight-out "yes" you'll ever get.

by John McLean

FOR the last month, someone in the Federal Government has been thinking aloud.

What seems to happen is that the government leaks its latest proposed cut, waits for the howls of outrage, and if they're too strong says it was not really thinking of making that cut anyway.

First we had the threat of T.V. licenses. The public service unions said that they would not process the forms, and the wharfies said that they would refuse to handle TV sets on the wharves.

So the government decided they had better forget TV licenses.

Next came the threat to cut family allowances for the first child.

This met with universal hostility and Senator Guilfoyle held a press conference to say that this was not exactly what she had in mind after all.

It appears now that what Guilfoyle has in mind is considerably worse.

The latest leak "from the usually reliable source" is that they are planning to tax family allowances in families where both parents work.

This is nothing less than an attack on the right of married women to work.

It is only two years since Lynch announced that the goverment did not intend to tax the family allowance. He described it as a move "in favour of the independence of women".

changed

It appears the Libs have changed their views on the independence of women (if anyone was silly enough to believe that they ever supported women's independence).

However we can learn from the government's back-pedal on TV licences.

If the anger is strong enough and union action is threatened, the government can be talked out of its budget plans. Now is the time to oppose tax on family allowances.

. . . SO NEITHER CAN WE!

One of the phoney models used by the Libs when they promised Clayton a hospital.

NEARLY 7000 school leavers in the State of Victoria have still not found jobs seven months after the end of the last school year.

According to official figures (usually miles less than the real figures) there are 3171 male and 3646 female school leavers still unemployed.

show

So, to show its concern, the Federal Government is going to force the Community Youth Support Schemes to close.

The CYSS offices attempt to help young unemployed people. Under new guidelines announced recently CYSS offices will not be allowed to conduct job searching and canvassing, or help place young unemployed people in jobs.

They will not be allowed to involve themselves in small-scale job creation programs or community welfare work.

Nor will they be able to conduct education programs, apart from job interview training.

In other words they will be totally useless. So they will have to close and the Federal Government won't have to contribute to their funding. Which is the point of the whole exercise.

Anyone would think that the Fraser government is in favour of youth unemployment. And they'd be right.

Hit by the cuts ...our education

RESIDENTS in the Parks area in Adelaide are fighting spending cuts which threaten the "Parks Community Education Centre" – a 14½ million dollar project in a trust housing area of Adelaide.

This area, barren of facilities for years, needs 2½ million dollars to complete the project. But the South Australian Government, starved of Federal funds, looks like dropping it.

Local residents have reacted vigorously. They gave Minister of Education, Dr Hopgood, a petition with over 2000 signatures protesting at the proposed cuts.

Three hundred people attended a local meeting to consider the situation. They sent a group to demonstrate at the official opening of Parliament the next day.

This action was covered by three TV channels.

Hopgood said he had sought a 3.3 million dollar grant from Canberra to complete the centre.

This will provide furniture and equipment for inside the building, and an outdoor swimming pool – eagerly awaited in this flat, arid and air-polluted area.

staff

It will also provide for extra staff at the centre.

The Parks residents now wait to hear if the grant is forthcoming from Canberra.

Meanwhile, the Dunstan Government is doing the usual for a Labor Government – slicing their share of the cake smaller, instead of challenging the whole cake-making process!

Hit by the cuts... our hospital

OVER one thousand local residents have petitioned the Hamer Government to immediately re-site Melbourne's Queen Victoria Hospital in Clayton, a south-eastern working-class suburb.

There is an urgent need for a major public hospital in this part of Melbourne.

Casualties arriving at the nearest public hospital in Moorabbin are continually sent onto hospitals in the city (ten miles away) because Moorabbin can't cope with them.

The Victorian Liberals have promised us a hospital in Clayton since 1958.

trot

Before each election, they trot out this grand promise – even to the cynical extent of displaying bogus models of "the hospital to be constructed" when plans haven't even been drawn up yet.

One local newsagent – a loyal Liberal – put a model of a hospital in his window to win votes. It was actually of another hospital – his party had simply relabelled it!

Now local "community leaders" tell us we don't need a hospital in Clayton, because the already understaffed and overloaded Moorabbin hospital is a fine substitute.

called

The "Queen Victoria Hospital Now" Committee has called a demonstration on Saturday morning, July 29, at ten o'clock in Clayton Shopping Centre to protest at this neglect and deception.

We are sick and tired of broken promises. With the Federal cuts to hospital spending, the Queen Vic may never be re-sited in Clayton unless we do something about it.

by Roger Walkers, Queen Vic Now Committee

LEAVE IT IN THE GROUND!

The fight against Uranium mining

by Mick Armstrong

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'SOCIALISM? IT'S AGAINST HUMAN NATURE'

"Bishop, I can fly,
Said the tailor to the Bishop.
Just watch me try
And with a couple of things
That looked like wings
To the big, big roof of the
church he climbed."

So begins a poem by Bertolt Brecht, the German Communist.

Alas, the tailor's wings don't work, and he lies smashed on the city square. With a superior sneer the Bishop, guardian of traditional ideas, draws a moral:

"Let the church bells ring.
It was nothing but a lie.
A man is not a bird
No man will ever fly.
The Bishop told the people."

Tom O'Lincoln looks at every right winger's favourite argument against socialism

Today we smile at the Bishop's words. We have learned to fly, and we know that the tailor's fate was the result of human ignorance and not the laws of God.

Yet there is still no shortage of people today who tell us that other human hopes are in vain, because of the nature of things. Socialism in particular – that humane society free of classes which Marx and Lenin fought for – is dismissed as a Utopian dream.

beautiful

Socialism is a beautiful idea, they say, but it's impractical. It goes against human nature, which is selfish and egoistic.

I used to use this argument myself, and thought it a crushing one, at the age of 12. Today I still encounter it at every street corner and factory where I sell the Battler.

On the face of it, it is a serious argument. Everyone around us seems mainly concerned with their own welfare. It is a dog-eat-dog world, and from what we know of history, it always has been that way.

How can a change of social organisation – even one as radical as the change from capitalism to a democratically-run planned economy – change human nature?

But human nature is the most changeable thing in the world!

In the ancient world it was considered "natural" for some people to own others, and buy and sell them like cattle. Today we consider it "inhuman".

In Medieval times, it was considered "natural" to burn witches and heretics. Today we are appalled by such practices.

In many societies, past and present, it has been considered natural for people to have homosexual experiences. More and more people are coming around to that view again today.

Yet it was once considered so unnatural that even a revolutionary like Frederick Engels referred to "the abominable crime of buggery".

Human nature – which is just a high-falutin' way of saying human behaviour patterns – has changed with every change in society.

"Human nature is the most changeable thing in the world..."

theories

So have scientific theories about human nature. In the time of industrial revolution and the growth of capitalism, scientists preached social progress and the perfectability of human beings.

Their theories were associated with the desire of the new ruling class – the capitalists – to transform the world.

Today capitalism is in decay. Far from changing the world, the employing class wants to hang on to things as they are. Change is a threat, and any attempt to create a more progressive society is a grave threat to them indeed.

Not surprisingly, we are now getting pseudo-scientific "proof" that human beings cannot be changed. That human nature is permanently given, and basically selfish and egoistic.

One writer would persuade us that people are only "naked apes". Another, in "The Territorial Imperative", wants to convince the world that the desire to cling to a bit of territory – private property is what he means – is the basic urge of all human beings.

What they overlook, of course, is that capitalism itself has created the possibility for us to move on to a more co-operative world.

Recruitment posters for the First World War. "Whenever the bosses want us to fight one of their wars for them, they invariably appeal to our spirit of justice and self-sacrifice."

Because capitalism has created the wealth for us to do away with scarcity – enough wealth for us not to need to fight each other for scraps.

And because over the last two hundred years, capitalism has taken the mass of the world's population out of the country-side – where it was "each peasant for himself" – and put us into large factories and cities where co-operation is an essential part of day-to-day life.

So now for example, trade unions – large co-operative organisations of workers – are an accepted part of life. Yet they are something that peasants were never able to create.

And in the same way, capitalism itself brought about the world's first Communist movements.

In Russia, France, Germany, Spain, Hungary and a score of other countries, there have been mass movements of millions of workers fighting for an end to profiteering and greed.

mixtures

The truth is that under capitalism, we are all mixtures of generosity and selfishness.

Of course, if you are Lang Hancock, the selfishness tends to dominate! But time and again, working class people show enormous generosity and solidarity. Just ask anyone who did fund-raising for the Latrobe Valley strike.

Even the ruling class admits that there's a lot of unselfishness around, every time they organise one of their "Herald Blanket Appeals" or "Channel Nine Telethons".

And whenever they want us to fight one of their wars for them they invariably appeal to our spirit of justice and self-sacrifice. (They even build shrines to it afterwards!)

But if we're all as intrinsically greedy and selfish as they make out, why don't *they just say, "Let's go and loot Germany" to get their* volunteers?

paradox

There's one cute paradox about capitalism that scares the ruling class more than anything else. The fact that it's actually in the self-interest of workers to get rid of this system based on self-interest!

Because all that capitalism really has to offer the vast majority of us in the end is Depression, fascism and war.

So while we're fighting for a new, more humane society, we can take comfort in the story of the tailor.

Today we can fly. Tomorrow we can build a better world.

"Capitalism itself brought about the world's first Communist movements..."

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

REMEMBER THE TAX "cuts" that Fraser promised us during the last elections? According to all the newspapers he is taking them back again by raising the indirect taxes.

Of course not everyone will lose the tax rebates.

If an extra five cent tax is placed on cigarettes every smoker will have to pay five cents more for fags. However five cents more per packet hits a person on the dole ten times as hard as it hits a person earning $500 per week.

Which is why cutting income tax and raising indirect taxes doesn't bring you back to square one. It puts you a long way behind if you are on the average wage or less. And it puts you a long way ahead if you happen to be rich.

Further proof of Fraser's bastardy? On the contrary! It shows how much Fraser cares for the poor and working people.

True, he is taking money out of our pockets but that is only a side effect of his tax strategy. His main concern is our health and morals.

Fraser is worried at the risk of lung cancer, particularly amongst young unemployed people. So he is going to raise taxes on cigarettes so that people on the dole won't be able to afford them.

He is worried about working-class alcoholism. He is particularly worried about working people drinking spirit-based drinks. So up goes the excise on liquor.

Soon only the wealthy will risk death from cirrhosis of the liver, because only the wealthy will be able to afford drinks like whisky and gin.

Perhaps most of all Malcolm Fraser is worried about the road toll. It isn't fair that ordinary men and women should have to run the same risks that Malcolm gladly faces every time he takes his Bugatti out on the roads.

So to show his great love and concern for the people Fraser is considering raising taxes on petrol and sales tax on cars. If petrol costs 25 cents per litre (that's well over a $1 a gallon) that will discourage the riff-raff from driving.

Malcolm and his mates will have the roads to themselves, and hundreds of working people won't die in car accidents.

So you see it's not a question of redistributing wealth from the poor to the rich at all. The goverment is trying to redistribute health from the rich to the poor. Malcolm Fraser, you're all heart!

100,000 WOMEN MARCH IN USA

ONE hundred thousand women converged on Washington DC on July 9, to demand ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) – to finally give women equality in the United States.

By Elissa Clarke

The ERA itself is not an earth shattering piece of legislation. It is a rather basic statement of equality between the sexes before the law.

But if the ERA were defeated, every woman in the crowd understood that it would mean a stepping up of the attacks on womens rights.

"Equal Rights! Equal Pay! Ratify the ERA!" was the cry...

As the crowd gathered beneath the Washington Monument, it was announced that the police had estimated between sixty and ninety thousand people – and more were still marching down Constitution Avenue.

An exciting dimension of the march was the number of different groups involved – young women, old women, women in traditional jobs, women breaking new ground, professionals, union women, housewives, lesbians, children, babies – sisters!

Puerto Rican women wore white dresses with brightly embroidered flowers, and danced on the way to the Capitol.

Women steel workers came wearing hardhats. Car workers held banners of their trade unions.

There were also social-workers, actors, miners, socialists, feminists and students. One group called themselves "House-wives For ERA".

As far as you could see in any direction were women wearing white to symbolise their ties with the sisters who marched years ago for the right to vote.

To some, the march reminded them of the womens liberation movement of the 1960's.

But for others, it was the first time they had come to Washington to make their voices heard. It was their first demand on the government.

It was a new discovery of the power of ordinary women when we are united.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN RUSSIA

ON July 13 and 14, the work of every socialist in the world was made a bit more difficult.

On those days, the Soviet Union – which claims to be a 'socialist' state – condemned two of its citizens to long terms of imprisonment for 'treason' and 'anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda'.

By Nicola Catesby

"You provide the humans, we'll provide the rites."

Vladimir Klebanov, leader of the Free Trade Unions – now held in a pyschiatric hospital.

The two – Alexander Ginsburg and Anatoly Shcharansky – were prominent members of the groups set up to check that the Soviet Union was applying the human rights provisions agreed to by the Helsinki summit.

But Ginsburg and Shcharansky are only two of an ever-increasing number of dissidents being thrown into gaol by the Soviet state for holding views against those of their rulers.

From February 1977 to May 1978, twenty two people have been imprisoned or lost their citizenship for their activities in the 'Helsinki' groups.

threatening

Most threatening of all to the regime was the formation earlier this year of the Association of Free Trade Unions of Workers. This represented about two hundred white collar and manual workers.

Engineers from Kiev, Moscow and Rostov, doctors and nurses, pensioners, farmers, miners from the Ukraine and railway workers came to Moscow to set up the organisation.

There are no trade unions in the Soviet Union. The organisations called trade unions are in fact state police agencies.

So when the new group started speaking out against poor wages and conditions, high rates of injury, rising productively drives and prices, they were in trouble.

Their leader, Vladimir Klebanov, a coal miner, has not been heard of since he was taken to a Moscow psychiatric hospital and declared a 'paranoid'. The man whose flat was used for the Association's meetings is also in hospital – officially 'insane'.

hospitals

Four more of the unionists are in mental hospitals, while another ten have been arrested or gaoled.

Of course the political leaders of the west have been falling over themselves to criticise the latest trials. Carter, Callaghan, Schmidt and Fraser have all issued stirring condemnations. Even Norm Gallagher (who isn't noted for his love of democratic debate within his union) has got into the act.

Most of this is sheer hypocrisy. None of these leaders are innocent of practising or supporting the sort of repression they condemn in the Soviet Union. The American ambassador to the UN was nearer the mark when he said:

"After all, in our prisons also there are hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of people whom I call political prisoners."

But the problem for socialists is that western leaders and the western media don't use the trials just to condemn abuses of human rights – they use them to condemn socialism itself.

To criticise Russia is not to criticise socialism. *Because Russia is not socialist in any way, shape or form* – despite what various right (and even some left) wingers say to the contrary.

The USSR is supposed to be a 'socialist state of workers and peasants' as its constitution says. 'All power in the USSR', says that document, 'is vested in the working people'.

Alexander Ginsburg

Anatoly Shcharansky

In reality, all power is in the hands of a highly privileged bureaucracy. Working people are deprived not only of power, but of elementary democratic rights.

rich

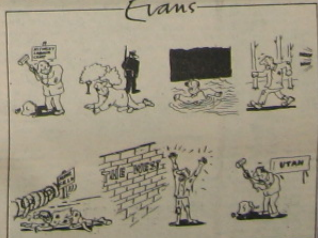
The fact is that Brezhnev and his fellow bosses are rich men. The gap between them and the ordinary worker is at least as great as that between rulers and workers in the west.

In between is a whole pyramid of privilege and inequality. The dictatorship exists to defend it.

That's why the struggle of Soviet workers is so important. The western press cannot take up *their* case because it would embarrass them when they attack strikers and 'dole bludgers' over here.

Socialists support the intellectuals, but we know that the workers' struggle is the real key.

Because when Russian workers have won the freedom to organise, they will be on the road to changing society in their own interest and building socialism.



Leftist prisoners forced to stand all day with their hands up and faces against the wall after the right overran part of Beirut in 1976.

Lebanon war: No end in sight

DESPITE the intervention of the Syrians, and the withdrawal of the Israeli invaders, the civil war in Lebanon doesn't look like it's about to end.

By Fadi Yammine

When the Israelis left southern Lebanon, the basic conflict between the right wing minority that has historically dominated the country, and the left wing and Palestinian majority re-emerged.

withdrawal

Negotiations took place between the Lebanese government and the Palestinians to try to allow complete withdrawal of the Israeli army.

The negotiations attempted to establish the Palestinian armed presence in the south, together with that of the leftists and the Syrian forces.

Meanwhile, there has been fighting within the right wing itself. At Cheka and Batroon, gun battles have occurred between rightist factions following from the frictions created in the right wing by war profiteers.

In the words of one right winger – Cyril Boutros of the Organisation of Liberal Students:

"We are selling ourselves today, we are selling parties, we are selling our future. We have priced it. We either pawn it or sell it completely."

It's the job of Lebanese socialists to persuade these people away from chauvinism and the mafia mentality.

At the same time as the re-emergence of the right in Lebanon, there appears to be a concerted attack on the Arab left in the rest of the Arab world.

The attacks are based on two principles – that the left is atheist, and that the left is non-nationalist.

In a clearly rigged 'referendum', Egyptian president Sadat gave himself a 98 per cent vote in favour of clamping down on 'communists' – and any other critics.

Since then, there's been an attack on the simplest rules of democracy. The referendum allows fascist laws to disregard the rights of Egyptian workers, intellectuals and journalists, and other progressives.

One week after the referendum, Egyptian authorities announced that at least 150 people were being 'investigated'.

news

From Iraq, alarming news has been coming of an attack by the government on the Iraq Communist Party, and the execution of its members.

This has been done on the pretence that they have a political movement inside the Iraq army.

The Agony of Hiroshima

NEVER AGAIN!

THIRTY-three years ago, at 8.15 am on Sunday August 6, 1945, an American plane flew over Hiroshima and dropped the first atomic bomb.

It fell to an altitude of 2,000 feet, then exploded — unleashing a blinding flash, deadly radiation and heat of up to 7000 degrees Centigrade.

Within seconds, thousands were dead. Thousands more were to die in the next few days from their injuries. In all, the death toll was around 200,000 from that one explosion.

Three days later, America dropped another bomb on Nagasaki. Only 100,000 died this time.

Officially, the Americans claimed the bombs helped end the war quicker.

But Japan was already close to defeat. Fleet Admiral W.F. Halsey, Jr, chead of the Pacific fleet later admitted, *"The first atomic bomb was an unnecessary experiment".*

In fact, the real aim was to gain a favourable position for the US in the coming "Cold War" with Russia.

Now the major imperialist countries all have atomic bombs in their arsenals - each with between fifty and five thousand times the explosive power of the Hiroshima bomb.

So before Australia lets the rest of the world have uranium to build arsenals even further, let's consider the words of a survivor of Hiroshima who describes what it was like.

Fataba Kitayama, a 33 year old housewife, was a mile from the spot where the bomb was dropped.

"Someone shouted, 'Oh that's a parachute! A parachute is coming down! I responded by turning in the direction she pointed. Just at that moment, the sky I was facing flashed.

"I do not know how to describe that light. I wondered if a fire had been set in my eyes. It was something like an ominous purple-like color of sparks caused by a street-car at night - only some billion times stronger.

"I don't remember which came first - the flash of light or the sound of an explosion that roared down to my belly. Anyhow, the next moment I was knocked down flat on the ground.

"Immediately things started falling down around my head and shoulders. I couldn't see anything, it seemed pitch dark. I thought the destined final moment had now come.

"Soon I noticed that the air smelled terrible. Thinking that the bomb that hit us might be yellow phosphorus incendiary bombs, I instinctively rubbed my nose and mouth hard with my tenugui (a Japanese handkerchief) that was tucked at my belt.

Left: A fading life. ... an aged bomb victim who lingered on for 25 years after the explosion. The glitter of tears from suffering.

Below: A young boy burned to death in the Nagasaki blast.

strange

"I felt something strange with my face. Then I was shocked by the feeling that the skin of my face had come off on the tenugui.

"Ah, then, the hands and arms too. Starting from the elbow to the fingertips, all the skin of my right hand came off and hung down grotesquely. The skin of my left hand, all five fingers, also came off.

"What happened to the sky that had been such a clear blue one only a moment ago? It was now dark, like dusk. Everything was vague and hazy, as if mist covered up my eyes."

In a panic, she ran to a nearby bridge.

pray

"What we saw under the bridge was shocking. Hundreds of people were squirming in the stream. I couldn't tell if they were men or women. They looked all alike. Their faces were swollen and gray, their hair was standing up.

"A mother, stained heavily with blood from her face to shoulder, was crying, 'My boy, my dear! and frantically tried to run into a house that was aflame.

"She was restrained firmly by a man, but she still cried like mad, Let me go. Let me go. My boy is burning to death! She looked like a demon in a fury. It was a heart-rending scene indeed".

"When crossing the Kojin Bridge, which I did not then recognise, I found all its parapets of solid ferro-concrete had gone. The bridge looked terribly unsafe. Under the bridge were floating, like dead dogs or cats, many corpses, barely covered by tattered clothes.

"In the shallow water near the banks, a woman was lying face upward, her breasts torn away and blood spurting. A horrifying scene.

"How in the world could such a cruel thing happen. I wondered if the Hell that my grandmother had told me so much about in my childhood had fallen upon the earth.

somewhere

"My burns started paining me. It was a kind of pain different from any ordinary burn which might be unbearable. Mine was a dull pain that was coming from somewhere far apart from my body.

"A yellow secretion oozed from my hands. I imagined that my face also must be in this dreadful shape."

"By my side many junior high school students, both boys and girls who were members of the volunteer corps, were squirming in agony.

"They were crying, insanely, 'Mother! Mother!' They were so severely burned and blood stained that one could scarcely dare to look at them. But once I looked at this cruel sight, a rage came up—why? Why these children?

"I didn't know at whom I should direct this rage. I could do nothing for them but watch them die one by one, seeking their mothers in vain.

"Steadily, my face became stiffer. I put my hands carefully on my cheeks and felt my face. It seemed to have swollen to twice its size. Now I could see less and less. Alas, I would not be able to see at all soon. After all the effort, was I destined to die?

"I kept walking and, by following the hill footpath, reached Hesaka village. I saw on the street many victims being carried away by stretcher. Carts and trucks heavily loaded with corpses and wounded who looked like beasts, came and passed me.

"On both sides of the street, many people were wandering around like sleep walkers.

"My eyesight came back rather soon and in some 20 days I was able to see the faces of my children vaguely. But the burns on my face and hands did not heal up accordingly.

"The summer and autumn came, but I were still pulpy, like tomato. In early I could merely see, and only in December I manage to walk.

"After January I could finally remove bandages, only to find my face as well as my hands never be the same.

"The skin of my face had shrunk to half a palm-sized and was from the side of the bridge across my mouth.

"Across my left eye there is a keloid 10 meters long, and the little finger of my left hand was at the base.

"Five years passed. I am now all the shame of my ugly, only for the sake of children."

"Under the were floa like dead or cats, many corp

waste

And in Sydney, the suburb of Hunter's Hill is actually built on old radioactive waste material. Three people have already died from cancer or leukemia almost certainly cause by the radiation.

Above left: Utter devastation as far as the eye can see — the scene after the Hiroshima bomb. The building in the foreground was directly underneath the explosion. It received only perpendicular rays of force, so remained relatively intact.

Above right: Three hours after the explosion, a mile and a half from the centre of the blast. "They looked as though their souls had left their bodies," said Yoshito Matsushige, who took this photo. "When I looked into the viewfinder, the figures I wanted to photograph were blurred and faint because of my tears."

How do you safeguard against this?

AMAZINGLY, the people who want to develop nuclear power still haven't worked out what they're going to do with the waste.

From time to time, they say they *think* they've got a solution. But let's take a look at some of their other solutions in the past - all of which they thought were safe at the time.

First, they used to just dump the waste. Now, sixty years later, we find that Barrenjoey Technical School in Victoria is built on an old radioactive waste dump.

Waste from the Rum Jungle uranium mine, in the Northern Territory, used to be dumped in a dam. Now it's known, or leaked, all over the surrounding countryside.

After 1949, Britain and America tried dumping their highly radio-active wastes in the Atlantic Ocean.

Tens of thousands of drums of waste were dumped - all dangerous for hundreds of thousands of years. *They've already started leaking!*

And recently another 45,000 drums were discovered in the bay of San Francisco. Twenty-five per cent were leaking!

After that, they tried burying the waste in underground tanks. At Hanford, USA, the largest waste storage in the world, there have already been sixteen leaks. 350,000 gallons of waste have escaped.

Escaped waste have been detected one-sixth of a mile away after only ten years - wastes that remain deadly for 750,000 years!

Now we await their next solution. Burial in stable rock and salt formations thousands of feet underground!

Very nice. But how do you bury whole supercooled, radio-active power stations?

Nobody knows.

And now they're discovering that even the "safe" levels of radiation that uranium miners and nuclear power stations workers have been getting, are not so safe after all.

We can't afford to trust the boxes' "safeguards". They're just scraps of paper.

There's only one sure safeguard against another Hiroshima, against nuclear disasters, against nuclear waste.

And that's to keep uranium in the ground.

... and this?

THE horror of another Hiroshima isn't the only danger of uranium. Nuclear reactors are proliferating around the world - and with them, the risk of incidents like these.

Brown's Ferry, USA — An electrician was checking the insulation under the control room with a candle. He accidentally touched it and the building was soon seven hours before burned down. Power failures being controlled. It disposed most of the power station, and officials admitted it was "close back" that the incident could have kill down and kill tens of thousands of people.

Chalk River, Canada — on 12 December 1972, the nuclear reactor was destroyed. A million gallons of radioactive water flooded the structure. Radioactivity was spread into a hatchbowns because of a fault in a testing stick. Workers and plane have been found to have radio-active bottle, caps and vent holes. Radioactive iodine was released.

Idaho Falls, USA — In January 1961, a three man crew was killed by a power excursion during a routine assembly. They were at health transmission with a reflector around the core. Radioactive iodine released. Nobody knows.

Cumbrian Coast, Britain — Wind scale No. 1 pile. The uranium burned for several days before being brought under control. Radioactive iodine released. Nobody knows.

Pickle Canyon, USA — Last year, it was discovered that the nuclear reactor was only 3 miles from the San Andreas fault. The US Geological Survey believes that an earthquake might break up the plate which could in fact launch one of the nuclear reactors into the air.

Connecticut, USA — In January this year, two explosions blew off a chimney at the Haddam Neck nuclear plant. Radioactive gas escaped. Two workers were injured, and authorities expected to release radioactivity was expected into a hatchbowns because of a fault in a testing stick. Workers and plane have been found to have radio-active bottle, caps and vent holes. Radioactive iodine was released.

New York State, USA — At the NFS plant in West Valley, 300 workers were injured, and authorities expected to release radio-active gas.

Dear Battlers,

DON'T RELY ON THE UNION

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If thats the sort of work you want to do–

JOIN US!

Dear Battler

Your leaflet "Support the Sanyo Workers" was a timely and important one. However, your advice to contact the Electrical Trades Union shows a misplaced trust in the bloody union bureaucrats!

I went to the ETU six days after the beginning of the strike, offering money and asking for a leaflet or more information.

fund

Oh – they – said – we don't have a strike fund or anything like that. But we'll send it on (yeah?) . . . no, we haven't got leaflets or anything.

Wha-a-a-t ??!? Six days after the strike commences – and no sign of organisation, defence, solidarity, caring! Nothing! It was like someone had turned over in bed.

Five people were wandering around the office, obviously working there, but doing what, I ask? *Five people* and they didn't have a single sentence on paper they could hand me, or even seem to know what a strike fund was.

Geez, no wonder the country's going to rack and ruin.

Wendy D.
Melbourne

How do you fight a racist ?

Sanyo workers enter the plant en masse to work in during the recent dispute. Did the union do enough to support them, asks a reader.

Dear Battlers,

During my employment at a weaving factory, I both witnessed and experienced the most blatant forms of racism and sexism.

I worked in the finishing room on a cut-and-fold machine, and packed woven and printed labels into boxes.

I was working with a group of migrant women who could barely speak English, and two middle-aged Australian women. The foreman frequently abused and swore at the migrant women for low production and supposed inefficiency

abuse

There was one particular Greek woman named Maria, who was frequently subjected to personal abuse and humiliation. So much so, that on more than one occasion she broke down and cried.

The foreman also took advantage of his position by treating all the women in an extremely sexist manner.

He walked [illegible] smoking cigarettes, wh[ile] the women were [not] permitted this privi[lege]. They had to resort [to] sneakily smoking cigarettes [in] the toilets.

He constantly boo[sted] his male ego by flirting w[ith] the Australian women (m[ind you] note – not the migr[ant] women) and often pinch[ing] me on my bum!

The migrant wome[n's] piece-work rate suffe[red] because of the forema[n's] racist attitudes.

He had the power [to] distribute work to [be] finished and packed, and whenever possible gave the Australian women printed labels because they were higher piece-work earners.

I believe the women in my work-place are subjected to the whims of a sexist racist boss. Considering how ineffective both the union representative is and the union itself, what would you suggest the women do to overcome their oppression?

Avid reader,

L.M.
Melbourne

School leavers in a bind

Dear Battlers,

It is impossible to understand the effect the Fraser Government's policies are having on school leavers, until you actually meet them in their own environment, as I have done in the past weeks.

Mick and Willie are two seventeen-year-olds who left school at the end of last year. They have not had permanent employment since.

They have been travelling from Sunshine to Fern Tree Gully to get work (at least thirty miles, across town). They have been working for ten hours a day for $20 to try and avoid the stigma of being called a "dole bludger".

Mick has been trying to get an apprenticeship as an electrician, but has been completely wiped off by private industry.

He said to me, *"The bastards only want qualified people. But if they won't teach you, how can you become qualified?*

apprentice

"I have now signed up with the RAAF as an apprentice. They are the only people would would take me on."

This means that Mick has to join the Air Force for si[x] years, with no way *out if he* decides he isn't suited to it.

His mate Willie is more cautious. He said, *"I'll wait and see how Mick gets on before I commit myself."*

Meanwhile he continues to work as virtual slave labour with no hope of job security.

Barry Cousla[nd]
Melbour[ne]

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

PARTY SCHOOL

TWENTY members and friends of the I.S. Brisbane Branch came to our successful Party School held over the weekend before last.

We had sessions on building the revolutionary party, work in the trade unions and the history of the I.S., both in Australia and internationally.

On Saturday afternoon, we discussed the role of the revolutionary newspaper and had a very successful writing workshop, where three people were interviewed and the interviews written up.

One of the stories is being polished up for a future issue of The Battler.

International Socialists

Talking about workers' struggles is easy. But how does an I.S. branch go about getting involved – especially right now, when there are no mass strikes going on? Some Melbourne members had an interesting experience recently.

As part of our growing focus on women workers, we set out to sell at a local factory where many women worked. We knew of the people employed there. When we turned up, we discovered they were on strike.

We got in touch with our friend and began to work on a story for the Battler about dispute. then when they returned to work, we truned up to sell. First we handed out a leaflet, announcing we were coming to sell. The next day we sold 20 copies of the Battler.

Now the dispute is continuing, our members and our paper are well known. All part of the day to day work of building the Battler as a workers' paper.

And advertising leaflets have worked well in Sydney, too. For the last issue, with the article on nurses, Sydney members distributed a special promotional handout at Hospitals. The next day nurses came up to us and asked for the paper, we sold dozens.

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031	376 9[illegible]
24 hour answering and message machine	376 27[illegible]
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	376-2783
MELBOURNE GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	387 6361
SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown 2042	51-36[illegible]
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49 7[illegible]
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	49 640[illegible]
BRISBANE PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067	358 36[illegible]
IPSWICH, QLD.	281 611[illegible]

Fighting Fund

Our fighting fund raised $95·78 last issue. Our thanks to:

Melbourne BBQ	4.00
South Branch	8.73
Sydney	1.09
Canberra	1.20
J.S.	18.00
Adelaide	0.80
R.M.	24.00
J.G	0.50
Sydney	1.69
North Branch	3.00
Canberra	0.20
R.M.	13.00
Film	2.00
Anon	1.00
Brisbane	3.57
B.B.	13.00
TOTAL	95.78

Learn by doing

THAT was the theme of our meeting in Melbourne South branch. Battler staff members were invited along – but not as speakers. Instead they got us writing for the Battler.

We all put together short items based on our own experience. They took the form of letters to the editor, news stories – and even a review. Then we edited them on the spot.

We were shown how to improve our style and organise our ideas. The rest of us also pitched in, making criticisms and suggestions for each other's articles.

We all learned a lot, and more of us will feel capable of writing for the Battler in future.

What's On

CANBERRA MON JUL 31
Branch meeting, Ainslie. Discussion on China. Ring 49 6405 for details. 8 pm.

CANBERRA MON AUG 7
Meeting to defend right to abortion and Medibank. ANU Union Board Room 8pm. Ring 49 6405 for details.

CANBERRA MON AUG 15
Rally against Fraser's Budget — students, unionists, women, blacks. 12.30 pm.

MELBOURNE TUE JUL 25
South branch meeting at 3 Hatter St, Oakleigh 7.30 pm.

MELBOURNE THU JUL 27
I.S. Women's caucus meeting 7.30 pm, 6/17A Albion St, Rippon Lea.

MELBOURNE SAT JUL 29
Queen Victoria Hospital Now Committee is holding a demonstration against cut in hospital spending. Clayton Shopping Centre, Clayton Rd, Clayton, 10.00 am.

MELBOURNE SUN JUL 30
Wine and Cheese tasting afternoon being held by South branch. Starts 2.30 pm, 2A Rugby Rd, Oakleigh.

SYDNEY SAT JUL 30
I.S. Branch meeting. Educational: on the role of the Revolutionary [illegible] Friends of the I.S. we[lcome] 7.30 p.m. 111 Enmore [Rd.,] Enmore.

SYDNEY SAT AUG [illegible]
Hiroshima Day — [illegible] uranium demonstration. Assemble at Circular Quay 10.30 A.M. March to Town hall square via Pancontinental mining offices.

SYDNEY SU[N] [illegible]
I.S. Branch Meeting. Business Meeting. Friends of I.S. w[elcome] 7.30 P.M. 111 Enmore [Rd.,] Enmore.

SYDNEY AUG [illegible]
"Homosexuals at wo[rk] The fourth [illegible] homosexual [illegible] Paddington Town Centre.

Tom Robinson at the Anti-Nazi Carnival which drew 80,000 people.

TOM ROBINSON

Standing up for his rights

By Tess Lee Ack

THE new album from the Tom Robinson Band, "Power in the Darkness" has a clenched fist on the cover. It is an appropriate symbol.

TRB is one of the many New Wave bands around at the moment. Their music is loud, catchy and forceful. In Tom Robinson's case, it is also angry and political.

Tom Robinson, to a greater extent than many other New Wave bands, sees his music as a means of communication, of breaking down barriers (mainly racial and sexual) between people and uniting them against a common enemy.

"All of us, you, me, rock 'n rollers, punks, longhairs, dope smokers, squatters, students, unmarried mothers, prisoners, gays, the jobless, immigrants, gypsies . . . to stand aside is to take sides.

"If the music can ease even a tiny fraction of the prejudice and intolerance in this world, then it's worth trying.

"I don't call that unnecessary overtones of violence. I call it standing up for your rights."

Tom Robinson has been standing up for his rights for quite some time.

He has been involved in the gay movement for several years. He is also a prominent figure in Rock Against Racism, which along with the Anti-Nazi League is fighting racism and the National Front in Britain.

His band recently performed at an anti-Nazi Carnival in London which attracted 80,000 young people who chanted *"We are black, we are white, we are dynamite"*.

crucial

This activity is crucial for Robinson: *"Every person who comes along to an Anti-Nazi League meeting or turns up to a Rock Against Racism gig is putting a nail in the coffin of the National Front."*

Power in the Darkness is full of great songs which make you want to do more than get up and dance. (although they're good for that too).

"Long Hot Summer" for example is a gay street fighting song, written in reaction to the bashings and discrimination that still go on in Britain despite homosexuality being legal for adults.

directed

"Up Against the Wall" is directed at the politicians in Whitehall. Robinson doesn't think much of them.

For those of us continually struggling with clapped out cars that we can't afford to get fixed, there's "Grey Cortina".

There are others too, particularly "Better Decide Which Side You're On", "Power in the Darkness" (my personal favourite), and the devastating "Winter of '79", in which Robinson looks forward/back in a frightening vision of England's future:

"It was us poor bastards
Took the chop
When the tubes gone up
And the buses stopped
The top people still come
out on top
The Government never
resigned . . .
The Carib club got petrol
bombed
The National Front was
gettin' awful strong
They done in Dave and
Dagenham Ron
In the winter of '79
When all the gay geezers
were put inside
And coloured kids were
getting crucified
A few fought back and a
few folks died
Yes a few of us fought
and a few of us died
In the Winter of '79."

Buy it.

"To stand aside is to take sides..."

PUTTING WOMEN IN THE KNOW

"PINK PAGES: A Directory of Women's Rights in Australia", by Barbara Bishop and Kerry Petersen.

Probably the best thing about this directory is that it doesn't concentrate only on "women's issues."

It realises that women are part of all aspects of life and so it covers their rights in all areas. In fact, many parts of this book would be just as useful to men as to women.

It's a very easy book to use because as well as a list of contents it also has a list of the sections that would be useful to women in particular situations.

At the end of each chapter there is a list of other books and pamphlets that contain useful information and the final section of the book is a list of addresses for advice and help and emergency accommodation.

destruction

Unfortunately the continuing destruction of Medibank has meant that at least one section of the book is already out of date. The section on health care applies to a Medibank scheme that hasn't existed since 1st July.

Most of the directory concentrates on women's rights in the law, because of the powerful influence of the legal system over our lives. It's very useful to have these written down, because of the mystification that goes on about the law.

Whether it's signing a hire purchase contract for repayments you can't afford, or not being told you can get compo for getting hurt at work, there are a vast number of areas where it's profitable to keep women ignorant of their rights.

One of the main things wrong with the approach that Bishop and Petersen have taken is that they seem to place too much importance on getting this information to women.

society

While they *"believe that women are discriminated against in almost every aspect of Australian society,"* they appear to think that this discrimination arises *"most essentially, from the lack of knowledge many women have of their rights."*

Making the knowledge available, while helpful, is not going to solve the problem. To do that, we're going to have to change the whole system that depends on lack of rights and lack of knowledge.

And it's not just a question of ignorance on the part of women like the authors imply. There's a deliberate "conspiracy of silence" about what legal rights are available, except for those with the money to get lawyers' opinions.

Books like the "Pink Pages" are useful because they help break down some of that silence.

by Diane Fieldes

FROM THE SHELF

Bobbin Up

SET in the inner suburban areas of Sydney during the 1950s, "Bobbin Up" is a novel which winds through the warp and weft of the material and personal lives of a group of textile workers.

Employed at the Jumbuck Textile Mills, they are representative of workers who form part of the fabric of the Australian working class.

I worked for twenty-eight years in a textile mill, so naturally I relate very strongly to these workers in their struggles. Not all the characters are shown as loveable, but they all loom large as real people.

Dorothy Hewett, the author, describes the women who work in the mill, on their feet for eight or more hours a day, amidst the grease, fluff and deafening noise of hundreds of machines.

race

Married women, single women, widows, mothers or mothers-to-be, all race to beat the clock in an effort to make their meagre "bonus" above the award rate.

As always the bosses set these rates so low that the speed of their body movements appears to make them appendages to the machines.

The mill lacks any decent amenities, such as hot water, air conditioning or proper first aid facilities. The women risk a variety of industrial accidents or diseases such as miscarriages, varicose veins, asthma, backache, industrial deafness or scalping.

When the Textile Workers Union announces an expected slump in the industry and explains the arrangements they have made with the bosses for proposed lay-offs, the Jumbuck workers become personally involved in the crisis.

Some of the married women and older hands receive retrenchment notices. Nell Mooney, wife, mother, delegate in the Textile Workers Union and member of the Communist Party, has to decided how to organise the rank and file to fight back.

For Nell, this decision is a test of her own strength. She proposes to the workers that they refuse the retrenchment notices and sit-in on strike.

hostility

She has to battle against varying degrees of hostility before she gains the confidence of her fellow workers. Eventually with the aid of other militants she leads a deputation to the boss.

He, of course, calls in the union organiser and together they threaten the ringleaders with victimisation should they disobey their directive.

Despite this threat, the women do sit-in even though they realise the hardship and inconvenience it will cause in their private lives.

older

In the final lines of the book Lil, one of the older hands, advises the pregnant Beth to "Rest your legs love. It's likely to be a long wait."

When Dorothy Hewett was employed in the industry herself she must have made a close study of workers' struggles to defend and raise their living standards. The solution she suggests is one of the ways of achieving the power to control these standards.

by Verna Matcott

[BA]TTLER 5 April 1975

BUILDERS OUT TO CUT APPRENTICE PAY

THE NSW Master Builders Association is applying to the Arbitration Commission to cut apprentice wages by amounts of $25.54 to $49.39.

The MBA argues that this would enable them to employ more apprentices to train in the industry.

But the MBA's own policies are the reason that not enough apprentices are being trained. By encouraging sub-contracting and body-hire, the MBA has allowed a whole series of bodgie tin-pot capitalists to spring up.

Not one of the parasites bothers to train any skilled tradespeople at all. The main contractors are just bad, as they have fostered and encouraged the system.

Apprentice wages are already shockingly low, well below the adult rate. On most of the sites the boss does not bother training them properly.

Frequently apprentices have to work by themselves, unsupervised by a tradesman, or are used as cheap labour by the boss.

On TV this week apprentice carpenters asked the MBA representative if he would take a wage cut too. Of course he said *"That's not the question."*

The BWIU has mounted a campaign against the wage cuts.

Workers on the Civil & Civic Campbelltown job went on strike. Stoppages have been held on several jobs.

It remains to be seen if this is enough, or how far the BWIU will be prepared to fight it.

As usual the BLF officials have done nothing. If apprentices get this wage cut, it could easily flow on to BLs in the form of junior rates or reduction in allowances.

BLF marches on court

BUILDING workers defeated a move by the Master Builders Association to impose a $5 wage cut through the Arbitration court on Friday 14 July.

Over 1500 building workers marched through the streets of Melbourne to the Arbitration court. The workers rallied outside the court and then invaded the court packing it out.

The MBA advocate was thrown into a flurry. The court rejected the bosses' application for a $5 wage cut.

It's a shame this type of action did not occur in other states well.

In South Australia, the BLF officials actually told members not to take part in stoppages organised by the BWIU.

This time the MBA lost. But there's no doubt they'll try again – they've already knocked out the travelling allowance and got away with it.

What's more, they'll succeed unless all building unions unite to stop them.

Above: Building workers march down Little Bourke St. in Melboune and (below) enter the Arbitration Court.

QANTAS SHEETIES BEATEN BY SCABS

QANTAS sheet metal workers have just [...] back to work after a three week [...]

Unfortunately, they go back empty-handed [...] embittered about the defeat of their struggle.

It was an important strike, involving a direct attack on indexation. And the strikers were members of one of the most powerful unions in the country.

Qantas flew aircraft in need of maintenance work, but there was no mention of the strike or its consequences in the media. Eventually the workers were forced back.

During the strike [...] did their normal job [...] was possible for [...] foremen and the [...] (who are not allowed [...] strike) to keep enough [...] craft operational [...] to ride out the strike.

"Association member automatically [...] improvements [...] award without having to fight for it, and [...] won't stick their necks out an inch to support us", said an angry sheetie.

The dispute at Qantas goes back a long way, to [...] pay increases of a few years ago, and to the disruption [...] parity levels caused by indexation.

Three issues were involved in the recent strike: [...] parity position which would mean an $8.20 rise; a [...] meal break for day workers which would mean a 37½ hour week; and the same overtime payments [...] workers as to shift workers.

This wasn't because of lack of militancy.

The strike had gone ahead despite the Industrial Commission's threat to stop hearing a 2½ year long work evaluation case if they went out.

A militant worker, talking to the Battler, gave two reasons for the failure of the strike.

Firstly, there was lack of support from the AMWSU. *"All they do is play one section of the membership off against the others. They talk big, but they won't take on Fraser."*

Secondly there was lack of co-operation from the Association of Licenced Aircraft Maintenance Engineers.

The Association members work alongside the Qantas sheeties. They check the work that needs doing and the sheeties do it.

As far as the sheeties [...]

Qantas are concerned [...] indexation is dead, [...] under the rubble of [...] Fraser promises, and [...] the Arbitration Commission.

Overtime bans are [...] on, so the backlog from [...] strike will take some time [...] clear.

So we suspended the bosses!

AT Smorgon's Dinmore meatworks in Queensland, the bosses got some of their own medicine last week.

We suspended them for a day, after they tried to force extra work on the slicers.

The company wanted the slicers to take a gland out of a section of the fat used in some of their meat products.

In the processing, the gland turned black – not a very desirable result.

At a lunchtime meeting, the boners and slicers decided to put the issue in dispute.

Removing the gland was not incidental to the slicers' task and they were not going to do it until the matter was resolved.

The next day, one of the foremen stood over a slicer to force him to remove the gland. The slicer refused and asked to see the delegate.

The foreman returned with the boss of the boning room. The slicer again asked to see the delegate, and the boss suspended him.

Things didn't take long after that.

At the end of the first run, the boners and slicers walked out. We weren't halfway to the dining room before the foreman rushed up.

Apparently *[...] "[...] right now". The slicer would be re-instated. The workers wouldn't have to cut the gland [...] we could go back to work.*

The meeting, however, decided differently. Of course the slicer would have to be re-instated.

But the company's behaviour in standing over people, refusing to get the delegate, and pushing until they got a reaction and then expecting us to go back to work, couldn't be tolerated.

So we suspended the company for the rest of the day and walked off!

the WORK TOLL

SHIFTWORK is a destroyer of mind and body. It upsets the normal body functions and strains personal relationships.

But for many women work on late shift is the only option they have because of inadequate childcare. This allows their husbands to look after the children while they work.

A survey in 1974 found that husbands of one in four working mothers looked after the children while the mothers were at work, compared to only one in six who relied on child-minding centres and relatives.

After making tea for the children and her husband, seeing that the children are in bed, the working mother leaves for her job in the late evening.

She returns in the early morning. The husband is off to work. If she is lucky the children might be old enough to go to school.

Otherwise, she has to meet the needs of the children, do the washing and it's anyone's guess when she'll get a break to sleep.

On late shifts you don't have access to company medical staff or to union officials who work 'normal' day-time hours. It's no surprise that nervous disorders and ulcers are greatest amongst late-shift workers.

•

THE Newspapers scream about strikes causing industrial anarchy and stopping "economic recovery" but you rarely hear of the daily trauma of industrial accidents and deaths.

The Victorian Labour Shadow Health Minister, Tom Roper, claimed this month that days lost due to industrial accidents and sickness cost the community five times as much as days lost due to industrial stoppages."

He said the time off from work because of industrial illness or accidents amounted to 2.5 million days. This compared with 586,000 strike days in 1977.

In our society the raw dollars and cents of production count more than the health and well being of workers.

•

The Battler Falling Brick Award for Safety this week is awarded to a little band of conspirators in the Federal Immigration Department who seem intent on re-enacting in Victoria the Spanish campsite gas disaster which occurred a few weeks ago.

The department is planning to reopen the Wiltona Migrant Hostel in Melbourne to house Vietnamese refugees.

This hostel is surrounded by oil refineries and storage tanks. Not 200 metres from the hostel are tanks containing the very dangerous liquid gas, propylene.

This is the same gas which exploded killing 200 holiday makers in Spain when a tanker, trying to evade a toll gate, took the coast road and careered into the campsite.

Although we have a truck load of the Battler's special asbestos safety bricks for the Minister, Michael MacKellar, for a holiday shack for himself and the Fraser cabinet at Wiltona, we lament that they are unlikely to protect them.

The fire fire in the Spanish gas disaster reached 2000 degrees Celsius and resembled another Hiroshima.

by Steve Morgan

Utah miners back

AFTER seven weeks out, Utah mine workers [...] Central Queensland returned to work on Monday [...] allow negotiations with the company.

They have demanded a final answer [...] Wednesday. If the answer is unsatisfactory they [...] tend going back out again.

The workers at the Goonyella, Saraji, Blackwater and Peak Downs mines voted 1145-95 to accept the Combined Mining Unions recommendation to go back.

There was much reluctance to return, and [...] Hawke will have to do some fancy footwork if [...] to keep them back at work.

The strike, for a no-strings-attached $50 rise [...] an end to company proposals for continuous shift [...] has cut off Utah's coal exports.

Utah will be able to get some coal moving out [...] the country as a result of the return to work, [...] stockpiles in Central Queensland.

But it will take several days before they [...] resume mining, because of water in open-cut pits, [...] safety checks of equipment and roads.

NURSES FIGHT SOARING RENT

QUEENSLAND nurses are confident that the proposed trebling of their rent and meal charges in public hospitals can be stopped.

Earlier this month we staged a successful protest at the preliminary industrial court hearing.

Following a union meeting, 40 nurses marched down the footpath in pouring rain to the court.

There we held a picket before and after the hearing. And while the hearing was on, the commissioners were left impressed by the fair dinkumness of the nurses packing out their court.

The Queensland Health Department has proposed 200% increases in our living costs. Rent for nurses living in could spiral from $8.53 to $25 per week. Meals for living out staff could rise from 31 c to $1 per meal.

At the court hearing we won inspections of nurses quarters throughout the state. The Health Department had argued that this wasn't necessary.

homes

But as the Royal Nurses Federation industrial organiser pointed out: *"It was hard to find anything less homelike than a nurses home."*

The inspections of nurses homes is expected to drag on until November. While this will save our pay packets, we'll be trying to keep the issue alive at work.

Public meetings at hospitals with invited politicians are being planned. And we intend to call a rally on the morning of the next court hearing.

Also we want more than lukewarm support for our activity from the RANF. A reform orientated group will be running a couple of candidates at the coming election ballot.

We'll be stressing the need to stop nursing superintendents from running the union. And we want to help build rank and file organization at work.

by a Brisbane nurse

10,000 RAILWAY JOBS ON THE LINE

THE Public Transport Commission has hush-hush plans to modernise its railways at the cost of at least 10,000 jobs.

Hundreds of skilled jobs will be downgraded to process-type work, and conditions generally will be threatened.

by Janet Vaux

Rank and file members of the ARU have been piecing together the details, in order to fight the attacks on jobs and conditions.

One worker said: *"The plans have been produced piecemeal so that the full implications are not understood. They can only be defeated by a concerted push across the board."*

Transport minister, Peter Cox, tried to deny that the plans will be a full-scale attack on jobs, when he said *"There will be no redundancies while I am minister."*

But it is known that the PTC had written to the Labour Council setting out the terms for lay-offs.

same

The ARU workers point out, *"Labor may have made some short term improvements in public transport. But in the long term they have the same plans as the Liberals.*

"They're just more subtle and try to sell them by appearing to consult with the workers.

"The plans mean whole sections will be virtually wiped out. The signalmen who are already going, the guards, station and freight staff, will all be drastically affected.

"In the workshops, half the jobs will go. The 'unit exchange' system, where whole engines can be taken out, will make it easier for private enterprises to take over some of the work.

"The work will be deskilled and dispersed, which means the break-up of our present industrial power base and organisation."

The ARU workers have put out a broadsheet, with the support of the Combined Transport Committee, which outlines some of the major dangers in the PTC plans which are known so far.

elimination

Some of the cut-backs, like the planned elimination of guards, are just economising on safety precautions.

The workers are not opposed to change and technological development.

As the Broadsheet says, *"New technologies are certainly needed but they should not be used to reduce the number of jobs, job opportunities and skills of workers in the PTC."*

A worker commented: *"Unless we've got control, the changes won't be in our interest."*

Meanwhile the big freight companies are subsidised by the PTC. There has been a decline, in real terms, in freight rates over the recent period.

The Combined Transport Stewards Committee succeeded in forcing the PTC to set up the Workshop Modernisation Review Committee which includes workers and is a source of information about the plans.

But the seminar proposed by the Stewards Committee was sabotaged by the Trades and Labour Council. And John McBean, a Labour Council organiser, prevented militants from questioning Cox after he'd made a speech there.

planned

Now a Stewards' Independent Conference is being planned for 21st August. The Labour Council won't be given a chance to interfere.

It is hoped to make more links across the industry, getting more understanding of the PTC plans, and to organise a fight back against the attacks.

Cartoon from the ARU workers' broadsheet.

Audi workers slosh it out

A.W.U. members on the new I.C.I. Propathene site at Botany have been on strike for over a week over wet weather.

The blue started when the contractors, Audi Constructions, sent workers home with only two hours pay on wet days. This is because the AWU award does not have any provision for wet time in it.

By contrast BLF members doing the same type of work on other sites, and the BLF drillers and BWIU carpenters on the same site, can go home at 11am and get paid for the whole day.

The Audi workers are showing the way in improving the AWU conditions.

For too long AWU members have been behind construction workers in other awards. AWU members on the Eastern Suburbs Railway site broke through on wet weather and so can the Audi workers.

Mixed bag at VSTA AGM

THE Victorian Secondary Teachers Association annual general meeting this year had a few gains and a few losses for the left.

An agreement between the Central Committee and the Education Department over the controversial inspection/promotion issue was brought to the meeting for ratification.

This was pure chance; it happened to come along at the right time. And since the Committee was censured earlier this year for calling off action on the issue, they probably thought it would be good PR to take it to the membership.

The agreement has a number of important concessions for the VSTA, but militants vigorously opposed it because it still allows for the option of classroom inspection. There is no real guarantee that teachers who refuse that option won't be discriminated against.

However, after a long debate, the membership accepted the agreement.

A move to censure the Committee for taking a salary claim to the discredited Teachers' Tribunal (in contravention of last year's AGM vote) was very narrowly defeated.

But the experience may make the Committee a little more wary of such flagrant disregard for the members' wishes.

The VSTA will be supporting Labor at the next State election. Previously we've only supported them in the Federal elections, so it's a good step.

The motion allows for this policy to be changed if there is any "drastic improvement in the performance of the present government". Fat chance.

A number of pious resolutions about youth unemployment, school/work transition, multicultural education, curriculum and funding were passed, with very little debate.

It remains to be seen whether anything will actually come out of them.

All in all, it was a much less dramatic AGM this year than in the past few years. Few of the policies were startling or innovative.

But the amount of opposition to the conservatism of the Central Committee augurs well for the coming year.

By Tess Lee Ack, VSTA

200 march against cuts

TEACHERS and parents marched through South Melbourne on July 20, to show our anger about the bleeding of state schools and Fraser's lavish spending on top private colleges.

About two hundred of us gathered at Eastern Road Primary School to hear Rob Bluer of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Associations blast Federal Government policy.

Bluer concentrated his fire on "the monster Fraser and his dessicated creature, Senator Carrick."

contrast

But he also pointed out that "the rot set in 1975, with the Hayden Budget."

Then we marched on Melbourne Grammar, to highlight the contrast between public and private schools.

The turn-out was great for a local action with little publicity. It has encouraged the three teacher unions and two parent groups to continue the fight. Another demo will soon be held in Geelong.

It seems that militant action brings results.

Soon after Eastern Road Primary was announced as the scene of the demo, the Education Department began making long-needed repairs to the school!

by Tom O'Lincoln, VSTA

Parents, teachers and children rally outside Melbourne Grammar

Defending our conditions at Moorleigh

IF you teach in a Victorian high school, life is a constant battle against the Education Department.

Last year, teachers at Moorleigh High School set up a conditions group. Out of 22 members of the VSTA, six of us signed our names. We resolved to only teach classes of no more than thirty students.

We also took a stand on emergency teachers, and limited the number of classes they would take for sick teachers.

At present there is no adequate emergency staffing, thanks to the Education Department.

Further, we put a limit on the number of classes taught by each teacher, so we had enough time for preparation and correction.

won

It might have been a small group, but through negotiations we won our conditions. When the school administration put on the pressure, we stuck together and supported each other.

The school administration had to back down and pretend they made a mistake when they tried to give extra classes to us.

In 1976 junior classes were between thirty and thirty-three students. Last year, no junior class was over thirty.

But this year we have no conditions group. The numbers are creeping back up again, and junior classes contain 31 kids.

Our conditions of work – and the quality of education we offer – depend on us keeping up our union action.

By Barbara Hall, VSTA

5 April 1975

ALL THE NEWS ON THE BLF ELECTIONS

DIRTY DEEDS RIFE IN BLF POLL

THE NSW BLF elections started last Monday and are now in full swing.

Black and Co. are trying every dirty trick in the book to win votes. One builders labourer said in the pub this week: "The BLF is the Australian branch of the Teamsters Union."

By David Shaw, BLF

Here are just a few examples of Black's dirty tricks.

Many workers have received how to vote slips, but no ballot papers. The reason is simple. Blacks hoons have been lifting ballot papers out of letter boxes.

BLF "officials" from Sydney and other states are knocking on blokes' doors asking for their ballot papers. Some officials are even making visits during the day to members' wives.

Fortunately this type of disgusting activity is only helping to build support for B.L.'s for Democratic Control. On the jobs the response against the standover tactics has been tremendous.

At Hornibrook's Parliament House site, BLF official Dick Keenan tried to stage a voting day on this job for the Black officials.

fell

But his little scheme fell on its face when workers on the job told him they would make up their own mind in the election, without Keenan's help.

At Concrete Constructions Westmead site, all the BLF heavies, including Black himself, fronted on the job on Wednesday morning to try to stage a voting day.

Steve Black never got to talk to many workers except the crane crews – and they threw him off the job!

The officials left "Rattie" Riley to conduct the voting day on the site. Rattie wanted workers to bring their ballot papers to the car park at 12.30.

Out of two hundred B.L.s on the site, not one turned up.

Rattie was seen leaving the job looking sorry for himself. Head down, tail between his legs, and no ballot papers. Bad luck mate!

The B.L.s on Westmead support Bob Petty, the Democratic Control candidate off their own site. Do you think they would give their ballot papers to the first man who changed over to Gallagher when intervention started?

At Citra Berrima Cement Works, the officials arrived on Tuesday and told the blokes they would be back on the job the next day to collect the ballot papers.

On Wednesday they arrived to get the papers. But no one came out to meet them in the carpark – a 150 mile drive for nothing.

At Westfield Hurstville, the BLF officials "voting day" fell through completely. Instead Noel Olive addressed a stop-work meeting on site.

At Hornibrooks Minto, Black's organisers went into the Riggers' shed and started ripping down Democratic Control posters.

Needless to say the workers were furious. These kinds of action just strengthen the Democratic Control team.

It seems we've got the gangster leadership of the B.L.F. on the run.

But it's no time to be complacent. Our campaign is now at its peak. We are holding job meetings every day and our organisers are visiting most major jobs at least twice a week.

The final week of the election will involve "mopping up" to make sure everyone possible votes.

By the next issue of the Battler we should know the results. It's going to be a fairly large vote, and we hope it will be a comfortable victory for BL's for Democratic Control.

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

GMH declare full scale wa[r]

GENERAL Motors Holden has declared all-out war on current log-og-claims campaign.

GMH has sacked workers and taken away annual leave entitlements worth over $400 in retaliation against unionists involved in action in the campaign.

By Alan Briggs, AMWSU,GMH.

GMH has been able to do this legally, due to a clause in the award which has remained unused for years. Under this clause, there has to be 24 hours notice before any industrial action is taken.

If anyone takes part in an "unauthorised" stoppage, the company can take away their accrued annual leave.

If they continue to strike after being telegrammed by the company, they can be sacked.

So far in South Australia, GMH has sacked three workers and "fined" fifty people $400 through the annual leave clause.

All unions have condemned these ... have had ... ranging from ... strikes at some ... walk-outs and ... others.

The "General" also used scab ... members ... air supply ... at GMH ...

FEDFA ... refused the ... the scabs ... So the power ... turned it ... walked off ... Holden then ... 1500 VBU members ... a day.

We have had an ... national overtime ... since Wednesday 19 ... have also been taking ... to disrupt the tooling ... the VB model Holden.

involved

All the unions are ... ved in these action[s] ... The "General" is ... ously not intending ... its offers on ... and pensions, and ... our industrial action ... going to change its ...

But years of ... average conditions ... tradesmen, and a ... cratic union for the ... ion workers, has ... the shop floor unity ... for an all-out campaign ... been undermined.

Nevertheless, the ... of striking workmen ... something that even ... most conservative ... member cannot accept ... award cannot be settled ... they have been re-...

Flashback to last year's strike on the Eastern Suburbs Railway. Left: Max Callaghan and fellow workers march on the Minister's office. Right: Tony Perera addresses a mass meeting.

NSW Labor arrests militants

THE NSW Public Transport Commission brought in the cops to arrest A.W.U. delegates Max Callaghan and Tony Perera, after they addressed a job meeting at Redfern.

The cops came to the site and arrested Max and Tony for using abusive language to a foreman.

By Phil Lee

Tony is alleged to have said to Max, *"Don't take that fucking piece of paper"*, when the foreman tried to give him a letter of dismissal.

As Tony said afterwards, *"What am I supposed to have done – abused a piece of paper?"* Imagine if every worker who ever swore on a job was arrested!

This intimidation of union delegates is part of a continuing campaign to attack workers' organisation on railway construction.

And it's not some private boss doing this, but a Labor government-run service. ALP Transport Minister Cox is directly involved in these attacks.

The latest dispute arose when Neil Hobson, a sub-foreman at the Flemington Carriage Sheds site, ordered a "nipper" to do general labouring. This is in breach of the award.

Max Callaghan, the job delegate, challenged management over this and was sacked for supposedly using abusive language.

In fact, this was just an excuse to get rid of him. Max had run foul of Hobson before, when he challenged Hobson's racist and standover tactics towards migrant workers.

The workers on the job went out in support of Max and to get a full-time nipper for the Flemington job.

After a week on strike they have forced the railways to back down and employ a nipper.

approached

Cox is considering re-employing Max. The rank and file negotiating committee has approached Cox. And they have started a petition among PTC employees, to reinstate Max Callaghan.

Storeme[n] sacked

THE Retail Traders' ... iation in NSW has dis... all the storemen and p... involved in a campaign ... bans and rolling ...

On Monday, the ... rejected a recommendation ... by the Arbitration Comm... ion for a month's cooling ... period.

The Retail Trad... Association reacted ... dismissing the 1,300 work... involved.

The dispute began with three week strike ... Flemings and Woolworth... over a paid meal break. Th... ended to allow negotiations with the Retail Traders' Association – which quickly proved futile.

Don't rely on the dailies for your industrial news...

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STRIKE 1... STRIKE 2 ...PLUMROSE OUT!

FOR workers at Plumrose Foods in Moorabbin (Vic), July was quite a striking month.

First the process workers went out on strike. Initially it was over a worker under suspicion of stealing.

But it quickly went beyond that. Pat Thompson, a process worker told us about it.

"Gail Cotton, an organiser from the Food Preservers Union, suggested we should put in for $5 extra while we were about it.

"And we said we wanted the bonus system completely squashed – we didn't want anything more to do with it."

Pat Thompson

The workers were out for eight days and won their $5 increase, three days lost pay, and an end to the bonus system in nine months time.

"We just dug our heels in and said we weren't going back to work until we got some satisfaction."

This is really quite an achievement. Bonus systems are one of the best weapons the bosses have for dividing workers.

making

Pat gave an example. *"A number of people are working on different parts of a line, making tinned sausages and vegetables. One group gets $27 bonus, one group $4 and one $17. Now that's not fair".*

This leads to suspicion and jealousy. *"It causes an awful lot of bitchiness"*, says Pat. *"And we've got to work like a bat out of hell."*

The bonus system isn't just bad for workers. It's ... for the product too. Pat said, *"They're ... worried about quality. The[y] want quantity."*

The process workers ha[ve] only been back at work on[e] week, when the fitters decide they wanted $5 too. So they were out for three days and won.

Even though every... won their demands ... thinks it could have ... organised better. The p[robl]em is no combined ... committee.

"If all the shop stewards and shop committees ... got together in the first place, it would've ... lot quicker and we ... have achieved more."

by Janey ...

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August 1978

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URANIUM Where to now?

P2–3

The Budget proves it....

FRASER MUST GO!

NOT SO TRICKIE DICKIE

VICTORIAN workers are enjoying the spectacle of the Hamer Government publicly falling apart.

A couple of weeks ago, the Liberal State Conference expelled right-wing rebel and land developers' spokesman, Doug Jennings.

He got less of a hearing than anyone ever expelled from the ALP.

Eighty-eight Liberal Party branch delegates voted against his expulsion and the electoral council for his seat of Westernport refused to nominate an alternative candidate.

Next, in the wake of the Withers sacking, Public Works minister Roberts Dunstan became "tired and emotional" and rang the newspapers, accusing Fraser of screwing the building industry and undermining Hamer.

He also said Fraser was mad. It might have been his most profound insight in 22 years in Parliament.

forced

Not surprisingly, Hamer forced Dunstan to resign from Cabinet. And in the uproar that followed, both the Jennings group and the Labor Party (and even some of the newspapers) asked how it was that Dunstan could be forced out while Pat Dickie remained Chief Secretary.

Dickie was the minister criticised in the Gowans Report on the Victorian Lands Scandals.

The answer came a week later, on Budget eve, with Dickie's resignation "for health reasons". He was upset at all the "false accusations" that followed the Lands Inquiry.

It's possible his health was damaged. It must be very painful to get your hands jammed in a till.

Hamer has to have an election within eight months. He's already got Fraser's Budget and his own record against him.

The last thing he needed was Pat Dickie as well.

by Dave Nadel

THE ISSUE in Fraser's Budget is not how bad it is.

There's hardly a newspaper in the country that hasn't admitted that it's the most brutal attack on working class conditions for thirty years.

There is now only one issue for us: How do we stop it and get rid of the bastard who did it?

The morning after the Budget, 400 construction workers marched on Trades Hall and the Commonwealth Government Centre in Melbourne.

There were chants of "Fraser Out" and many workers called for General Strike action. A motion was even moved, but never put.

The wharves in Melbourne and Sydney went on strike for 24 hours and dozens of workplaces have organised factory meetings to discuss action.

The potential clearly exists to build a movement to get rid of Fraser, to save Medibank and beat back the Budget.

But if we want to build a movement to get rid of Fraser we're going to have to do it ourselves.

In 1976, the working class demanded and got the first General Strike in our history. But it was sabotaged from beginning to end by our leaders.

responsible

They wanted to appear "responsible" so that the Arbitration Commission and TV interviewers wouldn't be nasty to them.

And Fraser just sat back and laughed. Every compromise they've agreed to has been taken as a sign of our weakness, and we've paid dearly for it.

In 1975, Fraser promised he'd retain Medibank. Now he's totally destroyed it. But all Labor politicians and union officials can do is bleat about Fraser being a liar and a cheat.

Of course he's a liar and a cheat. Parliamentary politics has never had anything to do with honesty or justice. Fraser simply serves those who support him: the bosses.

And they wanted him to get rid of Medibank, just like they wanted the rest of the Budget. We will only stop Fraser when we stop worrying about his honesty and start matching his power with our power.

Because it's our food, our housing, our clothes, our kids' education, our holidays and our very livelihood he's attacking.

Why?

fight

It's simply because we let them get away with it. They can rip into our wages because not one single union has bothered to organise a serious fight against the indexation guidelines.

Fraser and the bosses look upon the unemployed as embarrassing statistics and a burden in the Budget. Yet half-a-million Australians, most of them young, are having their lives ruined to save capitalism in this country.

They can dismiss the unemployed because nowhere has there been an organised fight for jobs, just the courageous resistance put up by individual workplaces, such as Sanyo.

This time Fraser has gone too far. He has rekindled the anger of the working class.

We must turn that anger into organisation, to take action at work and to force our unions into action.

The construction workers in Melbourne were right. Fraser must go – and a General Strike is the way to do it.

THE Medibank General Strike in 1976. Now it's time we took Fraser on again.

A General Strike... The way to do it

between the lines

"THERE'S no way the yachting people of this country will let economic circumstances wreck their pleasure."

That's the word from Bob Holmes, Australia's largest yacht broker.

IT'S nice to see that President Carter practices what he preaches. He recently attended a major international summit in Bonn on the energy crisis.

And then, with five other heads of government, went to nearby Gymnich castle for dinner.

Five of the heads of government arrived by individual helicopter (no sharing, no helicopter pool) and the President drove up in a gas-guzzling motorcade.

And to protect them all from the "dreaded" Baader-Meinhoff, they were greeted by troops armed with flaming torches.

ADS on Melbourne's trams used to proclaim that K-Tel's Vapor-Brite was "Safe, Fast and Easy to use".

Someone has rather clumsily covered the word "Safe" by the word "Sure", so the ad now reads "Sure, Fast, Easy to use".

Vapor Brite is a can of ammonium hydroxide crystals (similar to caustic soda), which release ammonia gas when hot water is poured into the can.

Ammonia gas eats the grease in your oven, and will eat away your lungs if you breathe enough of it.

THANK God for Christine Onassis. Anyone who can push the late, largely unlamented Pope off the front page of the papers can't be all bad.

The Russians, of course, were delighted that she was marrying one of their officials. Especially since in the same week, we heard that the Moscow Narodny Bank had lost between $200-$800 million in Singapore alone from loans to speculators.

Our only qualm is the trouble it must mean for the Russian-line Communist Party in Greece.

I mean, if the Onassis workers strike, what's this fine new Russian citizen going to think? And what is the Party going to say? It could cause a diplomatic incident.

OUR plastic straw this week goes to the Victorian Association of Teachers (VAT) — the company union representing the small number of teachers who like being under the thumb of the Education Department.

VAT especially hates the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association for using "that antiquated method, the strike". So no one howled louder than VAT when the VSTA signed a recent agreement over promotions with Dr. Shears of the Department. It seems that Shears had not consulted VAT! And why not? VAT's own news letter reports!

"We enquired how it was we do not get to talk to the Director — General as another party does. His reply was: You people don't strike, do you?" Suck harder, Suckers!!

by Darth Vader

WHICH WAY NOW FOR THE URANIUM MOVEMENT ?

State Public Servants march in Melbourne on Hiroshima Day.

WHAT do we do next?

That's the question now being asked in the uranium movement as the stalemate continues and the government pushes ahead with uranium exports.

Hiroshima Day saw another round of big marches. 15,000 in Melbourne, 7,000 in Sydney, 3,000 in Adelaide, 1,500 in Brisbane.

But despite its obvious size, the uranium movement is clearly not strong enough at present to stop uranium exports. And activists in the movement realise this.

Although the attendance at Hiroshima Day was above expectations in every city except Brisbane, people are more and more questioning the value of street marches.

"What did that achieve?" is a fairly common response, especially after you've spent Sunday afternoon marching around the city chanting at empty buildings and empty footpaths as we did in Melbourne.

The biggest blow to the uranium movement has been the decision of the last ACTU Congress. The unions voted to allow the fulfilling of existing contracts.

And unlike a lot of ACTU decisions, this has been implemented, from the top down, in all the key unions.

At the high point of struggles on the wharves, with anti-uranium activists attempting to block uranium shipments, many wharfies wanted to ban handling yellowcake.

But their union, and its left-wing officials, them they had to [illegible] ACTU and "Federal" policy, no matter how [illegible] wing or undemocratic might be.

Despite the desire of [illegible] of trade unionists to [illegible] exports, the unions [illegible] shipping yellowcake [illegible] individual unionists [illegible] powerless to stop it.

Which means that despite the hundreds of job [illegible] meetings held on uranium there has been only marginal success in setting up workplace anti-uranium groups.

exp[illegible]

The government [illegible] determined to [illegible] uranium that it will require a powerful social movement to stop it. And of all progressive forces in society, only the working class and the unions have the necessary power.

That's one of the reasons the ACTU policy and clampdown are so important for Fraser. It also means that the uranium movement has to simply bite the bullet and begin the hard work of changing the position of the unions.

It means that workers in the uranium movement have to start campaigning within their own unions, by letters to the union journals, leaflets, job meetings, and setting up union MAUM groups.

In the right-wing unions we have to fight to reverse their pro-uranium positions.

In the left-wing unions — the ones that, on paper, oppose uranium — we have to demand the implementation of bans.

And to hell with the ACTU's bureaucratic sell-outs.

No-one, least of all Fraser, is going to take the movement seriously if all we ever do is march and make speeches.

We also have to step up the level of our action outside the unions. Occupations of mining company offices have already started — we have to keep them up. There are plenty of students in the movement. Most universities and colleges have shares in mining companies. We need action on the campuses to force the sale of these shares.

We need suburban MAUM groups taking direct action against Liberal Party MP's offices to force them to change their policies.

We have to start building direct action now — towards the day when the movement is powerful enough to simply stand in front of the uranium convoys and say "No go!"

That day sounds a long way off.

accidents

But we must realise that the situation is not all gloomy. Day after day, new reports of accidents, leakages, lost plutonium and nuclear proliferation all undermine the government's position.

The international anti-nuclear movement, demands for expensive safety features and the high capital cost involved have all made nuclear power less and less economic.

The nuclear power plant construction industry is in severe crisis and appealing for government funds to bail it out.

All these developments have an effect in Australia. They split the ruling class (most of whom do not directly benefit from nuclear power) and break up the once solid support for uranium export.

Already the movement has forced the ALP to toughen up its stand.

Now we have to step up the struggle right across society — until the Hawkes and the Duckers have no choice but to stand aside and let the bans go on.

15,000 Hiroshima Day marchers converge on the Uranium Producers Forum office in Melbourne.

Public servants march

A contingent of twenty Victorian public servants risked possible victimization to march in Melbourne on Hiroshima Day.

The public servants marched behind the banner "State Public Servants Against Uranium Mining".

The State Public Servants MAUM group organised the leafletting of all state public offices in the city.

They called on state public servants to march with them.

Paul, one of the leaders of the group, told the Battler that public servants were often too afraid of victimization to become openly involved in political activities.

Paul said that during the march, a public servant came to him and said, *"What you're doing is really great.*

afraid

"There are a lot of other public servants at this march, but many of us won't march behind the banner because we're afraid of not being considered for promotion."

The State Public Servants MAUM group was formed only three weeks before the march. But already it has twenty members, making it one of Melbourne's largest MAUM groups.

Paul told the Battler, *"Any plans for building a nuclear reactor in Victoria would involve state public servants.*

"What we have to do now is to get our union, the VPSA, to take a stand against uranium."

Any State public servants wishing to support this struggle and join the group can contact Paul on 543-4726.

Indo-Chinese Refugees

LET'S GIVE THEM A GO!

ATTACKS on Indo-Chinese refugees are still coming from left-wingers who ought to know better,

Latest to swell the chorus is Labor front-bencher Tom Uren.

Freshly back from a two week trip to Vietnam — where no doubt he got all the facts from the state capitalist regime — he claimed that, "A lot of people that are coming out here certainly were people who made a lot of money during the occupation of the Americans in Vietnam.

"A lot are coming here for the softer life."

No-one on the Australian left seems to have thought of finding out what the Indo-Chinese (not just Vietnamese) refugees themselves think. About communism, about unions, and about their reasons for coming to Australia.

rights

Paula Kelly, a Melbourne school-teacher, has worked with many Indo-Chinese refugees, helping them find jobs and housing, and speaking out for their rights. A Labor voter, she opposed Australian involvement in Vietnam.

"But I'd never say no to refugees. I believe that we should take any refugees, no matter where they come from."

Paula disagrees that the Indo-Chinese refugees are really just members of the old ruling class looking for a softer life.

"The old ruling class is well and truly out — and sitting in America. It's the lower and middle classes that are coming now.

"A lot are fishermen from around the edges who can get boats. There's a lot who can't read or write — fishermen, peasant farmers from the south. The middle-class ones are mostly tradespeople, a few doctors and lawyers."

Paula denies that Indo-Chinese refugees are an inherently anti-union, right-wing group, as many Australian unionists fear.

"They don't quarrel with the union, they join. They're hard workers, but they follow the union rules.

"They don't reject unionism as the first step to Communism. They're not totally naive.

Paula Kelly with Marita and Bill, two of her adopted children.

"GMH has got a few refugees working there. They were at a union meeting, and they saw Australian workers screaming abuse at the union about a proposal for more long-service leave.

"They couldn't understand this. They thought it was a great idea.

trouble

"At AMI early on, they got in trouble for working too fast. But they soon slowed down when it was pointed out to them. They're not fools.

"They just see the unions as their way out to equality. I've never seen anyone of them complain about joining.

"I'd say they're anti-Communist. But if you explained that Communist here is different to 'bang-bang-you're-dead' Communist over there, they'd understand.

"If people start calling Labor Communist, they'll probably stay away from the ALP — they still see Communism in 1950's terms.

"But otherwise — they'll see their pay cheques dwindle, they'll see their tax go up — they'll go away from the Liberals."

What about the stories that Indo-Chinese refugees have been arriving with gold bars and large amounts of wealth?

"The average amount they've brought in is 24 dollars.

"In Bangkok, they're given one hundred dollars by a church group. Strangely, they usually spend it on a good suit and a suitcase — they want to look respectable when they arrive in Australia."

Hayden razes Kane in Qld ALP

QUEENSLAND ALP Central Executive member Neal Kane's public call for Hayden to stand down as Federal leader has proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back.

Kane has claimed that Hayden lacks worker support!

The Federal party has now decided to intervene in the Queensland organisation. ALP national officers have been installed in the Crest Hotel and there is little doubt that the party structure is in for an overhaul.

The intervention was prompted largely by demands from the Reform Group in the Queensland ALP.

The main demands of the Reform Group are for annual Labour — in — Politics conventions (instead of three — yearly); increased numbers of delegates to the convention, especially branch delegates; abolition of the Queensland Central Executive, and its replacement with a State Council with a majority of non-union members.

addition

In addition the Reform Group is demanding full and regular financial reports to all branches, and the resignation of the present office bearers.

The reforms will have two effects. The strength of the branches will be greatly increased in relation to the trade union leaders.

And the party will become a far more effective electoral instrument.

There is no obvious left-right cleavage in all this. The differences are between branch members who want the party to have some chance of winnning the next election and a bunch of incompetent, conservative alcoholics.

Many activists in the Reform Group have at least tried to prod the party into some activity around the question of civil liberties in Queensland.

The trade unions, the State ALP and the parliamentary party have refused. refused.

support

Many Queensland ALP members will no doubt support the moves for reform.

The trouble is, the reformers are looking to steer the ALP towards a Neville Wran-type course. One that appeals to the trendy middle-classes, and avoids those oh-so-nasty working-class struggles.

The reformers don't just oppose union bureaucrats like Kane because they're bureaucrats . . . . but also because they want to cut the party away from its union ties.

While socialists support individual moves to democratize the ALP, there is certainly no point in falling in behind the Reform Group's banner.

The need right now is for a political organization that is prepared to defend workers' and trade union rights, *not just [illegible]* their votes.

And for that, Queensland ALP members will have to look elsewhere.

Bill Hayden

QUEENSLAND RIGHT-TO-MARCH CAMPAIGN

BRISBANE Speakers for job-site and union meetings — phone 281-6113 (Ian).

MELBOURNE Solidarity rally, 4.30 pm, Monday Sept 4, Bourke Street Mall.

REG WITHERS WHILE FRASER SLITHERS

THE only thing that will please Fraser about the howl of outrage following his Horror Budget is that it will get the Withers Affair off the front page.

Liberal senate leader and numbers man Reg Withers was sacked after a Royal Commission found him guilty of using undue influence to change the name of the proposed Gold Coast seat to McPherson.

The Liberals have an agreement with the National-Country Party not to challenge each other's sitting Cabinet ministers.

This agreement would not have applied to the new Gold Coast seat. But when it was given the old name of McPherson, the NCP decided not to oppose Liberal minister Eric Robinson.

The Withers affair worries Fraser in three ways.

lowers

Firstly, it lowers people's confidence in Parliament and the honesty of the Liberal Party. After all, a judge has now found a Liberal leader guilty of election rigging.

This is not very important. Since Kerr sacked Whitlam, parliamentary elections haven't meant much anyway. And since Malcolm Fraser broke his election promise on Medibank, no-one believes the Liberals are honest either.

Secondly, about half of Fraser's Cabinet and probably more of his back-bench now hate his guts. There's nothing new about that either. But for the first time, senior ministers are now telling the press what they really think of Malcolm Fraser.

Fraser himself doesn't see anything wrong with electoral rigging. But he has to get himself off the hook.

Reg Withers — sacked

Because the third problem worrying Fraser, is that he himself is implicated in the coverup.

Eric Robinson gave evidence at the Royal Commission that Withers told Fraser at a Cabinet meeting on January 17 that he may be implicated in the electoral name change.

Fraser did nothing and he now says that he doesn't remember hearing about Withers' role till three months later.

If Fraser did know which is mostly likely, though Robinson is nearly as big a liar as Fraser) then Malcolm obviously attempted to cover up Withers' role.

Which makes Fraser a hypocrite at the least — and an accessory to electoral malpractice, since he did not suspend Withers right away.

For forty per cent of Australians Fraser has been an accessory to electoral malpractice ever since November 11, 1975.

The significant thing about the Withers Affair is that a lot of Liberal voters are beginning to see it too.

Pity that it took them so long.

One year later - and we're still marching, Bjelke!

By Carole Ferrier

THE next big test facing the Right to March Movement in Queensland comes on August 21.

The combined maritime unions have a stop-work rally planned for King George Square. The Trades and Labour Council is sponsoring it.

The Civil Liberties movement is also getting ready to "celebrate" its first birthday on September 4 with a march. September 4 is the anniversary of Bjelke's announcement of the ban on street marches.

Bjelke's stated reason at the time was to prevent anti-uranium demonstrations.

"Send us your uranium and we'll get it out," he grandly promised Fraser. But significantly, the ban came at the same time as Bjelke started his attacks on the union movement, with "Right To Work" legislation.

The workers most active in fighting the ban on marches have been those in the direct line of Bjelke's attack. The first challenge came with the Ted Zaphir rally.

Wharfies marched to the rally along the footpath, while students marched from Queensland University.

This action dramatized the ban — and brought out several hundred cops.

This has been the pattern ever since, with cops being regularly flown down from Northern centres at a cost of thousands.

The campaign has been built by actively marching in defiance of the ban. These tactics are similar to the militant confrontations that won the Vietnam and Springbok struggles.

We have gone beyond the mere declaration of protest — which many moderates wanted to settle for — and into a united, mass confrontation with the State Government.

"We have gone beyond merely declaring protest"

show

By doing this in a disciplined way, and forcing Bjelke's cops to actually show their repressive hand, we have swung public opinion against the ban.

This has produced splits inside the middle class and ruling class. Concerned Christians, Liberal Party members, newspapers, even the speaker of the Legislative Assembly, have come out in opposition.

In the case of the newspapers and Liberals, it is mostly the growth of the left that has got them worried.

There was a 7-8% swing against the Government in the last election, largely as a result of the Civil Liberties and uranium marches mobilising and articulating support.

Policewomen arrest a marcher at the International Women's Day rally in Brisbane in March. Fifty were arrested that day.

And Brisbane's May Day march — 8000 strong — was the largest in Australia.

But despite the gain made, ALP leader Tom Burns keeps on urging all and sundry not to "take Bjelke's bait".

His most recent sell-out was when he applied for a march permit for a Saturday afternoon. When he got it, he called off the march — claiming *"the point had been made"* that permits were given out selectively.

The failure by the ALP leadership and the trade union leaders to take up the campaign seriously has been the main reason it has not yet broken through.

For despite all Bjelke's bluster, it is clear he fears the organized strength of the unions and ALP most of all.

It is significant that he did not ban the May Day march. And he did not try to stop the Utah miners marching in Blackwater last month.

The key to smashing the march ban is still mass defiance by the working class movement. That is why August 21 and September 4 are so important for the struggle.

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE NO. Postcode
TRADE UNION

Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, 3031

Czechoslavakia 1968

FROM RUSSIA WITH BLOOD

Above: Prague 1968 — angry Czechs stone a Russian tank. Below: Special issue of Tribune, the CPA's newspaper, condemning the invasion.

Tribune

SPECIAL

Czechoslovakia: Aust. Communists protest

Tom O'Lincoln recalls the Russian invasion of August 20, 1968.

SOCIALISM with a human face.

That thought captivated the minds of millions during the spring and summer of 1968.

The repressive regimes set up in Eastern Europe after World War 11 had made a bitter mockery of the word "socialism".

They smothered democratic rights, and exploited the workers much like the old capitalist society before them.

But in Czechoslovakia a great experiment in socialist democracy seemed to be underway. Censorship was ended, a new economic policy announced, and a ferment of discussion had begun.

Then in August 1968 the Russian Army, backed by the armies of its puppets throughout Eastern Europe, marched in to destroy the dream.

The great "Liberators" in the Czech government, led by Alexander Dubcek, did nothing to resist. In fact, they cooperated fully with the new leadership installed by the Russians.

smashed

How were the hopes of millions of Czechoslovaks smashed so easily?

Dubcek and his followers had begun a program of liberalisation, not to transform Czechoslovakian society, but as part of a bureacratic power struggle.

The economy was in trouble. Foreign trade, the life-blood of Czechoslovakia's economy, was in decline. Real wages began to fall for the first time in years.

In the mid-60's, the economist Ota Sik was given the job of finding a way out.

Sik proposed to streamline the economy. More backward sections of industry were to be scrapped. Workers were to face speed-up and wage cuts.

The proposals were resisted by entrenched sections of the bureaucracy, in the areas where Sik proposed to wield the knife. The new economic policy was stalled, and discontent grew in society as a whole, especially among intellectuals.

Dubcek, Sik and their supporters determined on a daring move. They deliberately appealed to the disaffected intellectuals and students, and used them as a battering ram to force changes in the government.

And they were successful. The old Novotni government fell, and Dubcek now took unchallenged power.

Russian soldiers read in "Pravda" why they have invaded

But in the course of the struggle, a pandora's box had been opened.

Novotni had toured factories looking for support. He got little or none, but the workers were encouraged to take an active interest in politics.

Meanwhile, students and intellectuals were watching closely to see how Dubcek performed.

Dubcek aimed to keep this mobilisation of the people strictly under control. He tried to maintain a strict censorship, attacking "anarchy" in the press and calling for "responsibility" among journalists.

He failed. The press was rapidly opened up to a wide range of viewpoints.

To the end, the government sought to maintain a monopoly on political institutions.

At one point, the Communist Party congress discussed how to run parliamentary elections which would guarantee them a majority of seats, even if they got one-third of the vote.

And Dubcek sought to convince the Russians that he could keep things under control. But Moscow was unconvinced, and by late summer the troops were ready to march.

Dubcek co-operated with the invading Russians, as did his supporters in the Communist Party leadership. Not so the workers.

In the early months of liberalisation, the workers had remained fairly quiet.

The intellectuals were excited by the expansion of civil liberties. But the workers remembered that Ota Sik's economic program promised them harder work and lower wages.

Nevertheless, worker unrest was growing. Strikes occurred over wages at first, then gradually began to include demands for workers' control.

The trade union machinery, designed to control workers rather than represent them, began to splinter. By the time of the Soviet invasion the factories were in a ferment.

In a resolution passed by 40,000 Skoda carworkers, Dubcek was accused of a "shameful capitulation" to the Russians.

In the winter of 1968-69, hundreds of thousands of workers demonstrated against the Soviet occupation and the return to "normal" political life.

Printing workers refused to handle a new weekly paper Tribuna, which carried a conservative and pro-soviet line.

The potential obviously existed for a mass strike movement against the occupation.

But the workers had no political leadership of their own. Their struggles were aimed largely at maintaining the liberal Dubcek supporters in office.

But these politicians were more afraid of worker militancy than of the Soviet Union.

Ludwig Smrkovsky, a leading liberal politician, refused offers of trade union action in his support. Other liberal *leaders actively* backed the new right wing regime, even while it was victimising them.

As a result, the worker militancy was deflected. Even so, it took a further six months before the Russians and their puppets could breathe easily.

The consequences of the Czechoslovak events were immense.

They helped sow the seeds of further resistance in Poland and East Germany, including the mass strike struggles in Polish shipyards in the seventies.

debate

In the West, the impact on Communists was striking. Already beginning to liberalise their own organisations, Communists were caught up in heated debate over the events in Prague.

In Australia, the Communist Party spoke out against the Soviet invasion at mass meetings, an action which helped precipitate an open split in Party ranks.

Equally important, perhaps, the events of Czechoslovakia remain alive in the minds of young radical activists around the world.

A vision of socialist democracy had been awakened.

And many began to understand that it could only be won through militant struggle, not just against the capitalist regimes of the West but also against their repressive cousins in the East.

Dave Nadel's

MY SHOUT

IT'S been a fortnight of astounding scientific developments. First we had the much publicised birth of the test-tube baby in England.

The most remarkable aspect of the child's birth (about which the papers said nothing) is that it was the first conception without intercourse for nearly two thousand years. Does this make Louise Brown the daughter of God?

Synthetic conception was followed by synthetic rock. Just a mere week before the Hiroshima day demonstration, Professor Ringwood announced to a grateful world that he had solved the nuclear waste disposal problem.

Subsequent reports showed that Synroc was rather less than a total solution to the disposal problem. But the Uranium Producers must have loved the headlines.

Still the march of discovery continued. The same week the Liberals in Victoria discovered the Kangaroo Court as they expelled Doug Jennings for spilling the beans, and the Labor Party discovered Queensland.

The Press and television have been most involved in their latest discovery; synthetic entertainment featuring plastic people.

Test-tube babies and synthetic rock can sustain a front page for one day, but plastic people like John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John have plastic sex appeal and can sell papers for weeks.

You'll have to wait till next week for a review of Grease but the hype began weeks ago and we can say something about that right now.

For weeks our T.V. screens have been full of Newton-John's alleged dancing while the radio pushes Travolta's alleged voice.

The radio also plays all of Olivia's past hits in which she takes songs by musicians as diverse as Bob Dylan and Dolly Parton and reproduces identical Muzak.

The height of synthetic entertainment appeared on TV two days before the premiere of Grease. A full hour of prime time TV devoted to Grease.

This special was not on the making of the movie, highlights from the picture itself or anything half way interesting like that. No, this was film of the "stars" attending the Los Angeles premiere and the party which followed.

As well as the lovely John and Olivia it featured other well known nonentities of the disco scene such as Andy Gibb.

While it is not in the same class as the Grease promotion, TV viewers and newspaper readers were offered an alternative form of synthetic entertainment over the past couple of weeks — synthetic sport.

This came in the shape of the Commonwealth Games from Edmonton, Canada. There, with much publicity and unsubtle nationalism, we could see athletes and swimmers compete for medals showing that they are the fastest amongst a quarter of the world.

Of course it doesn't mean much by its own terms, since all the top swimmers and many of the top athletes come from the USA, USSR and East Germany. None of whom happen to be members of the Commonwealth.

Still no doubt added Australian prestige to prove that we are the best of the rest. Obviously it must be important, or the Australian Swimming Union would never have engaged in that curious exercise in petty tyranny in Hawaii last month. Synthetic babies, synthetic rock, synthetic entertainment and synthetic sport. What will they think of next? A synthetic My Shout?

Vietnam vs Cambodia

WILL THE REAL SOCIALISTS PLEASE STAND UP?

By Andy Milner

IN April 1975, the city of Saigon fell to the Vietnamese National Liberation Front.

In the same month, the Cambodian liberation forces captured Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia. It was the end of the Second Indochina War, and the beginning, many believed, of a new era of peace and socialism in South East Asia.

But since October of last year, Vietnam and Cambodia have been at war.

In the first three months of fighting alone, there were something like ten thousand casualties. In early July, the Vietnamese casually reported the destruction of two Cambodian army battalions during one week of intensive fighting.

From the beginning of the war, Vietnam has been receiving aid from Russia, and Cambodia from China.

In May conflict between Vietnam and China suddenly flared up over the treatment of the Chinese living in Vietnam.

In March, the Vietnamese government nationalised the wholesale trade in south Vietnam, which has always been dominated by Chinese merchants.

Since then, about 140,000 refugees have escaped from Vietnam into China.

On May 24, the Chinese government openly accused the Vietnamese of "persecuting" Chinese residents in Vietnam. And in early July, the Chinese cut off all economic and technical aid to Vietnam.

Of course, the Vietnamese deny that they are persecuting foreigners. The government claims that it's only settling accounts with private capitalists.

But it's a bit difficult to believe that all 140,000 of the refugees are capitalists.

campaign

The truth is that the Vietnamese government has launched an anti-Chinese campaign, which is directed against these foreigners irrespective of their class background.

But what has caused it? Why is it that relations between these supposedly 'socialist' countries bear a striking resemblance to relations between capitalist countries?

Why is it that there can be 'socialist' war and 'socialist' imperialism?

The explanation lies in the fact that these 'socialist' countries are still part of a world capitalist system.

The crisis of State Capitalism

The first capitalist countries, in Western Europe and North America, were able to dominate the international market. Their dominance made it more difficult for other countries to follow the same road.

The second generation of capitalist countries, notably Germany and Japan, were only able to break out of the stranglehold of the first because of extensive state involvement in their economies.

enabled

Only complete state capitalism enabled Russia and some of the Eastern European countries to industrialise.

And today, even that road is blocked. China for example, after nearly thirty years of state capitalism, is quite incapable of competing with either Russia or the West in military or economic terms.

But for Vietnam and Cambodia the situation was even worse. Both countries are desperately poor, and both were devastated by the American war.

How could their new governments possibly hope to salvage their wrecked economies and make some attempt at development?

There were only limited alternatives. Both Vietnam and Cambodia have found foreign aid — one from Russia, the other from China.

But the strings which were attached to that aid have dragged them into the wider rivalry between Russia and China.

Vietnam also looked for foreign investment. In mid July the International Monetary Fund made Vietnam a new loan of US $28 million.

Cambodia by contrast has tried self-sufficiency. But the end result is very similar.

Vietnam can only afford to pay out high interest rates to foreign investors if it steps up exploitation of Vietnamese workers and peasants.

And Cambodia can only achieve self-sufficiency by cutting the living standards of its own population. Either way, the masses pay.

In the midst of economic crisis and mass poverty, foreigners can be made into scapegoats for all the economic ills. And war can be used as an excuse to demand further sacrifices in the name of patriotism.

Trapped between Russian-Chinese rivalry on the one side, and the pressures of the world market on the other, the new ruling classes of Vietnam and Cambodia have been led towards war and persecution.

There is a word to describe this state of affairs, and that word is imperialism.

Vietnam and Cambodia may have won a battle in the war against imperialism — but it was only a battle and not the whole war.

That war can only be won in the heartlands of the imperialist system — in Russia, in Western Europe, in North America, and here too, in Australia.

Chinese refugees expelled from Vietnam wade across the Nanhsi River into China. If China, Cambodia and Vietnam are all socialist, how come they're at each others' throats?

In happier days, Mao chats with Madame Binh, NLF Foreign Minister, in 1972.

Namibia: South Africa's piece-keeping force

IF the Australian army's feeling at a loose end, there may be a job for them in Southern Africa.

It was reported last week that Australia may be asked to send six hundred soldiers to help police a United Nations 'peace settlement' in Namibia (South West Africa).

Despite UN resolutions the South Africans refuse to give it up, anxious to hold on to its minerals — especially its enormous deposits of uranium.

But South African control has been increasingly weakened by the guerrillas of the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO).

orbit

If SWAPO takes over, it may mean that the country will move out of the Western orbit. To prevent this, five western powers — the US, Britain, Canada, West Germany and France — came up with a set of 'peace proposals' in April.

These advocated 'free' elections, even though they allowed for South African troops to stay in the country.

But the real snag with the plan was that it left South Africa in control of Walvis Bay — Namibia's only deep water port.

This would have given the South African government a stranglehold on the Namibian economy.

Naturally enough, SWAPO refused to have anything to do with the plan. But they were accepting it by the 'front line' states — particularly by Zambia, Moramhique and Angola.

Two weeks ago the UN Security Council passed a resolution virtually endorsing SWAPO's claim to Walvis Bay — thus removing South Africa's main reason for acceptance of the five-power plan.

South Africa has now stated that it will only go ahead with the plan in its original form — that is, with continued South African control of the Bay.

A SWAPO leader has said that prospects for free elections are *"increasingly doubtful if not untenable"*.

And they maintain that the war will continue till all repressive laws are repealed, South African troops are confined to their bases, and SWAPO prisoners are freed.

So Australian troops will probably never see Namibia, because there will probably be no UN peace settlement for them to police.

But if the UN agreement somehow goes ahead, and Australian troops are sent, it's clear that they'll be policing an agreement against the interests of Namibia's population. We can't let that happen.

INDONESIA'S OTHER TIMOR

Guerillas of the Free West Papua Movement on the march.

INDONESIA'S campaign of murder and intimidation of villagers in West Irian is hotting up.

In the last month 700 refugees have fled their villages seeking refuge in Papua Niugini.

Two battalions of Indonesian troops have been burning and pillaging villages on the West Irian — PNG border.

Almost daily, flights of Bronco (OV-10) counter-insurgency aircraft from the West Irian capital of Jayapura are using bombs, rockets and machine guns against the villagers.

The step-up followed the capture of seven Indonesian officials two months ago, including the military commander of Jayapura, Colonel Ismail.

The officials are being held hostage by the Free West Papua Movement (Organasi Papua Merdeka) who are seeking an end to 16 years of Indonesian colonialism.

Since Indonesia took control of the former Dutch colony in 1962 they have systematically oppressed the West Papuans.

Schools were closed and roads rundown. Corruption and black marketeering by Indonesian officials caused numerous food shortages and starvation.

While the complicity of the Australian government in this murder cannot be proved, it has done very little to stop the violence.

affairs

In spite of the Foreign Affairs Department pro-Indonesian lobby, a back-door protest to Indonesia a few weeks ago seems to have curbed their operations near the border, particularly the hot pursuit of alleged rebels.

However, Australia still continues its military and economic aid to the Indonesian generals.

A major contribution is the mapping by Australian Army Survey of West Irian, called Operation Canderawasik. OPM small arms fire is reported to have holed Australian aircraft.

In recent weeks, a survey unit held a sit-down meeting in the jungle. They complained of the "gun-happy" Indonesians they were working with who would, on landing with Australian surveyors in remote villages, leave the helicopters and immediately begin indiscriminate machine gunning of villagers.

Behind the scenes the Fraser government is concerned. Not because of any humanitarian aspirations, but because Australian companies have large investments in both West Irian and Papua Niugini.

Given Australia's heavy military and economic aid to both Indonesia and Papua Niugini, the fighting has every possibility of embroiling Australian military forces.

Any moves to commit Australian forces (and there are already military advisers on both sides of the border) must be stopped.

by Steve Morgan

THE GAS BILL SCANDAL

Reports:
Alec Kahn
Steve Morgan

"I pulled my kids out of school to pay the bills."

JEANETTE Croxford is one of the victims of Malcolm Fraser's Australia.

Unable to walk properly, and wracked by a chest complaint, she has been battling to bring up her four teenage boys on an invalid pension of $130 a week.

But now Jeanette – and a hundred other residents in Housing Commission flats in Kensington, a working-class Melbourne suburb, – have had enough.

The last straw was an amazing, scandalous rise in their gas bills. From $20 for two months, now Jeanette has to pay $95. A rise of 450% in just half a year.

And everyone else's gas bills have at least doubled.

Jeanette and the other residents are refusing to take it. They're telling the Gas and Fuel Corporation and the Housing Commission to go to hell.

Jeanette says it all started when the Gas and Fuel Corporation installed a new water-heating system in their flats.

"The tenants never even had a letter that it was going to happen. They just came in and ripped the old water heaters off the wall."

The Gas and Fuel Corporation put in three tanks on the roof in their place.

They were hopelessly inefficient.

"If you're very lucky, you might get hot water two or three hours a week.

You either have a cold shower and catch your death of cold, or stay dirty."

But losing their hot water wasn't the only shock for the tenants. When they got their first gas bills after the new system, they were amazed.

outrageous

"It used to be only $20 for everything for two months. Now it's $45 just for hot water – hot water that you don't get."

Jeanette's total bill was $95. Everyone else in the flats had outrageous bills too.

"The woman upstairs, she uses less than I do. Hers was $57.

"And another woman was away in Queensland most of the time, her place was locked up, I had her key. Her bill was $38! How do you work it out?

"Something had to be done. It'll only get worse if we let it go.

"We're boiling water on the stove to do the dishes and the washing, and using sponges to wash ourselves.

"If you get under the shower, you'd need to be a multi-millionaire."

organize

The tenants started writing letters of complaint.

They just got palmed off from one authority to another.

"Their attitude hasn't been real good. You go around in a circle. From the Gas and Fuel to the maintenance people, then to the Housing Commission, then back to Gas and Fuel.

"Only two letters have been answered, and we've been complaining since we got our first gas bill in after February.

"You ring them and they say, it's not us, it's someone else. . . "

But instead of sitting back and taking it, the tenants started to organize.

"It was beyond a joke, so we decided to do something about it.

"We had a meeting last Tuesday. Only a few of us went to that – a lady upstairs and me and a few people from the local clinic.

"So we wrote out a pamphlet and delivered it around, and we got a lot more the second time."

Eighty tenants turned up to the second meeting. Forty of them went into Melbourne to confront the Gas and Fuel Corporation face to face.

"I have trouble trying to walk," said Jeanette. "But I went into the city. They had a chair that I could be transported in.

"The MLA for this area went with us – Mr White. We were very determined. And cross – but more determined that we were going to get somewhere.

"At first they were only going to take four tenants in to talk to them, and the social workers.

"But everyone wanted to speak to them. So they opened up a big room, and we all spoke to them. We all had our gas bills with us."

Housing Commission residents meet at Kensington before going en masse to the Commission's city offices.

rent

What if they have to pay the full bill? They're also being hit with a six dollar rent rise together with other Housing Commission tenants in the State.

"I'd have to cut back on a lot of food. I let my rent go last fortnight because of the gas bill. Now I'll have to let the next gas bill go to pay a month's rent.

"You'll either let your rent go, or you let your kids starve. I pulled them out of school because I couldn't afford to pay the bills."

tight.

The mass delegation won a temporary compromise from the

■ Jeanette Croxford and two of her sons, David (left) and Michael (right). They are determined to stay put if the Housing Commission tries to evict them for speaking out.

Gas and Fuel Corporation. The tenants don't have to pay their hot water bill for the moment – just the stove and heating.

Meanwhile the Corporation, will investigate and report back to the tenants by August 17. The tenants have organized another mass meeting for that day to consider the reply.

"A lot of people are frightened of fighting," said Jeanette, "because they think they might get evicted.

"If they try to evict me for speaking up, I won't let them get away with it.

"I'll call in the newspapers. And we'll just sit tight.

"I'll just round up everybody in the flats and we'll put up such a fight. There'll be enough helpers to carry our stuff back in if they try to take it out.

"The Commission are not very brave people when you fight them.

"When we went in the city, I warned the kids – if the Commission come while I'm in town, don't let them past the door."

...ll Hirst says the Housing Commission Tenants Union has grown in strength from the struggle. The jail-like block of flats behind him houses mostly ...gle parent families.

THE RENT REBELLION

...E latest group to feel ... sting of Malcolm ...ser's attacks are ...toria's Housing ...mmission tenants.

...hile Malcolm stays in ... a night hotel suites at ...xpense, they are being ...d an extra six dollars ...by Fraser's eager allies ... the Victorian ...rnment.

...w the Housing Commi... ...enants are hitting back ...rent strike. Hundreds are ... to pay the $6 rise, and ...paring for a full-scale ... the Housing Commis... to evict them.

...first lives in a Housing ...ion flat in Kensington, ...e. A former tramway ...now unemployed, he ... spending most of his ...nizing the fightback, ...ing president of the ...Commission Tenants ...

...s the rise is part of a ...n scheme by the ...t to drive up rents to ...t value" – the price ... estate agents and ...dlords are extracting ...enants.

...gry at the effect the ...ving.

...a woman pensioner ...roy. She has two ...ghters, both on low ...n $104, the other ...

...only taking a small ...board off them, so ...ave for their own ...

... woman ends up ...e full market rent ...daughters have to ...r her."

... to Bill, the ...menting a ludicrous ...move to "market ...ents".

"...t, the subsidies ...e come from general ...

"...ant the slightly ... – the working ...e subsidize the worse-... ...nes who aren't ...rking.

"...more of them ...unemployment.

"...ent claims it ... the wealthy ...nants are being driven ...off ... – they're working.

"...himself says ... ...0 p... ...afford ... He also says 33% will get rebates.

"That leaves nearly forty per cent who will be hardship cases, according to the Minister's own figures!"

A wave of anger has swept through Housing Commission estates at the latest increases. Several estates have already had militant mass meetings.

"We didn't call a rent strike. People decided to do it on their own, and we're co-ordinating it.

"At the meeting at Geelong, the chairman pointed out that he hadn't paid the rent increase since it went up. I haven't either.

"We've set up a trust fund, and we're paying the increase into that, instead of to the commission.

"At Geelong they passed the same motion. We had 200 at that meeting – it's the biggest so far.

"Preston also. Every estate has passed the motion so far."

Often people have been pessimistic about what they could do. Especially on the high rise estates, Bill has found a mood of despair at the start of the meetings.

"But you come along and tell them what they can do, and the mood turns to what it should be – which is anger.

"At Geelong, the mood was angry straight away. They've had experiences with unions at the Ford plant there, and they've got more idea of what they can do and their rights."

Several thousand migrants live in Victoria's Housing Commission estates. As usual, the Government is trying to keep them in the dark.

"One-third of the tenants in this estate are Turkish, another third are Spanish," said Bill.

"But the Commission hasn't put out anything in foreign languages explaining the rebate system. Just something saying to go and see a district officer."

Not surprisingly, migrant groups are joining in the campaign against the rent rise.

"The Australian-Turkish Cultural Association has collected two thousand signatures. They'll present that to the Minister.

"The Spanish community at Fitzroy has also combined with us."

As well as the rising rents, conditions on Housing Commission estates are notorious. Bill described what it was like on his own estate at Kensington.

"Conditions are dreadful. Maintenance is awful on all estates.

"The walls are damp here, water runs down them and respiratory infections are bad.

valium

"People are constantly going down to the Health Centre with bad nerves. We had a meeting of fifteen tenants and I asked, just out of curiosity, how many are on valium and other drugs.

"Twelve hands went up – including my own, I must admit!

"You're just not in any state of privacy. To put it crudely, if someone's having a shit upstairs, you hear it down here.

"Soundproofing's no good. You always hear arguments from the other flats."

The Housing Commission has enormous power over its tenants.

"You can be evicted for keeping a budgerigar, or for washing the walls down with anything other than soap and water.

"They don't use these things, but they keep them as a power over us."

The Housing Commission Tenants Union has grown in strength already from the struggle.

"It's been the biggest boost for the union so far. Our membership has gone up 250%.

"If we can achieve something with the rent strike, it'll be a terrific boost for morale on the estates. Even for people not in the union – they'll say whacko, they achieved something."

The Tenants Union is looking to the rest of the union movement for support in its struggle.

"At Fitzroy they've passed a motion asking for union support. The motion came from a trammie.

"Unions can help us by putting up posters so their members know about us, by giving us financial help, and by coming out with statements of support for public housing.

"We're the only ones who seem to be making a fight at the moment.

"I don't expect the trade unions to strike over this issue.

"But the day has got to come where the trade unions have a national strike over all these things. Housing, Medibank – all the issues.

"The working class has just been lying down and taking it. It's about time we had a bloody great moratorium, and all got out in Bourke Street from one end to the other and said we've had enough!"

Maintenance workers check the railing in the concrete jungle, home of pensioners and single parents. Cut backs are running down the flats and many residents are ill from damp walls.

MOUTH TO MOUTH

- not enough lip

Jeanie, Tim, Serge and Carrie — the four main characters of "Mouth to Mouth". Just a bit too good to be true.

IT hardly needs to be said again that 'Mouth to Mouth' is a 'genuine', 'sincere' and 'compassionate' film.

The critics are having a field day over the fact that it was made on a shoestring budget and craps on a lot of glossy Australo-American productions which cost much more.

By Judy Turner

Obviously it is a good film. The acting is excellent (although the odd traces of MLC in the girl's accents are slightly disconcerting), the message is clear, and the setting in inner Melbourne is ethnic and instantly attractive to large numbers of Melbourne people.

And it makes a pleasant change to see a film about Oz that isn't nostalgic junk ('Break of Day', 'The Irishman') or wanking psycho-drama ('The Last Wave' or 'Weekend of Shadows').

Despite all this I wasn't super-thrilled with the film.

For a start the script is pretty rotten. Luckily for all concerned there isn't too much of it, as the kids' conversation is realistically sparse.

wacker

There isn't enough characteristic Melbourne working class lingo. No one was a wacker or a suck, nothing was hacked or rank, and although it didn't surprise me that nothing was really ace in their lives, I thought at least one of the kids would have been spewing over some of the poxy things that happened to them.

In giving them a language everyone can understand Duigan makes the kids less real, and ignores an important and separate part of working class culture.

Learning from the experience of Michael Thornhill's FJ Holden, which was said to be cold and documentary-like, the writer director John Duigan seems to have turned this into a good but not highly accurate adventure story.

The relationships between the male and female kids, for example, are unusually trouble free.

The wild men of Wonthaggi are a bit too good to be true. They are incrediably non-sexist and supportive, as well as being very uncomplaining about their failure to find work.

In the effort to make the film appeal to the kind of kids it's about, Duigan has romanticised the relationships and the lifestyle.

Shoplifting is fun and no-one gets caught. The episode of pure farce, where the kids sneak into the Southern Cross (one of Melbourne's swankiest hotels) and order themselves a poolside midnight feast is fun but self-indulgent.

They wouldn't have got away with it even if they had the guts to try it.

But the worst example of romantic gloss over is in the treatment of the deserted warehouse which they make their home.

There is a bit of Enid Blyton in the way a dank, probably rat infested, cold, damp and leaking dump of a place magically becomes home.

The camera is so concerned to show us individual faces and through them individual responses to the events that it tends to ignore physical surroundings.

Duigan almost seems to think that this style could prov[ide an] alternative, if it [lets] straight society['s] let them get away wit[h it].

And although the[y] is supposed to be about on the dole very ... the demoralisation, ... loneliness and frustration ... that peculiar state of ... ence can be seen in the boys from Wonthaggi.

effects

On the contrary, cheerfulness, kindness each other and p... all and sundry ... face of what w... about the effects o... ployment, partic... kids.

Their creative adventurous respo... atypical, and either didn't know enough the real effects of long joblessness to make the... or he hopes to inspire victims to take a sim... creative way out.

And yet if that wa... maker's intention, he ... it an impossibility ... way in which he ... story.

The gentle Jeanie up behind bars, wh... where we first ... girls, and the ... Carrie opts for self... ion.

Here Duigan is rel... in his exposure of the capitalism kicks a ... when she's down.

He seems to be ... that one either destroy oneself (as Carrie, by selling he... to anyone who'll bu... spending the proc... drugs) or be destroyed.

It's a pity he hasn't ... about the struggle for ... ism.

Sendy too far away

THE Communist Party was hounded and persecuted for decades. Now it has become trendy.

Comrades Come Rally!, a book of reminiscences by John Sendy about his life in the party, is being reviewed in the literary pages of the daily papers. It has come out in a slick edition, at the outrageous price of $9.45.

By Tom O'Lincoln

Times have changed since the days when a similar book, by Ralph Gibson, had to be published by the party press and sold for $1.75.

The great virtue of this book is that it shows Communists are human. Reviewers have been agog at Sendy's portrayal of likeable people, who loved Australia and had normal virtues and failings.

Who can resist a smile at the tale of Australian Communists on a study tour in China, becoming ridiculously sozzled and extolling the virtues of beer in drunken voices, to the polite astonishment of their hosts?

ignorance

Or the time Sendy and Eric Aarons almost came to blows in a basketball game — largely because, in their ignorance of the rules, they were playing it more like football.

For students of Communist history, the book is essential reading. There are portrayals of party leaders, including a chapter on the Aarons family ("the royal family of Australian Communism").

There is the inside story on factional struggles, including differences between Aarons and the Taft-Sendy group in Victoria.

If Sendy had stuck to telling anecdotes there would be little more to say.

But he announces in his introduction that he wants *"to throw some light on the fate of the Communist Party of Australia, and to offer some hints for its possible rejuvenation."*

Here the book is a failure, and worse.

His account of history is dishonest in at least one important point.

The experience of the NSW Builders' Labourers was one of the most important periods in modern party history, yet Sendy gives it only two paragraphs.

And that in the middle of a chapter mainly devoted to the student and New Left entitled "The Ultra-Left Upsurge".

In a pious lecturing tone he writes:

"Had the green bans movement and the various innovations and experiments of the New South Wales BLF been combined with methods of work, which, as the Chinese say, were modest and prudent, and which guarded against arrogance and impetuosity, the fight within the BLF would have ended differently."

But what did Sendy and his fellow Victorian leaders, not to mention prominent party union officials, do to defend the NSW BLF against Gallagher's intervention? Sweet F.A.

The tut-tutting of the Victorians was best answered by Jack Mundey himself at the time.

"Yes, mistakes, but always keep in mind that had other unions displayed working class solidarity with the democratically elected NSW leadership . . . the 'invasion' would have certainly failed."

What hints does Sendy offer for the rejuvenation of the CPA? Precious little.

The party is too radical, he says, it should moderate its tone and draw closer to the ALP.

A Communist Party Executive meeting in 1967. John Sendy is fifth from the right.

biggest

The ALP will *"play an important part in any socialist transformation in Australia"*, and might even remain the biggest party!

The logic of his position is not to rejuvenate the CPA, but to dissolve it into the Labor Party.

Why not do just that? The party, after all, is moving visibly rightward.

In a recent article, Left Tendency leader Bob Durbridge complained that the CPA is being pulled away from the radical pose it struck in the early 1970's, which led him and others like him to join the party.

In a recent article in Australian Left Review, Eric Aarons argues that the capitalist state can be democratised and reformed.

But if you're going to be reformist, why not get with the strength? No doubt many CPA members will be asking themselves this question over the next few years.

John Sendy has retired to the bush. Perhaps he did so too soon.

He may shortly get the kind of Communist Party he wants: "modest and prudent" . . . and utterly dead.

"ON OUR COLLECTIVE: A Red Rev[ue]"

Everything you always KNEW about politicians, junkies, etc BUT WERE TOO POLITE TO SA[Y]

Friday August 25 and Sunday August 27 8.[30 pm]

Paddington Town Hall, Sydney

JIMMY BLACKSMITH PANNED UNFAIRLY

Dear Battlers,

Thank goodness I did not let Dave Nadel's panning of "The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith" stop me going to see it.

Dave Nadel's attacks on the film and director Fred Schepisi as "racist and thoroughly negative" (Battler No. 55) were totally unjustified.

First he claims that the film was nearly black-banned by the Theatrical Employees Union "because of Schepisi's reluctance to use union labour in making the film".

That's hardly fair. The problem, as I understand it, was that the film required a large number of black actors, and Schepisi had to to hire non-unionists because there aren't many black actors around.

That seems to be more a reflection of the subjugation of blacks and their culture in Australia, than of any anti-union attitudes of Schepisi's.

criticism

Dave Nadel's main criticism is that "the story encourages white guilt without commanding real respect for blacks".

I'm not sure how that makes it "racist". But anyway, the film doesn't set out to inspire "respect".

Instead, the film sets out to make the audience *identify* with Jimmy Blacksmith, so they can understand how disgusting the racism is that he cops throughout the film, and why he lashes out against it.

And identify they do. Jimmy Blacksmith spends the last fifteen minutes of the film clutching a rag to a hideous bullet-wound in his mouth. When the lights went on, I looked round — and over half the audience had their hands to their mouths in sympathy with him!

Certainly, by showing Jimmy's axe-murders of old women and children, the film ignores the more admirable examples of black resistance last century.

But that doesn't make it useless, as Dave seems to think.

One of the ruling class's favourite lies is that criminals and misfits are themselves to blame for being what they are, in this best of all possible worlds.

And when the criminals and misfits are black — that just "proves" that blacks are no-hopers anyway.

"Jimmy Blacksmith" tackles this lie head-on.

The whole first half of the film shows us (through Jimmy's eyes) the unrelenting barrage of racism that blacks face from white society. The snide patronising, the brutal insults, the economic exploitation.

It doesn't try to paint any pretty pictures of the victims (like Dave Nadel seems to want). Instead it makes us understand why Jimmy Blacksmith lashes out so viciously.

society

Because he's not a "psychotic" like Dave Nadel makes out. He's just been pushed a little further by the society around him than all the drunks who try to escape by destroying themselves.

The film also shows us how futile this individual rebellion is. The cold, clinical hangman who keeps bobbing up during the film is a constant reminder of how efficiently the State deals with individual rebels like Blacksmith without batting an eyelid.

"Jimmy Blacksmith" is no incendiary masterpiece, inspiring us with acts of heroic rebellion like Dave Nadel seems to expect.

But "racist"? Certainly not.

And "thoroughly negative"?

I would save that description for Dave's review.

Ken Stevens
Melbourne.

Dear Battlers,

ABOUT TIME SOME OF US WOKE UP!

Dear Battlers,

As many of us know, members of the Liquor and Allied Trades Union in Sydney hotels have just had a three day strike.

It was one of the most pathetic strikes I have ever seen. Not one hotel was closed, due to widespread strike-breaking by hotel managements.

In fact the manager of the Wentworth Hotel said the strike cost him nothing.

But there's something even more disgusting than that.

Not only were the pubs open during a strike, but they were full of left-wingers buying beer from the strike-breakers.

When I chipped some Communist Party and I.S. members, all they could do was laugh or make weak excuses.

One person said, *"The award allows management to work during strikes."*

Another said, *"Management are not union members and therefore don't have to strike."*

In fact, you could say those things about any strike. I'd expect such statements from Tony Street, not revolutionary socialists.

It's time a few of us woke up.

Dave Shaw
Sydney

Sloppy economics

Dear Battlers,

I have been concerned for some time about the misleading nature of Battler articles on the economy.

In trying to write "popular articles", the writers often oversimplify things to such an extent that the articles are - totally confusing or just plain wrong.

There is a common belief throughout much of the trade union movement and the left that the present crisis can somehow be resolved by increasing demand (eg by increased government spending or higher wages).

In other words, the system can be patched up and there is no need for socialism.

Unfortunately the Battler, by the confused nature of its economic articles, does not clearly distinguish from such "analyses" and at times it seems to agree that increased spending would help solve things.

What is one to make of the following paragraph from the last Battler: *"Lack of demand, high unemployment and capital being switched away from manufacturing industry are all elements of the crisis which have slowed economic growth and forced down inflation".*

This explains nothing and could have been written by a capitalist economist. It just touches on the surface flows and ignores the underlying economic forces at work.

The present crisis has not been brought about by lack of demand, unemployment or switches in the investment policy of capitalists.

profits

Rather it is a result of the decline in profit rates throughout the world over the last ten years or so.

The capitalists are attempting to reverse this fall in the rate of profit by forcing down workers wages, social services etc.

This is what is behind all Fraser's concern over inflation.

Thus talk of decreased demand, shifts in investment etc just obscures the real issue.

They are the symptoms of a system in crisis and "curing" them will change nothing.

Mick Armstrong
Sydney

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state — parliament, courts, the law — is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If thats the sort of work you want to do

JOIN US!

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

Defending the Sydney 74

What's On

SYDNEY — Sat Aug 19
Tal Al Zataar. Main speaker — John Troy MLA, WA. Public meeting to found Palestine Solidarity Committee. Trades Hall, Goulburn St, 3 pm.

SYDNEY — Sun Aug 20
Gay Solidarity Group. Motorcade to Parramatta and picnic in Parramatta Park. Motorcade leaves 11 am from CAMP, 33a Glebe Point Rd, Glebe.

SYDNEY — Sun Aug 20
I.S meeting. Future directions for the BLF. Speakers from BL's for Democratic Control. 111 Enmore Rd, Newtown. Friends of I.S. welcome. 7 pm

SYDNEY — Thur Aug 24
Gay Solidarity Group meets every Thursday 6 pm at CAMP, 33a Glebe Point Rd, Glebe.

SYDNEY — Fri Aug 25
"Homosexuals at work" — the fourth national homosexual conference. Paddington Town Hall Centre, Aug 25-27.

SYDNEY — Fri Aug 25
"On our collective: A Red Revue", Paddington Town Hall, 8.30 pm. Tickets $3.50 or $2.50 concession, available from David Jones and the information counter, Wentworth Building, Sydney Uni., City Road. Also on Sun Aug 27.

MELBOURNE — Mon Aug 21
Melbourne I.S. general meeting. Main Topic — "The Sanyo Work-in". Unitarian church, Grey St, East Melbourne, 7.30pm.

CANBERRA — Mon Aug 21
I.S. branch meeting, Ainslie. Ring 49 4605 for details.

SYDNEY I.S. members have been heavily involved in the Gay Solidarity Group.

This is leading the defence campaign for the 74 people arrested in the recent police attacks on the gay mardi gras and two following demonstrations.

G.S.G. has a number of activities planned, as part of the ongoing defence campaign. On Sunday 20th August there will be a motorcade leaving CAMP at 33a Glebe Point Road at 11 am.

drive

The idea is to drive slowly through the city to Parramatta Park, with as many cars as possible emblazoned with banners and placards.

The bands, "Leroy's Layabouts" and "Wasted Daze" have offered to play for free in Parramatta Park, in support of G.S.G. demands.

On Sunday 27th August, G.S.G. and a number of women's groups are organising a counter-demonstration against a Right to Life rally in Hyde Park.

The week-end of the 25-27th August is also the week-end of the 4th National Homosexual Conference, "Homosexuals at Work". Two I.S. members are offering a paper.

THOUSANDS of Clayton residents have signed their names to demand a hospital for their area.

The Queen Vic Now Committee held a rally in Clayton shopping centre on 30 July. The Melbourne Southeast branch of the I.S. was out in force, handing out leaflets and joining in the spruiking.

Demonstrators and shoppers agreed that the petition by itself would not melt the hearts of the Hamer government. Residents will have to take militant action if the health needs of the community are ever to be met.

International Socialists

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 24 hour answering and message machine	376-9142 376 2783
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	376-2783
MELBOURNE GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	387 6351
SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown 2042	51-3665
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49-7939
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	49 6405
BRISBANE PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067	358 3978
IPSWICH, QLD.	281 6113

1975

THE UTAH SETTLEMENT

Who really came out best?

WHO needs to win the Pools? Not the shareholders in Utah.

Because now that all the dust has settled down, it's clear that Utah are the big winners from the recent six-week miners strike.

By Phil Griffiths

Last year, Utah made nearly $80,000 profit, after tax, from each and every one of its employees. So it was always in a position to meet the miners' demand for higher pay.

They hadn't had a rise since the original Utah agreement was thrashed out in 1971.

That's when Utah was only making $8 million a year and their overaward payment was a significant part of their pay.

Utah realised it couldn't stop the miners winning a pay rise. For every dollar lost in wages, Utah was losing around $10 in production.

The miners, with strong organisation and a tradition of local organising had Utah over a barrel. In fact, their position is so favourable, it's a wonder it hasn't been used to advantage before.

Utah decided that if its wages bill was going up, then it would get something in return. It hit the miners with a demand for seven-day production.

miners

Before the strike, most miners worked a five day week, mostly on either day shift, permanent afternoon shift or permanent night shift.

Weekend work was overtime and was voluntary. Only FEDFA had agreed to seven-day-a-week rosters.

The union estimates that continuous shift rosters would have added $20 million to Utah's profit in a year.

And most importantly of all, it would have destroyed the sporting and social life in the isolated Central Queensland towns where the miners live.

With continuous shifts, it would be impossible to organise sporting teams, social functions and normal recreational activity.

In fact, a decision by the Miners Federation convention, held every two years, stated that the union was against continuous shifts in principle.

In other words, there was no legal or political way that the Miners Federation officials could have agreed to continuous shifts even if they'd wanted to.

minds

And in case the thought had crossed their minds, the rank and file reminded them of its attitude. They were flooded with telegrams telling them off for even negotiating with Utah on the issue!

But Utah was determined to get something for itself out of the dispute when it finally gave in. So instead of formal continuous shifts, it has offered a productivity bonus of $63 a week, provided that the 1977 production level is exceeded by 5%.

This is a major concession to Utah. Like all productivity deals, it ties the workers to the bosses' aims of higher production and higher profits. It includes a no-strike bonus (the first $55) to con the men into maintaining current production levels at least.

It will mean that Utah will have a lot less trouble getting workers to volunteer for weekend loading shifts. Finding willing workers for the seven day a week loading has been a problem in the past.

The bonus is tied to the amount of coal actually railed out.

The production bonus means that Utah could produce $36 million more coal a year for virtually no more investment. And that will mean another $20 million profit; exactly what it was looking for in the first place with its continuous shifts demand.

In fact, it's such a bonanza for Utah that the increase in production will, on its own, be almost enough to pay the entire, total wages bill for the company.

In other words, the miners could have had their pay doubled for the same increase in productivity and Utah would still have come out ahead.

bonus

Naturally, being a productivity bonus, there will be no new jobs created for unemployed workers.

The agreement will do nothing to build union organisation in the Utah towns. The bonus will divide workers rather than unite them. And it pretends that higher pay can be gained by working harder.

In other areas, miners are using the Utah deal to make similar demands on their employers.

Eight hundred workers employed by Thiess Dampier Mitsui at Moura and Kianga are on strike demanding a production bonus of about $60 a week.

The Utah settlement made a mockery of the wage indexation "principles". But because of Utah's exceptional profits and the miners' isolation, the Utah strike wasn't a test case for the whole indexation system the way the Latrobe Valley strike was.

It was quite clear to everybody that the Latrobe workers had to break the indexation guidelines if they were to win. They had the muscle and they came close until the officials sent them back.

Because their strike directly threatened the guidelines, because workers throughout Melbourne and around the country saw it as a test case, the government simply couldn't afford to lose.

attempt

But the Utah miners were strong enough to rely on the strength of their own union. And no attempt was made by the ACTU or any union officials to draw in other workers into a full-scale assault on indexation.

The Utah miners have proved that a group of workers with enough unity and profit-hurting muscle can win big rises.

But for a decisive breakthrough on wages, we'll have to wait for another struggle.

"Another $20 million profit; exactly what Utah was looking for..."

Utah general manager T. R. Winterer — he won't be upset at the deal.

RMIT cleaners win 36hr week

CLEANERS and trade workers at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology have won a 36 hour week.

Their campaign started with a 1½ day stoppage on June 16. Then followed sectional rolling stoppages and overtime bans, and a protest picket on July 20.

Ninety per cent of the staff at RMIT already had the 36 hour week. They were in clerical, administrative and educational areas.

But the RMIT Council stalled on the cleaners' claim. They shuffled it through committees for six months, then tried to get the Trades Hall Council to take the issue to Arbitration.

provoked

This move provoked the first action.

The RMIT Council is worried about flow-ons to other colleges. They have negotiated a nine-day fortnight to try and obscure the victory.

by Tom Freeman

AUDI SITE WINS WET PAY

AWU members working for Audi at ICI's Botany plant have won a big improvement in their wet weather agreement.

The AWU agreement only gives one hour pay when work is rained off. This is one of the worst agreements in the construction industry.

Now the Audi workers have won four hours pay for each day lost, and 32 hours per month. Not up to the best of agreements, but a massive improvement on what they had.

The union has been [illegible] over twice in the courts trying to get a general change in the award. Now the [illegible] being fought site by site.

The workers at [illegible] went out after they'd [illegible] sent home two days in a row with almost nothing to show for it.

They were out for two weeks, and [illegible] management for dragging the strike out. Delegate Gerard said: *"It could have been settled a week ago.*

"Management offered the same terms then, but they'd only give us a verbal agreement. That's no good because they can change their mind anytime they want.

"It took them a week to offer us something in writing."

BUS CREWS WANT FARE GO

"LABOR won the election on *our* backs and now Wran's going back on his promise".

This was the general feeling at the four hour stop work meeting of Newcastle and Sydney bus crews.

Conductors and drivers were protesting against the NSW State Government, which has failed to meet its promises of increased gratuities payments.

For the last three elections in NSW, Labor has gained a lot of election mileage out of public transport issues. In the last election "Nifty Nev" based most of his winning campaign on how public transport would improve with him in the Premier's seat.

The bus crews know they are important to Wran and they're sick of years of empty promises. They want action now.

At the Sydney meeting there was discussion of a work to rules campaign and a withdrawal of support for the ALP until they honoured their promises.

However these suggestions were rejected. Instead the meeting decided to give Neville Wran one last chance.

A deputation from the union will go to the Premier to outline the gratuities demands. Wran has three weeks to come good. Otherwise, there will be another four hour stoppage.

The spotlight is on you, Neville.

by Pam Townshend

SCABS GET THE BOOT

200 march on steel works

IN Wollongong on Thursday 3rd August, two hundred workers marched on the steelworks and occupied Number Five blast furnace for seven hours, kicking off scabs.

Workers for Transfield, on a contract job relining the blast furnace, had been out for nearly three weeks over a $15 parity claim.

They picketed the site for a few weeks. But a subcontractor was bringing in scabs all the time.

So the workers marched on the steelworks, and burst through the north gate of Australian Iron and Steel.

Security guards could not stop them entering.

Significantly, amongst the marchers were South Korean migrants, who have previously been considered "backward" by other unionists.

The marchers were accompanied by Merv Nixon of the South Coast Trades and Labour Council, and several union officials.

Now the officials are under pressure from the Wran Labor Government to back down from militant tactics.

One FIA organizer claimed: *"Pat Hills (NSW Minister for Industrial Relations) will fix things up."*

Following the occupation, Transfield under pressure from BHP – broke their agreement not to work the site for 24 hours while negotiations went on.

They brought the scabs back the next day.

The company also complained about lack of action by the cops, who made no attempt to stop the workers entering the site.

During the next few days there was a build up of expectation of a clash between workers and police.

But last Thursday, a week after the occupation, the workers were presented with a set of back-off resolutions from the South Coast TLC. These were pushed through the meeting by trade union officials.

There was some opposition from militants, but it was not well organised and half the delegates were away collecting money. As a result of the back-off, the march on the steelworks was not repeated.

One worker said in disgust: *"We could have got rid of the scabs the first day. Three weeks out and we have got nothing."*

Transfield workers are getting strong support from the rest of steelworks, who have also been holding stoppages over an award claim.

by Phil Lee

Transfield workers in Wollongong march on the steelworks to kick out scabs.

Workers breaking through the north gate of Australian Iron and Steel. They later occupied a blast furnace on the site for 7 hours.

Qantas victory

WORKERS at Dillingham's Qantas site have won reinstatement of a worker who was sacked after being provoked into a fight with a foreman.

The workers objected to the unfair protection given to the foreman, who was only suspended for a few weeks while the worker, Borry Tokic, was sacked.

They made it clear that the two men involved in the fight must be treated equally. *And when* Dillinghams brought the foreman back on the site, the workers went out the gate for four days.

This won the reinstatement of Borry — though Commissioner Heffernan said it was because the two men had shaken hands in front of him!

Dillinghams deliberately provoked the strike by bringing the foreman back on the job, immediately after a number of other claims has been settled.

At a meeting on 28th July, Dillinghams agreed to scrub everyone's record of "warnings".

This gives a temporary solution.

But as one worker pointed out, "They won't actually forget what was in the records. And anyway they just start giving new warnings from that day."

The only outstanding claim at the moment concerns wet weather work.

RAINY WORK RAISES STORM

"THE union's proposal was unanimously rejected by a vote of 304 to nil.

"I can't recall a time when a union proposal has been unanimously rejected before."

A Seatainers clerk, working at White Bay, described the results of a "very stormy" meeting of waterside container clerks, held in Sydney on July 27th.

The Federated Clerks Union had presented a package deal giving them $9.10, including $1.30 site allowance. This is way below gains made by other waterfront unions.

The men also objected to a wet weather loading in the deal, which was supposed to satisfy long standing claims against wet weather work.

One clerk commented: "We don't want a wet weather loading – we don't want to work in the rain. The meeting supported working in the rain under any conditions."

Another clerk [illegible]: "They call it a package. But that's just a cunning way of building little things into it."

The day before, container clerks [illegible] conventional [illegible] clerks had also rejected a package deal which [illegible] $4.80 site allowance.

BLs BLACK DAY

THE Gallagher-Black machine has won the NSW BLF elections.

Militant builders labourers were shocked to learn last week that they had won by nearly 200 votes (687 to 481) in a very high turn-out.

By David Shaw, BLF

How did they win? BL's for Democratic Control had a clear majority on all the major jobs and we expected an easy victory.

We were mistaken. Steve Black and his team won the election by the same tactics that Laurie Short has used for twenty years in the Ironworkers' union.

The door-knock campaign undoubtedly got Black the winning votes.

These votes were not from the politically conscious workers, the active BLF members. They were from workers who were either apathetic or unaware of the position in the BLF.

Black and Co used every trick in the book to appeal to right-wing sentiments.

They attacked the militant Qantas workers as "shit-stirrers". They launched right-wing, anti-communist attacks on former communist BLF leaders like Joe Owens and Jack Mundey.

storms

And they spread ridiculous scare stories about links with the KGB.

Throughout the entire campaign, the Black officials failed to come up with one single policy dealing with builders labourers' interests.

Instead their entire campaign consisted of lies, slander and intimidation.

Gallagher and Black threw the whole union machine behind their election campaign.

About thirty organisers from NSW and interstate worked against us in the doorknock – all paid out of union funds.

Interstate branches poured funds into Black's campaign. For good measure, Dillinghams sacked two of our candidates.

Any rank and file team standing against a right-wing gangster leadership should expect all these things. We in BL's for Democratic Control were not sufficiently prepared for it.

Well known Gallagher supporter Peter Galvin summed up the official position well. He told one of our supporters, *"We'll win because we play dirty and you can play clean."*

branch

We had our first branch meeting after the election last Tuesday.

Black and his supporters used it to have a bit of a gloat, and make speeches about unity in the BLF and so on.

But he went on to say that *"splitters and disrupters would not be tolerated."*

This probably means candidates in a future election.

The most disturbing aspect of the branch meeting was the disputes report. Of the nine disputes reported, *seven* were demarcation disputes.

The BLF is now in real danger of being wrecked in NSW. It is already completely isolated from the rest of the trade union movement.

The branch meeting decided to increase union dues by, up to ten dollars a half year.

That would be fine, if we got value for money. Instead union money is mispent on election campaigns and court cases denying Joe Owens, Bob Pringle and Jack Mundey their union tickets.

Black offers "Unity". But these are just hollow words.

You can't have unity with people who refuse to deal with the real issues for BL's like unemployment and subcontracting, and who continue to threaten and stand over any opposition.

elections

The triennial elections come up late next year, and we will have another chance to get rid of Black and Co.

The 500 votes for BL's for Democratic Control are the votes of active supporters.

They form the basis for an ongoing rank and file movement to make the BLF a decent union again.

WHAT WE THINK

THE BLF election result is a setback for all militant building workers.

The danger now is that militant BL's will adopt an attitude of "Let's sit back until next year's election for another crack at Black."

The victimizations, the sackings and the running down of conditions in the industry will not wait until next year's election.

If anything they will quicken now that the bosses' man is back in the driver's seat.

The task for Builders Labourers for Democratic Control is to build the resistance to this downward slide.

The BL's for Democratic Control have a strong program of policies that can defend the jobs and conditions of workers in the industry.

Now they must start fighting for these demands. For instance, some sites have forced the main contractors to do all hiring for the job, instead of using subbies.

The BL's for Democratic Control need to build struggles like this in the sites recruit new members into the rank-and-file group . . . establish a permanent regular news bulletin for the industry.

They need to mobilize the members into campaigns that Black and Co are too lazy and corrupt to organize themselves.

The rank-and-file has lost one battle. But the war against the bosses goes on. And each new fight provides new opportunities to spread the organization of BL's for Democratic Control.

Steve Black has out-campaigned the rank-and-file group in one election ballot.

But he will never be able to out-campaign them when it comes to actively organizing the defence of the union membership.

PHILIPS: 300 FACE SACK

WORKERS at the Philips Mendon plant in Adelaide have picketed the gate for ten days this month.

The company has been offering redundancy pay of only one day for each year of service.

The workers called off the picket last Wednesday, subject to a new offer from the company.

This was considered at a meeting on Friday. But the company had not moved substantially from its earlier position.

The meeting rejected the offer, and demanded one week per year redundancy pay.

meeting

A meeting with Commissioner Brown and the Trades and Labour Council will consider the situation further.

The claim affects almost three hundred workers who will be retrenched by the end of the year, as a result of a section being shifted to Clayton in Victoria.

JOHNS WAY NO GOOD

THERE'S nothing worse than coming on to a new site to find conditions not up to scratch.

That's what happened to workers employed by Johns and Waygood on the ICI Propathene site. The workers are riggers, crane drivers, boilermakers and trade assistants in the FIA, FEDFA and AMWSU.

For weeks the workers complained to the bosses and for weeks nothing happened. It took three weeks to get fridges and four and a half weeks to get a box of matches.

Two boilermakers became sick with fume fever because of inadequate safety.

For a smoking "shed" Johns and Waygood fenced off an area out in the open. The workers called it "the pigsty" and put a ban on it. Most other complaints were just not dealt with.

On top of that, J & W tried to bring subbies on the job. And they refused to employ workers because of their union record. This was clear victimisation.

Enough was enough and everyone went out the gate. After eight days on the grass J & W started to move.

On Wednesday 10th August the whole site turned up in the Arbitration Court.

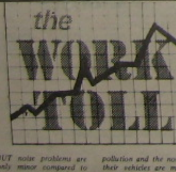
This put the pressure right on the judge and the bosses, especially as the whole site took part in the conciliation hearing. Workers in the public gallery asked questions and made comments throughout.

Eventually the bosses agreed to most of the unions' demands and everyone returned to work with most of the complaints on conditions sorted out.

There is still a ban on subbies coming on the job. There is also a ban on new labour until the company hires a boilermaker it has tried to victimise.

by an FIA member, ICI.

the WORK TOLL



TRAM and Bus drivers in Melbourne are refusing to drive noisy vehicles.

Thirty drivers from Preston, North Fitzroy and Camberwell depots had hearing tests organized by the tramways Rank-and-File group.

All the bus drivers and most of the tram drivers were suffering some hearing loss.

The drivers are not seeking compensation because of fear that they'll be put off as being unfit for work. Instead, they'll keep their claims quite till they retire.

The union executive is dragging its feet. They have not acted on motions from depots asking that the union measures noise levels and sets a "safe" maximum.

BUT noise problems are only minor compared to heart and respiratory disease, a tram driver told Work Toll.

Many workers are suffering from nervous asthma. Heart disease amongst drivers is twice that of conductors.

The traffic, the pollution and the noise of their vehicles are making invalids of many drivers.

WHAT is the highest occupational risk group in Britian?

If you answer coal miners, steel workers, or oil workers in the treacherous North Sea you'd be wrong.

A startling survey found that company directors were the highest risk group with 22 times the average mortality rate from, wait for it, cirrhosis of the liver!

IN AUSTRALIA good luck has saved us from the horrible tragedies of exploding gas tankers that have occurred in Spain and Mexico recently.

But residents in country towns along the Hume highway linking Melbourne and Sydney are living in fear. The Victorian Liberal government has refused to proclaim the Liquidfield Gases Act passed in 1968.

Not a month passes without some report of a spillage of dangerous chemicals or leaking gas. The State government reply to Kilmore Council's request for an alternative route was a bland "has been noted."

The Kilmore Free Press dialled the emergency phone numbers painted on two ethylene tankers parked in the town. These numbers are supposed to raise a trained safety officer capable of giving exact instructions on coping with a particular liquid or chemical.

Instead, the person answering couldn't speak adequate English, and knew nothing about dangerous chemicals.

Even if the numbers worked, they'd be next to useless in a tanker explosion situation.

by Steve Morgan

TELECOM GOES FOR PENAL LASH

BLF election result - p.11

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

TELECOM is setting the stage for a massive industrial confrontation with its application for the penal powers clause to be used against the ATEA.

Telecom is refusing to negotiate and has now stood down over 2,000 workers to try and crush union bans which have been in force in some states since April.

The bans have been producing free STD calls all over Australia and have cost Telecom millions.

The ATEA technicians placed the bans because of the threat to jobs and skills under a new grading system.

imposed

The new grades have been imposed by Telecom as part of a plan to introduce computer controlled telephone exchanges. They also make skills learned for the electro-mechanical crossbar system redundant.

A tradesman who has served his time and has seven years experience as a technician with Telecom has no way of improving his wage under the new grading structure.

He will be paid about $10,000 a year basic pay after seven years. But he will not be able to advance to the higher grade of technician or technical officer.

Instead, Telecom will reward skills with computerised equipment. These will go to the technical officer grades which require academic qualifications.

Telecom claims that mature age bridging courses allow tradesmen to become technical officers.

But there are less than 100 course placements for a workforce of 10,000 tradesmen and assistants.

In the meantime, Telecom has classified the grade of technician as "holding", which means no tradesman can advance to it.

Telecom is prepared to wait up to thirty years until technicians in that grade retire and it is abolished.

The penal clause application by Telecom is a direct threat to every Australian worker.

If it succeeds, it will unleash a ruling class offensive to destroy every gain made in the Clarrie O'Shea struggle ten years ago.

Bill Mansfield, the ATEA Federal Secretary, has said he is prepared to go to jail rather than bow to the threat of penal powers.

And the struggle has produced the first strike in the union's history in NSW – a 24 hour protest stoppage to back up the bans.

▲ ATEA members meet (above) at overflow Sydney meeting and (below) in Melbourne. ▼

Uranium - ACOA set to vote

FORTY ACOA members working in the Department of Social Security and the Department of Health met, in Sydney last week to hear speakers on a union plebiscite which is coming up soon.

The plebiscite has four questions. The main ones are to determine a uranium policy for the ACOA, and to decide whether we should affiliate with the ACTU.

Other questions deal with internal democratization of the union.

The number of members attending the meeting was significant, considering that ACOA officials have given no publicity to the plebiscite.

It was called at last year's Federal Conference, so the leadership have had plenty of time to circulate information and publicity.

In fact, not one skerrick of information has gone around. When we got our ballot papers at work this week, most people didn't even know what they were for.

It took rank and file ACOA members to call for this meeting through their section committees.

Assistant Secretary Gleave reluctantly agreed to speak, but held the meeting up by being twenty minutes late.

Editors of the branch journal "White Collar" didn't think it sufficiently important to include an article on the plebiscite in the last issue.

debated

At Wednesday's meeting, the uranium mining question was hotly debated.

Mike Wrenford from the Movement Against Uranium Mining spoke strongly for a uranium mining moratorium policy. A research ... from the Atomic ... Commission ... this proposal.

The MAUM ... well-reasoned, ... approach ... convince most ... opponent's ... manner and ... claims about the safe... efficiency of nuclear ... were not impressive.

The Government Employees Action Group, ... and file group of ACOA ... APSA members, ha... for a 'yes' vote ... questions on the p...

We produce a ... bulletin, called "... Collar", when ... taken a strong ... union officials ... inactive and do not ... to the membership.

by Cecilia Poole

CYSS DEMO SACKING

SHELLEY Jackson, a worker for the Community Youth Support Scheme in Sydney, has been sacked following her attendance at a demonstration.

The demonstration was against stringent guidelines recently introduced by CYSS.

Shelley's local CYSS committee, Auburn, at first refused to give reasons for sacking her. They told her *"It might embarrass you"*

Later they gave a number of reasons, including vague charges of unsatisfactory conduct and failure to co-operate. They also charged her with "inciting participants (unemployed people in the CYSS scheme) against the new guidelines."

One committee member accused her of *"brainwashing the kids politics."*

Shelley is a member of the Australian Social Welfare Union, which is campaigning against the new guideines.

Shelley said, *"The role CYSS is taking on now is job-oriented. Applying for jobs, interviewing, that kind of stuff.*

ignores

"It ignores the fact that there's not enough jobs for people – especially in the Western Suburbs."

The new guidelines involve keeping dossiers on unemployed people. Although CYSS says this is "only for statistics", details on the record cards include monthly attendance at CYSS and reasons for leaving.

In addition, it is now stated that CYSS centres are not concerned with Social welfare.

Shelley sees this as unrealistic. *"Even without the new guidelines CYSS couldn't solve any problems. There aren't any jobs available and CYSS can't do anything about that.*

"But there was still some point, because of what it's done for the kids. Getting them out of their homes, giving them friends, they can help each other."

The kids in Auburn have been boycotting the centre since Shelley got the sack.

The A.S.W.U. is mounting a campaign to get Shelley reinstated, as well as to gain an award for CYSS workers.

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MILITANTS FIGHT COURT BATTLE

By Janet Vaux

AWU delegates, Max Callaghan and Tony Perera were taken to court by the Public Transport Commission on Thursday August 3rd.

As we reported in the last issue of the Battler, Max and Tony were arrested as they left a job meeting in Redfern, for allegedly using obscene language.

Charges were laid against them by an engineer named Addinnell, a foreman, Neil Hobson, and a ganger called Siad.

The bad language is supposed to have been used when Max and Tony went to report on the results of a job meeting, and Addinnell tried to hand Max a letter giving him the sack.

Transport Minister Cox has admitted that the workers were in the right in the original dispute, concerning a full-time "nipper", and that the P.T.C. was in breach of the award.

trial

Early in the week before the trial was due, it looked as if the P.T.C. was prepared to make some concessions.

Max and Tony also expected that the trial on Thursday would be adjourned. Their lawyer was unable to attend, and the P.T.C. indicated that they would agree to an adjournment.

But things did not go smoothly in court. The P.T.C. lawyer would not agree to an adjournment, and the judge refused to adjourn.

With no lawyer to defend them, this could have meant an instant conviction for Max and Tony. But a lawyer from the Redfern Legal Centre agreed to step in at the last moment.

The hearing is due to continue in November and the P.T.C. has cancelled a planned conference, saying that issues connected with the charges are now sub judice.

From Left: Max Callaghan, Tony Perera, and two of the P.T.C. workers who went to Lidcombe Court to give them support.

discussing

They're also not discussing Max's reinstated. The P.T.C. and the union would like to go to Arbitration.

But Max's attitude is, *"I'm not going to get done in the courts."*

Instead he's busy building support among other P.T.C. workers. Shop committees on the railways have distributed 5,000 leaflets so far. P.T.C workers are also setting up a ... committee.

due

Max and Tony are due to re-appear in Lidcombe ... on November 6th. By ... time P.T.C. workers ... have built a strong ... campaign.

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS
No. 58
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INSIDE: Budget Resistance p.2,3

STOP THE POLICE ATTACKS

ATTACKS by police have reached a new high in recent weeks.

In New South Wales, the police have launched an all-out assault on the gay rights movement, culminating in 101 arrests at a peaceful march along the footpath.

In Queensland, the cops arrested 121 marchers at a Trades and Labour Council rally. Then on September 4, they arrested five people at a peaceful picket – one for "addressing a public meeting"!

IN the repressive climate under Fraser, police forces are feeling more and more cocky about flexing their muscles.

In Queensland, the harrassment of left-wingers has now become a day-to-day affair. And police recently bashed and arrested workingclass teenagers at a peaceful punk rock dance (story – page 2).

In the Sydney attack on the gay rights march, five hundred police were brought out to break up the demonstration by three hundred people.

Their 'excuse' was that the marchers might have tried to disrupt a large "Right to Life" Rally in Hyde Park.

The demonstrators marched along the footpath from the Paddington Town Hall, where the fourth National Homosexual Conference was being held. They were trapped by the cops in Taylor Square.

disperse

The marchers attempted to disperse immediately they were ordered to. One of the marshalls even informed the police they were dispersing. But the cops clearly intended to arrest as many as possible.

Within seconds of the second order to disperse, Superintendent Reg Douglas announced: *"You are all under arrest. Arrest these people."*

Sixty eight people were arrested as they attempted to leave the area in small groups. Later, another 33 people were arrested in Hyde Park.

This in effect means that gays now have no right to march or even to hold rallies in NSW.

This was not simply a case of police getting out of hand and lashing out. It was carefully planned operation which must have had the approval of Wran, the Minister for Police.

When he was elected in 1975, Wran made lots of noises about civil liberties and investigating the police.

But now Wran is more concerned with improving his law-and-order image to pick up middle-class and country votes in the coming state election.

The Liberals have been using the Long Bay prison riot (see other story this page) to accuse Wran of being weak on law-and-order issues.

Even if Wran wanted to clean up the police, he couldn't.

They have too much dirt on prominent Labor Party men like Hills, Jensen and Ducker for Wran to interfere with them.

PAGE 2: Cops arrest 121 at Brisbane rally.

WARDERS RAMPAGE AT LONG BAY

THE Central Industrial complex at Sydney's Long Bay Jail has been burned out.

A long campaign of harrassment by the screws led to a prisoners rebellion on Tuesday August 22.

The Battler has seen copies of letters from prisoners, smuggled out of Long Bay and Parramatta Jails, which tell the truth about the "riot".

These letters prove that it was screws who laid on the "riot". These are the same people criticised in the Nagle commission into the prisons, the people Neville Wran is scared to move against.

meeting

A mass meeting of prisoners was held on Friday, August 18th *"to discuss the worsening situation here."*

Complaints included delays to mail, visits in the pouring rain, arbitrary charges, lack of work and overcrowding, and the shanghai-ing to Maitland of wing delegate, Lyn Jones.

The prisoners decided to remove their prison numbers in protest, and to cease work indefinitely.

The screws reacted by stepping up their harassment, and by violently removing a number of prisoners from the jail on Monday evening.

One prisoner described how *"About 30 Special Operational Division Squad and screws armed with shotguns, mace, pistols, handcuffs, batons raced in and out of wings dragging prisoners to the vans parked in the main square."*

▲ ABOVE: Prisoners are lined up at Long Bay after the riot. BELOW: The Central Industrial Complex smoulders ▼

The real riot story

Several prisoners were hurt in the move. This is a prisoner's description of one incident.

"I saw them taking Ross Holleywell from the wing. They had Ross handcuffed and were also punching and kicking him.

"Ross appeared to be in need of medical attention. He had blood all over his face, T-shirt and arms."

Another prisoner described what happened on Tuesday, the day of the riot: *"8.35 am. Prisoners who were prepared to wear their numbers were allowed out into the yards, a few decided to stay locked up . . .*

"10.00am. Screws started arriving on the lawn . . . taunting the prisoners who were locked in the yards.

"11.00 am. It was as if a screw gave a signal, because all of a sudden a screw yelled out. All the prisoners looked to see what was happening. Then all the screws took off towards the front gate, somewhere between 50-60 of them.

panic

"This seemed to put panic into everyone. That's when the prisoners started climbing over the gates from the yards, and running everywhere.

"That's when I heard the shots, followed by the reports from the tear-gas as it was fired. I should estimate that there were 40-50 tear-gas canisters fired and several hundred rounds of ammunition . . .

"Out side the yard there were a large number of rigged-out screws beating their shields with their batons just like the Zulus do before going into battle. It was hair-raising . . .

"3.40: We were marched from the yards to our cells with our hands on our heads. When I got to my cell I found my TV set on the floor smashed.

"I have since found out that the screws went from cell to cell smashing the tele's before bringing us back to our cells. . . .

"It was three days that I'll never forget. These screws were just how I pictured the Nazis to be, powerful and a law unto themselves – a law unto themselves because they are out of the public's view and can screen any action they take."

The Long Bay riot was useful to the screws.

They can use it as further proof that prisoners are "uncontrollable", to protect the bashers named in the Nagle Report.

JAIL NEWS

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE PRISONS

In every issue of "Jail News", published by the Prisoners Action Group. Write to PO Box 215, Glebe, NSW 2037

THE BATTLE TO STOP THE BUDGET

between the lines

THANKS to a reader for sending us a clipping of an interview Bob Hawke did for Rydge's, the exclusive business and finance magazine.

Rydge's asked Bob about his negotiating method. (Small things amuse small minds).

The first point in his negotiation formula is . . .

"Honesty. I can't overestimate the importance of telling the truth."

And the man who went on TV with Jim Killen to recruit for the Army Reserve lists his third point as "don't inject into the dispute considerations that are not relevant".

Finally, he shed some light on his promise to give up drinking if he became prime minister. "Negotiators should show imagination and be prepared to come up with propositions which may appear ridiculous."

A COUPLE of months ago, a white publican in Maitland, S.A., refused to allow aboriginal teachers to attend a school breakup party in his pub.

The publican, a creep called Frank Tracey, who runs the Yorke Valley Hotel, knew at the time it was against the law to refuse service on racial grounds, and that he could be fined up to $500.

But the (white) magistrate decided that he had acted in "good conscience" and placed him on a good behaviour bond without recording a conviction.

WHAT'S the price of a fireman's life? $50 if it's New York City.

When firemen fighting a blaze called for more assistance, the city officials ordered the messages to be delayed for ten minutes.

Reason? Because the next watch would have to come on duty and they wouldn't have to pay the watch already on duty any overtime.

The delay cost six firemen their lives. The overtime would have cost about $300.

ONE BTL reader tells us what happened when he was arrested at a recent Melbourne demonstration.

The cops took him off to the local watchhouse where they tried to pump him for information.

But he wouldn't talk. Suddenly the phone rang and the cops told him to answer. "It's for you," they said, and left the room.

"Hello, it's Tony Vella from Tribune here," said the voice at the other end. "I heard you'd got arrested and thought I'd get the inside story from you."

Since Tony Vella is a right-wing union official, our friend was a little surprised to hear he was working for Tribune, the Communist Party paper.

"Sorry, what did you say your name was?"

"Er ... Alec Vella."

"Oh yes. And who puts out this Tribune?"

"Er ... the Socialist Left."

"Oh, I didn't think they put out Tribune," replied our friend.

"Er, well, it's a bit of a joint effort really."

"Ah yes. Well, what does this Socialist Left group stand for?"

"Er ... well ... it's Russia-line, actually."

"Well I'm afraid I've got no comment to make," said our friend, and hung up.

by Darth Vader

ACTU SELLS US OUT

A jeering crowd greets Fraser at the Melbourne Hilton two days after the Budget

BOB Hawke and the ACTU are busily selling out the biggest working-class upsurge in this country since the Medibank struggle in 1976.

They have refused to consider a call from a mass meeting of Victorian shop stewards for weekly half-day General Strikes, until at least September 25.

By Alec Kahn

By which time, they know that all the momentum that has built up for action against the Budget will be dissipated.

With Fraser already in trouble over the Withers affair, with the Liberals falling apart in Victoria and about to get creamed in NSW at the state election, the political situation was perfect for an offensive against Fraser.

Even the weaker sections of the ruling class were unhappy with the Budget – because the deepening recession is going to clean them out too.

But all the trade union bureaucrats and the ALP could tell us was *"Vote Labor in two years time."*

The anger against the Budget produced an immediate working-class response. The wharves struck in Sydney and Melbourne, building workers marched, and militant demonstrations pelted Fraser with eggs in Melbourne and Hobart.

suck

But all that Bob Hawke could do was suck up to the Arbitration Commission, springing to their defence against some throwaway lines in the Budget speech.

Wharfie leader Ted Bull neatly summed it up in Melbourne, when he said, *"Let the ACTU give us a clarion call to action."*

Unfortunately, Bob Hawke has learned from the 1975 battle over Supply.

Then he made a chance remark that, *"If the Liberals block Supply, we might too."*

The whole working-class immediately started thinking about a General Strike.

So Hawke deliberately refused to make any comments on industrial action to strengthen this time.

anger

The anger continued in mass rallies in all major cities. Ten thousand in Sydney, eight thousand in Melbourne, seven thousand in Adelaide, four thousand (and 121 arrests) in Brisbane.

But under the barrage of boring, do-nothing speeches, morale sunk.

The trouble with the Hawke's solution of voting Labor in two year's time, is that even if we could wait that long, it wouldn't solve anything.

The crisis is a global crisis, a crisis of the whole system, and voting Labor won't put a stop to it.

The fight-back against the Budget has been broken up for the moment.

But the Budget also heralds a wholescale attack on our wages. Even the last remaining vestiges of indexation will be further cut back.

In this situation, we can expect more major struggles against the Government.

And next time, we'll be better prepared to stop the sell-outs and backtracking.

"Give us a clarion call"

Stewards vote for a fight

Victorian shop stewards applaud a call for action to fight the Budget

AFTER the initial burst of outrage against Fraser, about two thousand shop stewards rallied in Melbourne to work out further action against the Budget.

The Trades Hall Council, as usual, had nothing to propose (except an ACTU Congress).

But two action proposals came up from the floor.

The first, put up by John Halfpenny and the AMWSU, argued for weekly half-day General Strikes.

The second, proposed by a group of ten militant shop stewards, called for a minimum of one week's General Strike, with a Victorian 24-hour stoppage and mass rally leading up to it.

Halfpenny argued against this, called it a "one-week wonder". He claimed that his own proposal would mean a sustained campaign against the Government, and would eventually bring it down.

This is doubtful. Fraser will not be beaten by everyone working a 36-hour week, which is what Halfpenny's strategy amounted to.

In fact, there are probably a lot of bosses around right now who are overstocked and would like the idea.

The campaign would hardly be sustained, either. Most workers would get sick very quickly of doing four hours pay for no good result, and the struggle would simply fizzle out.

The real reason the shop stewards voted for the Halfpenny proposal was because they doubted that the rank-and-file was ready to try anything stronger.

This is a serious consideration. But it is a mistake to adopt a dead-end strategy simply because the alternative seems too radical.

At that meeting, the left officials had a responsibility to bite the bullet and put forward the way to win.

Above: Cops hoe into demonstrators at the Sydney Stock Exchange. But they couldn't stop the damage shown at right. Top Right: ACTU junior vice-president Jim Roulston addresses the Melbourne rally.

The great Stock Exchange crash

THE most spectacular demonstration against the Budget came in Sydney.

About 10,000 gathered to hear Neville Wran and Bill Hayden roundly condemn the Fraser Government.

But the ALP wasn't proposing a march or indeed, any form of action.

So 1,000 angry demonstrators decided to march anyway.

militant

Led by militant building workers from the ICI site, they went to Telecom headquarters to express solidarity with the ATEA's struggle. Then they turned back and headed for the Stock Exchange.

The Stock Exchange was a particularly appropriate target. They were the only people in Australia to celebrate after Fraser's Horror Budget. When the march arrived, there were only six police guarding the building. So they burst through and proceeded to break windows and daub slogans of "Make the Rich Pay" on the walls.

The stockbrokers had hastily locked the doors to the main exchange floor. So the demonstrators were unable to get right through to the nerve-centre of the building.

When the police re-inforcements arrived, they picked out ten demonstrators to carry the can for the damage done.

Two face jail terms over charges of causing $4300 damage each to the building (even though they didn't – in fact, one was nowhere near the "scene of the crime".)

Most of the others have been charged with assault. A majority are unionists.

Hayden and Wran were quick to dissociate themselves from the march, and condemn the damage to property.

But the action at the stock exchange did a lot more to hurt the ruling-class than the empty rhetoric and whingeing from Labor parliamentarians.

Demonstrations that physically express the anger of the working-class are a hell of a lot more threatening to the bosses, than all the fine words in the world.

Because just like a strike, it's their pockets that are getting hit by the damage.

And more importantly, they know that if the tactic spreads amongst workers, their system is really going to be tottering.

WHITE COLLAR WORKERS REBEL

ONE of the big gains from the Budget struggle was the leap forward in militancy by white collar workers.

On Budget Day itself, angry white-collar workers in Canberra shouted down treasurer John Howard when he tried to address them at a rally.

Then at a meeting called by CAGEO (the public servants ACTU) in Sydney, members of the "Grey Collar" rank and file group tried to move a motion calling for immediate strike action.

support

This motion would have had lots of support. There were many militant Medibank workers at the meeting, whose jobs are threatened by the Budget.

But the chair bureaucratically ruled the motion out of order.

The CAGEO officials weren't so successful in Melbourne. The powerful ACOA Reform Group had an amendment calling for sectional meetings to consider industrial action.

Rather than risk being routed, the officials accepted this amendment into their do-nothing motion.

But then another, even tougher amendment came up, this time calling for four hour stoppages to accompany the meetings.

The officials were in complete disarray. The groupers amongst them were trying to go back to the original motion, the rest were trying to think of reasons why stoppages were a bad idea.

In the end, the thousand strong meeting carried the motion for four hour stoppages by a whacking four-to-one majority.

4,000 RALLY TO FIGHT BJELKE

THE campaign of mass defiance against Queensland's right-to-march laws got another boost on August 21.

In the largest rally in Brisbane for several months, 4000 trade unionists and supporters protested against the budget and state government policies.

By Carole Ferrier

After the three-hour rally, a motion to march was put and overwhelmingly carried. About 500 marchers then stepped out onto the road.

As usual, we were met by hundreds of cops. They moved in and arrested 121 of us.

The march would have been much bigger, except for the 2½ hours of speeches which preceded it.

Nonetheless, the rally was an important step forward in drawing more workers into the struggle. The Trades and Labour Council has been slow in supporting past marches, but this time it was trying to mobilize workers for a 24-hour stoppage.

And despite the Queensland ALP consistently backing off from any confrontation with Bjelke, individual members have been drawn into the struggle.

Most prominent is Senator George Georges, who was attacked by the ALP for getting arrested last year. He has even been threatened with loss of his senate nomination.

Nevertheless, he is now planning to present a petition to state parliament in October demanding the restoration of the right to march.

sustained

Meanwhile, the ruling class and the Queensland cops are keeping up a sustained attack on left-wingers and civil liberties activists.

Not just with arrests at marches, but harrassment at their homes as well.

Civil liberties activists get summonses delivered in the middle of the night on charges like giving out leaflets, carrying banners and disobeying traffic directions.

More recently, people speaking at pickets or taking up collections have been charged with "using their voice as an amplifier."

Special branch cops patrol past people's houses and prepare files for Bjelke to use in state parliament.

Bjelke hardly needs new legislation to attack his opponents. Cabinet simply has to use the existing laws in the most reactionary way possible.

However in the new session of parliament, he plans to extend police powers of detention to 24 hours without arrest and removal of the right to remain silent under questioning.

Attacks on unions will reach new levels with the right to work legislation which means that closed shops will be illegal.

Unions will be financially responsible for wages lost by workers stood down as a result of strikes. And unions will not be able to use their funds for political campaigns.

This ruling-class broadside will almost certainly produce a new wave of struggle against Bjelke's regime.

POLICE BUST UP PUNK DANCE

THE cops in Queensland have found a new target . . . punk rockers.

A couple of weeks ago, about thirty plain clothes detectives walked into a punk dance in West End and arrested two people for alleged obscene language.

About half an hour later, thirty uniformed police marched into the dance in formation, stood there for several minutes and then walked out.

They waited on the footpath outside and eventually arrested forty people, filling three paddy wagons. Two members of the band, V2 and the Hiltons were also arrested.

"The kids were really upset", one told The Battler. "My friend said to the cops, 'Do you really hate to see people have fun?' Then he got a punch in the guts."

Tenants fight on

HOUSING Commission tenants in Melbourne are still fighting the state government on two fronts.

Tenants in Kensington – whose fight against doubled gas bills was reported in the last Battler – have now received an answer from the Gas and Fuel Corporation following their demonstration at the Corporation headquarters.

The Corporation has officially blamed the Housing Commission for the problem. So the tenants are organizing a public meeting, tentatively set for September 21, at which they will confront Les Allwinton, the head of the Housing Commission.

The Housing Commission Tenants Union also hopes to use this meeting to demonstrate their anger over a recent $6 rent rise.

DEFEND THE 10

TEN PEOPLE face grave police charges as a result of the march on the Sydney Stock Exchange.

Two workers face charges that they did over $6,000 worth of damage. These charges are frame ups.

These militants must be defended.

Resolutions of support, money and offers of assistance should be sent to:

Stock Exchange Ten Defence Fund
P.O. Box M8 Newtown South, NSW 2042

RANGER DEAL ROBS BLACKS

FRASER'S campaign to mine and export uranium faces a crucial test this coming week.

On September 13-15, the Northern Lands Council will meet to discuss the tentative agreement reached between their negotiator and the government.

By Phil Griffiths

If the NLC agrees to sign the agreement initialled by Stephen Zorn, their expert negotiator, mining will probably begin on the Ranger site within a week.

This would mean the immediate destruction of sacred tribal sites and dancing paths.

The draft agreement is a very poor result for the aboriginal people.

In economic terms, they are to get a royalty of 4¼%, which is less than half the royalty commonly paid in other countries and even less than the 4¼% paid to the aboriginal peoples of Groote Eylandt. And their contract was negotiated by missionaries 15 years ago!

The environmental safeguards are weak. The agreement is riddled with escape clauses for the government and the mining companies.

For instance, safeguards can be dropped if they're too expensive, or if the minister decides it's impracticable for the companies to obey them.

The current minister is Doug Anthony. We can imagine how loosely he would interpret that provision.

Less than half of overseas royalties

pulling

The government is pulling out all stops to force the Northern Lands Council to sign the agreement. Forty officers are touring the area handing out "titles" to the land.

Both Viner and Anthony are reported to be planning to attend the NLC meeting next week, and enormous pressure is being applied.

The Northern Lands Council comprises 42 representatives of the traditional tribes covering a vast area of northern Australia.

They have little common language, so the proceedings are conducted in English, a foreign language to the aboriginal people, and with the "advice" of white assistants.

The NLC structure is contrary to all traditional forms of aboriginal organisation.

One of the central requirements in traditional negotiations is patience and time to discuss the problem.

But the government can't wait to start making money. It's forcing the aboriginal people to decide now, on the basis of incomplete information.

Liberals rig uranium contract

delegates

As far as we know, not all the 42 delegates to the NLC have seen the draft agreement, or had its implications explained clearly.

Trickery and forced proceedings have been used on the NLC before.

At a recent meeting, a bar graph comparing the royalty rates proposed with those paid to indigenous groups in other countries, was to be used to explain the government proposals.

On the decision of a white advisor, this simple graph wasn't used. Instead the delegates were bombarded with details and percentages.

We know already that the agreement will meet stiff opposition on the NLC.

The only traditional owner actually on the council is reported to be against the agreement.

The Movement Against Uranium Mining is organising telegrams of opposition to the agreement to be sent to all the delegates individually.

rally

In Melbourne, on Friday 8 September, MAUM is holding a rally against the terms of the agreement, at 4-30pm in the Bourke St. Mall.

RIGHT: Doug Anthony. The Ranger agreement gives him wide discretionary powers.

Public Servants take a stand

IN April this year "Public Servants Against Uranium Mining" (P.S.A.U.M.) was organised in Canberra.

The group consists of Public Servants concerned about uranium mining who want to do something about the issue in their work place.

Members of the group so far are confined to one union – the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association. But they they are keen to involve members from other Public Service unions.

The first major activity of P.S.A.U.M. has been the production and distribution of a leaflet on the Uranium question in the current A.C.O.A. plebiscite.

Members felt that Uranium mining was an industrial issue that concerned public servants in their work.

The first question of the Plebiscite was – *"Should the A.C.O.A. have a policy on Uranium Mining?"*

involved

Diane Fields of the group told The Battler, *"Public Servants are involved in Uranium mining both directly and indirectly.*

"Workers in departments such as health and environment will be directly concerned by the dangers of Uranium mining and milling.

"Other departments will be forced to administer penalties under the Atomic Energy Act and the Industrial Relations Bureau against workers refusing to handle Uranium."

Obviously an A.C.O.A. policy on Uranium mining is essential.

P.S.A.U.M. used the second part of the plebiscite question – "What should A.C.O.A. policy be?" – to push for a permanent moratorium on Uranium mining.

They produced eight thousand leaflets, three thousand of which were sent to Sydney for distribution to A.C.O.A. members there.

The group's work won't end here. Apart from trying to get members of other Public Service unions to come to its meetings, P.S.A.U.M. are organising other Public Service activities around the uranium issue, such as slide shows and discussions.

meets

The group meets on the final Wednesday of every month at 12.30 pm at the Environment Centre, Childers St, Acton. Further information about the group can be obtained by leaving a message at the Environment Centre (ph. 47 3064).

by an A.C.O.A. member

THE END OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

"WE have arrived through the polling booths . . . we have taken measures which imply that we want to bring about the revolution, that is transform society, and that in turn means build the socialist society."

Salvador Allende
January 1971

Allende

Pinochet

On the fifth anniversary of the Chile coup, David Lockwood examines how Allende was toppled.

Brave words from Salvador Allende, five months after being elected President of Chile in September 1970.

Allende was a marxist, leader of the Chilean Socialist Party and presidential candidate of a group of left wing parties that promised to fundamentally re-structure Chilean society.

The victory of that coalition — called Popular Unity — unleashed enormous enthusiasm amongst the workers and peasants of Chile. And it was hailed around the world as the opening of a 'new road' for socialists — a peaceful, parliamentary road which could legislate socialism into existence.

Yet three years later in September 1973, Allende's government was smashed by a military coup; Allende himself was killed; and a wave of terror was unleashed against his supporters that has still not subsided.

How did it happen? How was the 'new road' to socialism destroyed in the space of a few weeks?

For a start, Allende's road was not leading to socialism at all — and from the beginning it was signposted with some basic mistakes.

While in power, the Popular Unity coalition achieved a number of important reforms.

milk

Free milk for children cut infant mortality by more than ten percent in 1971. All wage and salary earners got an increase of about 20 percent, and unemployment was cut by more than 4 percent.

Government measures also include full nationalisation of the US owned copper mines, partial nationalisation of other US and Chilean owned businesses, and some division of the land among the landless peasants.

But the real privileges of the rich were never attacked. Popular Unity's programme guaranteed that most businesses in Chile would remain in private hands and be aided by the government.

Allende's reforms did not touch the basic problem, the capitalists system. The reforms only opened up the real problems - they began to cut into the power of the capitalist class.

Far from dampening the militancy of Chile's workers and peasants, Allende's reforms increased it. Peasants seized land, workers seized factories.

But Chile's capitalists were not idle either. Backed by their US allies, they launched systematic sabotage of the economy. Capital fled the country, production was slowed to create unemployment.

At the same time, the US sought to strangle the Chilean economy and Popular Unity through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

To this too, the masses responded with militant struggle. Now Chilean workers and peasants could have taken offensive — but Allende's government tried to hold them back!

Allende had agreed before his election to constitutional amendments designed to strengthen capitalist institutions demanded by the opposition Christian Democrats.

First no military officers could be appointed who had not attended the special academies for officers. Second, no changes could be made in the size of the armed forces by the president.

Third, no 'private' militias (meaning armed workers) would be allowed. Fourth, Allende guaranteed not to tamper with the press, radio, schools, trade unions, the judiciary and so on.

Lastly, Allende promised not to remove Christian Democrat appointees to the public service.

So the Allende government inherited a state machine which it was not allowed to 'tamper with'. And it soon beca,e clear that that machine was by no means neutral. It had been designed to defend capitalism, and defend capitalism it did — by ensuring that the government kept within the bounds of 'legality'.

legality

When workers took factories into their own hands, they were greeted with calls to respect 'legality' and to contribute to 'the battle of production'. In the first year of his government, Allende denounced absenteeism and the 'exorbitant' wage demands of the workers.

Peasants involved in land seizures met with a similar reaction. A Communist Party Senator declared:

"We have stopped urging people to go out and take sites themselves . . . . These invasions must now cease."

In February 1971, the government announced special legi... to punish land invasion lea...

Revolutionary socialists ... have called on the working ... and peasantry to organise the... independent sources of po... workers's councils and ... militias — particularly in the... economic sabotage an... interference.

Instead, they were told ... their faith in the Chilean ... forces.

Despite the fact that the C... army receives more aid from ... than that of almost any ... South American country, and ... it has a long record of sh... workers' blood, Allende ma... to the end that it was loyal ... government.

"I have absolute confiden..." said, "in the loyalty of the ... forces. Our forces are pro... forces at the service of the ... the people . . ."

refused

Thus Popular Unity refu... arm the working class. The ... of the Communist Party ... Corvalan, said before the el... that proposals to arm the ma... were "equivalent to show... distrust in the army". And that, of course, would never do.

Despite government ... the workers' movement ... factories, and the peasants ... land were on the move — and ... not Allende, was what caused ... coup.

In September 1973 it happ... And it was not really surprisi... having refused to support ... workers and peasants in ac... having politically and physically disar... them, and having asked work... and peasants to respect cap... 'legality' — there was no-o... defend Allende when the ... made its move.

The Allende government ... walk a tight-rope between w... and the owners of industry.

In the end, it was toppled ... class that had been organi... since Popular Unity came to ... And the workers couldn't ... because Allende had ... sold ... them ... retaliation ...

Pinochet's tanks rumble through the streets as Allende's presidential palace burns in the background.

The first birthday of the Chilean junta — and General Pinochet(left) and his fellow butchers embrace military chaplains at an outdoor Catholic mass to commemorate the coup.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

ABOUT thirty years ago, a company called Nuffields used to make cars called Morrises.

Just after the war, they produced the Morris Minor. It was originally an 850 cc model. Later they added a bit of power and renamed it the Morris Thousand, but everyone continued to call it the Morris Minor.

The Morris Minor was the high point of British engineering. You can keep your Rolls and Bentleys — I'd take a Minor every time. It was cheap, reliable and easy to repair. Morris Minor owners usually get quite sentimental over their cars. The English apparently used to nickname it the "Mighty Mouse".

Most Mouse owners give their cars a nickname — my girlfriend calls hers Squeak, another friend of mine has one called Minnie. I had one for a few years that was just called the Mouse. It was more a pet than a means of conveyance.

The trouble with the Morris Minor was that it was too reliable. If you looked after it, it would go for twenty years. Which means you wouldn't need to buy another car for twenty years.

Which meant that Nuffields (who by the late fifties had merged with another company and were called B.M.C.) couldn't make profits out of you for twenty years.

So the Mouse had to go. B.M.C. announced a breakthrough in engineering and offered thw world the Mini — with the East-West engine.

The Mini was a breakthrough in a number of ways. First of all it had a life of about 30,000 miles. So in five years or less you had to buy a new one.

Secondly its marvellous East-West engine not only overheated more often than the Mouse and other pre-Mini small cars, but it was also less acessible so your mechanics bills grew.

No Mini owner could ever get sentimental about their car any more. How do you get sentimental about a cardboard box on wheels? Especially if it costs you a small fortune in repairs.

Still it did have one feature in common with the old Morris Minor. It was small and economical. And by the early seventies, as petrol prices rose and city parking shrank, small cars were becoming a necessity.

Now B.M.C, which became Leyland a few years ago has announced it is discontinuing the Mini.

Apart from throwing a lot of people out of a job, this is also the death knell of the small British car, at least in Australia.

Ford, GMH and Chrysler have never made genuinely small cars. And Volkswagen pulled the Beetle off the road some years ago. So apart from Japanese cars, you can't really buy small cars any more.

And yet with the current price pf petrol, it seems silly to drive any other size of car.

What I love about free enterprise is the wide degree of choice it gives you.

Or like Henry Ford said a long time ago, "They can have any colour — so long as it's black!"

ON THE HUA KUO FENG TRAIL

Hua with "Gang of Four" members Wang Hung-wen, Chun-chiao and Chiang Ching. Now the "Gang" is gone and Hua is free to pursue detente.

CHINESE leader Hua Kuo-Feng has been received by cheering throngs in the capitals of Rumania and Yugoslavia.

The trip is a major diplomatic initiative by the Chinese, and represents a d amatic turnabout in Peking's foreign policy.

China buries the hatchet with Tito

By Tom O'Lincoln

Not long ago, Mao Tse-Tung was denouncing the Tito regime in Yugoslavia as at best "taking the capitalist road", and at worst, "fascist".

And of course, some of the dirt rubbed off on Rumania, Yugoslavia's closest friend in eastern Europe.

When Chairman Mao's followers in Australia broke away from the Communist Party in 1963, one of their charges was that it was too soft on Tito.

praise

Now Hua Kuo-feng is full of praise for the same regime. This amazing change is the latest development in the transformation of foreign policy begun by Mao himself in the days of "ping pong" diplomacy.

It is based on Peking's "theory of the three worlds". This theory says that the Soviet Union is the main enemy of the world's peoples and provides the justification for China to line up with just about anyone against the Russians.

In their zeal to build alliances against Moscow, Peking us finding some odd new bedfellows.

popular

Hua's new-found friendship with Tito is not popular everywhere. Peking's traditional ally Albania, which fears the expansionist appetite of Yugoslavia, has now broken with China and denounced the "three worlds theory" as counter-revolutionary.

The Albanians have won support for their stand among many former supporters of China in the west.

These people are now dismayed by the Chinese stand, which includes calling for a stronger NATO alliance, and even for establishing links with the Chilean junta!

But China's foreign policy today is simply the product of the difficult situation in which the country finds itself. After Mao's victory in 1949, the Chinese leaders set out to build a modern economy on the basis of national independence and self-sufficiency.

But in today's world no country can break out of poverty and backwardness without help from the more developed countries.

And as long as China tried to remain independent, no help was forthcoming. Instead, the Americans blockaded the country, and the Russians massed troops on its border.

In order to save itself from what it sees as the greater Russian threat, China has drifted more and more into the American camp.

problem

Unfortunately, the new pro-western stance will not solve China's problems either. For whatever benefits China gets from the west will inevitably come with many nasty strings attached.

The only way out for China, as for other third world countries, is the destruction of the power of the imperialist countries.

And that's not going to be achieved by calls to strengthen NATO and cuddling up to the US.

Marshal Tito . . . used to be a "fascist" according to Mao.

PORTUGAL OPENS UP OLD SOARES

'AN ANTI-democratic group' of 'unseen right wing and military forces' some from abroad, have been responsible for the toppling of the moderate socialist government of Mario Soares in Portugal.

At least that is what Mario Soares has been saying.

The country's president, Eanes, has replaced him with an 'independent' prime minister, Alfredo Nobre da Costa, who is friendly to the right wing conservative CDS party.

All this must be very galling for Soares, since he himself was responsible for Eanes rise to the presidency two years ago.

action

Facism had been overthrown by the action of a number of junior army officers in April 1974. A huge upsurge of working class activity followed.

More than 300 firms were occupied, forcing the government to nationalise most industry. Agricultural labourers seized the huge estates of the South. The press, radio and TV began to be taken over by those who worked in them. Rank and file soldiers joined revolutionary demonstrations and defied right wing officers.

control

The notion became very widespread that real democracy meant control over every aspect of life through 'popular power' and not just writing a cross on a ballot paper every few years.

Even a few of the junior officers who had overthrown fascism began to flirt with these ideas.

By the summer of 1975, Portugal seemed only a hair's breath away from a full blooded socialist revolution.

The pro-capitalist forces felt powerless to stop this by themselves. And so they turned to someone who still had a certain popularity among the workers because of his talk of socialism, Mario Soares. They plotted with him against the revolution in the name of 'democracy'.

Mario Soares in happier days.

On 25 November 1975 right wing army officers led by Eanes moved their last remaining loyal units of troops against the left wing regiments in Portugal's capital, Lisbon. Soares supported Eanes as he disarmed the left and took over full control of the radio, the TV and the press.

Soares' great moment had come. He was soon prime minister. He thanked Eanes by joining with the right wing parties to back him in the presidential elections.

At the time revolutionaries said this 'triumph for democracy' would not last. Big business was not interested in votes but in getting its revenge on the workers who had occupied the factories and the labourers who had seized the land.

If Soares' 'democracy' got in the way of that revenge, it would soon be thrown out the window.

advisor

Da Costa is living proof of how right we were. Under fascism he was a friend and advisor of the Champalimaud family, who were notorious for the way they used fascist repression of the workers to build up a huge industrial empire. And he himself was appointed head of Portugal's state-owned oil company by the facist dictator Caetano.

That does not mean that Portugal is already back to fascism. Eanes and his his big business friends are wary of moving too quickly in that direction.

They know that a false move on their part could spur the workers into a new upsurge of struggle that would put socialist revolution on the agenda again.

The right has won another battle. But it still has not won the war.

by Chris Harman

Two years of the censor

Lebanon's Chief of General Security, Prince Raif Abillameh

ON January 1st 1977, the Lebanese authorities imposed censorship of the press.

They claimed that this was to secure the national interest from "irresponsible journalism."

In fact, the censorship has been savagely used against the left-wing press, while the right wing nationalist press has escaped almost untouched.

censorship

Now, a year and a half later, the censorship is beginning to ease, as the right finds it harder to claim that it is a successful way of promoting national unity.

When censorship was introduced there were bans on whole issues of the Palestinian Athaora (the Palestinian bulletin) and other left papers.

An article in the Syrian Socialist Party paper on the Palestinian presence was banned by the censors on the grounds that it would "re-open pre-civil war arguments".

But right wing papers have not been censored for articles attacking the Palestinian presence in Lebanon and calling the Palestinians "strangers and drifters."

Al Safeer, an established morning paper, was censored for an article pointing out the chauvinism of the elitist right wing maronite leaders.

In the right wing press, the most that happens is that some sentences are cut out.

Foreign newspapers are also frequently censored. Besides attacking overseas left wing papers, analytical articles on the middle east have been censored in papers such as the New York Herald Tribune, the London Times, and the French newspaper Le Monde.

But recently some discussion of censorship has been allowed in the press, and criticism by the president of the journalists union has been punished.

The Chief of General Security, Prince Raif Abillemah, has replied to his critics that "there is no perfect censorship."

replaced

It was pointed out that in a statement by President Carter, that "The middle East is the last thing on the American agenda", the censor had replaced the word "last" with the word "first!" Prince Raif Abillemah commented, *"To err is human."*

The Prince has demanded absolute power over press censorship saying *"If any paper objects, all it has to do is close its doors."*

by Fadi Yammine

STOP THE WHITEHOUSE TOUR!

MELBOURNE:
Anti-Whitehouse Public Meeting 8pm, Mon 11 Sept, in the 1958 building, Melbourne State College. Counter-demonstration at Whitehouse Rally 1pm, Sun 17 Sept at Festival Hall

SYDNEY:
Counter-demonstration before Whitehouse rally 10am, Sat 23 Sept, Town Hall Square
Whitehouse Rally scheduled for 3pm, Sunday 24 Sept, at Town Hall

Thoughts of Chairman Mary

On Opponents of Censorship:
"A degree of censorship is absolutely vital in a free society."
"I think this type of reader has a child's attitude – if I want something I must have it.

On Homosexuality:
"The greatest danger, especially to the young, is that we come to accept as normal what is in fact exceptional and vite."
"What is wrong with it is that you deprive the young of becoming mature people with heterosexual attitudes."

On Sexuality:
"You don't want all the bedroom doors open."
"There is something very wonderful about keeping oneself a virgin, making one's virginity a gift to the man one loves."
"Pornography destroys marriage."

On Religion:
"If you destroy the church, ridicule Christian values and negate Christian standards, society will collapse . . . . without the moral law you cannot have a stable society."

MARY, QUEEN OF WOWSERS

A special report by Janey Stone

" When the history of this century is written, they will look back on the 1960's and 1970's as an aberration, a return to a pre-Christian age, a return to pre-civilization."

Mary Whitehouse, Britain's self-appointed Wowser-In-Chief, started out fifteen years ago when she was already a grey haired grandmother.

At her first public appearance, she wore a hat decorated with plastic lilies of the valley. Today she still bears an uncanny resemblance to Edna Everage.

Mary Whitehouse mostly campaigns against the TV portrayal of sex and violence. She formed the Viewers and Listeners Association (VALA) in Britian in 1964.

VALA's aim was *"promote the moral and religious welfare of the community by seeking to maintain Christian standards in broadcasting."*

VALA has won damages from the Daily Mail and from Johny Speight, the writer of the TV show "Till Death Us Do Part". Mary Whitehouse organized a strong protest against a line in a satire which called God a "pommy bastard".

In 1971, Mary Whitehouse, Malcolm Muggeridge, Cliff Richard and others held a rally of over 90,000 people to form the Festival of Light in Britian.

Last year, Mary Whitehouse brought a private prosecution against Gay News for publishing a homosexual poem about Jesus. The editor was convicted of blasphemous libel, which makes blasphemy a *criminal* offence. This centuries-old law hasn't been used for 56 years!

Most recently, she has run a successful campaign against child pornography. Here, of course, she had picked an issue where most people, including socialists, are in agreement.

But for Mary Whitehouse, the issue of protection of children is just a convenient weapon. She and her friends are using moralistic anf emotive arguments to organize a mass, right-wing puritanical blacklash.

Their real aim is to smash the gains made by the women's and gay movements – such as liberalized abortion. They want to suppress discussion of urgent social issues. Most important, they want to smash the liberation movements themselves.

For example, Mary Whitehouse protested angrily at the famous TV drama "Cathy Come Home". This was a serious depiction of the devastating effect of homelessness on family life – the very thing Whitehouse says she is concerned about.

All she could say was that the program *"showed social workers in a bad light"*!

Gay Rights demonstrators outside the court during Mary Whitehouse's successful blasphemy case against "Gay News" in Britain.

discontent

Mary Whitehouse and her friends latch on to genuine discontent. If they can convince people that *"TV is the prime cause of increase social disease, crime and violence"*, then they can distract them from understanding the real cause.

Their cry of "moral pollution" makes life safer for the ruling class.

Today Mary Whitehouse is gaining in influence. Reporters ring her daily for comment – she makes great controversial copy.

The head of British Parliamentary sub-committee on broadcasting, Lord Annan, says, *"I have considerable respect for Mary Whitehouse. She speaks for millions. She has made out a case which the broadcasters have not answered."*

agitator

Mary Whitehouse is a clever woman, and a professional agitator. In debate she knows how to avoid difficult questions, and is undeterred by hecklers.

Like other wowsers, she herself is of course uncorruptable. One reporter recently asked her why she was not depraved by all the porn she forces herself to look at.

She clasped her hands together and smiled up towards the ceiling and beyond. *"I pray to God – keep me pure, keep me pure."*

A FESTIVAL OF REPRESSION ...

"Mary Whitehouse is a lighthouse!"

So gush the Festival of Light, who are sponsoring her tour of Australia this month.

When Mary Whitehouse was last here in 1973, she helped set up the Festival of Light. This time, they hope to use her tour to start the same sort of campaign for TV censorship that has been so successful in Britain.

Moralists, puritans and wowsers in Australia are organised in an interlocking chain of groups, all dedicated to the same thing.

Officially their aim is *"to resist influences that lower moral standards and threaten human dignity"*. Their real aim is to defend the status quo and keep down women and gays.

employs

Festival of Light employs two full-time organizers in Australia: Fred Nile in NSW and Steve Stevens in South Australia. This year, their budget is $70,000.

They are evangelical Christians, but humility is not their strong point. "Festival of Light represents the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of decent people."

The Right To Life Association is closely associated with Festival of Light. These are the people who, in the name of life, want to send working-class women to their death at the hands of backyard abortionists.

Their supporters have firebombed abortion clinics in Sydney, New Zealand and America.

But they are more concerned with unborn children than living ones. We never see them demonstrating for child-care or paid maternity leave. The Right to Lifers want to emulate America, where the poor can no longer get free abortions, and New Zealand, which has the most repressive anti-abortion laws in the world.

The Right to Life Association claims 12,000 members in NSW alone. They work closely with the churches, and bus people to their marches straight after services.

Homosexuals always had to face repression and violence. But now they are being openly attacked by police in Sydney.

This is a world-wide pattern. Anita Bryant's anti-gay campaign in America prompted one car-sticker "Kill a Queer for Christ". At least one man has been murdered by poofter-bashers in the wake of it.

Behind these organisations are powerful forces. The Anglican and Catholic churches, and the DLP. Working hand-in-hand with them are the police and government.

We are not up against small groups of nutty fanatics. We are fighting tightly organized people who want to perpetuate the authoritarian morality of capitalism, and will use authoritarian means to do so.

Sweet reason alone won't stop them. They are building militant mass movements – and our tactics have to be the same.

... that we've been fighting for 100 years

Margaret Sanger selling her "Birth Control Review" in the streets of New York in 1915

THE fight against the Mary Whitehouses and for genuine sexual liberation is not a new one.

Even last century, there was a major movement in Britain against repressive Victorian puritanism.

wrote

People such as Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis not only wrote articles and made speeches. They also tried to put their ideas into practice.

Like the New Left of recent times, they set up communes, tried to share housework, and had homosexual marriages. Unfortunately their movement remained isolated from the mass working-class struggles of the day and died out.

In the 1920's and 30's, the issue of birth control came to the forefront. Then, it was four times more dangerous to bear a child than to work in a coal mine.

Margaret Sanger, a member of the Socialist Party in New York, was imprisoned for publishing birth control information. In Britain, women were taken to court for handing out information on contraception. Stella Browne, a socialist feminist, agitated for birth control clinics for working class women.

Wilhelm Reich, a German psycho-analyst, set up a mass organisation in 1930 with the help of the German Communist Party. Called Sex-Pol, it had a membership of 40,000.

By helping people with their sexual problems, it tried to show people the connections between personal life and the need for political change. But along with other working-class organisations, it was smashed by the Nazis.

Today the struggle is being carried on – by the women's movement, the gay movement, and many socialist organisations. Now the main battles are over abortion, gay rights, and against censorship.

And as always, the forces of the status quo – the churches, the courts, the law, and reactionary rabble-rousers like Mary Whitehouse – are ranged against us to keep us repressed and in our place.

Peddling a phoney myth of the family

Mary Whitehouse's vision of the family comes from the 1950's – the sort of family they had in the first grade reader at school.

Daddy goes to work every day with a smile and a brief-case. Mummy stays home with a smile and a broom. The children, John and Mary, play with the cat Fluff and the dog Scottie.

Let's leave aside for the moment whether such a family is really happy or desirable. Mary Whitehouse likes to pretend this is how the family always was until the "permissive society" destroyed it.

And she appeals to a lot of people who yearn for the "good old days."

But families like this really only existed for a short time during the economic boom of the 50's. Because the man's [...]has to be regular, [...] enough to give the [...]ic security to allow [...]oman to stay home.

[...]n an economic crisis working-class people can't afford this sort [...]estic bliss. So Mary [...]ouse's vision of the breaks down.

work

[...]ing the last century, families went out to [...] Even then, their [...]d income was often [...]ough to feed them. [...] family was so broken [...] these conditions that [...]elieved the working-[...]family had already [...]ared.

But the middle-class family flourished. In fact, the idea of women staying at home was invented then. An affluent man could prove it by the fact that his wife didn't have to work.

The Depression of the 30's tore families apart. Men had to travel, sometimes thousands of miles to find jobs.

Women meanwhile stayed at home and coped. They weren't entitiled to the dole and there was no work. This hardly made for happy family life.

Two World Wars maintained the instability. Men went away, this time to fight. Women went to work in factories, while continuing to look after children with little help.

So today's *"breakdown of the family"* is really a return to what is normal for capitalism. Economic insecurity, tension in family relationships, and worry about the future is nothing new.

Mary Whitehouse says she wants to protect children. *"We are poor guardians if we do not ensure their inalienable right to children, to mystery, to dreams, to tenderness, to love."*

But do children under capitalism often get that?

Marx wrote of the children of his time. They worked for fifteen hours in factories and knew little of childhood.

The thousands of child prostitutes of Victorian England knew little of love. One brothel even specialized in the whipping and rape of young children in sound-proofed rooms.

Mary Whitehouse may claim to abhor such things. But it was the capitalist system that she supports, that forced these children into brothels. And it was the repressive morality that she espouses, that twisted people's sexuality to seek out such places.

violence

What of the children of the Depression, two World Wars and Nazi Germany. They knew more of starvation and violence than dreams and tenderness.

In any case, was it really so wonderful during the fifties?

In her famous book, "The Feminine Mystique", Betty Friedan exploded the Happy Housewife myth. She showed that the stultifying and opressive life at home was really invented to sell the consumer goods produced by the economic boom.

Mary Whitehouse's retreat into the dream of the old-fashioned family is no solution to today's problems. The answer doesn't lie in the past.

Unlike Mary Whitehouse, we look to the future – to building a co-operative society free of want and exploitation, where new and more humane relationships can blossom between men and women and children.

YES, "JIMMIE BLACKSMITH" IS RACIST

Dear Battlers,

Ken Stevens is reputed to be a former member of the Battler industrial reporting staff. Considering that he should know the difference between Actor's Equity and the Theatrical Employees Union.

In his reply to my review of the Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith (issue 57) he suggest that the reason that director Fred Schepisi had to use non-union labor was that black actors aren't in the union.

All actors, black and white, are covered by Actor's Equity. Schepisi's troubles were with the Theatrical Employee's Union.

They cover the technical employees (mostly white) and Schepisi refused to co-operate with the T.E.U.'s attempt to enforce a closed shop. Later he made some very right-wing anti-union statements.

Fred Schepisi hates unions. And it is indicative of his general politics.

The rest of Ken Stevens' apology for Schepisi is based on the argument that the movie explained why Blacksmith killed his enemies and made us feel sorry for him.

The word Ken used was "understand", but it still comes out as patronising white guilt however you dress it up.

Ken suggests that Blacksmith is not a psychotic. Then he must be a rebel as Schepisi had him saying he was. He has to be one or the other unless Ken Stevens wants us to believe that killing small children is a rational act.

Jimmie Governor was a pyschotic, whites made him that way. Schepisi portrays Jimmie Governor/Blacksmith as a psychotic with delusions of grandeur.

The script is designed to make white audiences guilty and sympathetic towards him. But it is designed to make them feel superior to "poor Jimmie" and is racist.

Dave Nad...
Melbourne

Dear Battlers,

TIME FOR LABOR TO MOVE

The Hiroshima Day rallies around Australia and also overseas definitely show that the anti-nuclear movement is not the trendy fad which many of our opponents make it out to be.

The Melbourne rally was 15,000 people. In view of the uncertain weather and the fact that it was held on a Sunday this is a great achievement – and it was about twice as many as the March 31 rally. But let's not sit back complacently, or our movement might drift away.

It was a pity that more ALP branches didn't take part. My Federal Electorate Assembly (the regional co-ordination council of ALP branches in a Federal electorate) circulated a MAUM leaflet with the local ALP newsletter and had a group travel in to the rally by public transport.

Labor Star, the ALP state paper (which is meant to go to every member but rarely does) had a four page anti-uranium liftout centrefold.

When we asked for some help with leafletting in shopping centres we were told *"Sorry, we've got a migrant naturalisation drive on, because four out of five Greeks and Italians vote Labor. If we naturalise them we'll get their votes."* (The next federal election is timed for January 1981). There was little if any effort to get people in the community interested.

If you're in an ALP branch, try to get them thinking about uranium mining, and hopefully by the rally we will have reached not only ALP members but their friends and relatives who we might not have otherwise reached. The ALP has a uranium policy – get it fighting and on the streets.

fight

As socialists, of course, we see the ALP as a body which doesn't fight. But it is useful in building a mass anti-uranium movement.

There should be more to a workers party than fighting election battles.

'Jon-wears-badges'
Melbourne

15,000 rally in Melbourne on Hiroshima Day. Now the Labor Party must throw itself fully into the uranium struggle, says a reader.

Rethink your objectives

Dear Battlers,

Without any sarcasm and with full understanding of your assumed cause, I say I am touched by what you stand for and what you have set out to achieve.

I would not have hesitated one moment to officially join your cause, if your objectives as stated in your paper were structurally viable and had a greater sense of certainty surrounding them, which at present they do not.

Please do not misunderstand me, for I too have suffered from and am opposed to capitalism more than most. But I believe a revolution is a very fragile thing and should be thought out more carefully and cautiously by the movement.

An attempted or achieved revolution could lead to greater problems than at present, if not fully planned in detail and vulnerable to undesirable forces. Unfortunately your objectives do not possess the necessary qualities for a successful and for a successful socialist Australia.

Your socialism has communistic qualities, and it is evident that for the benefit of the proletariat, socialism must exist within communism.

Your opposition to China reveals a lack of study and intensive investigation of China and its struggle. Every revolution and society with principles influenced by Marxist-Leninist theory such as socialism, should use China and its struggle as a model to build itself around.

fragile

Homosexuality is a fragile issue, and you should not be so emphatic towards it, or encourage it in any way.

Generally, I believe your objectives are in need of intensive moves for reform, for they pose a greater threat than benefit for the people. In reforming your objectives much emphasis should be given to the People's Republic of China, and the need for a detailed and well planned constitution of objectives before and after the revolution as stated.

Yours Socialistically
Neil McGlinchey
Melbourne

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If thats the sort of work you want to do-

JOIN US!

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

The Budget battle

IN the nation wide upsurge against the Budget, I.S. members have been fighting for militant action to hit back at the bosses and bring Fraser down.

In Sydney the Trades and Labour Council called a mass stopwork rally. I.S. members leafletted the crowd, calling for a march on the Stock Exchange.

One thousand took up the call. First we marched on Telecom headquarters, in solidarity with the ATEA struggle.

Then we doubled back on the Stock Exchange, where we caught police off guard. Led by militant workers, the march stormed the Stock Exchange.

The cops arrested ten people to scapegoat for the damage done, including several I.S. members. A defence fund is now in operation, since at least two of the ten face the threat of jail.

In Melbourne, we also leafletted the Trades Hall rally calling for a march on the Stock Exchange.

This time, about two thousand took up the call. But warned by the Sydney events, a huge number of police were guarding the building and we were unable to invade.

At the Melbourne shop stewards meeting I.S. members worked with other militants to try and get a motion for a one-week national general strike adopted.

The motion got a sympathetic hearing from the meeting, but in the end the shop stewards voted for a more moderate proposal from John Halfpenny for a series of half-day stoppages.

neither

Since neither the Communist Party nor the Trades Hall had any intention of taking this proposal to the mass meeting of CAGEO white collar unionists in Melbourne the next day, members and other white collar militants put up a motion from the floor for four-hour stoppages where further action could be planned.

To the chagrin of the CAGEO bureaucrats, the thousand white collar unionists present adopted the motion overwhelmingly.

International Socialists

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 24 hour answering and message machine	376-9142 376 2783
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	376-2783
MELBOURNE GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	387 6351
SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown 2042	51-3665
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49-7939
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	49 6406
BRISBANE PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067	358 3978
IPSWICH, QLD.	281 6113

Fighting Fund

Our fighting fund raised $656.51 last issue. Our thanks to:

Sydney IS	187.9[illegible]
IVP	5.0[illegible]
Elaine	18.0[illegible]
Melbourne poster sales	113.0[illegible]
Anon (Adelaide)	1.6[illegible]
RM	87.0[illegible]
Adelaide French dinner	23.0[illegible]
NH	[illegible]
National Committee delegates	30.0[illegible]
Deb Turner	18.0[illegible]
HM	13.0[illegible]
Brisbane badge sales	4.7[illegible]
Brisbane IS	14.5[illegible]
Anon (South Melb)	[illegible]
LM	1.0[illegible]
Raffle	6.0[illegible]
Fruit sales	36.0[illegible]
Melb North IS BBQ	30.0[illegible]
TOTAL	656.5[illegible]

ANATOMY OF A STRIKE

"ANATOMY of a Strike", described on its cover as "an Australian novel", is written by Conciliation and Arbitration Commissioner, Justice Robinson.

If it wasn't for the damage he and his fellow commissioners do Australian workers from the bench, he might best be advised to stick to being a commissioner and forget about writing novels.

By John McLean

In view of this effort, the best possible course for him is to abandon both careers.

At $8.50 his novel is poor value for money, less value for its politics and about on par for literary value with a full bench decision of the Conciliation and Arbitration

Its only interest is that it peeps into the dreadful recesses of the collective mind of the arbitration commission, through the eyes of Justice Robinson, who calls himself, appropriately, Lake O'Charley.

For rank and file trade unionists involved in strikes and work bans, Justice Robinson and his mates are often as dangerous as the employers themselves and this novel is evidence of that.

anatomy

Ordinary trade union members, who you'd expect to get some sort of guernsey in a book called "Anatomy of a strike", hardly get a mention.

With one brief exception, the relevant "action" takes places in offices, a plush bar, expensive restaurants or travelling between them.

All characters are cardboard cut-outs, so much so that their identity within the Australian industrial relations "industry" has been the subject of much speculation.

mates

But you don't need to be Sherlock Holmes to identify an ACTU president who is not called Bob Hawke and one of his best mates, an employers' representative who is not called George Polites.

The "plot" involves an oil industry strike organised by a communist general secretary of an industrial union. It is settled by a commission of inquiry(!) when a picket is injured.

It takes Justice O'Charley 190 pages of sexist, boring prose to put over the message that workers are mere troops to the union generals, faceless nonentities whose capacity for manipulation is endless.

The "real world" is in and around the arbitration commission and the main characters are an industrial advocate for a right-wing union and an up-and-coming government minister.

Sprinkled throughout are Justice O'Charley's thoughts and prejudices. Here are two examples:

On feminism: *"Don't get me going. A group of them came in here after demonstrating at some equal pay hearing. They were, to a women, loud-mouthed, vulgar, rude and dirty.*

"They call themselves feminists! I'm ashamed to belong to the same breed."

This from a bar-maid who tells a hard-bitten company boss(ho-hum!) *"None of this liberation bit for me. I like to be dominated. As long as it's the right man of course."*

On revolution: *"Have you always been a rebel?"*

"In the sense of not accepting the status quo, yes. I've never been a revolutionary, though. Perhaps that's because I'm a self-disciplined person."

You've got the picture: warm-hearted loveable reactionaries as opposed to the ill-disciplined slobs who call themselves revolutionaries.

Justice O'Charley's solution for the crisis of capitalism(oh, yes, he admits it has problems) is a bit like Conciliation and Arbitration on a world scale.

force

It involves no challenge to the system but instead a sell-out by union leaders to form a third, middle, force in politics and a blurring of the edges of class conflict.

Sort of like Don Chipp on a full-bench, benevolently directing the misguided workers of Australia, flanked by Bob Hawke and Rod Carnegie.

What Justice O'Charley fails utterly to recognise, is that workers are what matter in strikes, not government ministers, not industrial advocates, and certainly not arbitration commissioners.

His contempt for the rank and file is so complete that any trade unionist reading his novel is driven to one conclusion (if they haven't already arrived there).

The arbitration court is a bosses' court; it is staffed by bosses' men and is solely designed to channel off the industrial strength of workers in dispute.

The sooner it goes, the better.

This judge thinks it's all heads and no body!

All the literary value of a full bench decision

Justice Robinson doing inspections at Tullamarine Airport in Melbourne. His book is as bad as his judgments.

FROM THE SHELF

Summerhill

THE book that made me a socialist more than any other was Summerhill by A.S.Neill.

Summerhill is the name of an experimental school that Neill set up in Britain in the turbulent years before the Second World War.

It was a school dedicated to its students. Neill believed that schools could do without the violence that passes for discipline. He believed that the students could decide for themselves what they should learn. His job was to provide the classes they wanted.

No-one was forced to "learn". He boasts that one student only bothered to learn to read and write at 15 when he wanted to find out more about electronics but realised that meant reading books.

There was no arbitrary at Summerhill. Apart from the laws imposed from outside, all the rules were made by the students and anyone who broke the rules was punished by the whole student body at the weekly meeting.

teaching

I first read "Summerhill", Neill's story of his school when I began a brief teaching career in a Melbourne technical school. It showed up the inhuman rules of the school and pointed a way forward.

Or so I thought.

Inspired by the ideals of Summerhill, I tried to introduce a free classroom. We did away with useless lessons in the syllabus and the students only had to work if they felt like it.

But I was more or less on my own. "Summerhill was fine if everyone in the school agreed with it, but what if they didn't? What was the individual teacher to do then?

And being a working class area, many of the parents were anxious for their children to "get on" at school, even if that meant punishing them for laziness or bad behavior.

Other students came from broken homes, or had violent fathers.

In fact Neill himself said that the worst time at school was the first two weeks at school when the children came back from holidays with their parents. After a few weeks boarding in the open atmosphere of Summerhill, they got rid of their aggressions and settled down.

except

He insisted that his school could never have worked except as a boarding school.

And that was the catch. Summerhill was a private school for those few dozen students in the whole of Britain whose parents had the money to send them there and who didn't mind the school's unorthodox approach.

Neill had no answers for the mass of society. His answer was to more or less cop out.

And that's why I became a socialist. I realised that there had to be answers for those of us who couldn't afford private schools, for workers and their children, for the ordinary teacher.

The schools could only be changed when the whole of society ceased to be competitive, violent and built on the exploitation of the poor and the weak.

But despite its weakness, Summerhill is very important. It proved that people could live cooperatively. It proved that we didn't need rulers and their rules, arbitrary punishment and violence.

But it's up to us to do the job that A.S. Neill avoided. To win the struggle for socialism so we can have Summerhill in every suburb.

THE LAST NEWSREEL SHOW

A look at the not-so-good old days of the fifties

WHAT did Australia look like in the '40s and '50s?

For those of us who remember, "Newsfront" recreates the atmosphere. And for those of us who don't, it provides some interesting insights.

It does this by using authentic news reel of the time, dubbed over the life of the people who were involved in the making of the films.

The old Movietone Newshouses were an Australian institution. Newsfront tells the story of two competing newsreel companies, Cinetone (the local one) and Newsco (the multinational).

Len works for Cinetone and his brother Frank for Newsco. Through their lives, a lot of the conflicts of the time are shown.

For example, Len is a Labor Catholic who comes into conflict with his religion.

acceptable

First his wife kicks him out of bed as the only acceptable means of contraception for Catholics. Then he has an argument with the local priest, who hands out VOTE NO TO COMMUNISM forms at the church.

Len, meanwhile, is involved with Amy, assistant editor at Cinetone. Her talents make her the obvious person to take over when the editor dies, but because she is a woman, she is completely overlooked.

Amy previously had a relationship with Len's brother Frank, and when he returns from America, she goes back to him, much to Len's surprise (and mine, too.

juggle

At this point the story starts to get a bit wishy washy. It seems as though they have to juggle the characters about to get the desired ending.

Charlie, the Newsco cameraman, and Len had a certain rivalry which created a competitive bond between them. This led to some interesting situations, like the filming of the Maitland floods.

Here the film is extremely well edited, as the characters are sliced into the original film with amazing continuity.

During the floods, Len's offsider Chris is drowned. The news reels exploit this with the ad "ONE OF OUR CAMERAMEN DIED MAKING THIS FILM". Perhaps things haven't changed that much.

With the coming of TV, more pressure is put on the industry, and eventually the two companies merge to film the '56 Olympics in Melbourne.

Overall the acting was very good. The thing I enjoyed most was the use of original footage and the way it was integrated with colour film. But the story line got a bit thin towards the end.

If you used to get a kick out of the old movie tone picture houses, or if you were too young to remember, Newsfront has a lot to offer.

by Jeff Wallman

Len's marriage — headed for disaster because of the Catholic Church. JATOT

Charlie and Len contemplate the challenge from TV during the 1956 bushfires.

What's On

SYDNEY — THURS 7 SEPT
Gay Solidarity Group meets every Thursday. At CAMP, 33a Glebe Point Road, 6 pm.

SYDNEY — SAT 9 SEPT
Special Seafood dinner, IS fundraiser, 432 Wilson Street, Chippendale, 7.30 pm. For details ring 51 3665

SYDNEY — SAT 9 SEPT
United Palestinian workers — Cabaret Night at Leichardt Police Citizens Boys Club, 67 Norton St., Leichardt. Ticket $7.50 includes Dinner 7.30 pm

SYDNEY — SUN 10 SEPT
I.S. Business meeting, 111 Enmore Road, Newtown, 7pm.

SYDNEY — SUN 17 SEPT
IS meeting on Politics in NSW, 111 Enmore Road, Newtown 7pm. Friends of IS welcome.

MELB — FRI 8 SEPT
Gay dance North Melbourne Town Hall.

MELB — SAT SEPT 9
Come and experience good homely Jewish dishes cooked in the traditional way
All you can eat and wine for $4.50. Details and reservations 380-2227

MELB — MON 11 SEPT
8pm Anti Festival of Light/Mary Whitehouse public meeting. For more details phone Janey on 913 548

MELB — TUES 12 SEPT
South branch educational From the next chapter in The Fight For Workers Power Ring 913548 for details

MELB — FRI 15 SEPT
5pm Rally opposing NZ anti-abortion laws, Bourke St Mall.

MELB — SUN 17 SEPT
1 pm Counter-demonstration outside Mary Whitehouse rally Festival Hall.

MELB — MON 18 SEPT
North branch meeting on the politics of homosexuality Ring 387 6351 for details. Friends of IS welcome

MELB — TUES 19 SEPT
South branch meeting on the politics of homosexuality with 2 guest speakers: Judy Munro & Mike Hurley Ring 913 548 for details

MELB — TUES 26 SEPT
South branch meeting on the Fight For Workers Power Ring 913548 For details

MELB — TUES 3 OCT
South branch meeting on the Middle East Ring 913548 for details

Why not send us a story from your workplace? Either phone 376 2783 or write to PO Box 46 Flemington Vic 3031

DROP THE CHARGES!

PTC workers fight to save delegates

RANK and file Public Transport Commission (PTC) workers in Sydney are waging a campaign of bans and stoppages in support of AWU delegates, Max Callaghan and Tony Perera.

As we reported in recent Battlers, Max and Tony were taken to court for swearing at a foreman.

By Janet Vaux

Max Callaghan

Tony Perera

PTC workers are also demanding the reinstatement of Max Callaghan who was dismissed for using offensive language.

Commenting on the campaign, Max said: *"At the moment the PTC is determined not to give me my job back, because they want to impose their authoritarian form of administration.*

"Because of their attitude to workers' rights, the PTC is prepared to waste tax payers' money in its vendetta."

Actions taken by PTC workers include 24 hour stoppages at Meadowbank Bridge, Ropes Creek Bridge, Argyle Street Bridge, Eastern Suburbs Railway and Blacktown.

At Chullora Railway Workshops on Friday 18th August, 2,300 workers held a mass meeting in support of Max and Tony and demanded the dropping of the charges.

Chullora workers are not returning carriages to various depots. Train examiners have put a ban on petrol trains. Railway workers also put a ban on some goods trains.

Some container trains have been stopped. And there was a 48 hour stoppage on trains at Enfield, including Mayne Nickless trains.

As the bans continue, the Arbitration Commission has thrown the ball to PTC to arrange a meeting with Peter Cox and talk to the workers, representatives.

The present campaign began with a meeting of PTC delegates who passed a resolution of support for Max and Tony.

A number of the delegates attending the meeting did so in defiance of their union officials. For example, the VBU delegate reported that he had been told not to attend and that a well-known official called Max a communist.

But the rank and file PTC workers are supporting Max and Tony because they realise they could be in the same position themselves in the future.

PUT THIS IN YOUR PIPELINE AND SMOKE IT

"WE'VE got to strike while the iron's hot. If we give the bosses another week, they will think we are prepared to wait for ever."

The men working on the Silverwater to Botany Bay (Shell) Pipeline decided to stay on the grass for the two days it would take the bosses to look at their log of claims.

The job has been going for 6 weeks and is progressing quickly. Workers commented; *"We have to go out now, or we'll have got round Strathfield Golf Course by the time they're ready to talk."*

The oil pipeline is being built by Eric Newham (Wallerewang). The Industrial Officer is John Wigmore — men who worked on his last job at Newham Technical call him *"a real bastard."*

served

The pay is the same as the 1975 rates for the gas pipeline!

The three unions involved (AMWSU, AWU and FED&FA) have served an 8 point log of claims.

The men want a quality allowance of $15 per week. Quality allowances are always paid on pipeline jobs, but Newham thought he'd get away with it this time.

Travelling allowances are very low at present and with the recent petrol rises in Fraser's cut-throat budget, the men are claiming a $10 a day allowance.

The workers are also claiming for the hourly rate to be increased by 30 cents to $6.01

Other points in the claim include — one hour paid stop accrued sick leave paid on completion of job; $3 per week for boots and overalls; and non-contributory company superannuation scheme.

A victory would give the workers similar wages to the Victorian pipeline workers.

On Friday the organisers reported that the company was prepared to have a conference on the following Tuesday — if the men returned to work.

Pipeline workers vote to go out.

Conference

The unions involved had asked Newham for a conference 3 times before the job started but were refused. Now the company is desperate for a conference.

A majority of the workers voted for a return to work. However they are prepared to go out again immediately Newhams look like giving them the run around.

by Pam Townshend

BETRAYAL AT GMH

TWENTY four VBU members look like losing their jobs in the aftermath of the 1978 GMH award campaign.

Holdens have been using the tactic of removing annual leave entitlements and sacking workers who are involved in industrial action.

arbitration

While all the other unions in the award campaign made acceptance of the new arbitration award conditional on the restoration of these 'fines' and sackings, the VBU officials did not insist on this for their members.

Commissioner Paine has arbitrated a new GMH award which contains some improvements — but which has a major drawback.

Nearly all awards in Australia last for one year. GMH wanted a three year award — but the Arbitration Commission, demonstrating its usual impartiality, compromised on two.

Yet again, the VBU officials have sold their members down the drain. To quote a leaflet put out by the shop committee directed to VBU members:

elections

"We remind you that the elections for the union come up again in October and ask you not to forget what has happened."

Let's hope people don't — and that the rank and file/reform ticket for the elections has more success than last time.

But one improvement in the new award is a fifty percent subsidy for safety boots.

Looks like we have to wait until 1980 to get the other boot off them.

by Alan Briggs,
GMH Woodville

WEE VICTORY AT RESCHS

MEMBERS of the five unions at Reschs' breweries have again combined to beat the bosses.

The workers at Reschs Waverly brewery went out the gate for two weeks when a Liquor Trades member was sacked.

Liquor Trades workers were supported by workers in the F.I.A., A.W.U. F.E.D.F.A. and A.M.W.S.U.

After Reschs had been out for a few days, the Kent Brewery on Broadway and all the Reschs depots in NSW went out in support.

The man who was sacked had been forced to piss in a drain after the company blocked off most of the toilets. He had a medical certificate for a weak bladder condition.

After two weeks the bosses caved in. They reinstated the sacked worker and agreed to unblock the toilets.

Wharf clerks fight on

WATERSIDE clerks (depot and terminal) in NSW have unanimously rejected a union proposal to settle site allowance, wet weather and other claims.

On Thursday Agust 31st, the Federated Clerks Union presented the workers with a deal which was not substantially different the one they came up with a few weeks ago.

As we reported in the last Battler, that proposal was unanimously kicked out, and the union told to come back with something better.

The current proposal met the same fate, and the clerks decided to go out the gate till the following Monday.

the WORK TOLL

MAINTENANCE workers at Vic Rail's South Dynon yards in Melbourne have banned work on the fibre glass insulation of diesel locos.

A few workers were suffering from dermatitis — an itchy skin rash — caused by the glass fibres. But their main concern was was that the glass fiber could be small as asbestos fibres which cause several kinds of fatal lung cancers.

Some medical authorities believes that glass fibres the same size as the tiny asbestos kind cause cancer. The British TUC has banned these types of glass fibres.

The maintenance workers form the ARU, ETU and AMWSU have declared the work black until results of tests on the fibre size carried out by Vic Rail are made public.

Because of the asbestos bans earlier this year, Vic Rail has acted quickly this time. They have granted special clothing, washing facilities and other protective measures.

■

WORKERS at the Gas and Fuel Corporation Heatane Division in Dandenong (Vic) are risking their because of inadequate lighting.

The Dandenong depot loads road tanker with liquefield petroleum gas (LPG). At night there isn't enough light to see the gauges on the tankers so they have to use torches.

LPG is very dangerous. When it leaks, it forms clouds of vapour which a spark can ignite into a fireball. LPG was the gas which incinerated 300 holiday campers in SPain last July.

■

ASBESTOS workers at James Hardie plants seem set to make a world's first. They look like getting a breakthrough in compensation for illness or death caused through working with asbestos.

James Hardie refused for two years to negotiate Miscellaneous Workers Union Claim for special compensation payments. Workers at the two Melbourne plants went on strike in July.

Now the bosses have given in. They agree to pay but are still wrangling over which group of workers it should cover. They want all workers hired before 1966 to be excluded. Unions are not agreeing to this.

■

THE Battler Falling Brick Award for Safety goes to the Victorian Minister for Minerals and Energy, Mr Balfour.

Ten years ago he brought in an Act to regulate the transport and storage of liquefied gases. He said it was urgently needed. But it is still unproclaimed because regulations necessary to administer it haven't been drafted.

Last week Work Toll discovered that there had been "a blanket prohibition" on the hiring of new staff. Yet at the same time he was telling parliament that they could not find any experts to work on the draft.

We are a little surprised. The most common liquefied gas, LPG, was used as early as 1860 and it has been in use in Australia since the 1930s.

Two days after the Spanish gas tanker disaster in July, Mr. Balfour told Parliament he had just appointed an officer full-time to assist in drafting the regulations. He said that they would be ready in the new year.

What a marathon effort of bureaucratic footdragging. You'd almost think that he had been carting around a ton of The Battler Falling Bricks for the last decade.

by Steve Morgan

THE BRADFORD STY

Strike for better deal

"BUGGER those bleeding capitalist pigs down in the office — they're worried about lining their pockets and now I'm worred about mine.

"I say we go out for $15 and wait for the company to approach us."

By Pam Townshend

This was what one angry worker said about the bosses at last Thursday's strike meeting at Bradford Kendall Iron Foundry in Alexandria (Sydney).

The workers started their campaign about 5 months ago with bans, limitations and rolling strikes. The present strike has been going for over a week. They are fighting for a $15 per week across the board rise.

Their wages at present are the lowest in the South Sydney area. A fitter gets $176 while the area average is $200!

On top of the low wages the safety standards are shocking.

In the No. 2 Plant the men are choking with manganese dust. This dust can cause acute lung disease and interferes with the nervous system and co-ordination.

masks

The men are not issued with protective respirators. Instead they are given little paper masks which don't filter after three minutes wear.

The quality control officer moves around the factory all day. He hasn't even got safety glasses to protect his eyes from welding flash.

The meeting on Thursday was quite confused, partly because it was raining and people had trouble hearing and understanding what was going on. The organiser didn't help much. They offered no definite proposals.

One worker said *"It seemed as if they wanted us to go back to work and play into the hands of the bosses'.*

demand

The men wanted to march down to the bosses' office and demand their money but the organisers went on their own to talk with the bosses.

The men was unanimous in their rejection of the company's pathetic $4 offer. The No. 1 plant workers decided to stay out in support of the No.2. Plant.

The day after the meeting, all the employees working under the Metal Trades Award were sent priority paid letters informing them that their annual leave was cancelled and holiday pay forfeited.

How weak do you think these workers are, Bradford Kendall?

As if they would fall for a cheap standover tactic like that.

CYCLONE-HEADED FOR A STORM

HOW would you like to get paid $20 less than anyone else doing your job?

You wouldn't? Then you probably understand how the 150 workers at Cyclone-KM Steel in Richmond (Melbourne) feel.

They've been on strike for three weeks now to try and get the same rates as other workers in the window-making industry.

Peter Pirdis, FIA shop steward, told the Battler, *"For 18 months, we've been trying to get our wages level.*

afford

"The company says 'We can't afford it, we'll have to close the factory, we won't make a profit.

"But what about last year and the year before?"

Many workers at Cyclone-KM are taking home $120-130 a week.

Peter told us, *"There are twenty-seven other companies doing the same job. They get between 15 and 28 dollars more than us. We're the lowest."*

Another worker — who feared for his job if he gave his name — told us, *"Six people were sacked for asking for more money three or four weeks ago.*

sack

"They said they were frightening the others. They sacked four from the paint shop and two from the machine shop.

"I've worked here twenty years now. Every year round this time, they say the same thing. Some people are sacked, others they tell to work two jobs.

"If you are injured, you keep it quiet. Otherwise, they find you an easy job for a couple of weeks, then they say sorry, no job, and kick you out.

"The last pay rise was four years ago. I get $123 clear after paying Medibank — many get less."

ACOA DEFENDS...

Dear Sir

I was interested to read the report on the ACOA plebiscites published in your edition of 19 August 1978. I would like to correct a number of erroneous assertions made by Celcilia Poole.

1. An assertion is made that ACOA has not publicised the plebiscites.

ACOA Journal	October 1977	– 2 page report on Conference Decision to hold the plebiscites.
ACOA Journal	December 1977	– mention in Federal Executive report
ACOA Journal	April 1978	– mention in article on ACOA finances
ACOA Journal	June 1978	– article by Federal Vice President – article by Assistant Federal Secretary letter and editor's reply.
ACOA Journal	July 1978	– article by Assistant Federal Secretary
ACOA Journal	August 1978	– 3 letters on plebiscites
White Collar	October 1977	– Conference report on decision to hold plebiscite
White Collar	December 1977	– Federal Executive report – mention
White Collar	Jan/Feb 1978	– article on plebiscites
Whitle Collar	August 1978	– page article on plebiscites.

reluctantly

2. An assertion is made that I reluctantly agreed to speak.

The contact with the Branch was made by a member of Social Security not Cecilia Poole, and when I was approached to speak I readily agreed in the same manner that I attended a forum on the uranium question arranged by the Department of Construction Section Committee.

Prior to the meeting being held the NSW Branch had determined that the Branch should support a yes vote for the questions on affiliation with the ACTU, voting rights for Federal Officers and the abolition of Federal Conference but that no recommendation be made on the uranium question. As an officer of the Branch, I addressed the meeting in line with that resolution.

Perhaps in future your correspondent could check her facts before committing your publication to printing inaccuracies.

Michael Gleave
Assistant Secretary,
ACOA, NSW Branch

Cecilia replies...

AT the meeting organised by the Social Security section committee, Michael Gleave was asked a direct question about what the union did to publicise the plebiscite. He replied that industrial officers and branch officials had been instructed to discuss the plebiscite when they visited offices all over the state (i.e. visits made in the normal course of duty).

Gleave's own attitude to the plebiscite can be seen by his behaviour in a visit to a metropolitan Social Security office in June. He didn't bother to discuss the plebiscite at all — he was more interested in discussing issues of manager's positions!

My comment on "White Collar" was — "Editors of the branch journal, 'White Collar' didn't think it sufficiently important to include an article on the plebiscite in the last issue."

The August issue of "White Collar" did not come out till half way through the plebiscite — which does mean that they published no major article on the plebiscite immediately before the plebiscite. As Gleave's list shows — they had published only one article and that was way back in Jan/Feb.

delayed

Its true that the August issue of "White Collar" was delayed. But they should have made up for this with a special bulletin.

The ACOA Journal is a federal publication — the NSW branch can't count that among its activities.

They'll have to come up with some better excuses than this!

Cecilia Poole, ACOA

ICI - PAY UP OR SHUT DOWN

ICI construction workers have won increases of $9 to $15.50 in the ICI contractors agreement.

The increases were won mainly through the efforts of workers on the new propathene plant site.

On the new site we are building structures 200 feet high with no height money. We work with special disabilities like sandy conditions and galvanised steel.

After a series of stoppages and bans the companies offered a $5 increase in the disability allowance, 15 cents an hour height money for certain sections of the new site and 50 cents increase in meal allowance.

Obviously the bosses saw the writing on the wall. Either offer the money or we shut the job down for a couple of months.

The contractors brought in their star negotiator, Bill Wyatt from the Employers Federation.

Just after we had voted to accept the offer and return to work, Wyatt came up to the delegates and told us he had withdrawn the offer because we still had bans and limitations in force.

Then he decided that everything was O.K. after all and the offer would stand.

We waited on the grass for Wyatt to make up his little mind and did an hour and a half's pay for his incompetence.

protest

The John's and Waygood blokes took the rest of the day off in protest at Wyatt's stupidity. He needn't bother coming back on the job either, as the John's and Waygood delegates have put a ban on negotiating with him.

Nevertheless, it was a good victory for all the unionists on site.

by an FIA member

LEIGHTON: WE WON'T GET WET

AWU members at the Leighton-Christiani site in Botany have been out the gate for three weeks and won't give in to threats from the boss.

This dispute is over a number of points, including an unlimited wet weather claim, stand-down notice of 72 hours and payment for all lost time.

Of the 6 claims in the dispute, boss Keith Bennett is only prepared to consider one — for one day's sick leave without a certificate.

When the organiser and delegate went to see him after the last mass meeting, he threatened to throw them off the site.

In court last week, the Commissioner refused to discuss the three major claims, because they had been knocked back in a general award claim made by the AWU.

AWU members have been fighting for improved wet weather conditions site by site, since the award claim was knocked back. As we reported in the last Battler, AWU members at Audi, ICI's Botany plant, recently won improved wet weather conditions.

Now the Leighton-Christiani workers are determined to win their claims from the boss. As one worker said, after the meeting: *"Our battle is no longer with the court, but definitely with that bloke in there."*

TRAMMIES GIVE BIGGS THE BOOT

PAUL Krutulis may be dead – but his scabby spirit lingers on.

Barbara Biggs, a newly-recruited 21-year-old tram conductress, has decided to try and break the Tramways Union in Melbourne by refusing to join.

And 3,000 trammies are out for a week to make sure she fails.

By Nicola Catesby

Biggs, who came to Melbourne from Sydney a little over a month ago after returning from a tour of Japan, says it's her *"democratic right"* not to join a union.

But as one angry trammie said at Monday's mass meeting, *"What about the rights of three thousand trammies who refuse to work with a scab?"*

Biggs claims that, *"Even if unionism is completely optional, the unions would keep their strength if the majority wanted to join."*

Maybe she should tell that to the thousands of workers who already have their strikes undermined by staff scabs.

And as Tom Kelly, the driver at Brunswick depot who refused to work with Biggs in the first place, said at the mass meeting:

"She's prepared to take what we've won. But she's not prepared to help fight for anything."

Barbara Biggs wanted the mass meeting to let her speak – even though she's not in the union.

But when union secretary Sid Edwards asked if she'd then accept the meeting's decision, she refused.

Anyway, everyone knows her arguments – they've been on the front pages of every paper for days.

Is Barbara Biggs a stooge for more powerful right-wing forces who want to smash compulsory unionism?

She's already admitted she has enlisted the aid of People Against Communism – a loony right wing organisation always ready to step in and help out a scab.

It was alleged at the stop work that she's also being backed by the Liberal Party, in order to make an example of the Tramways Union.

When Barbara Biggs tried to start work at the Brunswick depot, Tom Kelly, the first person rostered to work with her, refused. Tom summed up most peoples' feelings when he said at the stop work:

"If we lose this struggle we go back one hundred and fifty years."

support

When the Brunswick trammies came out in Kelly's support, the Tramways Union executive tried to keep the dispute confined to Brunswick.

But they soon found out that the workers at Preston felt just as strongly about the issue. Jim Harper from Preston said:

"For our members, money comes last. Unity and solidarity come first."

So the Preston trammies came out as well.

By the time the stop work meeting convened on September 4, most trammies wanted action – this was shown by the record attendance of at least 1500.

The union executive recommended that only the Brunswick workers should stay out – and that the others should support them financially. But more active proposals were put up by the rank and file.

One was that fares shouldn't be collected. Others wanted a total stoppage until Biggs either left or joined the union.

But most of all the trammies wanted involvement in their own fight.

"This isn't a struggle of the union officials", Jim Harper told the meeting, *"Each and every one of us must participate. It's our fight."*

Bill Donnelly from Doncaster argued for a strong stand:

"If we're going to look for support from other unions", he said, *"we're not going to get it by backing off today."*

And the union may well need this backing. Biggs has been a lot smarter than Paul Krutulis – she has obtained her conscientious objectors certificate from the Industrial Registrar, which makes it illegal for the Tramways Union to ban her.

In the end, the meeting threw out the executive recommendation to confine the dispute to Brunswick Depot. They voted to go out until Biggs either joined the union or was sacked (preferably the latter).

Which neatly gives the lie to Biggs' claim that unionists are manipulated by militant communist officials. The Tramways are a left-wing union, but there was a lot of anger at the executive's foot-dragging.

Whether Biggs is a stooge for more powerful forces, or just a nutty right-winger crusading on her own, one thing is clear.

With the political climate created by Fraser, there will be lots more union-busting attempts like hers. Unless the Tramways Union wins this struggle and smashes them for once and for all.

"She's prepared to take what we've won"

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Brunswick tramway workers prevent scab Barbara Biggs (centre) from entering the depot to start work

ATEA hang up

WE'VE all heard that Bob Hawke performed a masterpiece of negotiation to win the Telecom dispute for the ATEA last month.

But if it was such a great victory – how come substantial minorities of the membership voted against the deal?

By Alec Kahn

For example, about 400 at the Melbourne meeting and one-third of the Canberra meeting.

The answer is that the deal was not a victory. In fact, it was a compromise – when the ATEA bans clearly had Telecom on the run.

For a start, the ATEA has agreed to allow nine "Exchange Maintenance Centres" to be introduced on a two year trial basis. These Centres will be highly automated, displacing hundreds of technicians.

And as one worker at the Melbourne mass meeting asked, *"Who's going to decide if it's a fair trial? Telecom – they've decided everything else so far."*

In fact, Telecom can, with the approval of the Arbitration Commission, cancel the trial if "reliability of the Telecom network" is endangered.

Supposedly, the trial will be assessed by two independent experts", one appointed by the unions and one by Telecom.

But if these "experts" disagree – which they almost certainly will – then the matter will be resolved in Arbitration. In other words, by the bosses' court.

The ATEA is not bound by the result of the Arbitration finding. But it will be awfully hard to start a campaign to abolish two-year-old Exchange Maintenance Centres, especially after losing a court case that they agreed to in the first place.

claim

Telecom has agreed to retain the technician grading, one of the ATEA's key claims. But once again, the union has left vital decisions in the hands of the bosses' court.

For example, the issue of promotion opportunities to the Technical Officer grade will be decided by Arbitration if the two parties disagree.

And the fine details of the staff question will only be decided in ten weeks time – when the bans have completely worn off and the militancy of the workers has been dissipated.

The ATEA has also agreed to avoid taking any industrial action during the next two years which could "prevent a fair trial." In other words, a virtual no-strike clause to make the trial work.

The union also agreed to having the wages made up for only 70% of the workers stood down. The other 30% will have their wages made up by the union – a very bad precedent.

Stan Sizeland, a militant in Melbourne, pointed out to the mass meeting, *"Last meeting, the executive said Arbitration was useless, and there'd be no settlement unless everyone was paid.*

"The executive's more concerned about going to jail than fighting for the membership."

Wally Marek, another militant, argued, *"Now is the moment of our greatest strength. We can't wait two years and let it be eroded away.*

"This agreement is similar to the La[illegible] Valley. They went back w[illegible] the promise of a hearing [illegible] and they got the big ra[illegible]berry."

The bans by the AT[illegible] cost Telecom $20 mil[illegible] and they certainly di[illegible] concessions.

That's the proble[illegible] were only conc[illegible] Telecom can no[illegible] only mildly hampe[illegible] its computerization [illegible] system.

To fight on would [illegible] meant a major confront[illegible] with the Government for [illegible] ATEA.

skilled

But it was a confr[illegible] ion they could have [illegible] Their job is too [illegible] skilled to be done by [illegible] or strikebreakers. Th[illegible] were popular because [illegible] got free calls; ev[illegible] resents Telecom's [illegible] charges and massive p[illegible] And the Governmen[illegible] already in trouble [illegible] Budget and the [illegible] Affair.

Instead, Bob Hawke [illegible] again intervened and [illegible] by a weak-kneed [illegible] leadership – comprom[illegible] away the workers' stren[illegible]

the battler
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None dare call it MURDER

A Battler Special Report

LES HOSKING died on September 14.

His death was another of the Silent Murders. Les was killed by the lack of safety and the cost-cutting that plagues Australian industry.

Of course, that wasn't the official reason for his death. The story that went out to the Press was that a wall had "accidentally" collapsed on him.

Les Hosking had worked for the Victorian Government Housing Commission as a construction worker for 29 years. He was sixty-one and looking forward to a well-earned retirement.

Les and his workmates were in a construction crew at the Westmeadows estate in the northern suburbs of Melbourne.

They had long complained about the shoddy materials that they were expected to work with.

On September 14, they were erecting flats, bolting pre-fabricated concrete walls together.

One of the walls was the wrong size. The crew removed it – but in trying to jiggle it into position, bolts were loosened in the wall and it fell on Les.

Mrs Eileen Hosking, Les Hosking's daughter-in-law, told The Battler that a similar accident had happened a year ago in Bendigo. Another worker was killed.

She said that the flat had been *"A total schemozzle from the beginning. The floor wasn't aligned and all the sizes were wrong."*

Now the Victorian Government Housing Commission has tried to cover up the facts of the accident.

Housing Commission covers up evidence

Les' workmates stopped work when he was killed, and stayed off the job the next day as well.

The Housing Commission moved in another gang, without telling them of the accident, to rebuild the wall and remove any evidence of their negligence.

A television news report on Channel 0 the night of the accident, claimed that the wind had swung another wall on the one which fell, causing the accident.

Eileen Hosking says that the wall which fell was an inside wall, and that none of the workers on the site had mentioned the wind in telling what happened.

She said, *"Whoever put that story about, was trying to make it look like a freak of nature."*

We only have to remember back to the Westgate Bridge disaster to understand the real reason for so many industrial accidents.

skimping

The Royal Commission into Westgate made it plain that it was the skimping on safety and costs that caused the death of 35 workers.

There won't be any Royal Commission into Les Hosking's death. The Housing Commission is planning to hold an inquiry. But they have already covered up the evidence to exonerate themselves.

The struggle for safety on the job isn't a spectacular one. It doesn't make the front pages of the daily newspapers, and we never see Bob Hawke grand-standing about it.

But in a system that puts profit first, and our health and well-being a long way last, it is a vital one.

Capitalism is drenched with the blood of literally thousands of people like the late Les Hosking.

And it will continue to be, until we put an end to this Silent Murder and the system that causes it.

A pie for the pious

MARY Whitehouse's tour of Australia might have been a flop. But she certainly provided great target practice for pie-throwers round the land.

Whitehouse failed to kick off any right-wing "morality drive" and many of her rallies were pathetically attended.

Her biggest humiliation came at Sydney University. A counter-demonstration of 1000 turned up to drown out the fifty diehards who came to hear her. In the end, she didn't appear at all.

The same day, she became the target for cream buns and pies when she addressed a tiny crowd outside Sydney Town Hall.

Nearly half the 300 that attended were hostile to her.

In Melbourne, only one thousand of her supporters came to hear her at Festival Hall. Three hundred socialists, gays and women's activists staged a noisy counter-demonstration across the road.

Thirty of us lined the footpath approaching the hall. Festival of Lighters had to "run a gauntlet" of broadsheets and anti-oppression slogans to get to the entrance.

Some interesting exchanges took place when the more hot-headed Whitehouse supporters decided to have a go at us.

One respectable – and presumably Christian – gent decided to threaten us with the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah if we didn't smarten ourselves up.

Another asked one of us, *"Are you a queer?"* because he'd *"Always wanted to know what they looked like."*

"Well, that's what they look like," the demonstrator replied, "Me."

A Festival of Light worthy turned to us with a beatific smile and intoned *"May your mother forgive you."*

Others just pushed past, tearing up leaflets (strangely none were arrested for littering) and muttering *"Hallelujah"* or *"Praise the Lord"*.

But no-one got into the meeting without knowing that the opposition to Mary Whitehouse and the ideas she represents is large, vocal and unafraid.

SUPPORT THE STOCK EXCHANGE TEN

between the lines

COLES NEW WORLD have been boring us all shitless with those ads about 500 everyday price cuts. What they haven't been saying is that their prices have been inflated for the past five years.

When Tom the Cheap went broke, a lot of inside information from the grocery trade began to surface. It appears that Tom had managed to argue a pretty good deal from his suppliers: both in terms of prices and credit.

So tough little grocery chains like Tom the Cheap, SSW and Jewel kept their retail prices right down.

But after a meeting of creditors, Coles found out that the suppliers had been selling much cheaper to Tom than to them. So they went around the suppliers, one by one, and arm twisted some better deals out of them.

Woolworths found out about all this and sent a letter to all its suppliers saying that any concessions gained by Coles would have to apply to them. One major supplier even threatened to withdraw all its supplies of food and toiletries to Coles.

Upper class twit of the year, Roddy Llewellyn, doesn't like children, is hard to live with, almost broke and thinks whippine is a good idea.

Sounds like the ideal companion for a princess.

Some people are born stupid; others make up for it by practising. Not only did Morris Glickman (formerly a solicitor, now resident in Israel) embezzle or lose lots of his clients' money, but some of his clients were men with guns.

And his former clients are very angry and they've told him how angry they are. Not even Pentridge will be safe for Morris, they say.

You have to admire the ruling class for the calibre of the people it picks to fight the unions.

First there was Paul Kratulis, who was shot by his brother for sleeping with his wife. Then there was Noel "I just want to work" Kane, sacked and defended by the unions a number of times for being pissed at work.

Finally, Barbara Biggs, the woman with one American and two Australian passports, a drugs record and deported from Japan.

No! Ms Biggs doesn't get the plastic straw this week. But John Bennett from the "Council for Civil Liberites" does. He supported Barbara Biggs.

It's not as if the council is some loony right-wing front organisation. Some of its members were active over conscription and it's generally your typical middle of the road bunch of conscience-striken trendies.

John, your cancer-inducing Battler PVC Plastic straw is on its way. You have the right to suck or not suck. You have the right to accept it or not accept. You have the right to . . .

Thank God our fate isn't in his hands. On the morning Ms Biggs started her new job there, in the Department of Transport, the lift driver refused to take her up in the lift.

by Darth Vader

One of the ten arrests at the Sydney Stock Exchange

Build the defence campaign

TEN activists are on trial in Sydney for doung what every militant worker dreams of: confronting the bosses in their own den at the Stock Exchange.

They were part of a thousand-strong march that went to the Stock Exchange after the anti-Budget rally in Sydney on Monday 21 August.

The march was led by construction workers from the I.C.I. Botany site, and included workers from many different unions and jobs.

As a result of the melee in the Stock Exchange police arrested ten people, including ironworkers, builders' labourers and students.

Two of those arrested Phil Lee, a storeman and Martin Hirst, a Liquor Trades Union member, have been charged with $4,300 worth of damage each.

That is, they have been charged with all the damage done to the Stock Exchange!

Another, builders' labourer Ray McGovern, has been framed on charges of assaulting police, even though there were many witnesses who saw that he did no such thing. Ray was fined $150.

frame

Obviously, the police are prepared to frame anyone who is willing to fight the employers.

Some of the charges probably won't be heard until next year, so there is time to build a campaign to get the charges dropped.

The defence committee held a successful fundraising party on 23 September, and we will be holding other functions to raise money for the campaign and covers defence costs.

We are also producing two posters. One will expose the role of Special Branch in the frame-ups, and the other will be a fund-raising poster.

But most important part of the campaign is taking place in workplaces and the unions.

Leaflets [illegible] explaining the issues and we are seeking union endorsements for the campaign.

If you can organise a meeting at work, or circulate leaflets, or if you want more information contact the DEFEND THE STOCK EXCHANGE TEN COMMITTEE, P.O. Box M8, Newtown South, NSW 2042, or phone Sydney 51...

WE, the undersigned, demand the immediate dropping of the charges against the Stock Exchange Ten.

NAME ....
Address ....
Union .... Signature ....

NAME ....
Address ....
Union .... Signature ....

NAME ....
Address ....
Union .... Signature ....

Clip and post to PO Box M8, Newtown Sth, NSW

Aust. worker held in Israel

FAWZI Khalid, a Palestinian-born Australian citizen, has been arrested during a visit to the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

He is being held without a trial, but the Australian Government is taking no action to help him.

Fawzi is a 28 year old pipeline worker and AMWSU member from Melbourne. He has lived in Australia several years.

In March he went to visit his elderly parents in the occupied territories. He was allowed into the country without any problems. A few weeks ago he got married.

Then the Israeli security force, Mossad, suddenly swooped in a night time raid. They have held him since then, without making any charges, and without allowing any visits.

fingernails

He is allegedly under interrogation. Mossad interrogation methods are notorious and include burning the skin with cigarette butts and pulling out fingernails.

No reason at all has been given for Fawzi Khalid's arrest. But he was a prominent member of the United Palestinian workers organisation in Australia, and it is highly likely that ASIO passed this information to Mossad.

Max El Sheik, speaking for the UPW, said, "*We have the right to tell the Australian nation what the Israeli Government is doing. We have the right to express our views.*"

Members of the United Palestinian Workers have been alarmed to find that the Australian Embassy in Tel Aviv has taken no action at all to protect or help Fawzi Khalid.

At least 150 protest telegrams have been sent to Foreign Affairs Minister, Andrew Peacock. The UPW intends to send a delegation to see Peacock and hopes that a question will be raised in Parliament.

★ **New from IS BOOKS**

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VIC LIBS REEL

The Jennings pennings ... do they spell the end for Hamer?

by Dave Nadel

DOUG Jennings, the right wing Victorian state Parliamentarian expelled from the Liberal Party for disloyalty, has opened a can of worms which just might finish off the Hamer Government.

In a thirty five thousand word document, Jennings accuses about half the state Liberal politicians of corruption over land deals and branch stacking.

He also made accusations against Philip Lynch, former state Labor leader Clyde Holding, and the Liberal Party machine.

By allowing Jennings to table his document Hamer gave it parliamentary privilege, which means it can be reported in the press without fear of libel or need for proof. That may be the greatest act of political suicide since Nixon's aides mentioned the tapes.

accused

Most of the politicians accused of direct profiteering from the land deals are relatively minor, such as Vern Hauser and Charles Hider.

However he accuses bigger fish of cover-ups; men like Vance Dickie and Sir Kenneth Wheeler, the retiring speaker.

Wheeler participated in covering a huge profit made by his son, Lindsay, selling land to the Albury-Wodonga Commission. (We reported Wheeler's dealings in the Battler last year.)

Doug Jennings — spilling the beans on the Land Deals

Jennings accuses Holding of receiving thirty thousand dollars (presumably from the Liberals) for going quiet in the land scandals.

Holding was outraged at this last accusation and he and the state Labor opposition demanded a judical enquiry.

Hamer has refused, on the grounds that it would cost tax payers up to a million dollars which is a lots less than Jennings is accusing the Housing Commission of wasting.

He has two other reasons that he isn't saying publicly. Firstly, some of the allegations are almost certainly true. Liberal politicians are quite capable of lying under oath, but they don't enjoy it — the only thing they'd enjoy less would be having tell the truth under oath!

Secondly, Hamer must call an election before next May. A proper judicial enquiry could go on from now till Christmas and keep the scandals on the front page every day.

true

Some of Jennings' accusations are definitely true — such as his attacks on the Wheelers. Other make sense but are impossible to prove. The attack on Clyde Holding makes no sense at all.

Firstly because Clyde Holding did not run dead on the land scandals; and there are plenty of press cuttings and Hansards to prove it.

Holding has been accused of corruption or at least cronyism inside the Labor Party in the past. But even his most bitter opponents have never accused Holding of being stupid or cheap.

You'd have to be stupid to accept a bribe that your opposition knew about. You'd have to be cheap to be available for thirty thousand dollars. State Opposition leaders, not to mention silent partners in large law firms, earn much more than that in one year.

defence

The Liberal government's main defence against Jennings has been to throw more mud back at him. Alan Hunt pointed out that Jennings stood to make over half a million from a subdivision if the Liberals had changed planning regulations in the Mornington Peninsula.

Jennings has never denied this. He has always been the spokes person for large landowners. He represents private speculation whereas the government represents corporate specualtion.

All the government's mud-slinging proves is that Jennings is as greedy as they are. It does not prove that he is corrupt.

And more importantly it does not prove that they are innocent.

The dole bludgeon gets worse

by a C.E.S. worker.

THE Department of Social Security plans to use a new system of monthly interviews to step up their harassment of people on unemployment benefit.

The idea is to call people in for monthly interviews at their local Social Security office. Questions to be asked include — How many jobs have you applied for lately, what are the names of the firms and when did you apply there.

intimidated

Many people on the dole will be intimidated just by having to go for monthly interviews, let alone by undergoing third degree questioning when they get there.

There will be a higher drop-out rate from the dole and many more people will be frightened away from putting in dole claims — which is one way of lowering the official unemployment figures.

Senior management in Social Security have even acknowledged this as being part of the reason why the scheme has been introduced, on a trial basis, at Bondi Social Security.

Maybe this is why, in his recent budget, Malcolm Fraser allocated 900 more staff nationally to the Social Security Department while most other Department got staffing cutbacks.

Social Security at Bondi have defeated an attempt to victimise their union rep when he and other workers disagreed with the new scheme.

supported

A meeting of the workers at the office overwhelming supported their rep. and condemned the attempt at victimisation. Bondi CES workers also expressed their support.

An urgent meeting of the Social Security Section Committee was called and ACOA State Security Secretary Barry Cotter attended.

Next day Cotter met with the Acting Director of the Social Security Department of NSW and told him that Bondi Social Security workers were prepared to take industrial action. The victimization attempt was dropped.

Obviously Social Security feels threatened when workers object to implementing these dole bashing schemes.

THE FIGHT TO STOP URANIUM

FRASER MAULED OVER RANGER

Galurrwuy Yunupingu

By Phil Griffiths

MALCOLM Fraser's concerted attempt to pressurise the Northern Lands Council into signing the uranium deal with Ranger has backfired.

Fraser managed to coerce the NLC chairman, Galarrwuy Yunupingu into recommending the deal to the council meeting two weeks ago.

Fraser did this by threatening to freeze the NLC's funds and abolish its right to negotiate.

There were only 23 delegates at the NLC meeting itself, out of a total of 42. And a small majority of these followed Yunupingu's advice and voted to accept the agreement. The Liberals were delighted.

Their delight quickly soured. There was an immediate revolt by some of the delegates to the council, who attacked Yunupingu's leadership and started court proceedings in Darwin.

In the face of mounting hostility and pressure from his own people, Yunupingu was forced to back down, cancel the agreement and call a further NLC meeting to reconsider the deal.

Meanwhile the delay killed any chances the government ever had of getting the Ranger project started before the wet season.

The struggle over Ranger is crucial both for the government and the aboriginal people. Fraser has set up a token committee he hopes will sign away the rights of the black people.

And he has tried to convince their leaders that despite their powerlessness, there is a point in negotiating the terms of defeat.

But it hasn't worked. The black communities have little to lose by not negotiating. And the delay means that the uranium movement has a breathing space to step up the struggle.

And that means organising against Ranger in the capital cities where we have the power to stop Fraser.

Now let's get our unions fighting

ONCE uranium mining operations do get under way, the anti-uranium movement must be prepared to take up the fight. Far

Unfortunately, many proposals on future action seem to avoid the basic question of how we're actually going to stop mining. The answer is simple — trade union bans. Organising these bans is not so simple.

In SA, a couple of workplace branches of the anti-uranium movement have been launched in recent months. This is only a fraction of what is needed; but it is the way forward.

This type of organisation will be a major emphasis of CANE's activity in the coming year, but it seems to be getting pushed into the background in other states.

zones

Instead, we're getting proposals from Melbourne MAUM for nuclear free zones in local areas. These zones will only be nuclear free if the mining companies say so. And the effects of radiation poisoning will not take much notice of this desire for good health either.

When Collingwood City Council in Melbourne declared itself 'nuclear free', it couldn't be said that shock waves rocked the stock exchange. But when the ACTU changed its policy, shares jumped.

Which is the whole point.

The mining companies know they need labour to operate. So does Fraser . . . that's why he introduced such harsh penalties for unions who refuse to co-operate.

When the uranium movement begins to operate on the same assumptions, we've got the chance to grab them both by the throat.

TOP: Mass anti-uranium march in Adelaide. Now the Adelaide movement is pushing for trade union bans as a major focus of the campaign. ABOVE: Bob Hawke patronizing the anti-uranium stall at the ACTU Congress this year, before going inside and getting the bans lifted on existing contracts.

Shaping the struggle for '79

DELLGATES from all over Australia are meeting in Sydney at the end of the month for the Uranium Moratorium National Consultation.

The delegates from Campaign Against Nuclear Energy in South Australia have been instructed to argue for trade union bans as a major focus for the movement in 1979.

Using the Melbourne MAUM's recommendations for activity as a basis for discussion, the CANE steering committee considered that the fight against mining in the Northern Territory will remain at the centre of the campaign next year.

We altered MAUM'S proposals to reflect this.

There should be at least two major demonstrations held next year — the first to co-incide with the expected start of mining operations in March or April and the second on Hiroshima Day.

The MAUM proposal for a national mobilisation at Lucas Heights has a number of flaws in it. It will be difficult to get there if you are working (or broke), and it also diverts attention from mining to stockpiling.

We'd also prefer that the signature campaign emphasise the dangers of mining, rather than concentrate on democratic rights.

That way, we could use it to build the first rally.

involved

We also want to see boycotts of all major companies involved in mining. For any boycott to be effective it has to have the backing of the relevant unions — not just consumers.

MAUM's proposals that just one company be singled out will not be particularly effective or relevant to every local branch.

by Ross McKenzie and Doug McCarty, CANE

> **Uranium Film**
>
> "SENTENCED TO SUCCESS"
>
> A film about health hazards in the nuclear industry
>
> Adelaide Trades Hall, South Terrace, Adelaide (in the meeting room adjoining the bar)
>
> 7.30 pm, Wednesday October 11
>
> *Film followed by an informal discussion and drinks. Speaker: John Phillips, from the Islington Railway Workshops CANE branch.*
>
> An important meeting for all trade unionists
>
> Sponsored by the CANE Trade Union Action Group

Will Donald duck on U-plant?

MALCOLM Fraser is putting pressure on South Australia's premier Don Dunstan so that plans for a uranium enrichment plant near Port Pirie can go ahead.

Uranium processing is not new to Port Pirie. There was a processing plant there in the 1950's, when Radium Hill was being mined for British A-bombs.

Just this year, it was found that local children were playing on the radioactive wastes left when Radium Hill closed.

The Liberals are pushing the new plant as jobs for South Australians.

They are saying Dunstan's refusal to join the nuclear band-wagon is "purely through politics". As if uranium isn't political! The Labor government is still saying no to the U-plant.

For the Liberals to argue for the plant because of "jobs" is doubly cynical. Firstly, their policies are increasing unemployment everywhere else.

Secondly, the nuclear industry is about the most capital intensive industry there is, providing very few jobs from massive investment.

directly

A similar sized investment in manufacturing industry could create between 20 and 60 times as many jobs directly, and probably at least as many in support industries.

But with the economic crisis, the profits in manufacturing are not enough to attract large-scale capital investment. The profit in uranium appears more attractive.

While Don Dunstan is currently opposing Fraser's plans, his attitude is suspect too.

Dunstan qualifies his statement against the plant by saying that,

"*Like the ALP, I am prepared to change again.*"

The most effective way to stop the plant once and all would be for all unions involved in building and construction to place bans right now on any nuclear project.

Aurukun sell-out

BLACKS at Aurukun and Mornington Island were assured a few months ago by Malcolm Fraser that: "The people of these communities have turned to us. We will not fail them."

The Queensland Government subsequently made provision for the setting up of Shire Councils in the two former reserves.

Then they sacked both for failing to jump when Bjelke-Petersen, Hinze and Porter cracked the whip.

Before the sacking, the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs attempted to intimidate the councillors.

It served eviction notices on four council staff. It delayed funding for at least three months, and then rejected Council nominees as acting Shire Clerks.

councils

On August 4 and 5, both councils met together at Mornington Island. They said, "*We have been cheated. The Local Government Act is a smokescreen.*

"*They (the Queensland Government) have broken their own law, it is only a piece of paper to be thrown on the ground.*"

Ten days later both councils were sacked. The Queensland government obviously has two laws, one for blacks and one for the mining companies.

The Aurukun and Mornington Island controversy has achieved one thing — it makes it plain to see who pulls the strings.

The basic demand of North Queensland blacks is for Land Rights Now with federal government funding, to preserve the possibility of self-management.

On July 19 this year Hawke promised trade union support. He has done nothing since.

We have to make sure that he doesn't dither away from this fight.

I want to join the International Socialists

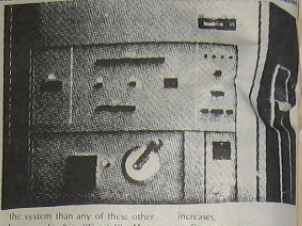
NAME ....
ADDRESS ....
Postcode ....
PHONE NO. ....
TRADE UNION ....

Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, 3031

The international fight against computer sackings. In 1976, French printworkers on the Parisian Libere newspaper occupied to prevent the introduction of new technology. The police smashed the occupation, leading to this demonstration by printers dressed in convict clothes.

The computer menace

ARE WE PROGRAMMED FOR THE SACK?



By Tom O'Lincoln and Doug McCarty

BY taking on the government last month, Telecom technicians have put the spotlight on computer technology.

A national debate has broken out on the threat to jobs.

It's not just in Australia. In Germany, computers have been nicknamed "job killers". In Britain, Tony Benn has said that automation is about to race through society cutting jobs "like a scythe".

Meanwhile in Japan, they are using robots on car assembly lines.

holocaust

Rupert Murdoch, who is happily computerising his own operations, had the gall to run a series in the "Australian" about the "computer holocaust". Even Liberal Ministers are warning that unemployment could rise far above the present level.

We are up against one of the great ironies of history.

Capitalism is a revolutionary system. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx wrote:

"The bourgeoisie ... has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, applications of chemistry to industry and agriculture ... what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?"

These advances should be liberating. But under capitalism, human beings become the slaves of their own technology. The most obvious case is nuclear energy, which threatens to destroy us all.

Then there are the fruits of chemistry and biology, used by capitalist governments to turn out endless horrifying varieties of chemical warfare.

"Once you've programmed one of these little fellows, you know it will always share your basic assumptions, which is more than you can say for employees."

And twenty per cent of the world's scientists are currently employed in military research. What a criminal waste of human talent!

But the use of automation to chop jobs is built more deeply into the system than any of these other horrors. In his "Capital", Marx showed how the growth of the system led to unemployment.

The need for each firm to compete with the next forces it to automate. The machines replace workers. The result is a permanent pool of unemployed which Marx called the "industrial reserve army".

To be sure, automation can produce economic expansion, which in turn provides new jobs. But there is a lag. A certain amount of unemployment is a normal state of affairs.

increases

What is more, the pace of work for those left to work with the computers increases. They are such expensive items, and do the repetitive work so quickly, that users are forced to work faster to use the machines effectively.

Another problem - and one that has created a new form of drudgery - is getting information into and out of the computer, and making sure it is right.

At present, punched cards are used extensively, and punching them is an awful job. They are being replaced by VDUs - Visual Display Units - which have their own keyboard.

Will the loss of jobs due to computers enable bosses to break the strength of unions? Not necessarily.

There may be fewer workers employed after a computer is installed, but their potential power increases.

Computer workers have special skills, and often secret knowledge of how the system works.

Repayments on the computer mean that it cannot be left idle during long drawn-out disputes. And computer staff are not easily replaced by scabs.

Also, it can take only a few simple instructions for the computer itself to erase all valuable information it holds.

Fifteen years ago, computer workers formed a small, select professional elite. But with the booming growth in computers, computer work has dropped in "status" and relative pay.

Here in Australia in the last year we have seen the formation of a union for computer workers. We can expect that in the next few years, they will join the rest of the white-collar working class in union struggles.

Still, computers sound like some sort of hideous threat to the working class. But they needn't be.

It all depends which class controls them. Under socialism computers will help humanity in two vital ways.

The first will be the freeing of workers from many mundane and boring tasks. We can then concentrate on satisfying and fulfilling activity, and have more time to participate in the democratic processes of a workers' government.

And our participation will be made more effective by computers.

Information could speed all over the globe, so that workers could make intelligent and democratic decisions about how to run society.

planned

Economic life could be planned, guaranteeing employment and security for all.

Some of this could be done already. But the information is kept secret and in the hands of governments and large employers.

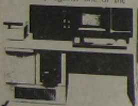
When that information is available to everyone, we will begin to have the open society that workers can really control.

But for now, we have to protect ourselves.

Our unions should be saying not one new machine will be introduced unless it brings with it a shorter working week with no loss in pay.

Workers are not opposed to progress.

But we have every right to block it, as long as we do not share in the benefits.



ABOVE: The visual display units, which threaten printer's jobs.
RIGHT: The Fairfax picket in Sydney in 1976, which fought against VDU's.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

I READ in the papers that our ever-vigilant police force have made yet another major drug haul. This is a great victory for law and order. It doesn't do much for community health.

Like all the big raids this year, it was a raid on marijuana growers or importers. The cops have been rather less successful in busting big-time heroin dealers.

This may surprise you, given that the only real argument that they have against cannabis nowadays is that in some cases it leads to heroin usage.

Possibly heroin producers are harder to catch. Possibly, being bigger crooks they pay better protection money to the cops.

According to the police news releases, the major crackdown on cannabis and the "grass drought" that it has created will lower drug usage in the community and improve public morals and health - especially among the young. Unfortunately it doesn't quite work that way.

Nobody uses drugs (any drugs) to excess because other people force them to.

Despite some of the more lurid pieces of television fiction disguised as documentaries, there are not a lot of cases of people held down and having drugs forced down their throats or into their veins repeatedly until they become addicted.

Most people use drugs to excess because they wish to escape from some aspect of their lives. Like, for example, chronic boredom amongst the thousands of unemployed kids.

And that applies to any sort of drug, whether it is marijuana which is pretty safe in any proportions, alcohol which is safe and pleasant in moderate amounts but very dangerous when used to excess, or heroin which is unsafe in any dosage.

For some kids who are already in contact with the shadier dealers, the grass drought will lead to heroin use. For rather more of them, it will lead to heavy drinking.

If the causes of despair are not removed, all that happens when you close one avenue of escape is that other avenues are sought.

No-one has ever died of an overdose of cannabis. Smack kills quite quickly. And in this country, people die in large numbers from alcohol effects.

So our gallant law enforcement agencies, who are so proud of their big drug hauls have probably condemned several hundred people to death; relatively quickly by the needle or somewhat more slowly by the bottle. Great stuff fellows!

Decriminalising marijuana won't do any harm - it may even save a life or two indirectly.

But in the long term, the only way to stop drug abuse is to eliminate its cause: the system that regards youth unemployment as a regrettable necessity to improve business profits.

PALESTINIANS LOSE A "PAL"

THE Palestinian villagers of Al-Bireh, in the Israeli occupied West bank of the Jordan, weren't very interested in the Middle East summit at Camp David.

On the same day that the summit was announced, they got a notice from the Israeli military government that they weren't allowed to build or grow crops on their 900 acres of land.

By David Lockwood

The reason? The land is soon to be confiscated and handed over to the Israelis to turn into a new settlement.

Of course, this isn't the sort of event that our media has been reporting. Instead we had two weeks of to-ings and fro-ings by Israel's Begin, Egypt's Sadat, and Plains' (Georgia) Jimmy Carter direct from Camp David.

The outcome of the summit was never really in doubt: a 'peace settlement' would be arranged between Israel and Egypt, which although it ignored the essential question in the Middle East - the rights of the Palestinians - might rule out the possibility of all-out war between the Egyptians and Israelis.

This would make all three of the governments involved at Camp David happy.

The Americans - because they could then sweep the Middle East 'problems' under the carpet, and continue their economic exploitation of the area, especially with their new investments in Egypt.

sentiment

The Israelis - because their war economy is beginning to falter, and there is considerable sentiment in Israel for peace. And of course, what's good for the US is good for its client state in the area.

And the Egyptians - because their country is on the brink of economic collapse. They couldn't afford another war and, having fallen out with the Soviet Union are desperately in need of economic backing from the US.

But the real problem in the Middle East is not about the adjustment of the Egyptian-Israeli border. It is not even just about the rights of the Arabs on the West bank of the Jordan.

The conflict in the Middle East is about the rights of the Palestinians - all the Palestinians, whether they are in Israel or outside.

Most of them were driven from their homeland in 1948, when Israel was set up with the support of the imperialist powers.

Those who remained are treated as second class citizens. The rest - 600,000 of them - are scattered in refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the Gaza strip and the West bank.

The Palestinians are fighting for their rights - and until these rights are secured, no amount of machinations by Sadat, Begin and Carter will resolve the conflict.

But it is not a fight that the Palestinians can win on their own - they just aren't strong enough to do it. To win, they need support from the Arab working classes.

The results of the summit were a series of face-savers on both sides. Egypt will get back the Sinai peninsula (which Israel grabbed in 1967); but Israel will still be entitled to "security zones" (exactly how big a security zone is is anybody's guess).

The people living in the West bank and Gaza strip will (eventually) be granted "full autonomy", and the Israeli military government will end; but Israel will be able to maintain a "military presence" and presumably keep on settling on Palestinian land.

Most important of all is what the summit did not say: where exactly Israel's boundaries will end up and exactly how "autonomous" the West bank and Gaza will be.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation has already said that there can be no settlement of the Middle East situation without the participation of the PLO. And it will continue fighting Israeli forces until there is such a settlement.

Despite the current euphoria about "peace", we can't expect the Palestinians of Al-Bireh, or anywhere else, to care whether their land is stolen by Begin, or by Sadat, or by something called "autonomy".

And that means we can't expect them to give up fighting.

Palestinian freedom fighters in action

" Psst. I'll give you back your desert if you'll give me some of your dessert."

Shah gets the shakes

THE Shah of Iran added to the misery of the Tabas earthquake victims earlier this month.

By Nicola Catesby

With one of the best equipped armies in the world, the Shah could have saved hundreds of lives by sending it to Tabas.

But he knew without the presence of that army in Iran's major cities even for a few days - he couldn't maintain his tyrannical rule. *So he kept the bulk of it at home.*

strikes

Since January this year, Iran has been swept by anti-Shah demonstrations and strikes. They began in January in the religious city of Qom, and by August had spread to Abadan, Tabriz and Shiraz.

To begin with, many of the demonstrations had a religious slant-calling for the restoration of the "laws of Islam". But because *all* anti-Shah activity is banned in Iran, they have become increasingly political.

Of course, nothing would suit the Shah - and his cheer-squad in the Western press better than to portray the demonstrators as 'Moslem extremists'.

But the fact is that when the Shah made concessions to the religious leaders at the end of August, this failed to stop the rioting.

In early September, the Shah's troops fired on demonstrators for three days running. An estimated two hundred and fifty were killed.

Martial law was declared - because the government said, the demonstrators had disregarded the advice of the Moslem leaders.

But the Shah wasn't entirely friendless. At the height of the demonstrations, the chinese leader Hua Kuo Feng provided moral support through a state visit, while Jimmy Carter telephoned Teheran to back up the regime.

Ever since he was hoisted back onto the peacock throne by the CIA after a previous rebellion in 1953 (in which he distinguished himself by rapidly leaving the country), the 'Shah of Shahs' has presided over a regime noted for its brutal repression.

Why has such a movement only broken out now?

Iran is a very wealthy country. In 1974, its oil income practically quadrupled. But most Iranians - workers and peasants - never saw any of it. All they saw was inflation rising to 40 per cent, rents taking three quarters of their earnings, and cheap foods disappearing from the market.

This was because Iran's oil-rich ruling class - the Shah's supporters - were busily engaged in property speculation, hoarding commodities to make huge profits and so on.

Discontent began to

benefits

grow. It was encouraged by the Shah's promises of development and benefits from technology. Iranian workers and peasants demanded benefits for themselves.

The Shah tried to deal with the situation in his usual way - through the SAVAK, his secret police, trained by the CIA and Mossad (the Israeli intelligence service). But Eventually, the people's anger burst onto the streets.

Religious leaders led the first demonstrations because they were to some extent protected from arrest, they had a national network, and because of the weakness of the left.

But a 'return to Islam' is no answer to the Shah's repression.

In the past, revolutionaries in Iran have concentrated on students or intellectuals or heroic guerrillas - bypassing the only force that can really threaten the regime, the workers and peasants.

But the present movement, based in the industrialised areas, must come to terms with the organised force of the working class. And for that reason, it may be a threat that the Shah cannot meet.

ABOVE: Iranian demonstrators tend to a wounded comrade.
BELOW: Shah reads the riot act.

Aldermaston workers call a halt

WORKERS in Britain have struck a mighty blow against the hazards of nuclear technology.

They have forced the British Government to shut down major parts of Aldermaston Weapons Research Establishment.

Twelve workers from Aldermaston were found to have plutonium in their lungs. Naturally, they and their workmates were worried - with good cause.

Scientists don't know what the effects of plutonium exposure are on humans.

In fact, they don't really know how to measure how much there is in someone's body.

All they know for sure is that plutonium - the key ingredient in nuclear weapons - is very poisonous and very easy to breathe in.

The only way to measure plutonium in the body, even approximately, is by a Whole Body Monitor. But these cost half a million pounds, and Aldermaston hasn't got one yet.

In January, the Aldermaston bosses decided that some routine testing really ought to be done. The first three workers found to have the stuff in their lungs didn't even work in the radio-active areas - they were from the laundry!

materials

Then plutonium was found in the lungs of nine workers who had direct contact with radioactive materials.

The Ministry of Defence tried to play down the whole issue. They said that the chance of any risk was "one in 700,000". But the Medical Research Council disagreed; they put it at one in a thousand.

None of Aldermaston's four thousand workers wanted to be in the unlucky four. Their shop stewards demanded that the radioactive areas be shut down until the workers' safety was assured.

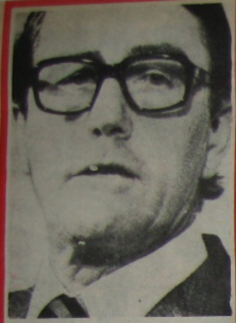
Finally, the government was forced to agree. Aldermaston radioactive sections were shut down.

Now the government is worried that demands for adequate safety precautions could spread to other plants that handle plutonium.

British workers are beginning to realise that where plutonium is concerned, safety just doesn't exist.

6 April 1975

WRAN AND THE ALSO-RAN



Labor's Lib

The Labor election campaign has scarcely mentioned the Labor Party. It has revolved around Neville Wran: "Wran's our man".

Wran's personal influence has also been central in the two years of Labor state government.

He promised us action and far-ranging reforms in 1976. But two years later he has done very little, and has become the man of "moderation and stability".

The truth is that Wran was never interested in reforms. In an interview with the National Times in August 1976, he said frankly that what he was offering were "life style reforms which don't cost a great deal."

Wran has always been a conservative. A few years ago, when he was acting as lawyer for the Teachers Federation, he was sacked for being too conservative. But it seems that the Police Association, for whom he also acted, had no complaints.

And he has many in his cabinet who are even more conservative than him. As State Secretary Richardson said, "There's a lot of people in the Wran cabinet with whom the Festival of Light could find little or no argument. It's hard to argue that we're enemies of family life when you're arguing with Peter Cox, Kevin Stewart and Ron Mulock."

EVERYBODY knew for weeks beforehand that Neville Wran was going to call an early election for October 7.

The thing that finally made up his mind was the Federal Budget.

That guaranteed the working-class anger which, together with the middle-class vote he has been so carefully cultivating, would make Wran a sure-fire winner in an early election.

It meant he wouldn't have to promise anything expensive and "economically irresponsible" to win votes. He could get re-elected simply by not belonging to the same party as Malcolm Fraser.

By Janet Vaux and

Mick Armstrong

Wran has probably been even more successful than Donny Dunstan in South Australia when it comes to grabbing the "middle ground" in politics.

He has been such a picture of "moderation and stability" – to quote his election ads – that Labor's traditional enemy, the Press, has been right behind him.

And Wran has aggressively gone after the country vote with moves like the dropping of death duties.

All of this has squeezed the Liberals out of the middle ground and off to the right. Not that the ruling-class particularly minds that anyway.

Coleman's campaign has reflected the Liberal's desperation, as he frantically tries to appeal to right-wing sentiments.

establishment

Labor State Secretary, Graham Richardson, can even say, "We are the establishment. It would take a revolution to knock us off."

The only thing that has had Labor in any trouble has been the law-and-order issue.

The Liberals cleverly used the warder-provoked Long Bay prison riot and the attack on the Sydney Stock Exchange to paint Wran as "soft" on law-and-order.

defuse

But Wran has managed to defuse that one too by turning a blind eye to the recent police attacks on the gay movement.

Not that Wran has much inclination to crack down on the cops anyway – they've got too much dirt on prominent Labor politicians like Ducker, Jensen and Hills.

But while the first attack on the gays was probably an embarrasment for him, they're now almost certainly something he welcomes.

THE NSW ELECTION: A chance to hit back at Fraser

WHAT WE THINK

AN OVERWHELMING victory for the Wran Labor government will be a boost for every worker and union under attack from Fraser.

The NSW poll will be seen partly as a test of the Federal Government's popularity. Fraser and his Ministers obviously see it that way themselves – they have spent more time in Parliament attacking Wran than they have spent on any national issue.

The fact that Wran is trying to limit the campaign to state issues does not mean it will not be seen by tens of thousands as a chance to vote against the union-bashers and budget-cutters in Canberra.

The big upsurge in struggle around the Budget proves that the Australian working class is not licked yet – not by a long shot.

A big defeat for the Liberals in the NSW elections will be another blow against Fraser. Together with the crumbling of the Hamer regime in Victoria, and the growing opposition to Bjelke-Petersen in Queensland, it will add to the problems in the Liberal camp.

defeat

With Hamer facing a likely defeat in Victoria next year, Fraser will really start to look on the skids.

Seeing the Liberals cop a bloody nose could well spark an upturn in industrial action – and not just in New South Wales. Workers all over Australia will be following this State election.

And all of us will draw confidence from seeing the Liberals getting smashed.

If Wran gains a big majority, and control of the Upper House, people's expectations will rise. He will have none of the excuses he had until now for doing nothing, and for letting the police run riot.

Wran will disappoint those expectations. And he will turn savagely on industrial struggles sparked by his victory. That is why voting Labor is not enough.

What is desperately needed is a fighting alternative to the politics Wran represents. But a Labor victory will provide some of the soil in which that alternative can grow.

Peter Who?

Peter Coleman is sure to lose the election – he may even lose his seat in parliament.

He's the man that nobody knows – while even schoolchildren recognise Wran when they see him in the street.

He's a talented parliamentarian who is nonetheless totally outclassed by Wran's performance on the floor.

Coleman is something of a crusader in right-wing causes.

He's careful to keep his distance from the extreme right of the Liberal Party – like Ashley-Riddle and others who recently tried to take-over the Rose Bay branch of the Liberal party in the name of "the queen, the Church, the judiciary and the services."

But he has fought hard for censorship, to stem the tide of "the new pornographers." He battled against the influence of "communists" in the moratorium movement – and got himself embroiled in a scandal about the use of ASIO material in a projected news-sheet.

When he couldn't make it to the recent Right to Life Rally, in Sydney, he was concerned enough to send along a personal representative. Other absent politicians just sent apologies.

Wran's record - backdown and betrayal

Wran's cops in action. ABOVE, arresting a gay rights marcher. BELOW, getting stuck into a picketer during the Fairfax strike.

WHEN Neville Wran came to power in NSW in 1976, it was a time of rising prices and soaring unemployment.

It still is. And in the meantime, the Wran Labor Government has done precious little to ease the burden for NSW workers.

Like all Labor Governments, it has been trapped by the iron discipline of the capitalist economy. The meek and mild reforms that Labor voters hoped for have mostly not occurred – victims of the world-wide recession and the cutbacks of the Fraser Government.

But the NSW Labor Government's policies haven't made any attempt to fight the federal policies, or even to soften the blow – apart from a cynically timed package of election-eve concessions to pensioners.

Wran willingly went along with Fraser's decision to chop thousands of jobs in the Newcastle Dockyards. He even went up there personally to sort things out when the workers tried to fight back.

In fact, Wran himself has never given much help to the workers' struggle. He has been known to comment that increases in workers' wages in 1974 were too great.

members

A hospital worker, approaching members of the government about the drastic drop-back in hospital employees' wages, reported, *"We got a good hearing from Stewart and Hills, but Wran and Ferguson dumped us."*

The Labor government has also brought cops in against strikers and militants. Cops were used against the Fairfax picket line two years ago.

And recently scabs were used in the Eastern Suburbs Railway strike. Minister of Transport, Peter Cox, has gone along with the PTC's arrest of two militants after a job-site meeting, for alleged obscene language.

A recent wage claim by transport examiners showed Wran in the rare role of intervening in a dispute on behalf of the workers. If he hadn't he would have been landed with a transport strike just before the elections!

Even the improved service and lower fares in public transport are only short term, limited benefits to workers.

This is because the Labor government hasn't taken on the big freight companies who get cheap rail services, subsidised by passenger fares.

In fact, the long term plans for the PTC are almost identical under Labor and Liberal.

They involve plans to streamline the rail system according to the needs of large freight companies, rather than passenger services. These plans will cost at least 10,000 jobs, with many more jobs de-skilled.

Other reforms turned out too expensive, in terms of conservative and country votes, and just keeping things quiet.

A good example of this is the fate of the Nagle Report into NSW prisons.

contact

The measures suggested by Nagle have mostly been left to gather dust. These include long overdue humane reforms, like contact visits and privacy of mail.

But Wran was not willing to confront the screws and their supporters.

Even the closing of Katingal was only a gesture, because the conditions in other maximum security units have not been changed at all.

The last piece of legislation to go through [illegible] before the election [illegible] police tribunal, [illegible] with complaints [illegible] police.

This is far [illegible] the restructuring of the force that Wran said [illegible] was a top priority. And also be inadequate [illegible] tribunal, because there [illegible] lay representation – [illegible] investigating cops.

Of course, all of this backtracking is not just Neville Wran's fault.

As history has shown time and time again, the ruling class will never let Labor Governments achieve anything more than the most minimal changes.

They move quickly to get rid of any Labor leaders they don't like, like Lang and Whitlam.

The real lesson from Neville Wran's last two years is that we're going to have to go beyond Parliament for the changes we need.

We're going to have to get rid of the bosses – not just play along with them – to get a really just and democratic society.

Newcastle dockworkers at their tent embassy outside Federal Parliament. Neville Wran helped to sell them out.

The Liberal 'alternative' - we've seen it before

CAN you remember the old NSW Liberal government?

The "good old days" of Liberal NSW, when their Minister for Education went around saying that it did not matter what size school classes were.

Meanwhile their premier informed us that workers shouldn't get full pay while on workers' compensation, because it encourages bludgers and loafers.

The NSW Liberal government was distinguished by two things: a lack of any principles whatsoever, and a consistently reactionary attitude to any issue that arose.

The Liberal government was clearly and openly a government of big business – for that reason, people in NSW suffered the highest cost of living in any Australian city.

Part of that was due to the fact that milk cost 6 cents more in Sydney than anywhere else. This was because the Liberal government drew a big circle around the city. Only farmers inside the "quota" could sell their milk inside Sydney.

Nine Liberal MPs owned quotas.

Farmers outside the quota weren't allowed to sell in Sydney. They lost access to a large market, and we had to pay more for milk. But a few government politicians and their mates made a lot of money.

Similarly, NSW had the worst education system. Class sizes in NSW government schools were the highest compared to class sizes in other states – and this was at a time when NSW was the only state which had teacher unemployment.

insult

Adding insult to injury, the Liberals' last budget – for 1975/6 – effectively reduced spending on government schools.

The state Liberal government was also a health hazard. Hospitals were understaffed and poorly equipped. Those who had to work in them suffered from the Liberals' penny-pinching. When the government put up nurses' rents by $10, it absolutely refused to grant any wage increase for them to afford it.

And if you didn't own a Mercedes or a glossy government limousine you were in trouble under the Liberal state government.

In a long record of "worsts in Australia", the transport system had to be one of the most important – particularly the railways.

They were deliberately neglected by the Liberals. As stooges of private enterprise, they ran down public transport so that oil companies and car manufacturers could continue to exploit the travelling public.

Government freight was given to private haulage firms. Expressways were built instead of improving rail transport.

Rail travellers in NSW literally took their lives in their hands travelling by train. Because of the large reduction in the numbers employed on track maintenance, there were a lot of major derailments.

And if they survived the journey, passengers knew that they'd paid through the nose to use the Liberal government's slow, dirty and overcrowded trains.

The NSW Labor government didn't change all these conditions by any means. But if the Liberals get back in again, there'll be changes alright – changes backwards.

Life under the NSW Libs. ABOVE, nurses demand a $9 rise that the Libs blocked. BELOW, one of the many derailments caused by their rundown of public transport.

So pigs <u>can</u> fly

With taxes what they are,
With jobs in short supply,
It's nice to know in Parliment,
It's really cheap to fly.

Roger Sencabaugh
Queensland

Dear Battlers,

STOP THE TORTURE IN IRELAND!

What We Stand For

Workers' Power
Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism
We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State
The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism
A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation
For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party
To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation
Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If thats the sort of work you want to do– JOIN US!

Dear Battlers,

In Northern Ireland the protests in the H-block wing of the Maze Prison continue.

Over 300 prisoners are demanding political status. They are refusing to accept prison discipline call the screws "sir" or wear prison clothes.

That means they spend their time in solitary confinement with only a blanket to wear. Some have been in solitary confinement for two years.

Conditions in the cells are horrible. Beatings and harassment are common. The screws turn up the heat in summer and turn it down in winter.

Now the prisoners have stepped up the struggle. They won't wash or slop out. This has meant more beatings. The cells have become filthy, swarming with maggots and fleas.

The prisoners are literally living in shit. The stink has become so bad that warders refuse to go near the prisoners.

Diarrhoea and skin disease are rampant. The risk of a major epidemic is very real. The screws have reacted by hosing down the cells and soaking the prisoners' bedding.

The point that has to be made here is that some of the prisoners now demanding political status had previously been granted these rights. Political status meant wearing civvies and receiving food parcels.

But the British government is determined to prove to the world that there is no war in Northern Ireland, and that there are no political prisoners; only "neighbourhood gangs" and "Criminals".

But the prisoners have foiled their plan. Their resistance is showing the world that the British war effort will not succeed.

The sacrifices being made in prison have roused the sympathy of the people. Once again the people of Northern Ireland are taking to the streets in protest. Recently, 25,000 marched in support of the H-block prisoners.

Workers everywhere must support the prison struggles of the Irish Republicans. We must raise the slogans "Political Status for Irish Prisoners" and "Withdrawn British Troops."

Gary McLellan
Brisbane

Part of the 25,000 strong march in Belfast

Don't be so negative

Dear Battlers,

I thought the article on the settlement of the Telecom dispute in the last Battler was pretty negative.

Not that there was anything wrong with all the critical points that were made. But it is wrong to wait until the last few paragraphs to admit, grudgingly, that the union's bans *"certainly did force concessions"*. And then to say *"they were only concessions"*.

In the past couple of years, the union have lost fight after fight with Fraser without winning any concessions at all. In the Fairfax strike of 1976, the unions struck for two months over new technology won no concessions.

Now the ATEA has proved that Fraser can be taken on and forced to back down. The lesson has not been lost on militant workers, but it seems to have been lost on the Battler.

More important [...] the details of the [...] ment is the fact that [...] been the signal for [...] upsurge in [...] militancy.

We should [...] hammered the lesson [...] Fraser is on the defensive [...] and left it to the [...] sections of the article [...] criticise details.

Tom O'Lincoln
Ripponlea Vic

China's no model for us

Dear Battlers,

So your correspondent Neil McGlinchey thinks socialists should steer clear of the gay movements of because *"Homosexuality is a fragile issue"*.

But that's exactly the point! Capitalism trains us to think that sexuality – and religion and politics – are "fragile" issues that shouldn't be talked about because people get offended.

And any socialist knows that if you give in to that mentality, you'll get nowhere in the fight against oppression

I suspect – from Neil McGlinchey's reference to studying the example of China – really he supports the Chinese idea of the "socialist family".

Which is that the nuclear family as we know it under capitalism, is really a progressive institution – much better than all that decadent "free love", homosexuality etc.

That idea flatly contradicts everything that Marx and Engels and Lenin ever wrote about the hypocrisy of bourgeois marriage, and the way that the family grew out of class society.

And [...] shackles that the family and marriage place on human sexuality and women's freedom.

As for studying the achievements of China – I'd be a bit more inclined to [...] that if the Chinese set any sort of decent example for the world.

But the role they've played in backing reactionaries in NATO Ceylon, Pakiston, Angola and Iran – just to name a few–hardly gives me any inspiration.

And the patently bureaucratic way that China is governed – the total lack of workers' control over the major decisions in society just confirms that China is a class society like all others in the world.

Ken Stevens
Melbourne

Fragile? You're kidding

Dear Battlers,

I'd like to make a short comment on a part of the letter from Neil McGlinchey in the last issue.

I'm not sure what he means by saying *"Homosexuality is a fragile issue"*. Perhaps he means that the gay movement is not as solid as it might be, through lack of support.

Probably McGlinchey knows what he's talking about. Since he says we *"Shouldn't encourage it in any way"*, he obviously intends to withold his support and contribute to the movements "fragility".

China is notorious for being a country where homosexuality "doesn't exist". In Cuba it is severely punished. Some people who consider themselves part of the left think homosexuality is "bourgeois decadence" which will disappear under socialism.

This view was wholeheartedly endorsed by Adolf Hitler, who sent 5% million homosexuals to concentration camps.

The so-called "socialist" countries in fact bring us no nearer to liberation of sexuality or any other area. Homosexuals are fighting for their liberation and everybody's. If we all support them, the movement won't be so "fragile".

Janey Stone
Melbourne

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

The politics of gay struggle

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 24 hour answering and message machine	 376-9142 376 2783
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	 376-2783
MELBOURNE GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	 387 6351
SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown 2042	 51-3665
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	 49-7939
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	 49 6405
BRISBANE PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067	 368 3978
IPSWICH, OLD.	281 6113

MELBOURNE I.S. South-east Branch last week discussed the politics of homosexuality.

A speaker from the gay movement, Mike Hurley, talked about the oppression that gays suffer – not only from the police and the law, but at work and in the day-to day sneers and jokes that are made by people just assuming that everyone is heterosexual.

Discussion after Mike's talk ranged over a whole number of topics.

Mike had argued that gay oppression – and women's oppression – stemmed from capitalism's need to defend the family as its basic social unit for child-rearing and care of workers.

socialism

We discussed the possible alternatives to the family under socialism. Communal child-rearing: state-run laundries, eating houses and child-care centres; and the dying out of marriage as an institution.

One member pointed out that after the Russian revolution, many workers had experimented with alternative living arrangements to the monogamous marriages that are the norm under capitalism.

Others argued that gay oppression stemmed from capitalism's need to defend part of the authoritarian disciplining process used to crush our independence from childhood.

Gay activists at the meeting gave a vivid account of the recent police attacks on Sydney gay marches.

And we also discussed the feasibility of gay trade union caucuses – such as have already formed in teacher and public service unions, and the ARU in NSW, – to fight against homosexual oppression on the job.

International Socialists

THE latest pamphlet from the International Socialists LEAVE IT IN THE GROUND – the case against uranium mining from a socialist point of view.

You can get copies of Leave It In The Ground from all IS branches, or direct from:
REDBACK PRESS
PO Box 46
Flemington Victoria
3031

It's 60 cents, plus 40 cents postage.

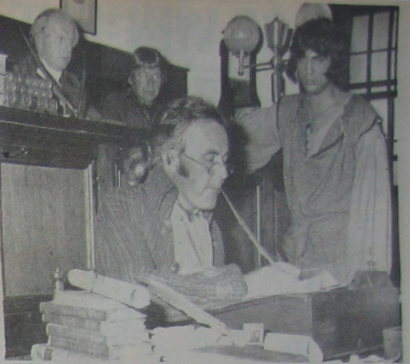
Fighting Fund

The fighting fund last issue raised $352.77
Our thanks go to:

Sydney Branch	30.9[illegible]
B.H	10.[illegible]
Melb SE Branch fruit sale	5.[illegible]
L.T	3.00
Adelaide film night	21.00
S.S. & J.S	100.0[illegible]
J.G	[illegible]
J.E	3.00
L.A	13.00
Sydney Branch fundraiser	50.00
Melb NW Branch Jewish dinner	91.00
L.O	20.00
TOTAL	352.77

CLANK, CLANK, CLANK!

Good politics, but this convict drama moves like it's wearing a ball-and-chain


Convict Jonathan Garret (Jon English) finds himself before the court in "Against The Wind".

Mick Armstrong reviews "Against The Wind"

HAILED as the Australian "Roots", and the best and most expensive TV drama produced in Australia, "Against the Wind" predictably fails to live up to the pre-publicity.

The opening two hour episode was slow moving and lacking in punch. All the elements of the heroic drama were there. But they failed to jell into something that grabbed and held my attention.

The central character is Mary Mulvane, an Irish peasant girl. She is transported to Australia for seven years for trying to steal back the family cow which has been impounded to pay the tithes of the Established English Church.

peasant

Her lover, Michael Connor, is shot by British soldiers while helping her. Michael was a member of the White Boys – a peasant guerilla group, which terrorised the local landlords by burning outhouses, haystacks and slaughtering stock.

Such groups were widespread in the rural areas of Ireland in the 18th and 19th centuries. They represented the only protection the peasants had against the rapacious British landlords.

At night they ruled whole areas, wreaking terror on the landlords, clergy and British authorities. A massive army of occupation had to be maintained to keep them in check.

Once on board the convict ship to Australia, the story becomes stereotyped.

savage

There is the usual brutal captain, savage floggings, and drunken doctor who lets the capatain get away with it. Also lack of water, dying convicts, foiled rebellion and the British officer who trys to force himself on Mary.

Mary manages to survive all these rigours and reach Sydney. In the next couple episodes of "Against the Wind" we will see the Rum Rebellion and the insurrection by the Irish convicts at Castle Hill.

So it might be worth watching if the pace steps up a bit.

Funnily enough, for a commercial television production, the redeeming feature of the series so far has been the politics.

brutality

The British in Ireland are presented in full brutality and it is clear that our sympathies are meant to lie with Michael the guerilla leader.

Michael argues strongly with Mary's father that teaching the kids the sad story of Irish history is not enough. What is needed is pikes and guns to drive the English out.

Presenting the convicts in a good light is one thing. After all, we've all got a bit of convict in us, haven't we?

But being hard on the British over Ireland might mean you can't get on English TV. What with the banning of anything half sympathetic to the Irish cause or the IRA over the last few years by the British government.

But then again, I suppose it was 200 years ago and nobody could accuse British troops of murdering innocent people in Northern Ireland today.

Or could they?

Mary Mulvane and a runaway convict "share" a picnic lunch.

First cut by Stiletto

THE most striking thing about Stiletto's first album, "Licence to Rage", is that it's such good, earthy rock and roll music.

Every single track could stand up against any of the middle of the road disco dross currently plaguing the Top Forty.

All over the world, rock music is in a mess. There's been nothing new and worthwhile for six years except British punk.

In that time, a whole wave of Australian bands have been polishing and perfecting their music.

Jo Jo Zep, Sports, Skyhooks and now Stiletto are producing the kind of rock that's good to listen to, good to dance to and has something to say as well.

Stiletto have been a cult band around the Melbourne pubs for a long time and they've had the reputation of being "feminist".

taboo

They're only feminist to the extent that they've broken the taboo on looking at life through a woman's eyes.

Stiletto are one of the few bands with women playing an equal part. Jane Clifton sings in a tough, no-compromising style while Celeste Howden plays bass.

Helen Garner, a well-known novelist, had a hand in three of the songs. Middle of the Bed is about life after your partner gets up and leaves.

Helen Garner

"I've been sleeping in the middle of the bed too long
At first I kinda liked it but now it seems all wrong
I was sitting back thinking I was so strong
I hate to admit it but I'm sorry he's gone."

There are songs about relationships, (Second Home) 'and (Woman in a Man's World).

In their stage act, they have also sung about rape (Women in Trouble), prostitution (Night in the Parlour) and just the problems of being a woman (Pre-menstrual Blues).

For that reason alone, both the band and especially this album are an achievement. They've made it in rock which has always been built around aggressive male sexuality and occasionally, violent frustration at the way things are.

And they've done it without attempting to imitate male attitudes (like Suzi Quatro), avoiding the subject or feeling sorry for themselves.

by Phil Griffiths

A TALE OF TWO ENEMIES

by Martin Hirst

THE New Theatre in Sydney is currently running a very old play with a theme that's always relevant.

The play is "Enemies" by Russian author Maxim Gorky. It contrasts the solidarity of workers with the back-biting and fighting that occurs between bosses.

The action occurs in a Russian town just after the 1905 revolution.

Two factory owners are at loggerheads over how to handle a dispute over an arrogant foreman.

liberal

Zakhar, a liberal, argues for concessions while Skrobotov, his partner wants to take a tough line. He is backed up by his brother, a fascist-type deputy prosecutor.

The other characters are caught up in the dispute and forced to take sides. Nadya, Zakhar's niece and the daughter of a poor washer-woman, comes out strongly in favour of the workers.

The play concentrates on the contradictions in the ranks of the bosses. We see very little of the workers. But they are portrayed as calm and well reasoned.

The main worker characters are Suntsev, a socialist clerk; Levshin, an old and shrewd worker; and Chekov, a young labourer.

Together these three plan the course of the struggle. Their comradeship is heartening in comparison to the squabbling between Zakhar's family and Skrobotov.

The play ends with the workers vowing to rid themselves of the bosses they don't need, while the bosses are still fighting amongst themselves.

Gorky's insights into the Russian political situation are clear. He shows brilliantly the turmoil of Russian society, at a time when the ruling class was crumbling and the workers were moving to the centre-stage of history.

Tatanya and Yakhov in a scene from "Enemies" at the New Theatre.

The New Theatre is the oldest continuous theatre group in Australia. It started as the Workers' Art Club in 1932.

Its plays have been banned by NSW Governments and performed at the coal face in a mine, during the 1951 occupation of a Glen Davis mine.

Today it is also involved in producing street theatre, theatre for factories, and theatre workshops. Anyone can participate and no experience is necessary.

"Sydney I.S. is organizing a theatre group to 'Enemies' on Saturday September 30th. Tickets are $4 and can be booked by ringing Sydney I.S. on 51 3665.

Big Red Diary 1979
$3.75 from all IS Branches
or mail order from
IS BOOKS PO Box M8, Newtown South
NSW 2042.

Computers vs Journos

THERE are signs that journalists, who have almost always sided with the newspaper employers against the printers in disputes over technology, are beginning a re-think.

At the Victorian branch annual meeting of the Australian Journalists' Association last month, three motions were passed on the attitude of the AJA to new technology.

Although none of the motions demanded a clear strategy for journalists faced with operating computerised equipment, they demonstrated the unease about the issue at rank and file level.

That attitude was not shared by the committee, whose answer to questions about new technology was *"Leave it to us, it's all being sorted out and we'll let you know when something happens."*

It is the need for rank and file involvement in determining the AJA attitude to new technology which has prompted a group of journalists to publish a pamphlet called "Computers versus Journalists – who wins?"

Some journalists think all they have to do is co-operate with the employers to dump printers jobs and they will be set for life.

aims

One of the pamphlet's aims is to destroy that selfish and anti-trade union attitude, which Don Paget, father of the Fairfax chapel of the PKIU in Sydney sums up as *"proferring the tainted palm."*

The pamphlet tackles three major myths about new technology.

Health hazards of the new equipment, which the employers have been trying to gloss over, are discussed in detail. So is the effect on relations with other unions if the AJA takes over their work.

The present AJA policy, which involves a $50 cash claim for operating display units, is compared to an agreement between printers and journalists in Sweden, which guarantees no redundancy.

Copies of "Computers versus Journalists – Who Wins?", can be obtained for 60 cents (inc.postage) from PO Box 175, 367 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000.

by John McLean, AJA

$5 WIN-BUT AT A PRICE ...

Sean Brennan (left), one of the organisers who kept the workers in the dark, at the meeting at Trades Hall.

A DISPUTE on the Silverwater-Botany (Shell) pipeline is now over after a strike of more than three weeks by the welders, and confusion and splits among the rest of the workforce.

Responsibility for the confusion rests with some of the union organisers who couldn't wait to get the men back to work and the matter into the courts.

By Janet Vaux

After the whole site had been out for less than a week, a vote to go back was rushed through a ten minute meeting.

At later meetings there was anger about this, and the decision to stay at work was only narrowly won. Especially after the first round in court was a resounding defeat.

The welders, all AMWSU members, did not vote with the rest of the meeting, because they were bound by AMWSU national policy on pipeline work. This meant they would not rely on the courts to win for them, but would keep up the pressure on the boss with industrial action.

strategy

A lot of the men in other unions felt that the metalworkers' strike had to be supported, and also that they had the right strategy for winning.

One F.E.D. & F.A. member, who had worked on pipeline construction in Victoria and N.S.W. commented: *"I've only been on one pipeline that we had to use the court. The rest we won on the job."*

But in court, the [illegible] and A.S.E. organisers [illegible] the AMWSU and the alleged "socialist" Commissioner Hefferman accused the metalworkers of being anti-union.

The bosses also got into the act and threatened sackings and stand-downs of other workers if the welders didn't go back to work.

In the settlement of the dispute, the metalworkers made fewer gains than the other workers. In particular they lost out completely on the quality allowance, which the rest of the site gained (the claim had been $10 for the welders and $15 for the rest.)

F.E.D. & F.A. delegate, Dennis Scott, described it as *"Not a bad offer, except for the welders."*

But he was quite definite about how the gains were made: *"Its all been gained by the welders. Whatever we've been offered has been gained for use by the welders."*

Westmead workers washed out

"YOU can write a two-line story on this dispute: once again the union leadership has done us in."

Bob Petty, a BLF member at the Westmead Hospital site, summed up the workers' anger at the union's handling of a recent dispute.

The men had been out for a week over a wet weather claim. But because the union with-held information from them, they are now back at work having picked up a few hours lost time, and nothing more.

The dispute started when the company went against site practice – that the workers could leave the site after rain for the best part of 4 hours. This follows the conditions of the 1973 award.

Now the company was pushing that it had to be continuous rain for 4 hours. This follows the conditions of the 1975-6 award. But the workers thought that these terms had been sneaked in by the Master Builders' Association, during the deregistration period, so that they had a good chance.

What union organiser, Sean Brennan, didn't tell them was that Norm Gallagher had agreed to the 1975 wet weather conditions.

When this came out in court, the workers told Brennan and co. what they thought of them – but had to agree to go back to work the next day. They had lost a week over the strike and had to go back to the beginning and start again.

Daywork shifted by Fairfax

ENGINEERS and fitters at Fairfax have defeated the company after a couple of short stoppages, one for 24 hours and the other for 48 hours.

The issue was the use of day-work fitters in production areas which are normally on shift rates.

The long-standing practice of paying these areas at shift rates had been formalised in an Agreement before Commissioner Mills in 1976.

The company has tried to break this agreement five times, and taken the workers to court four times since 1976.

This time Judge Cahill recommended that the work stay at shift work rates for a six month period.

AMWSU delegate, Mike Brooks, commented: *"The company would be very silly if they tried to re-open it again in six months time. The men here are not prepared to cop it."*

LAST STRAW AT I.C.I

THE Johns and Waygood workers on the I.C.I propathene site have had enough. They are on strike indefinitely.

First they had to go on strike for eight days to get award conditions.

Then the company decided to renege on agreements on wet weather and safety boots. On top of that, the company has told the workers that they are handing work over to subbies and other contractors.

To make things even worse, Johns and Waygood continue to discriminate against workers. They have refused to hire Joe Owens and Abe David because of their record as staunch unionists.

nobody

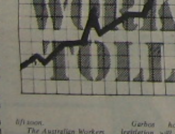
Anyway that was it. Everybody on site in the F.I.A., A.M.W.S.U. and F.E.D. & F.A. have gone out indefinitely and nobody starts on the job until Joe and Abe start.

On Friday a mass meeting of all I.C.I. construction workers was called. The riggers working for other contractors assured the J&W riggers there was no way they would erect any steel on the Johns and Waygood section of the job, and the mass meeting voted to black work J&W handed over to other contractors.

All the union officials at the meeting supported the J&W workers except [illegible] Baldwin from the F.I.A. As usual he was half-hearted about the whole affair and was booed down when he said Joe Owens might not be admitted to the F.I.A.

Johns and Waygood have got their work cut out to win this blue. The workers have had enough of their niggling tactics and it's about time things got sorted out on the job.

By an FIA member



WORKERS at the Homebush abattoirs in Sydney have recently won about $20,000 in compensation for industrial deafness.

F.E.D. & F.A. delegate, Charlie Price told us *"Most workers when they get deaf don't realise that it might be industrial deafness. They think its just age deafness.*

"But why should you go deaf just to satisfy the boss with a packet of money."

A number of workers found that their deafness had been caused at work.

So far at least 2 or 3 workers have been awarded $4,000 each, and several more $1,000 each. They also hope to get the cost of hearing aids.

Charlie said: *"We don't just want compensation. Management should put in different machines. They already know the problem is there. And they're not bad – but we have to keep them on their toes."*

■

GARBOS' conditions in South Australia might get a lift soon.

The Australian Workers Union has got the Health Department to study garbo's conditions at Adelaide City Council. Causes of skin and stomach complaints will get special attention.

It is likely the survey will extend to other councils. Conditions vary widely ... at Port Adelaide the bin limit is one per house ... at Mitcham there is no limit. Each council has separate agreements: agreements on how hard they'll flog their garbos.

Garbos hope that legislation will be passed forcing householders to wrap their rubbish ... a small but welcome step which will come a lot quicker with industrial action.

■

THE Australian Broadcasting Commission doesn't budget for their journalists or TV camera operators reaching retirement age!

That is what ABC Personnel told a 43 year old camera man after he recently had a heart attack.

They said something like this: *"You people, journalists and camera crew are under such pressure that you either get out early or die. Our super-fund doesn't budget on you making the distance."*

Meanwhile, the ABC Commissioners haven't many scruples about picking up the interest on their contributions to the retirement funds, while flogging their news reporting team to death.

■

THE company doctor for James Hardies Asbestos, Dr McCulloch, gave a talk to the Public Health Association in Sydney recently. He made it clear whose side he is on and won this issue's Falling Brick Award for Safety in the process.

McCulloch is so protective of management, that he doesn't believe in telling them the full truth about health risks too quickly – in case they get frightened.

On the other hand, he doesn't try to tell workers anything at all. He claimed that most workers were too dumb to understand, and at best it was possible to talk to a few delegates.

A questioner from the Workers' Health Action Group asked why James Hardies talked of "safe limits" of asbestos, when there's no such thing. Why not at least limit the claim to "acceptable risk"?

Dr McCulloch replied. "Workers could never understand a complex concept like 'acceptable risk'".

Asbestos is recognized world-wide as a carcinogen (cancer causing substance). Some health authorities have called for asbestos to carry labels warning it could cause cancer.

When asked why Hardies didn't carry these labels, he replied, "No-one else does".

Someone suggested this wasn't a good enough reason. He replied, "We are a commercial enterprise."

Funny ... we thought he was a doctor.

By Steve Morgan

BRADFORD WORKERS DEFY THREATS

MANAGEMENT at Bradford and Kendall's foundry in Sydney stooped to one of the lowest dirty tricks when they sent threatening letter to striking workers.

The bosses told workers that their annual leave was cancelled and their holiday pay forfeited. But the workers responded with a decision not to proceed with negotiation at all till the letters were withdrawn.

After they'd been out for three weeks, union officials recommended that they should accept taking the dispute to arbitration, which would almost mean a return to work.

return

In a stormy meeting a week before, the officials' recommendation of a return to work had been thrown out. This time only a handful of workers resisted it.

One worker said: *"To hell with arbitration. We've lost $300 already. We have to keep fighting."*

In arbitration they won only $5 of a $15 claim – early in the dispute they'd hoped for at least $8.

But even if the bosses got off a bit light this time, the three week strike was a new departure for Bradford and Kendall which hasn't been particularly militant in the past. Management probably won't be having such an easy time in the future.

Bradford workers meet during the dispute

ACOA workers come out

FOUR ACOA state branches have been considering motions calling for an end to homosexual discrimination. So far the motion has been won in the A.C.T. and lost in Queensland.

The motions follow from last month's 4th National Homosexual Conference.

About 12 ACOA members attended and decided to take the motion back to our state branches.

Besides calling for an end to discrimination on the grounds of homosexuality, the motion also called for complete equality for all public servants, regardless of sexuality, in employment, promotions, transfer, leave, superannuation and housing.

It also called for no action to be taken against any individual charged with commiting a homosexual act.

motion

In the A.C.T. the motion was passed by a large majority on Branch Council – the policy making body in each state branch. In Queensland it was predictably trounced.

In Victoria the motion is now official policy of the influential ACOA Reform Group. They are putting their weight behind the campaign for a policy against homosexual discrimination.

In N.S.W. the motion was passed by a large majority at our Annual General Meeting. But that decision is not binding on the union. The motion still has to go to Branch Council for ratification.

Consequently a large group of homosexuals and supporters are mobilizing to lobby the October Branch Council meeting about our motion.

by Di Minnis ACOA

IT'S CLASS WAR !

Teachers fight in three cities

By Verity Burgmann

Canberra

ABOUT 2,000 Canberra teachers attended a stop work meeting at Manuka Oval last Wednesday.

This was the reaction to the Government's announcement of a staff ceiling of 2,772 for 1979.

This is 40 teachers short, if present working conditions are to be maintained. Carrick, the Minister for Education, has stated that this must not be exceeded.

The members of the A.C.T. Teachers' Federation don't agree. Ian Macdougall, Vice-President of the Kambah High School branch of the Federation, explained how the whole dispute had to be seen in the context of the Government's "cut back like mad" budget strategy.

"The Government and the Teachers' Federation are completely at loggerheads" Ian said. *"The Government cannot give in to A.C.T. teachers or it's whole policy collapses. But the Federation will not tolerate any erosion of working conditions."*

equipment

As an example of how tight things were, Ian said his school, Kambah High, had about $1.50 per student for the rest of the year.

This was supposed to cover all equipment. And the Government wants to cut back more.

The Battler also spoke to two High School teachers from the Weston Creek area: *"the Minister's decision to hold the staff ceiling next year to what it is this year, is just not on – considering the fact that three new schools will open next year. In fact, over 40 more teachers will be needed.*

"Teachers are resolved to keep the industrial gains that we've fought for, and to keep the Minister to his earlier promises."

Another stop work meeting was to be held this Wednesday if the Government had not given in over its staff ceiling proposals.

Sydney

Tuesday's 24 hour strike by NSW teachers is the latest move in a campaign by the Teachers Federation to get a reduction of teaching hours.

Earlier this year, the teachers staged several rolling actions. These included one week bursts of minimal supervision in the different school areas. Then they had a series of rolling strikes.

These actions were most effective in more militant areas, like the Eastern Suburbs.

The Teachers Federation has also had a number of meetings with Wran, which have not been particularly productive.

After the State budget only gave the teachers another 900 jobs, and the ALP policy speech gave them nothing at all, they were determined to go ahead with Tuesday's strike.

The claim is for a 20% cut in teaching hours for Primary School teachers (30% for teachers in their 1st year of service), and for Secondary teachers a drop from 27 or 28 periods to 25 periods, plus sport (a drop to 20 periods for 1st year out teachers).

comment

A teacher commented *"At the moment Primary School teachers have no time to do any preparation outside the classroom, because they're in class 100% of the time!"*

With 4,000 unemployed teachers in NSW, the solution seems obvious.

Melbourne

IT'S one in the eye for the Victorian Education Department.

Teachers at Laverton High School have defended their conditions and their right to strike, with a little help from the Victorian Secondary Teachers' Association.

On the first day of third term, they were told out of the blue that a teacher was being transferred.

The teacher didn't mind. But the transfer threatened to force cutbacks in remedial programs and one teacher's allotment would be in excess of the VSTA conditions case.

"We decided this just wasn't good enough", says Steve Skok of the Laverton branch executive. The branch set a half-day stoppage in protest, *"to let the Department know we're not taking things lying down anymore."*

surprise

To their surprise and anger, the Principal issued them with a formal instructions to remain at work.

One period later he called an emergency staff meeting, and presented them with instructions in writing, backed by the Director-General.

The VSTA called an immediate State-wide protest stoppage. Within days the Laverton teachers' demands had been met, and the Director General had withdrawn his threat.

The school's remedial programmes are intact and all VSTA members are within the conditions case. So, apparently, are all the other teachers.

The whole problem could have been avoided if the Principal had been prepared to consult with teachers.

The whole affair was apparently a deliberate provocation – of the sort that no Principal is likely to try on the VSTA again for a while.

by Tom O'Lincoln

Let's get rid of the sell-outs

ACTIVITY is building up in sheds throughout Queenslands as workers prepare for a new union ballot.

After a drawn out challenge by the Reform Committee to the last ballot, we now have another opportunity to throw the present officials out.

The Reform Committee is producing a regular "Reform Meatworker" for distribution throughout the state to put forward its policies and provide a voice for comment throughout the sheds, while collections and fundraising on the jobs continue to finance the Reform campaign.

attack

At a time when conditions are increasingly under attack what we really need is a union to take up the attack and fight back.

The best the present officials could offer was an "information bulletin" filled with the usual accusations of splitting and interference made when their own actions are indefensible.

And no wonder, over the last twelve months we've seen them negotiate a non-strike agreement at Rockhampton to bring the shed "under control" and do a similar deal at Bremer as well as try to sack various delegates elected the job.

A lumper at an abbatoir meeting expressed the rank and file sentiment when he told them, *"I have been a member of the union for 22 years, but for the last 3 years I have been unfinancial and I will stay unfinancial as long as you lot are in Trades Hall"*

by Ian Rintoul AMIEU

Brewery dispute

ON Monday, two mass meetings of Sydney brewery workers discussed the Brewery Association's reply to their log of claims.

At Petersham Town Hall maintenance workers and FEDFA members decided to press on with the claims.

The employers' offer was accepted in general – but subject to seven important provisos.

The seven outstanding claims are for a thirty five hour week, improvement in long service and sick pay, one week's extra holiday, levelling up of tradesmen to a common rate and of tradesmen to parity with the construction industry and negotiation of a new redundancy agreement.

The meeting voted to give the employers four days to reply. What happens next depends on that reply.

As Bill Cockburn, FEDFA delegate at Reschs told the Battler: *"If a satisfactory settlement isn't received from the Brewers Association by Friday September 29, there is a strong possibility that there will be a dispute."*

At another meeting in the Sydney Town Hall, Liquor Trades members accepted an offer from the Brewery Association. However workers were worried by a new disputes procedure clause.

During the meeting, workers also raised the issue of "doublers" (double shifts). They discovered that the officials didn't even know there was a ban on doublers in the bottling section at Kent Breweries.

What's On

ADEL TUE 3 OCT
CANE General Policy Meeting, 7.30 Conservation Centre.

ADEL WED 4 OCT
IS Branch Meeting; 'Marx on Money' part 3. Small group discussion on some of the basics of Marx's economic theories. All readers welcome. 28 Ballantyne St. Thebarton 7.30 Phone 497939 for further details.

ADEL WED 11 OCT
CANE Trade Union Film night: Sentence to Success – a film about health hazards in the nuclear industry in France 7.30 Meeting Room adjacent to Trades Hall Bar

BRIS MON 2 OCT
Planning meeting for Civil Liberties conference, rally and march (to be held on October 28, 29 and 30) 7.00 pm, Room 30, Trades Hall

BRIS FRI 20 OCT
General Women's Liberation meeting, 291 St. Pauls Tce.

BRIS WED 11 OCT
BRISBANE I.S. Film night and discussion The film "Union Maids" will be shown and the discussion will centre on the role of women in the workforce. Admission $2.50. Inquiries ring 3581545

MELB TUE 26 SEP
Melb SE I.S. branch discussion meeting on the fight for workers' power Friends of IS welcome For more info, phone Janey on 913548

MELB FRI 29 SEP
Sydney Benefit Dance for those arrested in gay rights demonstration. Caulfield Insitute of Technology For more info, phone Janey on 913548.

MELB SUN 1 OCT
I.S. North West branch meeting on the politics of homosexuality. Friends of IS welcome. Ring 37 1580 for details.

MELB TUES 3 OCT
Melbourne South – East I.S. meeting: "The Middle East Situation" Speaker: David Lockwood Friends of IS welcome. For more info, phone Janey on 913 548.

MELB WED 4 OCT
Caulfield MAUM meeting at 2a Orinda St Ring 578-6709 for details.

MELB THU 5 OCT
Oakleigh MAUM meeting at 2 Coombe Ave, South Oakleigh. Ring 543-4726 for details.

MELB SUN 8 OCT
MAUM General Policy Committee meeting. Ring MAUM on 419-1457 for details.

SYDNEY THU 28 SEP
Gay Solidarity Group Meets every Thursday, 6 pm at CAMP 33 a Glebe Point Road.

SYDNEY SUN 1 OCT
IS Business meeting, 111 Enmore Road, Newtown 7 pm

SYDNEY TUE 3 OCT
IS Women's Caucus meeting. Discussion of black women in Australia introduced by Barbara Flick. Also food and drink. 7 pm. For further details and invitation ring 51-3665 women only. Friends of IS welcome

SYDNEY SAT 7 OCT
Theatre Party to "Enemies," Gorki's play about the Russia of 1905. $4.00. For tickets, ring 51 3665.

SYDNEY WED 11 OCT
Meeting – What is I.S.? 111 Enmore Road, Newtown, 7.30. Friends of IS welcome.

THE NEW GUIDELINES

By Alec Kahn

THE Great Indexation Pay Robbery has got even worse.

The Arbitration Commission has decided to throw us our scraps from partial wage indexation only once every six months now.

When you allow for the time wasted in compiling the Consumer Price Index, then the extra time wasted in the hearings, it means the bosses will be able to hike their prices up for eight months now before we get any compensation at all.

This slap-in-the-face from the Arbitration Commission comes as little surprise, though.

The judges only had to look at the way the ACTU broke up the Budget struggle, to know that Hawke and co. weren't going to lead any resistance to six-monthly hearings.

In fact, ACTU secretary Peter Nolan – who is probably even more spineless than Bob Hawke – called the decision "well-reasoned"!

To sweeten the pill for union officials – and ensure their acceptance of the new set-up – the Arbitration Commission has loosened the indexation guidelines ever so slightly.

allow

They are going to allow for *"the resolution of inequities existing where employers performing similar work are paid dissimilar rates of pay without good reason".*

This follows a suggestion from the NSW Labor Government.

On the surface this appears quite good. For example, this clause could have applied to the Latrobe Valley power workers last year, who were being paid up to $70 less than similar employees working for private contractors.

But when you read the fine print, you realise just how little the Arbitration Commission is giving away.

They say that they will only award "inequity" rises on four conditions. To quote from Sir John Moore's statement:

"1. The pay increase sought must be justified on the merits.

2. Ther must be no likelihood of flow-on.

3. The economic cost must be negligible.

4. The increase must be a once only matter."

Some concession!

The Commission conveniently forgets to say that a lot of workers have been winning rises on the basis of "inequity" for quite a while anyway.

In the metal industry, for example, many claims have been won by workers in lower-paid shops going out and demanding to get the "area average".

The Arbitration Commission would dearly love to bring these struggles under its control.

rely

The "inequity" clause is designed to do that. The idea is to get workers to *rely* on an "inequity" court case, instead of their own strength, to improve their pay.

Only now we'll have to prove to the judges that it won't cost the bosses much, and there won't be any flow-on (eg. from tradesmen to process workers, or from one union to another).

Oil workers mount the first challenge

The "new" guidelines will probably get their first big test in October.

Oil maintenance workers have mounted a campaign of bans in support of a log of claims.

Petrol shortages are already occurring in Sydney, where Shell's Clyde refinery has shut down.

Last time the oil workers mounted a major campaign was in November 1976. They put in a claim for payment of the Medibank levy, and ended up taking on the whole indexation system.

Bob Hawke and the union officials persuaded them to drop their struggle for three months – after which it never recovered.

This time, the oil workers will be a lot more experienced in Bob Hawke's slimy ways.

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Maternity leave

DON'T EXPECT MUCH, SAYS ACTU

Jan Marsh, the ACTU's industrial advocate. Why isn't the ACTU asking for paid maternity leave?

THE ACTU is presenting a test case on maternity leave before the Arbitration Commission.

Jan Marsh, the ACTU industrial advocate, has argued for unpaid maternity leave of between twelve and seventy-eight weeks.

If the case is won, it will hardly be a startling innovation. Australia is one of the very few developed nations which does provide general maternity leave protection.

The claim is for unpaid leave. ACTU policy is that maternity leave should be socially funded like workers compensation. They argue that if employers had to pay they would prefer to hire men or older women.

But one problem with unpaid leave is the effect that it will have on areas where paid leave already exists.

Women in the public service have twelve weeks paid maternity leave and so do teachers.

The public service has already been cut back by the Federal Government. The one week paternity leave and right to accrued sick leave has been dropped, and a twelve month qualifying period introduced.

If the Arbitration Commission awards the ACTU's claim for unpaid leave, paid leave entitlements may be cut back even further.

The claim is one of the actions decided on by the ACTU special conference on women earlier this year. The other was a child care centre to be built at Moorabbin (Melbourne).

average

But in both those cases, the ACTU is keeping its action on women's issues at a legal level, which the average woman worker on the shop floor isn't involved in.

Some trade union leaders argue that it's not possible to get action at a grass roots level for such issues as maternity leave.

Yet when the Victorian Teachers Union held a seminar on its maternity leave policy in early August, 120 members showed up.

by Janey Stone

DIRTY TRICKS STALL PTC FIGHT

ON September 13, more than five hundred Public Transport Commission construction workers met in Sydney to support AWU delegates Max Callaghan and Tony Perera.

Max and Tony were arrested and charged with using obscene language by cops, who came on to the Redfern Eastern Suburbs Railway site after a job site meeting. Max has also been sacked.

By Janet Vaux

The P.T.C. workers, all A.W.U. members, were out in force. But union officials managed to see that no action came out of the meeting.

Early in the meeting, the A.W.U. Negotiating Committee put up a motion with a number of points.

These included a call for the charges to be dropped, and for Max's reinstatement.

translated

The motion also called for a strike till early the next week and another meeting then.

The discussion during the meeting centred round this motion, which was translated into Arabic and Serbo-Croat.

Then leading AWU official Reg Mauby put up an amendment which was seconded by Digby Young.

This was really a counter-motion because it cut out any call for action.

Despite this, chairman Fergus Lake ruled that it was not in opposition.

So when it came to voting, the amendment was put first, in accordance with correct meeting procedure.

But this was not understood by a large number of the workers. In addition, the amendment was not translated and there was really no discussion of it.

At least half the meeting did not vote at all, and the amendment was carried.

PTC workers meeting to discuss the campaign against the arrest. But tricks by the officials prevented any action.

This committed the union to winning Max's reinstatement through arbitration.

The meeting then broke up in confusion, with workers asking what had happened and what the situation was.

At least they'd become aware of the unscrupulousness of the union leadership.

The leadership also showed its racism. On at least three occasions during the meeting chairman Fergus Lake harassed and interrupted migrant workers while they were speaking.

That afternoon John McBean of the T.L.C. and AWU representatives led a delegation of representatives of the railway unions to see the Commissioner. Max and Tony were not invited to this meeting.

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CAGEO defies vote for action

By Peter Ellett, ACOA

WHITE collar union officials are defying a vote by rank-and-file members for action against the Federal Budget.

On 31 August, the Victorian division of CAGEO (Council of Australian Government Employee Organisations) called a mass meeting at the Melbourne Town Hall to protest against the budget.

voted

The meeting went beyond the official recommendation and voted for four hour stoppages in conjunction with more mass meetings to determine industrial action.

Frightened by this unexpected show of militancy from normally docile white collar unionists, the CAGEO executive has been falling over itself in an effort to avoid carrying out the mass meeting decisions.

It is now clear that the protests called for by the CAGEO rank and file will not go ahead, due to the obstruction of the two largest affiliates – ACOA and APSA (Fourth Division Officers).

Both Victorian branches of these unions are widely believed to be heavily influenced by National Civic Council elements. The CAGEO sell-out, although coming as no great surprise, does raise some important points.

The mass meeting was mainly a white collar audience. The militant mood of the meeting testifies to a growing union awareness amongst white collar workers.

A layer of white collar workers is emerging who are increasingly willing to fight the Fraser administration.

At the same time, the credibility of the peak union councils is crumbling.

Both ACTU and CAGEO sponsored mass meetings have found the official recommendations lacking.

And both the ACTU and CAGEO bureaucrats have blatantly refused to carry out the expressed will of these meetings.

Which raises the question – just who are these leaders responsible to?

They might like to think they are a law unto themselves. But meanwhile workers are suffering from Fraser's attacks.

Obviously the only way we are going to get action is if we organise ourselves.

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS
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STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA 24 OCT 1978

STOP PRESS

41 picketers arrested

A MILITANT picket of about five hundred meat workers in Brisbane tried to stop sixteen trucks carrying live cattle to be exported to Japan as the Battler went to press.

Cops attacked the picket line a number of times and about forty one people were arrested.

At one point cops rushed into the crowd and bashed at least three men over the heads with batons.

One man's head was cut open and he was bleeding badly.

Demonstrators tried to stop the trucks by blocking the road, leaping on the bull-bars, throwing rocks and cracking windscreens.

One meatworker swam round to the docks and managed to release some cattle before he was arrested.

The Meatworkers Union had organised the picket very badly. There was no consultation with other unions concerned – so the wharfies only went out on a four hour stoppage because it hadn't been ratified by their Federal body.

Even some of the meatworks sheds weren't contacted till the morning of the picket. But despite this meatworkers came in from works twenty or thirty miles away.

Meatworkers throughout Queensland stopped.

Pam (centre) and supporters picket the Mudcrab Restaurant.

Sacked - because she didn't wear make-up!

SACKED for not wearing make-up? That's what happened to me last week.

I had a job as a lunch time waitress at the Mudcrab restaurant in Redfern Sydney. This restaurant specialises in "businessmen's lunches".

That is, it caters to suited gents who can indulge in two hour meals and charge it up on their American Express cards.

I am always clean and neat and even the boss said I was a good worker. This was obviously not enough.

They wanted me to parade around in make up and pander to the businessmens' fantasies of what a 'real' woman should look like.

It should be a matter of personal choice what I do with my face. Make up certainly doesn't affect the quality of the service.

Because I was employed as a casual waitress, I was not entitled to any notice.

policy

But according to union policy all pay should be given within fifteen minutes of termination. Any waiting time after that is paid on an hourly overtime rate.

It is now one week later and I still haven't got my pay, despite going back four times to get it!

When I realised that they were trying to get off without paying me, it called for decisive action.

Myself and fifty friends staged a rowdy protest outside the restaurant on Friday 13th.

The owners didn't know what hit them! They called the cops and threatened us several times.

We managed to convince a few customers not to go in and eat the 'tainted' food.

Eventually one of the owners came out and said *"You've done your money now.*

"It's no good going to the union – as far as I'm concerned you've never worked here."

Co-owner Lee Greentree - told Pam they'd deny employing her.

The action isn't going to stop at just a picket. I'm going to ask the union (Federated Liquor Trades Union) to back my demands:

1. Reinstatement
2. all my pay plus waiting time

The sacking is blatant sexist discrimination and illegal according to the anti-discrimination laws.

After all, none of the male workers are told to wear make up!

by Pam Townshend

LIBS ON THE SKIDS

Crumbling in three states

"THE crunch point will come in Victoria. Dick will get mauled . . . but the question is the degree of it. If he's badly mauled, the unrest could become potentially more dangerous."

That was how an unnamed Federal backbencher described the feeling in the Liberal party since the NSW elections.

The Liberals are worried. And they have good reason to be.

The dear departed: Knox and Coleman

In NSW they have received a record caning. Their leader, Peter Coleman was unceremoniously kicked out. Political commentators are predicting years of Labor dominance in NSW.

In Queensland, the week before, they lost a leader by back bench revolt.

Bill Knox, who had allowed Bjelke-Petersen to walk over him ever since he became leader, was publicly dumped.

His replacement, Llew Edwards, is scarcely more inspiring.

With two state Liberal leaders departing the scene in the space of a week, Victoria's Dick Hamer must be feeling very shaky.

After Fraser's budget cut the ground from under his budget, rebel right-winger Doug Jennings tipped the can on his party's corruption.

Following the latest revelations (see page 2), there isn't a single minister in the Hamer government who has not been publicly accused of corruption or incompetence.

Alan Hunt, once tipped as Hamer's chosen successor, is accused of both.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INSIDE - THE ASIO REVELATIONS p6,7

between the lines

AFTER Neville Wran's landslide in NSW, Dick Hamer must be feeling less comfortable. He has to go to the polls before next May.

Question: Will he wait until after the election to make an announcement about a proposal to build a nuclear power station in Gippsland?

Or will someone in the appropriate Government department leak the details before then?

★

WELL, now we've had two John Paul's in a month. I suppose that makes this one John Paul (the Young).

Will the 700 million faithful go round singing Love Is In the Heir?

And does that make the dead one yesterday's hero?

★

IT'S nice to know where you belong. The Liverpool Women's Health Centre recently tried to place a job advertisement for a doctor in the Australian Medical Journal, organ of the AMA.

They were informed there was some problem about the wording of the ad, then phoned back and were told that the advertisement would not be run.

One objection was that it used the term "collective". As the spokesperson for the journal explained it, the essence of health care delivery was that the doctor took full legal responsibility, had a higher status than other health workers and higher financial remuneration, none of which was implied by the word "collective".

★

FOR all you "Against the Wind" fans. An unemployed worker, Robert Berry, has been convicted in Wodonga Court of stealing $600 worth of food and household items, to feed his wife and five children.

He had been fired from his job and received no unemployment benefits for eleven weeks.

★

THIS week's plastic straw goes to a man whose plastic politics have long bored readers in South Australia.

Max Harris, that ageing enfant terrible of the wine and cheese circuit has come out in favour of Special Branch spying on trade unionists.

In a page of wanking that would do Peter Coleman proud, he used his column in the Sunday Mail to warn us that ninety percent of terrorist violence comes from the revolutionary left.

What's more, these people are deeply embedded in the unions and therefore the unions have to be spied on so that the government knows about their influence.

Unfortunately, the struggle to refine his urbane wit has been too much for Max baby.

He's missed out on seeing the terrorism of the Americans in Vietnam, or Korea, the murders and torture of the British in Ireland, the whites in South Africa, the Shah in Iran or the "Christians" in Lebanon.

All of whom would be upset to be described as Left fanatics.

A well-deserved award. Only, I've got qualms about giving the Battler Plastic Straw to Max.

Because instead of using it to suck, he's more likely to try and blow through it in his eternal quest to be "different".

by Darth Vader

STATE LIBERALS CRACK

Hamer under the hammer

Hunt at the land inquiry

THEY just won't go away.

Just when the flak was dying down from the Jennings document, another round of land scandals has emerged in Victoria.

All the usual characters are involved. Liberal ministers Hayes and Hunt, Housing Commission tout Riach, estate agents Dillon Inkster and Moore Williams, land speculation company Lewis, and of course Dickie and Hamer.

There are however a couple of interesting extras involved in this round of land scandals.

sold

One of them is a Company named Tamar Holdings which sold land to the Housing Commission at the usual amount above valuation.

One of the partners in Tamar Holdings happens to be Vern Hauser, a Liberal member of the Victorian Upper House.

He was the one who allegedly told Doug Jennings to shut up and take the money like the rest of the Liberals MPs.

Housing Minister Hayes

Another new character in the scandals is well-known Western Australian land speculator and boat-race loser Alan Bond.

The Bond Corporation owns land adjoining the Housing Commission's at Keilor.

Bond wanted to build a shopping complex on his land – the Commission wanted to build one on theirs.

Bond sent a lawyer round to threaten the Commission with exposure if they didn't abandon their shopping complex (he now denies this).

Then he took them to court where the current round of scandals emerged.

There are two aspects to the current episode of the land deals that will create particular problems for Hamer.

As well as the north-west fringe of Melbourne, some of the land involved happens to be in Ballarat, where the Liberal government is facing a by-election for (of all things) Vance Dickie's old seat.

Rather more disgusting is the excuse that has emerged for the inflated purchase prices that the Housing Commission has been paying developers.

It appears that both Lewis land and Tamar Holdings received "solatiums" above the straight purchase price.

A solatium is *"compensation for the emotional loss of selling the land"*.

Most people probably thought that solatiums would be paid to pensioners evicted from their homes after fifty years when the government builds a freeway.

Most people also have a sneaking suspicion that pensioners in this position don't get much of a solatium anyway.

To find that the government is compensating land speculators for the emotional loss of conducting their business (i.e. selling land) would make you suspicious, even if one of the companies being compensated wasn't part-owned by a government backbencher!

Alan Bond - his court case has opened up more la[nd] scandals

DEFEND THE K[...]

TEN PEOPLE face grave police charges as a result of the march on the Sydney Stock Exchange.

Two workers face charges that they did over $6,000 worth of damage. These charges are frame ups.

These militants must be defended.

Resolutions of support, money and offers of assistance should be sent to:

Stock Exchange Ten Defence Fund
P.O. Box M8
Newtown South, NSW 2042

Coleman gets Wransacked

THE massive victory for Labor in NSW was a kick in the teeth for Fraser and his vicious anti-working class Budget.

That's why Fraser was so eager immediately after the election, to claim that the vote was only a vote for Neville Wran as a "personality".

But even Wran himself refused to recognize the meaning of the victory. He claimed it was *"a mandate for moderation"*.

counter

This means that, as before the election, Wran will make no attempt to counter Fraser's policies at a State level.

The ALP victory followed in the wake of widespread working-class anger at the Fraser Budget.

The swing was highest in the city seats - not the country, which Wran has been so openly wooing with his "moderation".

Significantly, Labor has also won control of the Legislative Council - despite a somewhat pathetic rearguard action by the Liberals in the last days of the campaign to at least hang onto that as a "check" on the "socialists".

This removes one of Labor's most time-honoured excuses for not doing anything.

Labor once used to have a policy of abolishing Upper Houses. They even carried it out in Queensland. But Wran has already agreed not to get rid of this anachronism.

The ultimate humiliation for the Liberals was Peter Coleman losing his own seat. This will mean the Liberals have to elect their fifth leader in only four years.

Three parties to the left of the ALP also stood candidates, and their vote was encouraging.

The Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party each picked up round 3% of the vote in the electorates where they stood.

The Russia-line SPA polled a creditable 5% in its one electorate - a reflection of its greater concentration on working-class work.

Meanwhile, Don Chipp's Democrats suffered a major setback, picking up only 2½% of the vote and being outpolled by the Communist Party in the Upper House.

While Labor has won a smashing victory in NSW, there are no signs that things are going to be any easier for NSW workers.

Indeed, we had the remarkable sight of at least four different groups of Government employees waging industrial struggles during the election campaign - a time when unions traditionally "pull their heads in".

Government printers, teachers, transport workers and PTC construction workers were all involved in fights.

Neville Wran

Knox knocked off

AFTER a year of rumbling the volcano has erupted. The Queensland Liberal party has finally deposed its lack-lustre leader, Bill Knox.

Over the last twelve months, Liberal party backbenchers have been increasingly critical of the way in which Knox has been led around by the nose by State Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen.

In particular, the ban on political street marches which Petersen announced in September last year has caused much of the criticism.

As the number of arrests in the campaign against the ban rose to 1,500 and the police beat up demonstrators, and sometimes churchmen, journalists, trade union officials and ALP senators the Liberal Party started to get worried.

The State election in November last year showed a swing of over 9% against the coalition.

Meanwhile Knox continued to support the march ban despite repeated challenges from Liberal Party branches and conventions.

But it was the Liberals who were suffering more than Petersen because their base in the cities.

gerrymander

The enormous electoral gerrymander in Queensland discriminates against the Liberal party as well as the ALP, but Knox has made no effort to move for redistribution.

Instead, pro-Petersen Liberal MLAs like Charles Porter have been promoted to cabinet and anti-Petersen backbenchers like Hewitt have been passed over several times.

Knox is the first Liberal to have been deposed since the coalition was formed in 1957.

by John M[...]

LIBS ON THE SKIDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

All of this is creating serious problems for Malcolm Fraser. His budget is partially blamed for Coleman's defeat and for making things even harder for Hamer.

A lot of Liberal backbenchers are nervous about their chances of re-election.

Fraser himself is facing problems in four major areas. His budget was universally condemned - not only by the workers and pensioners that it was intended to attack, but also by the businessmen that it was supposed to help.

His union bashing is coming unstuck. Despite much waving of big sticks, the Telecom workers won a lot more than the government intended them to. So did the Utah miners.

Big business would love the government to smash the union movement. But the last thing it wants is for the government to lose drawn-out fights which cost them money and give us more confidence.

Fraser is also in a no-win situation over the Ranger agreement.

He is committed to the mining companies to open the mine. But it now seems he'll have to do it against the express wishes of the Aboriginal landowners.

He's quite prepared to do this, but he knows he's going to be hated for it - and not only by blacks and anti-uranium activists.

And then there is unemployment. Street has as good as admitted that the government has lied over its predictions and promises on jobs.

The government is now saying that it really won't do much about youth unemployment. Blaming Whitlam for the current unemployment figures is not as convincing as it used to be.

The Liberal government is starting to look panicky. It is making stupid mistakes - like Nixon's police raid on ACTU Travel, and Viner reading private mail into Hansard.

Backbenchers, holding marginal seats they would have lost last year if Labor had not been so incompetent, are threatening to vote against various government bills.

The public opinion polls show that if an election was held now, Labor would win. And this despite the fact that Bill Hayden remains unimpressive as ALP leader.

All of this is good news for workers struggling against Fraser's wage cuts and sackings.

A weak, worried government is a government that can be threatened.

Now is the time to smash the government's wage policy and begin a real fight-back for jobs.

Evicted - on 15 mins notice

A Federal housing project that can evict tenants at a week's notice - and recently used the cops to evict a group of tenants with only fifteen minutes notice.

This is the situation in the Glebe Estate in Sydney, where a group of tenants were evicted from their house on the grounds that they were "trespassers".

The Glebe Project office used Commonwealth cops to drag the tenants off the roof of the house.

Once in court, the office was totally incapable of backing its claim that the house had been abandoned by the two members of the group who signed the lease.

The residents point out that their case has implications for anyone with a Glebe Estate lease.

Most state tenancy laws provide for court proceedings before an eviction can occur.

But these unusually weak leases were set up by a Labor Government - with Tom Uren patching over the cracks by giving a public assurance that you were right for life unless you actually broke the terms of the tenancy.

There have been two or three similar evictions on the Glebe Estate.

Worst was the eviction of an aboriginal woman, while she was serving a short jail sentence, by taking all her furniture into store.

by Janet Vaux

Sacked for telling the truth

A trainee teacher was kicked out of her school, and almost out of her course, in Sydney last week.

Her crime? She dared to answer questions from kids about what it's like to be a woman today.

Christine Cremen was teaching at Marrickville Girls' High as part of her course at Kuringai College of Advanced Education.

The trouble arose from a strand of the English course called "Women in the World", a set theme for year 9 kids.

During the discussion, girls asked questions about the pros and cons of co-educational schools. Some thought that the school going co-educational would mainly lead to kids screwing behind the sheds during school hours.

Because Christine didn't instantly express disgust at this, the headmaster later accused her of saying she didn't care what the kids did as long as they came to classes.

He had some strange ideas about some other parts of the discussion, as well.

For example, young Greek girls told of the cultural custom of hanging blood-stained sheets out after the wedding night - to show that the woman was a virgin.

bleed

Christine pointed out that virgins don't always bleed in intercourse.

The headmaster called that "blasphemy"! And he accused her of imposing her "disgusting lifestyle" on the girls and corrupting the standards at the school!

Christine says: *"I was only telling them what it's like in the world, showing them they had more choices than marriage and child-bearing."*

Christine's course supervisor has commented on the rapport that she has established with the kids, many of whom are usually labelled "behaviour problems".

None of this fitted in with the moralistic prejudices of the headmaster, who is also a lay-preacher.

Following one complaint from someone in the class, both the kids and Christine are having to suffer for his narrow-mindedness.

RANGER - GET READY FOR A FIGHT

THE government has moved another step closer to an open conflict with the Northern Lands Council.

Following the meeting of the traditional owners of the Ranger site, the NLC now looks unlikely to sign the Ranger deal.

Fraser and Anthony have warned that the NLC has only got the right to negotiate over the terms of mining. It has no right of veto.

If the NLC refuses to sign, the government will have two choices.

The first is to go through the elaborate process of arbitration contained in the legislation that established the NLC.

The other possibility is to change the legislation, dissolve the NLC and set up some alternative, more compliant structure that would guarantee an immediate start.

The government would have to move immediately since politicians give themselves a long Christmas holiday.

Either way, Fraser is headed for open confrontation with the NLC.

Fraser set to move

Meanwhile, the government has pulled out all stops to pressure the NLC into submitting to the rape of their traditional lands.

They have finally got Galarrwuy Yunupingu, the chairman of the NLC, on side.

A few days ago he said that no-one could stop the government plans to mine at Ranger and he certainly wasn't going to try.

This means that blacks fighting for their land rights have got to either replace or fight Yunupingu. There are already moves to do this.

It also means that in the big struggle coming up, the resources and power of the uranium movement in the southern cities must be mobilised to defend black land rights.

The government has tried to make a lot out of the involvement of the "white" uranium movement and the ALP.

This has sent a lot of bleeding heart liberals scurrying for cover. The last thing they want is to be presented as manipulators of of the blacks.

The truth is, it's the government that's doing all the manipulating.

If the struggle for land rights and against uranium mining is to have any hope of success, activists have to be prepared to answer these smears.

We can't submit to them or be demobilised by them.

The resistance by some of the blacks in the Northern Territory is inspiring.

It has the potential to rekindle the anti-uranium movement and any offensive move by the Fraser government could be the catalyst.

Disorder in the court

THE trial of demonstrators arrested outside Katingal last May did not go quite the way the Magistrate intended when the case came up in Sydney Central Court on October 6th.

In fact by the end of the day he had virtually lost control of the court-room.

One of the arrests at Katingal last May.

The noise in court was so loud that he could not always make himself heard.

There were often three or more people speaking at once, on matters that he considered "irrelevant" (such as prosecuting the basher screws and questioning his own authority in court).

To remedy this he kept directing the cops to remove the noisier speakers from the room.

He also did this when someone threw water over a cop.

But this only created further problems, because he lost track of which defendants were in court and which had been removed.

His attempts to identify defendants soon resembled a music hall routine, with the gallery shouting "no" every time he had a go.

cops

Eventually he had to ask the cops to tell him who was in custody and who was in the court-room.

In the midst of the chaos, the prosecution suffered a small defeat when they were forced to alter the charges against the first of the defendants, Sue Mitchell.

She caught them on a weak spot when she pointed out that Katingal was not actually gazetted as a prison.

But if the situation in the court-room was high farce, the issues which the defendants raised were much more serious.

They pointed out that, since the closing of Katingal, the bashing and mistreatment of prisoners in NSW has continued - and that the Nagle Report on prisons has had no effect on this.

In particular they were trying to draw attention to the plight of Ray Denning who was in Katingal till it closed.

Ray has since been moved between the Grafton tracs and Parramatta Circle.

On September 8 this year he was brutally assaulted and bashed by five screws at Grafton Jail.

In a recent statement he wrote: *"No-one can tell me we have justice in Australia, when I am still being bashed by the same screws that I wrote a 50 page statement to the Royal Commission about."*

Gay rights marcher wins

A CHARGE against Sydney gay rights marcher Laurie Steele of "taking part in an illegal procession" has been thrown out of court.

It was virtually a test case for all the others.

Stipendiary Magistrate Berman's decision to dismiss the charge was a defeat for the NSW police, and showed up the fraudulent nature of their evidence.

Four hundred of us had marched from the Fourth National Homosexual Conference, intending to rally in Hyde Park (without getting too close to the "Right To Life" rally).

When we had got near Taylor Square, cops blocked every side entrance, and several rows of cops blocked the six lanes of Oxford Street ahead of us.

Superintendent Douglas had ordered us to disperse over a loud-hailer. The marshalls immediately told people to stop chanting, fold their banners and disperse quietly in small groups.

As the marchers were attempting to disperse, Douglas ordered his cops to "arrest all these people". Sixty-nine people were immediately arrested.

In his summing up, Mr Berman found that the march was in fact attempting to disperse when the cops started arresting people.

It is interesting to note that in the witness box, Superintendent Douglas claimed he did not broadcast an order to his men to arrest everyone in the march.

clear

We have a very clear tape recording of him issuing all these orders. The tape was admitted as evidence to the court.

Laurie Steele's case augurs well for the others arrested on that march. It clearly shows that all the charges are trumped up, and should be dropped.

The Gay Solidarity Group intends to pressure Attorney General Frank Walker to drop the charges against the arrested, both at Oxford Street and Hyde Park, and at three earlier gay rights demonstrations.

QLD BLACKS UNDER ATTACK

QUEENSLAND Aboriginal Affairs Minister Charles Porter has discovered a nest of bludgers in the Sunshine State's black community.

The bludgers just happen to be members of the Queensland government's most radical black opposition - the North Queensland Land Council.

Charles Porter

using

These people - Mick Miller, Joyce Hill and Carrie Grogan - are said to be 'just using' the black community of Queensland.

Instead of using the $15,000 received from the World Council of Churches to buy boiled lollies, these political radicals intend to use some of it to rally international support for the life and death struggle of Queensland blacks.

Another couple of bludgers have been unearthed at Mornington Island by another National party member of State parliament, Mr Bertoni.

Bertoni claims that John Ormand and his 'de facto' wife Marlene Hodder have dared to use their close contact with the local people, as employees of Viner's Federal Aboriginal Affairs Dept. to stir up 'anti-State government' activities.

slogans

It seems that anti-Petersen slogans have been appearing on houses at Mornington, much to the horror of Bertoni who recently paid the Island a visit.

As usual, the Nationals are blaming the people who put forward blacks' demands for the discontent that blacks feel.

The government's hysterical reaction shows that it is the organised blacks who they fear the most.

by Steve Rathbone

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME ....
ADDRESS ....
PHONE NO. ....
TRADE UNION ....
Postcode ....

Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, Vic

The privileged men who took control of Russia. Stalin and friends review the 1950 May Day Parade.

The answer to that age-old question

WHAT ABOUT RUSSIA?

By Tom O'Lincoln

OPPONENTS of socialism *have always got one argument going for them. They think there's no answer to it, so they save it up till last, to use as a blockbuster.*

"What about Russia?" they say. "Socialism sounds terrific, and maybe it will even start out very well, but eventually it will end up like Russia."

Then they look at you with a smirk, as if to say "Answer THAT one!"

Unlike some left-wing people, we don't defend the regime in Russia – or the one in China, which is very similar.

We openly say that Russia is ruled by a bureaucratic dictatorship, and workers there have no right to strike and no freedom of speech.

Russia's foreign policy is just as imperialist as the United States. But it's important to understand how it got that way.

In 1917 the Russian workers seized power, led by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party. In an almost bloodless revolution they took over the factories and took control of the government.

State power was placed in the hands of democratically elected workers' councils. The poor peasants seized the land from their landlords.

common

But Russia could not build a socialist society. It was poor and backward. Everything was in short supply, hunger was common.

Besides, industry was in terrible shape from the world war – and the coming civil war would almost paralyse it.

Under these circumstances there would be cut-throat competition for the means of life. Whoever was the most ruthless would get them, and so a new ruling class would emerge.

The leaders of the revolution expected that capitalism would be re-established within a few years, if the revolution were left to itself.

Why then did they seize power? Lenin understood that a revolution in Russia could be the spark for a world revolution.

With the help of victorious workers in an industrial country like Britain or Germany, Russia might overcome its backwardness and create socialism.

As Lenin dramatically put it: "Russia plus Germany equals socialism!"

Revolutions did take place in the West – in Germany, Hungary and Italy – but they were defeated.

Russia was isolated, and the workers republic was faced with enemies all around it.

The Russian capitalists and landlords, helped by the western imperialist countries, organised armies to try to crush the Bolsheviks.

The civil war that followed almost destroyed the Russian working class. The most militant and conscious workers naturally volunteered for the front, and a great many were killed.

returned

Industry was brought to a standstill, so countless workers returned to their villages and took up farming. As a force in society, the working class virtually ceased to exist.

The Bolshevik Party, now called the Communist Party, still clung to power.

But it could not control the economy.

With desperate shortages of food and supplies, individual small capitalists re-appeared. The peasants, who had control of their own land, were not interested in socialism.

The government had to make more and more concessions to the capitalists and peasants.

At the same time, the Communists were forced to make use of a big government bureaucracy to run the state-owned industry since the workers were in no position to do it themselves.

Many of the bureaucrats were left over from the government of the Tsar. Others had lost their socialist ideals because they were isolated from working class life.

They became selfish and authoritarian. Because of its exhaustion, the working class could not keep control of this bureaucracy.

The state bureaucracy at first played the role of broker, balancing between the workers on the one hand and capitalists and the peasants on the other.

But gradually it began to act in its own interests. It was becoming a ruling class.

A struggle broke out in the Communist Party itself between the defenders of socialism, led by Leon Trotsky, and the supporters of the bureaucracy, led by Joseph Stalin.

After Lenin's death, Stalin opened the doors of the party to a million new members, many of them careerists and self-interested bureaucrats. These new members became his firmest supporters.

A soup kitchen during the Russian famine of 1920.

By 1928 Trotsky's supporters had been defeated. By 1936, most of the original leaders of the revolution were dead, many killed by Stalin.

Trotsky was exiled to Mexico and murdered by Stalin's agents in 1940.

Having defeated the socialist forces the ruling bureaucracy had to cope with new capitalist forces – the richer peasants and the new traders.

Where earlier it had compromised with them, now it turned on them and wiped them out in a bloody struggle.

In the early thirties, Stalin actually had thousands upon thousands of rich peasants sent off to Siberia.

Stalin and the ruling bureaucracy went on to industrialise Russia by brutally exploiting the workers and peasants.

power

They used police terror and concentration camps to maintain themselves in power.

Today, Stalin's successors continue to use totalitarian methods though some of the terror has gone.

Followers came from the Bolshevik Party, the Soviet regime could continue to call itself "socialist".

In reality, Stalin's regime was created by destroying the socialist revolution of Lenin and Trotsky.

What happened in Russia doesn't prove that a democratic and humane socialism is impossible.

It does prove that for socialism you need the resources of the advanced industrial countries.

To gain control of all those resources, you need an international movement.

That is the reason the International Socialists has close ties with organisations overseas, such as the Socialist Workers Party of Britain.

Only an international movement of the working class can create socialism. The international socialist movement has to fight not only to smash capitalism, but also to destroy that hideous mockery of socialism which exploits the workers of Russia and China.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

ABOUT a year ago, the various state governments began using their tourist slogans on their number plates.

Queensland and Victoria both used to have white on black number plates (which NSW cops found confusing). Both changed to green on white plates so that you could tell them apart.

Queensland announced that it was "The Sunshine State" (surprise!) and Victoria called itself "The Garden State".

At the time, I made the comment in the Battler about the total absurdity of Hamer calling Victoria "The Garden State".

His government has run more freeways and power stations through public and private gardens than any other in the Commonwealth.

Since then, Tasmania has come out as "The Holiday Isle", and Western Australia's plates proudly bear the slogan "the State of Excitement".

I'm not sure whether that means its populace goes around in a state of permanent sexual arousal, or that agitators are exciting the masses in Perth. But it could mean something.

NSW and South Australia have not as yet decorated their number plates, but I thought I'd offer a few suggestions; and while we're at it, see if we can produce more appropriate slogans for the other states.

Queensland is obvious. Its number plates should carry the slogan "The Police State". If for no other reason, than to warn unsuspecting Southerners.

Victoria is equally as obviously "The Land Speculators State". Its gardens only exist so that some Cabinet member's son, brother-in-law or drinking mate can subdivide them and make a mint.

(Victorian land speculation and Cabinet corruption didn't begin with Dick Hamer and Vance Dickie either. It's a fine old tradition going back to the land boom of last century.

Most of the Toorak mansions and Western District properties belonging to Victoria's first families were built on speculation.)

NSW is "The Prison State". It began as a penal colony; and judging by the way the Nagle Report's recommendations were treated, it is still being run as a penal colony.

It would be tempting to describe South Australia as "The Trendy State", but that would ignore 120 years of pre-Dunstan history.

After all, it's not that long ago that Adelaide was called "the city of churches" and Playford was enforcing laws to match.

It might have been more appropriate to describe South Australia as "The State of the Fifteen Families".

Adelaide has a small, self-contained ruling class, and even Don Dunstan has admitted that they really run the state.

Westen Australia is "The State of Big Ambitions". It has produced Bob Hawke who wants to be Prime Minister, Alan Bond who wants to buy the America's Cup, Lang Hancock who wants to dig up the whole country, and "Prince Leonard of Hutt" Casley who wants to be king.

That leaves Tasmania, "The Unemployment Isle" – although "The Holiday Isle" is quite appropriate.

After all, that simply means "Nice place to visit, but you wouldn't want to live there."

BRITISH CAR WORKERS CRACK THE FREEZE

By Andrew Milner

SINCE the British Labour government came into power in 1974, it has firmly insisted on "wage restraint" – in plain English, keeping wage increases below price increases.

But now that policy is tottering, under the twin hammer blows from the Labour Party Conference and the Ford Motor strike.

The British system isn't quite the same as Australia's wage indexation – but its effects are pretty similar.

The Government sets a percentage figure above which wage increases should not go. It refuses to pay increases above that limit to Government employees.

And it threatens to withdraw its custom from any private firm which pays over the limit.

In the past few years, it has also persuaded the unions to agree to its targets and to "voluntarily" hold back wage demands.

benefitted

British Ford has benefitted from this policy more than most.

In 1975, the first full year after Labour's election, Ford made about fourteen million pounds.

By last year, that had increased to 246 million pounds. That's a 1750% increase in profit in only three years!

This year, British Ford has already topped last year's profit.

Last year, the Government's target figure for wage increases was ten per cent. This year it's even lower – five per cent.

But the Labour Government has run into difficulties doing the ruling class's dirty work.

The Trade Union Congress (Britain's ACTU) rejected Prime Minister Callaghan's five per cent pay policy – then the annual conference of the Labour Party followed suit.

That, of course, was merely words.

But when British Ford offered their workers the standard five per cent increase, words turned into action.

The whole of British Ford ground to a halt, as 57,000 workers throughout Britain went on strike – at Dagenham, Halewood, Daventry, Swansea, Basildon and Southampton.

Their demands were quite clear – a twenty pound a week increase and a reduction in the working week from forty to thirty five hours.

It's not a lot when compared to Ford's profits, or even to the eighty per cent pay increase that Ford gave to its top management in September.

The strike gained support from militants in other industries. Dockers at both Harwich and Liverpool have agreed to black-ban all Ford equipment coming in and out of the wharves.

But Ford's resistance didn't last long. Eventually they were forced to offer the workers what they called "responsible negotiations under conditions of free collective bargaining".

What that means is that that they are prepared to negotiate wage rises above the government's 5% limit.

Of course, that doesn't mean that the Ford workers have won. But their example could spell the end for British wage restraint.

Already, British Oxygen has moved to avoid a strike by offering its workers a rise between 7.7% and 8.3%.

If the Ford workers win, they will have knocked off the combined forces of the Government and a major multi-national.

But they will have made a hole in the wage ceiling which every other British worker will be able to climb through.

Ford workers demonstrate in support of their wage claims in Bayswater, London.

POLAND: DISSIDENTS UNITE!

By Nicola Catesby

JACEK KUREN – a leader of the Polish Workers Defence Committee – has been arrested in Warsaw.

Just twenty four hours earlier, Kuren had issued a call for unity amongst dissidents in Eastern Europe.

Kuren's arrest comes as no surprise.

The bosses of Eastern Europe and Russia are afraid of nothing as much as unity amongst workers who oppose them – for that unity could really threaten their power.

fearful

Poland's rulers are particularly fearful because in that country, simmering unrest has boiled over no less than three times in the last twenty-five years.

The reasons are not hard to find. Behind its 'socialist' mask, the ruling Communist Party has replaced the old bosses as the privileged ruling class.

Party members are assured of secure jobs, higher education for their children, adequate housing and excellent leisure facilities.

On the other hand, workers' wages are kept extremely low. Officially, the minimum wage is 1400 zloty for a 210 hour month. This will barely keep you alive.

The average wage of 3500 zloty is just adequate for food, rent and fares.

There are dramatic shortages in the shops, as Poland exports most of her produce.

But there's no unemployment. On the contrary, workers are often expected to do a fourteen hour day, seven days a week.

In October 1956, workers staged illegal strikes in Poznan and Warsaw, set up workers' councils and demanded reforms.

Althouth they only achieved the replacement of one set of rulers with another – led by Gomulka – the revolt shook the regime to its foundation.

Then in 1970, the regime announced price increases of 20% on staple foods. The increases were announced just before Christmas. Workers took to the streets and Gomulka sent in the troops.

Hundreds of men, women and children were mown down by the tanks. The regime was saved – but was forced to grant wage increases.

Mass workers meeting during Poland's 1956 uprising. Since then they've fought the bosses twice – but they need help from other Eastern European workers.

In 1976 they tried it again. Enormous increases in food prices were announced. Once again, the workers' response was immediate: strikes, protests, occupations and rioting followed the announcement.

It was in the repression that followed that uprising that Kuron's Workers Defence Committee was formed – to defend workers from punishment by the regime.

But in all these instances, a spectre haunted those who fought the regime – the spectre of Russian involvement.

It was a spectre that was powerful enough to put down any revolt, however strong. And it was a spectre that has been seen in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

That's why Kuron's call for unity between Eastern European and Russian dissidents is so important.

Because only a movement across the whole of Eastern Europe – and especially inside Russia itself – will have any real change of success.

And that's why they're so afraid of Kuron and those like him.

End of the miracle

IN the land of the "economic miracle," things are beginning to crack.

For thirty years the Japanese economy boomed. This allowed companies to throw a few crumbs to their underpaid workers. One of these crumbs was job security.

In slack periods many big firms didn't retrench their employees. They kept them on the payroll.

True, this never applied to women, or to workers in smaller firms. But it was a big help to a whole section of the labour force.

Now Masao Kanamori, president of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, wants to see this tradition scrapped.

"If we could lay off workers as American and German companies do, then our competitive position would improve," he says.

But the unions would raise hell. So the employers are looking for more subtle ways to reach the same objective.

Married women are being pressured to quit. Older employees are being "persuaded" to quit at the age of 48.

sackings

They get a "golden handshake." But minimal pension rights don't start until 60. No golden handshake lasts that long.

If these measures aren't enough, employers will eventually move to mass sackings.

Already Fuji Heavy Industries is negotiating with unions for the indefinite lay-off of 6,000 workers.

If all the idle workers in Japan were retrenched, the unemployment rate would rise from 2.3 per cent to about 6 per cent.

US bosses bankroll gay-bashers

By Janey Stone

A PROPOSAL to dismiss teachers and other public servants who engage in "any public homosexaul activity" will come before California voters in November.

This includes publicly advocating or encouraging homosexuality, whether or not the person is homosexual themselves.

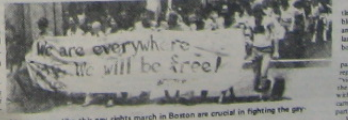
State Senator Briggs' "initiative" would also clear public libraries of works by known homosexuals.

So Californians won't be able to read the writings of Socrates, Oscar Wilde and Aldous Huxley; or look at the creations of Michaelangelo or Leonardo Da Vinci!

In true McCarthy style, the campaigners have distributed lists of politicians and artists who they claim are "tainted".

The Briggs initiative is part of the growing backlash against the gains homosexuals have made in recent years. This backlash started with Anita Bryant's victory in Dade County, Florida.

But despite the backlash, there has been a resurgence of the gay movement.



Mass actions like this gay rights march in Boston are crucial in fighting the gay-bashers

taboo

One gay teacher from Detroit put it this way: *"The thing the anti-gay movement had going for them was the taboo of silence.*

"They are engaged in breaking that themselves. They are leading to their own defeat."

Gays and their supporters have held demonstrations, culminating in 250,000 in San Francisco last June.

More recently, two Seattle lesbians poured their blood over the office of an anti-gay group. They declared their blood was symbolic of their life.

Unfortunately, some parts of the movement have repudiated this action as "violent". They argue that the best way to fight back is with an expensive media campaign, and only low-key participation by activists.

What they don't understand is that the backlash is not simply a legal attack on homosexuals.

If the Briggs initiative is passed, all Californian teachers will be under threat.

Any accused teacher will be subjected to a kangaroo court and the threat of dismissal.

Quite rightly, teacher unions have joined the opposition to the Briggs initiative.

Behind the attack stands big business. A number of major companies, such as ARCO (Atlantic Richfield Oil Company), Bank of America and United Artists have given money to the Briggs campaign.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers have poured money into the organisations of the New Right.

As the American revolutionary newspaper "Workers Power" put it, *"Behind the New Right stands not your local neighbourhood kook, nor any handful of highly visible Nazis, but the American corporations."*

The Petrov Affair in 1954 – ASIO's greatest exploit. LEFT: Petrov gets into the car of G.R.Richards, Deputy-General of ASIO, to finalize details of his defection. CENTRE: A distressed [illegible]led across the tarmac of Mascot Airport by Russian officials. RIGHT: A demonstrator grapples with a Russian official as they board the plane.

THE NOT-SO-SECRET SERVICE

New book's revelations blow the cover of ASIO

THE Whitlam Labor government really sacked ASIO Director-General Peter Barbour in 1975 because the KGB had 'penetrated' ASIO.

So claims Richard Hall in his new book "The Secret State: Australia's Spy Industry".

Probably most people know that much about the book and no more.

By Rob Albert

In fact, it's rare that anything gets into the news about ASIO or our lesser known spy organisations such as ASIS (Secret Intelligence - overseas spying) and DSD (Defence Signals - for 'listening' to international messages).

Of course, with all this business supposed to be hush-hush, that may not seem surprising.

But a lot of information is kept out of public view in the interests of 'national security' by a cosy little arrangement of 'D-notices' maintained between security organisations and the daily press.

One of the most useful things about Hall's book is that he has printed a lot of information that the capitalist press won't.

Let's look at some of his revelations on what ASIO and various overseas agencies such as the CIA and Britain's MI5 have been doing.

Gough Whitlam was informed in 1973 that ASIS maintained two agents in the Australian embassy

Tracking equipment at North-West Cape.

in, Santiago, the capital of Chile. He ordered them to leave.

But despite the fact that he managed to have ASIS chief Robertson sacked in 1975, ASIS simply ignored his orders to get out of Chile.

There's also evidence that ASIS and its forerunners helped the CIA's aid to the Dutch in Indonesia after the war, an unsuccessful colonel's uprising against Sukarno in 1958 and the right wing UDT coup in Timor during 1975.

The book also reveals the amazing fact that Australian security organisations knew immediately of the circumstances when five Australian journalists were killed by Indonesian soldiers in Timor in October 1975.

But the Labor government allowed itself to be persuaded not to make a public announcement of the facts by security officials, who were worried about jeopardising links with BAKIN - the Indonesian spy organisation!

Australians aren't alone in spying on Australians. From 1964 - 1967, the CIA - through a front organisation called the Forlanders Trust - paid for the salary and certain travel expenses of the president of Australia's national student union (NUAUS).

ingenious

This ingenious method of keeping an eye on the possibly volatile and unpredictable activities of students was only ended when the CIA's activities in other student organisations - in the US, in Britain and in the International Student Conference - were becoming public knowledge.

After the ALP won the 1972 election, it was revealed by ASIO sources that *"all likely members of the new government are believed to have been screened already by ASIO although some of the newer members of the House of Representatives may not have been processed."*

Remember the hue and cry about Senator Murphy's 'raid' on ASIO headquarters in 1973? ASIO was hiding information on the activities of the Ustasha, the Croatian fascist organisation, from Murphy - even though it was technically responsible to him.

power

But according to an ASIO lawyer, the Act establishing ASIO enabled it to tell the government whatever it pleased and that Murphy *"has no jurisdiction or power over the organisation"*.

Since the ASIO act of 1956, it has been the done thing to 'vet' everyone entering the Commonwealth Public Service. Between 1970 and 1974, an average of 69,000 people a year were checked for 'security' clearances!

Besides obvious activities like involvement in left wing political groups or movements like the Vietnam Moratorium, people can be caught out by having the wrong work-mates, friends or relatives, going back as far as two generations.

Hall gives some examples.

A university graduate was knocked back for a Department of Foreign Affairs traineeship in 1972 because of involvement in Moratorium demonstrations.

Harold Holt attacked a schoolboy who refused to do cadet service by using an ASIO file on his mother.

Sometimes the vetting takes an embarrassingly long time.

Jim Staples, now an Arbitration Court judge, had been work-

The US spy base at North-West Cape

ing in the Attorney General's Department as a lawyer for ten weeks in 1960 before ASIO found out that he was an ex-member of the CPA.

Yet Staples had previously stood as a CPA canadidate in a NSW state election! He was sacked for *"... a past of improper political activity."*

Thousands of migrants have been denied access to Australia, thanks to ASIO's activities in overseas offices of the Immgration Department.

Four hundred Italians and the same number from Britain were knocked back on security grounds in 1973-4 alone.

close

Within Australia, ASIO keeps a close watch on the activities of Chilean refugees like the Antorcha organisation, which is *"considered likely to support the use of political violence"*.

Supporters of the Junta who emigrated earlier would be certain to support political violence - but they are not watched.

All this is at least consistent. Members of the Palestinian and Lebanese communities who support the PLO, Irish immigrant supporters of the IRA and left wing Italians and Greeks are spied on.

But ASIO didn't se[illegible] keen on watching the U[illegible] it certainly didn't wan[illegible] the Labor Government kn[illegible] about it.

Hall's revelations only confirm what we all know about where ASIO stands in Australian politics; its job is to try and whiteant the left and help groups like the NCC in the unions.

And it's been trying to do it for a long time.

As far back as 1917, ASIO's forerunners were tipped off by the British embassy in Washington about an impending visit to Australia by a member of the syndical-

ist Ind[illegible]ers of the World.

A do[illegible]pared by the Investigati[illegible]au of the Attorney[illegible] Department in 1937 [illegible] "Is Communism Sprea[illegible]ng the Workers?", [illegible] dramatically, *"The [illegible] to this question is [illegible]nably YES".*

It the[illegible]n to give a detailed acc[illegible] the Communist Party's [illegible] that time in such union[illegible] Miners Federation and [illegible]

"Th[illegible]he 'Movement against [illegible] Fascism', not against [illegible] Communism mark you."

So [illegible] forerunners of ASIO [illegible]mething of a political [illegible] oppose fascist expansion[illegible]7!

Howeve[illegible] least one of Hall's revel[illegible]mforts us with the thought [illegible]haps it isn't as brutally effic[illegible] it would like to be.

Joe Ri[illegible] former minister in the W[illegible] Government, is known as [illegible] winger in the conservative [illegible] branch of the ALP.

[illegible]

Whe[illegible] Secretary of the Fed[illegible]rks Union, he worked [illegible] union officials [illegible]gent reporting [illegible] time, referred on the FC[illegible] dupe of the Riordan [illegible] com[illegible] knowledge that [illegible] links with the ASIO [illegible] CIA [illegible]

In [illegible] Whitlam exposed Rich[illegible]gs, a former head of[illegible]ecret Pine Gap base, as a C[illegible]

The CIA became very jumpy about the possibility of the Labor government terminating the agreement for continuing Pine Gap and other US bases in Australia.

After all, according to Hall:

"The central concern of American Foreign policy in relation to Australia has been the maintenance of its bases in this country."

Without them, the Americans wouldn't be able to communicate with their Polaris submarines - or to monitor Soviet, Chinese and French nuclear testing.

The Pine Gap base is particularly important because from 1971 onwards, it has been vital for the functioning of America's new spy satellites.

army

Hall takes a whole page to list in the briefest terms the army of international agents who infest Canberra alone: at least 25 nations and god knows how many agencies are spying on each other.

It's obvious that a whole international industry - spurred on [illegible] interest' - has [illegible] to perpetuate itself by [illegible] things which have to be spied on.

Unlike other government bodies (especially those subject to 'staff ceilings' a la Fraser) these organisations have the advantage of secrecy to promote growth.

The Petrov affair notwithstanding, ASIO needs the KGB as much as the KGB needs the CIA and the CIA needs MI5 and ... ad nauseam.

As a member of the Labor party, Hall obviously doesn't like ASIO. The Petrov affair and the Murphy raid are just the two strongest reasons for the enmity between the two organisations.

But ASIO cannot be abolished, because the electorate wouldn't stand for it, says Hall.

For him, there is a need to defend Australia's 'national interest' against groups who are disposed to violence. He lists:

"The Worker Student Alliance, because of its apparent cult of violence may qualify, as do the Nazi Party, the Croatian revolutionary groups, and perhaps the Palestinians because of potential PLO terrorist connections."

A question may be asked of Hall. What is to become of his trimmed down, efficient and socially responsible ASIO once it is established?

Will it not secretly re-establish links with international organisations and set up more hidden agencies to spy on the same groups it always has?

A telegram was fired off to ASIO (which said that no Labor minister should be informed of the contents) threatening to break off the intelligence pipeline between Australia and the US.

They didn't worry for long. Kerr sacked the government four days later.

Australian security organisations have had behind-the-scenes contact with the CIA and MI5 for decades.

In 1947, these links were formalised in the UKUSA Agreement which also includes Canada and New Zealand. Links have also been maintained with South Africa's Bureau of State Security among others.

The catalogue of spy satellites, international electronics eavesdropping, and 'friendly' nations spying on each other to gain usually useless information, is revolting.

WHAT WE THINK

RICHARD HALL'S book is a valuable catalogue of the range of dirty tricks and deception that the bosses use to spy on us.

But Hall himself cannot escape from the feeling common to much of the Labor Party that ASIO is a vast waste of money - paying loony right wingers to hunt loony left wingers (which to Hall appears to mean everyone to the left of the parliamentary Labor party).

Hall's objection is that they victimise innocent people in the process - that is, people like Hall and other "rational" ALP supporters.

It was doubtless people of his mind who narrowly defeated a motion at the 1971 ALP Federal Conference to have ASIO abolished. Because despite his expose of ASIO, Hall accepts that some form of security is necessary to protect the "national interest".

But just whose interest is the "national interest" in a capitalist society like Australia? Clearly the interest of the capitalist class!

The body of Hall's book is testament to the fact that in every nation the ruling class has established a secret organisation to maintain its control of society.

Complaining that security agencies have "got out of control" is hardly the point. Even when they're under control - it's us that they're attacking!

Suggesting that ASIO can be reformed into something inoffensive - or even "socially useful" - as Hall does, is exactly the kind of utopianism that he likes to attribute to revolutionary socialists.

It shows that Hall - like thousands of other Labor Party reformists - does not understand the true nature of the capitalist state machine.

Security organizations - just like the police, the courts and the army - are deadly, repressive instruments of capitalist class rule. They are the iron fist behind the facade of parliament.

To think that they can somehow be made serve our interest is a dangerous illusion.

We will never be safe from them until they are totally abolished, and we have established a workers' state to take their place. ■

ABOVE: ASIO chief at the time of the Petrov Affair, Charles Spry.
BELOW: Major William Throsby Bridges, Australia's first spy in 1903.

Steve Phillips

Students give Shears a lesson

ANGRY students and teachers at Caulfield High School in Melbourne staged a remarkable strike to fight the transfer of Steve Phillips, a senior school humanities teacher.

Three hundred students rallied outside the school and refused to return to classes when told to by the principal, Roy Fincher.

By a Caulfield VSTA member

Instead, they started up a chant of *"We want Phillips, we want Phillips."*

At the beginning of this year, Steve was sent to Caulfield High as a "substitute" for another teacher who was on leave.

But when the teacher returned in early September, another one left. So Steve assumed his position at Caulfield was safe.

Then on Friday morning, 20 September, Fincher told Steve he was to report to Doveton High School on the following Monday.

He was again to be a replacement, this time until the end of the school year, and was expected to take over a HSC economics class.

knew

Steve says, *"The Department knew 12 months ago that the guy I was replacing at Doveton was going on long service leave.*

"So why did they wait till Friday to tell me?

"Simple! The Department felt this would present the union with a fait accompli before they had any time to react."

But the Department also reckoned without the kids — who decided to take action for themselves.

The inane bleatings by Director-General of Education, Laurie Shears, that the kids were egged on by a "militant union group" are, of course, bullshit.

The kids took the only course of action open to them when they lost a teacher halfway through Term 3.

Perhaps Shears can't understand kids as being individuals, able to take action and think for themselves.

After all, kids are supposed to be illiterate automatons today, aren't they?

The teachers were also angry, particularly at the disruption the transfer would cause to the overall school program, and the inhumane treatment of a fellow unionist.

They decided that the Department couldn't be allowed to get away with this, as they have done — in Shear's own words — more than "1200 times this year".

So the teachers held a one-day stopwork immediately after the Staffing Branch refused to see any deputation from the Caulfield VSTA sub-branch.

The issue here is simple, although the media seem to find it difficult to comprehend.

refuses

A teacher cannot be moved about like a queen on a chess-board, simply because the Department refuses to employ any more teachers to fill gaps.

The strike failed to save Steve's place. But it will make the Department think a bit more carefully about any future transfers.

The final word on the subject belongs to Steve.

"I am proud to belong to a union which supports its members so strongly. And I am gratified by the action taken by students in the matter.

"But I am disgusted that both students and union have been forced to take such a stand.

"They haven't caused any disruption. The transfer did!"

Fincher talks to Caulfield students during their sit-in

Phillip Morris smoked out

WORKERS at Phillip Morris finally went back to work on October 10, having taken militant action since August.

Workers involved belong to the Tobacco Workers Union. The dispute was over a new machine brought in to eliminate human labour, and also over a log of claims.

When the union put bans on belts and workers were stood down, the people at Phillip Morris only became more militant. In mid-September they went out indefinitely.

More sick leave, paternity leave, and cigarette rations were just some of the things that they achieved.

Those that were stood down were both re-instated and re-imbursed for the stand-down period.

Pay for overtime increased, holiday loading increased from 17% to 20% — and if you work 130 hours overtime in a year you get an extra week's holiday.

According to one worker they were successful because *"We stuck together and we went out indefinitely."*

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state — parliament, courts, the law — is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Eq[illegible]ality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If that's the sort of work you want to do—

JOIN US!

International Socialists

HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS DAY

– Stop attacks on homosexuals in California: protest against the Briggs initiative.

– Defend homosexuals' right to work: no sackings, no scapegoats

– Drop the charges against the Sydney gay rights and womens rights demonstrators: defend the right to organise

DEMONSTRATE:

Saturday November 4 10am

Bourke St Mall, Melbourne.

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL
PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 — 376-9142
24 hour answering and message machine — 376 2783

I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE
PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031 — 376-2783

MELBOURNE
GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001 — 387 6361

SYDNEY
111 Enmore Rd., Newtown 2042 — 51-3665

ADELAIDE
PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061 — 49-7939

CANBERRA
PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601 — 49 6405

BRISBANE
PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067 — 358 3978

IPSWICH, QLD. — 281 6113

THE RIGHT TO MARCH

BRISBANE I.S. members have been heavily involved in the preparations for the Monday October 30 street march initiated by Senator George Georges.

A waterside workers meeting has already passed a resolution calling for a 24 hour stoppage on the day of the march.

petitions

Brisbane I.S. is trying to arrange further job meetings so that other workers can come in behind the campaign.

I.S. members have also been working on the letters and petitions that have been circulated around the unions and throughout the left to build the march.

So far the response to the campaign has been great.

The steering meetings have had between sixty and a hundred attending, including many ALP members.

Brisbane I.S. will be presenting a discussion paper at the weekend Civil Liberties Conference leading up to the October 30 March.

We will be stressing the need for a union and ALP base for the Civil Liberties campaign, and discussing the obstacles that have arisen so far from the labour bureaucrats.

Camp David

What Comes Next?

Public meeting organised by the Palestine Solidarity Committee

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 12 3 pm

Hungarian Hall 711 Punchbowl Road, Punchbowl (opposite station), Sydney

HAVE A SOCIALIST NIGHT OUT

The Victorian Amateur Trotskyist Club

Chicken and Champagne Dinner

Cup Eve, Monday 6th November

Dine and wine for only two guineas.
Details: 380 2227.

Union Maids

BRISBANE I.S. also had an interesting film night recently. We showed the film "Union Maids", about women workers organizing in America in the 1930's.

The film went into the subject deeper than "Harlan County", which many people have seen.

Then we heard speakers Vicki Spiteri from I.S., and Kath Thomas from the CPA, on the history of women workers' struggle in Australia.

Discussion afterwards focussed mainly on the obstacles that women face in the unions.

Fighting Fund

The Battler Fighting Fund this issue raised $245.50. Our thanks to:

Adelaide Pig Iron Bob Posters	23.50
Adelaide Mexican Dinner	54.00
Melbourne North-West Branch	80.00
TLA	10.00
Brisbane Branch	58.00
Sydney Branch	20.00
TOTAL	245.50

THIS F.I.S.T LACKS PUNCH

CLEVELAND 1937. Shots of factories and steelworks at dawn. A beautiful sight. It will be ours one day.

By Eric Peterson

Thirty minutes later.

Enter Johnny Kovak (Sylvester Stallone), now an organiser for the Federation of Inter State Truckers.

Followed by the strikers who ambush the cops, scabs and vigilantes and beat shit out of them.

The boss gives in to their demands and sections of the audience chuckle with delight.

Thirty minutes later. 1960. Sylvester is about to become Federal President of the union.

But his links with the Mafia are being investigated by the clean politician Rod Steiger. Large sections of the audience are bored.

Cleveland 1937 is the part where all that's worth watching occurs.

Here on the screen massive social forces move. No time to ponder the politics of the director. It's too exciting.

Capital moves first with a lockout. Labour is beaten the first time, but organises out of its apathy and strikes back the second time, turning defence into attack.

In some very powerful scenes the strike hots up. Vigilantes are brought in and with the cops' assistance smash up the picket line.

Kovak's response to the demoralisation is to buy gangster assistance to sabotage scab operations and organise armed pickets.

rot

In the short term it works, but the rot has set in.

Johnny Kovak is based upon Jimmy Hoffa, the former Teamsters President who disappeared a few years back.

Rod Steiger really hams it up as he plays Robert Kennedy, leading a Senate investigation into the unions.

So we march from the dirty union hall and the all-night picket into the bog of the courtroom cliche. Not exactly artistic.

You come to expect politics to be reduced to personalities at the top of the iceberg.

But even with this approach it is unusual to see a Hollywood production where the iceberg is a large industrial union.

For the most part FIST is a typical rise–and–fall–of someone story.

But even in the supporting role the union has a few worthwhile lines. These make the boss listen when clearly nothing else would.

And near the beginning, the union is conspicuous by its absence when Kovak and others are easily sacked after a shop floor revolt.

deliberate

But along with these examples of the need for trade unionism there is a deliberate ambiguity on the question.

We are served scenes designed to trouble pro-union consciences.

A union convention with all the luxurious surroundings and ridiculous carry-on of a business convention; unionists sent by head office to scab on an 'unofficial' strike.

These are assumed to be the natural state of modern unionism.

As a constructive view of trade unionism FIST falls badly in two places.

The first is the entry in the second part of the white knight legal system to fight the ganster forces of darkness.

Abitration courts or politicians like the Kennedys - is this where trade unionists should look?

The second is the insulting portrayal of the union rank and file.

They are shown as suckers for demagoguery — their role is to join the union and follow the leader.

Leave the running of the union to the better type of union official as epitomised by Kovak's friend and conscience, Abe Nelson.

trouble

The trouble is that he, like Kovak, usually rises well beyond the rank and file. That's where the boredom starts.

RIGHT: Kovak mixes it with some scabs. BELOW: FIST's first picket line.

What if men had babies...?

WANT to see some strong, forthright, controversial theatre?

By Jill Gray

"But What Have You Done For Me Lately" by American feminist Myrna Lamb is a great play.

It puts a man in the position of having an unwanted pregnancy, and uses his arguments for why he should have an abortion as universal reasons for abortion.

The man, a lawyer, wakes up in a strange hospital and is told by a woman doctor that she has planted a foetus inside him.

terrified

This terrified, hysterical reaction is contrasted to the rational, unemotional behaviour of the doctor.

He pleads that his life is *"too important"* to the world to be sacrificed to a *"parasite"* which has *"no rights, no existence"*.

He states that his body cannot physically endure a pregnancy. He demands a termination.

The doctor coolly responds that they are dealing with a human life, that of the foetus.

Also, many female bodies are unsuitable for childbearing and many women suffer injury and physical trauma.

They have weak kidneys, diabetes, narrow pelvic spans. All have to cope with intestines, kidneys, bladder etc. being pushed aside to give the developing foetus more room.

Frequently they are scarred and torn by the childbirth.

The female doctor was herself a victim of an unwanted pregnancy.

It resulted from a sexual liaison with the same man, ten years before when they were both students.

revival

His recognition of her corresponds with her emotional revival.

She rages at him, telling him what she went through, first in trying to obtain an abortion, and when this was unsuccessful, the damage the childbirth did to her physically and mentally.

The meaning of the play is thrust at the audience when we hear that the pregnant lawyer has been the sponsor of much anti abortion propaganda.

He (along with the male-dominated judiciary, government and medical profession) has taken it upon himself to control the lives of women and condemn them to backyard abortionists, unwanted children and suicide. All in the name of morality.

'WELL, IF I WERE PREGNANT I CERTAINLY WOULDN'T HAVE AN ABORTION!'

Victoria Greenwood and Jock Young

Abortion in Demand

IS BOOKS

Traces the history and impact of abortion law reform in Britain.
$4.10 from
IS BOOKS
PO Box M8
Newtown South
NSW 2042.

Confusing - and that's why it's good!

AFTER seeing "Word Is Out", a friend of mine said she was "confused".

And that's what's so good about this film.

If you go to see it with any preconceived ideas about lesbians and male homosexuals, then you are sure to come away confused.

For it shows gays in all their diversity. We meet 26 people who are black, young, conservative, old, women, married, Chinese, athletic, radical, middle-aged, male, overweight and so on and so on.

The only thing they seem to have in common is that they are all homosexuals.

"Word is Out" lets gays speak for themselves, about their lives. That alone makes it a very rare film.

experience

One woman recounts her experience in the late 1940's in the Women's Army Corps.

As she tells her story, we realise that the usual images and ideas that people (gay and non-gay) have about lesbians and male homosexuals are manufactured by society.

You can't help laughing as she remembers the routine her friends went through to fit in with that image, right down to using 'Old Spice' after-shave.

But we are brought slap back in our chairs when we are reminded that this hideous ritual was the only existence open to these women if they wanted to express their affection for another woman.

A gay man tells how he was committed to a psychiatric hospital in California for being gay.

He was threatened with castration as a 'cure' for his 'sickness' (loving another man!).

He felt lucky to escape with electric shock torture. (Sorry, 'therapy').

It's impossible not to feel angry, and frightened as he tells of his 'modern medical treatment'. . . . which is still being used in Australian psychiatric units.

A lesbian mother tells of her children denied her by the courts because she is living with another woman after he marriage broke up.

Gay men and lesbians tell of physical attacks and threats.

But the film doesn't just deal with the ways in which gays are oppressed.

It offers evidence of how an active, militant movement has beaten back oppression, fought the merchants of fear and hatred, to win significant gains.

Even the smallest changes for the better were won only after a long and bitter fight.

And these are constantly under threat in a society which needs the family to keep it going.

However, the film does have its drawbacks.

There is hardly any reference to working life. Most of those we meet talk about their lives with hardly any mention of their work.

dangerous

Yet coming out in your job (that is, not being afraid of your fellow works knowing that you are gay) is not an easy thing. Sometimes it's just plain dangerous.

The film's biggest failing is that it doesn't really talk about solutions. It just poses the problems.

Some people have escaped their situation by getting involved in 'alternative lifestyles', running away to the countryside to establish a haven from oppression.

But not many gays have the money (or inclination) to disappear into a commune in the country.

The film does show gays taking to the streets to assert their rights. And although no one says it, we can see that direct action is part of the way forward.

by Ian Jordan

CLEANERS FIGHT FOR JOBS

CINEMA and theatre cleaners in Sydney and Newcastle have won a $10 a week rise after a recent two-day strike.

The cleaners, members of the Theatrical and Amusements Employees Union, were way behind the award covering members of the Miscellaneous Workers Union, such as office and school cleaners.

This has been a long-term complaint and union members have been raising the issue for the last 12 or 18 months.

Flo Young and Veronica Fittler are cleaners at Hoyts Cinema Complex in Sydney. Veronica is about to take over from Flo as delegate.

They told the Battler that they'd known for a long time that their wages were behind cleaners in other areas.

This became especially important after the new Hoyts complex was opened a couple of years ago.

"We have a higher workload here. And there's been a big cut-back in staff, because the other cinemas each used to have 2 women and 2 men.

"Here there's 7 cinemas and only 6 women and 6 men.

"They say business doesn't warrant extra staff. But even if nobody comes into the cinema, people off the street still come in to buy things and go to the toilet."

So they wanted something done about a wage rise. Veronica said: *"Every time the organiser came in, we got on to him about it.*

"But the Newcastle cleaners were the main ones to put the pressure on. Then the union came and got our opinion and we were with them all the way."

The strike went ahead over the recent holiday week-end, and had some affect. On October 5th the cleaners agreed to accept $10.

It wasn't as much as they'd gone out for, but Flo said *"We feel good about it because it's a start."*

Flo Young (left) and Veronica Fittler

Postal workers put on the heat

AS Spring temperatures edge up in Victoria, Postal and Telecom workers are voting to put the heat on indexation.

About 75% of APTU members have answered Yes to a union survey calling for industrial action for a *real* wage increase.

By Marcus Banks, APTU, Central Mail Exchange

The last time we had one was way back in 1973. Since then, a mail officer for example has lost $532 a year.

Following calls by both the Victorian Trades Hall Council and the CAGEO delegates meeting to hold stop work meetings to discuss action on the Budget, workers at the Central Mail Exchange decided to act.

We collected a large petition for a lunch time special meeting to discuss our wages and conditions down Spencer Street at Unity Hall.

Being unsuccessful at delaying the meeting, the Victorian executive decided to call the meeting at the Trades Hall building at 7pm – a time when most CME people are working.

Even at this inconvenient time, eighty members managed to attend – a record for this year.

At this meeting, the overwhelming majority agreed to overtime bans and a work to rule campaign from November 1, if our log of claims was not met.

Most of these claims were already part of the union's policy.

They included a $35 a week increase in wages, an increase in penalty rates, five weeks annual leave, subsidised canteen facilities and a subsidy for medical costs by the employer.

The union survey was the response. An addendum was also put to the meeting to re-convene the meeting a week after the deadline to discuss progress with the log of claims.

It looks as if this meeting will not occur.

George Slater

response

The union leadership response to all this hasn't been too good.

Having George Slater, our federal secretary, strolling around with a Postal Commissioner top hat on his head has helped retard the APTU for many years.

The moderate ALP view generally held within our leadership of 'wait until the next elections, Labor will fix us up', have contributed to the do-nothing approach of the executive.

But the main charge that has to be laid against the leadership is that it doesn't have the faintest idea what the members want – and doesn't care to know.

The only suprised faces around after the survey were in the leadership. Three to one in favour of industrial action can't just be brushed off. The CME workers on my floor voted nine to one in favour.

In the next month or two, our executive will have to act. It's up to APTU members to make sure they don't shove this under the rug too.

Beer claims get a flat "No"

• Brisbane

WORKERS at Castlemaine and Carlton breweries in Brisbane have been on strike for over six weeks in an attempt to win their nineteen point log of claims.

Originally the main points of the log were for a pay increase of $25 and a disability allowance of $12.

The claims have since been dropped to a wage rise of $10-$15 and a disability allowance of $8.

selective

The dispute, which began with selective bans by each shift at the two breweries, quickly came to full scale strike action when Castlemaine and Carlton gave a flat 'no' to every point on the log.

At the first mass meeting Merv Williams, Liquor Trades delegate from Castlemaine, was confident about the chances of success when he told the meeting, *"In that brewery over there they've got nothing but pallets of stout – and who drinks bloody stout."*

So far the breweries have offered almost nothing. The best offer on any of the claims has been for a $2.50 clothing allowance. The companies won't even discuss the pay claim.

Meanwhile the pubs are just about dry. They are able to keep their doors open only because of the flow of southern beer across the border.

The Liquor Trades Union has so far done little to stop this beer coming into Qld. Early in the strike workers demanded that the Transport Workers Union be asked to black any loads of beer at all and Murphy, Liquor Trades Secretary promised that he would do his best – but nothing has been done.

• Sydney

THE Brewers' Association have rejected the outstanding claims put to them by maintenance workers (see story in last Battler.)

At a stop work meeting in Sydney on October 8, workers in the FED&FA, AMWSU, Plumbers', Electricians' and Building trades unions narrowly carried a motion to accept the Brewers' original offer.

The outstanding claims were for a 35 hour week, an extra week's annual leave for permanent shift workers, long service leave eligibility after 10 years and the levelling up of all non-trades classifications to the level of the building industry.

delegates

A significant number in the meeting, including some delegates, argued for a whole range of tactics to take on the Breweries in what they saw as a major fight to regain living standards – eroded by partial indexation and the scrapping of Medibank.

The unions were hampered by the fact that Arbitration Commissioner Johnson stated that unless the maintenance workers accepted, the award to Liquor Trades members would be held up.

Struggles at the Sydney breweries in the past have shown that unions working together on the job can beat the bosses. That's what's needed this time.

by Martin Hirst, LTU

APF BATTLE FOR PARITY

THIS week, 110 AWU members at Austral Pacific Fertilizer will decide on further action over their log of claims.

The main points in the 38 point log call for a 35 hour week, 15% weekend shift allowance with a 17½% loading for day workers, and a rejection of the company's demand for a 2-yearly agreement. At present they have a yearly agreement.

Since 30th April, the workers have presented the claims three times to the company. After the third time, they decided to begin a series of rolling stoppages.

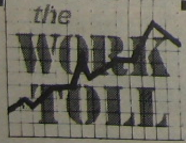
The company took them to Arbitration, and the workers decided to cease industrial action until the court made a decision.

The court offered four of the minor points and reserved their decision on the weekend shift allowances.

Winning the claims would give Austral Pacific workers the same conditions as refinery workers.

A.W.U. delegate Ian Curruthers said, *"We do the same job as refinery workers – they process oil into petrol, we refine gas into ammonia.*

"The processes are the same, but our conditions are different. We want the same conditions as workers in the oil refineries."



TECHNOLOGICAL change doesn't just threaten jobs: often our health is at risk too.

The new electronic tools' most publicised danger is radiation from video screens.

This radiation is suspected to cause cancer, and cataracts which blind the operators.

The Australian Bank Officers Association questioned the use of Video Display Terminals (VDT) after reports that radiation had caused miscarriages.

There are other problems too. An important one is eye strain, caused by looking at screens for a long time with little change in focus.

Screen flicker also causes severe eye strain, and may intensify problems of migraine and epilepsy.

HAVE you thought that the meat and other things you buy packaged in plastic foam trays with clear film covering could be making people into asthmatics?

It does – it is known as "meat wrappers' asthma" and is caused by fumes given off when a hot wire cuts the plastic film.

The Australian Meat Industry Employees Union is trying to have retailers change to alternative cutting methods.

Meatworkers in the USA refused to use the hot wire and so compelled employers to adopt a new method.

"WORKFORCE" is a new program on ABC Tuesday night radio which looks at health and work methods in the workplace.

It is researched, produced and presented by Matt Peacock, whose award-winning series on asbestos dangers last year broke new ground in media coverage of health and safety at work.

The asbestos series is now available in book form from the ABC.

LIDCOMBE Workers Health Centre in Sydney is looking for a progressive doctor to work in a clinical and educational-research capacity with their collective.

Lidcombe is an innovative centre, without much money.

Their main emphasis is on occupational health. If you're interested, contact Workers' Health Centre, 27 John St, Lidcombe, NSW. (Phone 02-646 3233)

by Steve Morgan

Job threat at Bundaberg

UNEMPLOYMENT is hitting the country towns as hard as anywhere.

The Bundaberg Sugar Company, which owns all six sugar mills in Bundaberg, has announced that about one third of its workforce will be made redundant in the near future.

When the announcement was made a few weeks ago, the maintenance workers at Bingera Mill walked off the job until they could get assurances from the company that the redundancies would not occur.

The A.M.W.S.U. then decided to put on overtime bans until the company came across with some reassurance for the workers. But the A.W.U. decided not to call bans on the grounds that they would *"only make the situation worse."*

One A.W.U. member, upset at the A.W.U. officials attitude, told the Battler that the lack of any action would inevitably give the bosses heart in carrying through their plan for sackings.

solve

He said, that *"anyone with long service leave due is being asked to take it now but that won't solve the problem".*

Each mill employs, on average, about 250 workers – and spread over six mills that is a very large figure in a town of about 15,000.

What makes it worse is that Bundaberg Sugar made a profit of $10 million in the financial year – an increase of 33% on the previous year.

Unless the unions do something more than they've done this time (especially the A.W.U.) the dole lines will be getting a lot longer in Bundaberg.

by John Minns

The day a leading hand got out of hand...

PERHAPS the heading for this story should be "Don't overload the machines – but to hell with the workers".

Of the two lines in production in the jam room at Henry Jones (Food Processors), one is fully mechanised.

Two women, a leading hand (male) and another male operate one, and about 15 workers operate the other. Production is the same on both lines.

However, it will be a while before the jobs of stacking the full cartons of jam onto pallets by two men on each of the ends of the two lines are taken over by machines.

stacking

One particular day, I happened to be working on this job stacking on the pallets.

The mechanised machine line has full attention and observance – a fitter is available at a moment's notice, also an electrician, a greaser and occasionally a painter. *"Look after the machine!"* is frequently shouted out by the foreman.

About the leading hand: this one happened to be carried away with the job and was over-zealous.

I must add here that the vast majority of leading hands employed here know which is the best side to be on and admit that they are only in it for the extra money.

business

At 12 noon this day, the stacker on the other line had some business to attend to in the city, and after notifying the foreman, left.

This action left only one stacker on the line and after about one and a half hours, he was just about rooted. I helped him till my mate went crook. Then the leading hand (as before mentioned) abused the lone stacker.

This was too much for me, so I went over to him and demanded to stop the line. At this, blows were struck and bedlam followed – though I think it was more like a Maori war dance.

After, we were both ordered to the office to confront the manager, who when he heard the story, let us off with a warning not to do it again – no more violence.

But the day after, a black ban was put on the jam room by both forklift driver and fitters. By this action, it looks like the zealous leading hand will be sacked.

by Frank Walker, FPU steward

APM Botany workers gather to collect their pay at the factory.

403 JOBS PULPED AT APM

AUSTRALIAN Paper Manufacturers are trying to lay off 403 workers in a move that combines massive "cost cutting" retrenchments with an attack on conditions throughout the plant.

The 403 workers, some with many years' service at APM, were given four days notice of the decision to close No. 5 Mill at Botany.

The sackings affect workers throughout the plant. They also hit the waste paper collection plant at Pyrmont, where ninety workers from a workforce of about 125 have been given the boot.

At the Botany plant itself, some sections like plumbers and carpenters have been virtually wiped out.

At a meeting the morning after the close down had been announced, plumbers' delegate Don McDonagh pointed out that the sackings went far beyond the so-called "necessary economies."

enormity

"When we went to the meeting with management, we had no visualisation of the enormity of the thing.

"The chop is so great, it is out of all proportion to the manning of No. 5."

Don warned that there would be an immediate attack on conditions because the company would inevitably try to bring in sub-contractors.

The workers were bitter at the way the sackings have been done, and determined to fight them. They called out all sections and declared the plant black.

The only workers not supporting the strike are members of the Pulp and Paper workers Union.

But support is strong through the rest of the industry. The ACTU has called a national week-long strike of all paper mill workers.

Solidarity actions have been taken by workers at Bowater Scott, Merivale and Fairfield in Victoria, and at Appm and Cellulite in South Australia.

When the workers met again on October 16, they were told that nothing had yet emerged from the unions' meeting with management and the ACTU on the previous Friday.

They are preparing for a long struggle and have printed posters and a leaflet to explain their case and ask for support.

Rheem hots up

A MASS meeting of workers at Rheem Australia (Bulimba, Qld) has decided to launch a campaign for a wage increase.

The recent horrific budget brought down by the Fraser government was seen by the workers as a further bludgeoning of the working class standard of living, in order to maintain the wealthy in the style to which they are accustomed.

The shop committee submitted an over award claim for $20-$25 which was immediately refused by the management. We then went into dispute with Rheem.

The action we decided to take was "rolling strikes", which meant that each steward used their own judgement to pull different times best suited to hamper and stop production.

This type of action stopped as a result of the management forcing us to go to an arbiter. The result was that we were told to return to work.

At a meeting called to report the findings of the commission to the workers, some of our previous supporters who voted for the dispute changed their minds and voted for the recommendation.

The vote was very close; it needed only nine votes to keep the dispute alive, and continue the fight for our much needed wage increase. We will never stop trying.

by Col Bell, AMWSU delegate

This is equality?

WOMEN members of the NSW Public Service Association are in the incredible position of not being able to vote for all positions on the union's Central Council.

Women can vote for two Women's Subdivision representatives. Or they can vote with the men for the seven remaining positions if they choose to give up the right to vote for the womens representatives.

This discrimination only occurs in the Administrative and Clerical Division of the union.

In the other three divisions of the P.S.A. women and men can stand for and vote for any position on that division's Central Committee.

powerless

The Women's Subdivision is a paternalistic way of representing the interests of women members. In practice, the overall sexist approach of the community renders the women's reps powerless.

At the P.S.A. Annual Conference in May this year, the rules governing this discriminatory method of voting were changed. But the A & C Division still called a Central Council election under the old rules.

The hierarchy of the division refuse to see the situation as discriminatory.

In fact they are likely to change the rules of elections in A & C Divisions to perpetuate this mode of voting at a General Meeting of A & C Division on 25th October.

by Genevieve Errey, PSA

J&W workers stand firm

From the Johns & Waygood strike leaflet

By an FIA member

AMWSU, FIA and FED&FA members at the Johns and Waygood ICI site in Sydney are still fighting for basic trade union principles.

We are on strike for decent safety and amenities, a site committee and a better site agreement.

The FIA officials have played a shocking role throughout the whole dispute.

When the company dismissed the striking workers, all Laurie (the log) Baldwin from the FIA could say was *"You should all have gone back to work."*

Now the FIA officials have refused to put their union stamp on collection sheets – "until the executive approves it". That's not for two weeks.

The AMWSU and FED&FA officials have backed us all the way.

refusing

Johns and Waygood workers at the Sandringham Fabrication plant in Melbourne backed us by refusing to load trucks with steel for the ICI job.

In the face of stand-down threats they have now agreed to load the tracks, provided no steel deliveries are made to the black-banned site in Sydney.

The strike fund is going well. Many jobs have levies on – like Caltex Refinery, Kurnell, Marrs Cranes, Abbatoir Maintenance workers and Fairfax Maintenance workers.

Other jobs have thrown into the bucket – QANTAS (Dillingham), Watts Reserve Bank, Centrepoint Tower and Unilever.

Money for support can be sent to: Johns & Waygood Disputes Committee c/AMWSU Box M200 Sydney Mail Exchange NSW 2012.

COMPO FIGHT AT HUTTONS

AFTER a three day strike, nine meatworkers at J.C. Huttons' Brisbane shed have been reinstated.

They were sacked while on an extended period of workers compensation.

While still on compo the company sent the nine a letter with a cheque to pay them off. The company told them that when they were fit, if they wished to have their job back they could apply and front a company doctor.

Only if the company doctor passed you would there be a job for you but without your seniority or other entitlements for service.

The mass meeting called to discuss the company's action decided on an immediate responce – there would be no work until the nine members were reinstated, and a guarantee from the company that no such procedure of company doctor assessment would apply for workers on compo.

The Huttons workers were pretty angry.

"One of the blokes has been here for ten years and after being injured at work the company takes this sort of action.

"You've got to get the O.K. from your own doctor before you return to work so the company wanting to use its own doctor looks pretty suspicious.

"And from the start of this the union officials were urging a return to work while negotiations were held, but we know where negotiations would have got us.

"There is no way we could work while the company was trying to bung this on."

It only took three days – the company caved in completely. The letters were retracted, the nine reinstated, there will be no sackings while people are on compo, and no company doctor to help the company to cut corners on workers health.

by an AMIEU member

Nobby's Nuts refuse to shell out

A SIX week strike at APD (Nobby's Nuts) in Oakleigh, Victoria, entered stalemate last week.

The strike started as a result of three men from the warehouse being absent – one on leave and two others on sick leave.

Management replaced the absentee workers with two cleaners who were unable to read or write English and therefore were unable to cope with the work load required.

Kerasoula Zarris, a Food Preservers Union steward at APD, told the Battler, *"The three blokes from the warehouse came and told Paul (the other steward) to stop the machines.*

"So everybody stopped work, and we brought the union to the factory. Then we went to talk with the big management."

claims

The shop stewards also submitted a log of claims which included $20 per week award rise, a 35 hour week with no loss of pay and two days extra sick leave.

Workers are also unhappy about increasing automation at APD. Sixteen new machines were introduced last August, threatening further redundancies.

Kerasoula mentioned one viciously racist comment that a worker had made at the start of the dispute: *"Look at the bloody wogs, they want to go on strike."*

But this reactionary attitude doesn't appear to have much support as the strike has remained solid for so long.

by Verna Matcott

Printers face sack

WORKERS at Academy Press are feeling the weight of the bosses economic problems on their shoulders.

The press which employs about 40 workers is on the verge of closing its doors.

Some workers had been suspicious about the possibility of a shut-down. But the management said nothing.

Finally the PKIU delegate approached the manager directly and demanded that he make a report to the workers. Then the truth came out – the firm could only guarantee the next day's wages. After that they could be working for nothing.

nothing

A PKIU member told the Battler, *"They must have known about the situation for a long time but they told us nothing.*

"They said, 'We've got creditors to think about and debts to pay.' But so have the workers.

"Small firms all over Brisbane are going broke and when the small fish get eaten by the bigger fish, it's always the worker who gets the lump in the throat."

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

STRIKE A BLOW AGAINST JOH!

"THERE will be no march. If they are out to make trouble, they must expect that the law will be upheld .... "

So says Queensland premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen about the coming Civil Liberties march on October 30.

March on October 30

By Judy McVey

True to form, his government will be assembling almost a thousand police in the streets of Brisbane to make sure there is trouble.

George Georges, Labor Senator from Queensland, will lead the march, which starts at 3.00 pm in the City Square.

attend

Georges is the main initiator of the march, and large numbers of ALP members are expected to attend.

This is an important step forward. Since the march ban some thirteen months ago, the ALP has relished Petersen's mounting unpopularity.

But up till now, Labor leaders have refused to throw their organisational force behind fighting him.

It was the Civil Liberties movement that first shook Bjelke-Petersen's power.

In the latest polls, 60% of Queenslanders now disapprove of the march ban.

And the sight of Civil Liberties demonstrators being subjected to mass arrests contributed largely to the 9% swing against Bjelke in the last state election.

Now for the first time, a section of the ALP will be taking part in the marches in an organized way.

George Georges himself has marched before - and been arrested. But that was in an individual capacity.

This time, many ALP branches have endorsed the march. And they have already contributed over $1,000 towards the Fighting Fund.

Georges himself is part of the left wing of the Queensland ALP Reform Group.

His initiative in calling the march is probably in part an attempt to shift the Reform Group in a more activist direction.

For the Civil Liberties movement, the drawing in of a section of the ALP is a real breakthrough.

The movement's main weakness so far has been its lack of active working class support.

Queensland's left is small, and on its own could not hope to defeat the National-Liberal Government.

But Queensland ALP leader Tom Burns, and sections of the Trades and Labour Council, have been major obstacles to gaining working-class support.

support

In fact, a letter from high up in the ALP has been circulating, calling on ALP members not to support the October 30 demonstration.

The letter claims that the ALP has already been active in opposing the march ban, and the October 30 mobilization is unnecessary!

Despite this feeble attempt at sabotage, the political situation for the movement is good. The Government has been heavily discredited over the last year.

Since the Civil Liberties campaign first shook Bjelke's power, Queensland has been rocked by scandal after scandal. The smell of corruption hangs very heavily over the National Party.

And, the Liberals have just dumped Bill "Spineless" Knox as leader.

Bjelke-Petersen is now poised to bring in "Right To Work" legislation to protect scabs.

If the examples of the Biggs Case in Victoria and the Zaphir Case in Queensland last year are any guide, this attack on closed shops will produce an angry working-class response.

The Civil Liberties movement has already correctly linked this new attack with the right-to-march ban. They are both part of a general drive against union and democratic rights.

If Bjelke-Petersen goes ahead with his scab legislation, he could easily spark off a movement that will not only smash the "Right To Work" laws, but the march ban as well.

George Georges

60% now oppose march ban

Is Queensland "different" ?

A lot of people in Queensland argue that Queenslanders are somehow different.

That's why Bjelke-Petersen has been premier for so long. They think that it's virtually impossible to get rid of him. But let's look at a few facts.

By Brad Bowden

Australia is the most urbanised country in the world - most of the population lives in a few capital cities. The rural population - traditionally a bastion of conservatism - is tiny.

This may be less so in Queensland - but not much. Nearly half the population of the state lives in Brisbane; and this figure is even higher if you include near Brisbane centres like Ipswich, Toowoomba and the South Coast.

Some of the largest factories in Australia are found in Queensland like the Gladstone alumina refinery.

But oddly enough, the decline of the rural population has so far favoured the National Party.

In the 1940s, the country areas were strongholds of the Labor party and the Communist Party. So Labour governments rigged electorates to favour country seats - and this backfired against them.

The drift to the cities left a system heavily weighted in favour of declining - and increasingly conservative - country seats. And this is where the National party's strength comes from today.

Bjelke-Petersen also has invincible because he has the mining companies behind him, as well as lots of money. But the National party only gets this backing because it's already successful.

If Joh looked like being a dud, they'd drop him, and start looking for more successful front people - perhaps the Liberals. They could use their money to push the Liberals to the right if necessary.

But we can't rely on the Liberals. They support everything that they think Joh can get away with.

So what's to be done? The answer lies in another fact about Queensland - we live in one of the most unionised countries in the world.

Over 50% of the workforce are in unions - that's higher than Britain, and higher than the US. This is true in Queensland as anywhere else.

sector

Since 1966, manufacturing has been more important than the rural sector. Even mining is not altogether a good thing for Joh. Because when a company like Utah is powerful, its workers are powerful too. Utah's seamen and miners have proved this.

In fact the strength of these workers is a serious threat to the stability of the Queensland government.

The basis of Joh's rule is artificial in many ways. He stays in power by rigged elections. Yet his main strength is the weakness of his enemies.

If he faced a really big mobilisation by workers, he would not look so strong.

It is only by Queenslanders realising how weak Joh's base really is - and how strong they really are - that they can learn that they are not really different. We can get rid of him if we are willing to fight and not just keep saying, "Aw, but Queensland's different".

Qld Rogues Gallery

Bjelke-Petersen

Llew Edwards

Tom Burns

WHEN he first became premier, Joh was regarded as a prime idiot. Even his party thought so and tried to drop him. Joh only won his position by using his casting vote as chairman – voting for himself naturally.

Since then, Joh has become renowned for his dirty tricks. He uses the special branch to collect dirt on troublesome coalition MPs to keep them in line.

Ever since the last election, and the beginning of the civil liberties campaign, Joh has staggered from crisis to crisis. Now, even his firmest supporter – Knox of the Liberals – has finally bitten the dust.

LLEW is the new leader of the Liberals. Undoubtedly, he's not as colourless as Knox – but he's probably every bit as slimy.

Edwards was one of the few people to stand up to Bjelke over the Milan Brych episode.

But his refusal to contest the leadership until Knox had already been deposed indicates no great excess of political courage. Since elected leader, he has stressed that he is a coalition supporter, and will carry out cabinet policy even if he disagrees with it.

In other words, he has no intention of rocking the boat which Joh steers.

SINCE becoming leader of the Labor party, Burns has been careful to build a 'moderate' image – he now talks slower and wears darker suits.

At civil liberties rallies, he has been conspicuous only by his absence. Burns was recently caught with his finger in the till. Since then, he has been in Thailand and has not come back.

While he's been away, there has been a state budget, a Liberal change of leadership and a by-election is coming up in Sherwood.

The question is, will he return? – and will it make any difference?

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INSIDE: Hawke's business capers

WHO ARE THE REAL BLUDGERS?

Social Security pays profs $500 a day

$500 a day - from the Social Security Department.

Sounds like a dream? But it was a dream come true – not for one of the 400,000 unemployed, but for two university academics.

The Department of Social Security told a Senate Committee that they paid Professor John Hunt and a Professor Knowles $500 a day each for lecturing their staff members.

The money was over and above their normal salaries, which are also paid by taxpayers.

Hunt got $2700 for attending five management training conferences.

Knowles was paid $1030 for a staff training conference over two days.

But the good professors had to work very hard for the money. Social Security's Director General, P.J. Lanigan, stressed to the committee that the professors' services included *"getting up at six o'clock in the morning, coming to Canberra, getting back late at night."*

■

Which sounds rather like a normal day in the life of a great many workers (except they don't get a free plane ride).

Lanigan was also at pains to point out that the payments were unusual; normally professors are 'only' paid about $300 a day for taking part – on top of their professorial salaries.

It all sounds very different from the Social Security Department that most of us are familiar with.

The Department that begrudgingly hands out the miserable pittance known as the dole.

The Department that harrasses the unemployed – and was given extra funding in the Budget to increase its harrassment.

The Department that checks up on pensioners to make sure that they're not getting more than the government allows them.

And it is blatant hypocrisy from the government behind that Department. The government of 'cost-cutting', of 'reduced expenditure', of "slashing the deficit".

But of course, talk of 'reducing government expenditure' is not for the likes of university professors – or for that matter for the police, the Defence Department, or even MPs' salaries.

It's only for workers, for the unemployed, for pensioners. It's only for us because, as far as the government's concerned, it's us that's going to pay for the crisis.

And if we continue to pay, others, like the professors, the generals, the managing directors and the rest – will continue to grow fat off our sacrifices.

Cops busted our picket - p12

Wild scenes from the Brisbane meatworkers' picket, as cops make 45 arrests to get live exports through. For an eyewitness account – turn to page 12.

Worker bashed in Israeli jail

FAWZI KHALID ALI, a Palestinian born Australian, was beaten up by Israeli authorities while held without trial for over two months.

Fawzi, a member of the AMWSU was arrested when he went to visit his parents in the occupied West bank of the Jordan. No reason was given, and he was not released until October 18.

Fawzi told the press that while under interrogation by the Israeli secret police, he was threatened with a gun, and forced to stand for long periods with his hands tied behind his back and his head covered.

It is possible that Fawzi was arrested because of his involvement in the Palestininian community in Australia. The Israelis questioned him on the activities of Palestinians here.

As the Israeli ambassador to Australia said:

"It is been found that people who are suspected of these things have been very helpful in detention."

Australian embassy officials interviewed Fawzi in prison and said that he had made no complaints of bad treatment.

But Fawzi claims that the interview took place under pressure and threats, and that he did not dare reveal his true situation.

Fawzi Khalid Ali

between the lines

THE Between The Lines award for thrift this issue goes to the distributors of John West Salmon.

You know, the people behind the recent boom in food poisoning cures.

It appears that they've decided not to destroy all those suspect cans of salmon.

With the economy the way it is, they decided to keep them in a Melbourne warehouse, to be released when all the fuss dies down and the Health Department's off their back.

■

BUT they missed out on the BTL–Westgate Memorial Award for Health and Safety.

That goes to the Victorian Government for housing a radiation laboratory in the middle of the Victorian Public Service office complex at Treasury Place. Just a few feet from the blue collar workers' tea room.

■

KARL Marx told us that class relations push their way into every sphere of life. He must have known about Expovin.

For the ordinary drinker, there was the usual collection of wine-tasting stands, pouring out gallons of your typical bottle-shop slush.

But for the beautiful person of taste, wit and refinement, there was the Connoisseur's Terrace, where fine wine and gourmet eaties were to be had. For another $5.

■

VICTORIA'S Gas and Fuel Corporation has just announced a modest $3.3 million profit on sales of $170 million. Nothing for to get upset about, you'd think.

Until you read the fine print.

Their real profit was closer to $20 million. The rest was hidden, to avoid the backlash Telecom got.

$16 million went to a special natural gas conversion fund.

This is an accounting trick to pay off the capital costs of natural gas conversion as quickly as possible.

And another $6 million was allocated to consolidated funds (accumulated profit).

In fact, they buy the gas for 36 cents from BHP (who are hardly losing by it) and sell it at an average of $1.58 per unit to the consumer.

Land Deals aren't the only way we're getting ripped off.

■

ADFROM a recent issue of the Mackay (Qld) Mercury: "Brickies labourer: must be a cross between gorilla and greyhound."

■

SOME people aren't concerned with making money. They've already made it. Like this week's Plastic Straw winner, Larry Horowitz.

Money and material things don't matter any more to Larry. He just spends his time sailing around the Pacific in his $350,000 twenty-metre yacht.

"I don't understand my friends and relatives", he said. "They have lots of money in the bank and they keep on going to work every day."

And, you could be lucky enough to enjoy the oak-pannelled luxury of Larry's yacht as part of the (unpaid) crew.

Just work hard and stick to the no booze, no drugs rule on board.

By Darth Vader

Adelaide women occupy

WOMEN from Mansfield Park Self-Help Group in Adelaide have occupied a building due for demolition.

The women are fighting to get local premises for an unemployed youth centre and a women's shelter.

The concrete pre-fabricated classroom they are occupying was to be removed to make space for playing field for the new $20 million community centre next door.

But the community centre does not have room for the sort of place the women know is needed in the area.

unemployment

Unemployment is the highest anywhere in South Australia, and the nearest women's shelter is miles away.

The Self-Help Group is one of the very few real community groups in the area.

They have put in several submissions for premises of their own, but have got nowhere.

The Department of Community Welfare refuses to recognize the group. They send families with problems to the group for counselling and help.

The women have been in occupation now for [illegible] days, and although some of their demands have been granted, they still haven't got a promise a building.

The women want two connected Trust homes that will be left vacant when the Department of Community Welfare moves into the flash new community centre.

They are putting a new submission next week.

The women are very wary of a sell-out. They see the gains they've made as far as trying to fob them off.

So they're staying put till their final demand is met.

Look out Hamer - the end is near

WHEN THE CRUNCH came it was worse than even Hamer's worst enemies could have hoped.

Last month in the Victorian by-election for the Victorain state upper house seat of Ballarat, there was a 14% swing against the Liberal government.

By Dave Nadel

9% went to the ALP, which was good enough to give them a seat that a lot of their own members didn't think they could win.

Most of the other 5% went to the Democrats, who are expecting to do very well in the state elections amongst middle-class voters disillutioned with Fraser and Hamer.

In the week before the by-election Labor began making excuses. Ballarat is a fairly conservative area where Labor has not done well even during national swings to Labor such as 1972.

Labor was saying that a 5% swing that would have re-elected a Liberal would be a victory against Hamer.

Who's the leader of the gang?

anonymous

Part of the reason was that Frank Wilkes, Labor's anonymous leader, did not campaign well.

Wilkes figures his best chance of winning the coming state elections is to do Neville Wran imitations.

Like Wran he is attempting to promise as little as possible. However, while Wran says very little, he talks a lot and is seen alot.

Wilkes doesn't seem to have got the message yet. The man who once defended himself against the charge of being unknown by saying he was "well known in Northcote", is still unknown in neighbouring Preston and Brunswick.

However, as the old saying goes, Oppositions don't win elections, Governments lose them.

So, despite Wilkes' pathetic effort, Labor won Ballarat. And has every right to expect that they will win the state elections which are due next May.

Before the poll was even declared, Hamer panicked and introduced "pecuniary interest" legislation patterned on British legislation.

However, by the time Hamer closed the stable door, the horse had well and truly bolted.

The legislation will force politicians to make their business affairs public.

If this legislation had been three years ago, it would have made it difficult for Liberal backbencher VErn Hauser to sell his property to the Housing Commission at inflated rates.

14% swing in Ballarat beats Libs

hand

On the other hand, it would not have stopped Planning Minister Alan Hunt from receiving campaign donations from real estate company Moore Williams, whom he subsequently allowed to act as purchasing agents for the Housing Commission.

The Liberal Government is in trouble for this kind of corruption, every bit as much as it is from backbenchers like Hauser and Charles Hider lining their own pockets.

Actually there is very little that Hamer can do to save his government.

Apart from the land scandals and recurrent political scandals like Newport and the Freeway plans, Hamer is also coping a backlash against Fraser.

One of the reasons for the swing against the Libs in Ballarat was the high level of unemployment. This will get worse in the next six months.

During the same period Fraser's lies about tax cuts will become obvious to even the blindest Liberal voter.

As of the beginning of November, a new tax surcharge is being taken out of wages.

This leaves low and middle income earners worse off than they were before the tax cuts that Fraser talked so much about before the last election.

Hamer has certainly lost the next state elections, but of course Labor has not won yet.

It is still possible, particularly after the high Democrat vote in Ballarat that voters disgusted with Hamer's gang of theives will vote for the Democrats, the Jenningsites and the National Party and that Labor will be kept out a coalition.

discourage

Labor's leaders are sure to use this possibility to excuse right wing policies and to discourage strikes before the elections.

So the main issue for workers in Victoria in the next six months will not only be to elect a Labor Government, but also to make sure that it's the sort of Labor Government that will be some help to us.

There must be no pre-election backpaddling on wages struggles. Otherwise all we'll get after the elections is a Wran style government.

More honest than Hamer with better public transport but no more concerned with jobs and wages.

Labor now has every right to expect that they will win the State elections which are due next month.

Two hundred metalworkers marched on the Arbitration Court in Melbourne at the start of the latest hearing. They invaded the courtroom briefly to press the ACTU demand for the full 4% rise for the last six months. The Government, as usual, is calling for no rise at all.

Wran's Cabinet - more of the same

WITH the announcement of the "new" State Cabinet NSW seems set for more of the same.

There is only one new cabinet member, Jack Hallam, and a few minor changes in portfolios.

Mines has been taken away from Pat Hills, following his attempt to grant 51% of the lease of the Warkworth Coal deposit to the State Electricity Commission, at the expense of Coal and Allied Industries Limited.

Wran has now given Mines to Ron Mulock, who can be trusted not to act on his own initiative.

Haigh's responsibilities have also been whittled down, so that now he has nothing to deal with but prisons.

mess

Presumably on the grounds that the less he has, the less he can make a mess of.

And Haigh won't upset things by trying to bring the basher screws to justice.

Lib leader Mason

The familiarity of the new cabinet isn't accidental.

The cabinet went to some trouble to get itself re-elected, with Hills' (for the right) and Jackson (for the so-called left) standing over hopefuls and persuading them not to nominate.

So only a few mavericks made any sort of challenge.

The new Liberal leadership is also a gift to Wran's government.

The appointment of John Mason, a simple-minded parson, at least proves that the old Lewis machine still has some life in it.

And as a foil to the foolish Mason, new deputy leader Bruce McDonald has a reputation as an unscrupulous property racketeer.

Meanwhile, the Wran government is itself facing the first hints of corruption in relation to the Barton case.

indictment

Attorney-General Peter Walker has taken the unusual step of issuing an ex-officio indictment on the Bartons which means their case will not continue through the usual committal hearings.

The most likely explanation relates to the possibility of the Crown calling Peter Abeles, Managing Director of TNT, as a witness in the committal hearings.

Apparently Abeles and Wran, and one of Abeles' staff paid a call on Walker shortly before the ex-officio indictment was announced.

The Council for Civil Liberties has described the procedure in the Barton case as "unjust".

THE FIGHT AGAINST JOH

Now We're Getting Somewhere!

FOLLOWING the 288 arrests at the democratic rights rally in Brisbane on October 30, five hundred maritime met at a stopwork rally at Trades Hall on Novemher 1.

One wharfie described it as "the biggest meeting at the Trades Hall in years."

They demanded Trades and Labour Council action over the arrests and denial of basic rights in Queensland.

As everyone knows, at the October 30 rally Queensland Labor senator George Georges tried to lead a march to State Parliament.

Senator Georges addresses the rally

petition

Georges intended to present a petition with eighty thousand signatures, demanding the restoration of the right to march and other civil rights.

More than half the workers at the stopwork marched to the court hearings to express support for those arrested.

Bail had been a ludicrous $50 to $100 per charge, even for minor traffic offences.

About a quarter of those arrested were detained overnight. The bail fund ran out, and the cops refused self-bail even to people who needed to get home.

Workers came out in force to the rally to challenge the march ban.

Brisbane police keeping the peace as they make one of 288 arrests

We made repeated attempts to march to Parliament, resulting in mass arrests.

The cops once again backed up their reputation for violence.

Obviously the cops hate militant workers at least as much as they hate the students who have been in the forefront of the rallies until now.

When a few marchers finally managed to reach Parliament House, they found Tom "Gutless" Burns courageously waiting to meet them with a free beer.

Most marchers were not impressed. One woman told us, *"He should get his feet out of his mouth and put them on the street!"*

Georges and Uren may be soggy when it comes to supporting workers' struggles, but at least they were there in the watch-house.

Burns sells us out right down the line.

Now we must keep up the rank-and-file pressure on the TLC and the Labor Party leadership.

excuse

After leading members of their own party have been arrested, they've got less excuse than ever for sabotaging the struggle.

As the seamen, meatworkers and brewery workers move into more and more serious battles, the demand for the right to march, picket and give out leaflets is becoming more important every day.

If Bjelke-Petersen gets his "Right to Work" scab laws in, these rights will be essential for our struggle.

A meeting at the Trades Hall will decline on future action. We can smash Bjelke's police state if we act together.

by Carole Ferrier and Steve Rathbone.

RANGER DEFEAT: WHAT NOW?

THE GOVERNMENT and the uranium mining companies have scored a sudden and stunning victory with the signing of the Ranger agreement.

The weeks of pressure that they applied to the Northern Lands Council – particularly through Chairman Galurrwuy Yunupingu – paid off last week.

At a meeting at Oenpelli, the NLC and three traditional Oenpelli owners of the Ranger site signed the deal.

The chairman of the Oenpelli community council, Silas Maranulungula, boycotted the meeting and sat in a nearby car during it.

Maranulungula had given permits to the press to attend the meeting, because he wanted to demonstrate to the world that it was a "wrong meeting"

overruled

But Yunupingu and Aboriginal Affairs Minister Viner overruled him and kept the press out. Northern Territory police were present to arrest any journalists if necessary.

Only three traditional Oenpelli owners – out of a list of thirty the NLC had given Viner – were present.

Two NLC delegates were also absent from the meeting.

Yunupingu – who played a Hawke-like role throughout the negotiations – also talked down a no-confidence motion from two NLC delegates during the meeting.

Stephen Zorn, the American negotiator who came to Australia to negotiate the Ranger deal for the NLC, had earlier sent a letter to Yunupingu asking him to stop pressuring NLC delegates to sign.

Zorn pointed out that the royalties and the environmental safeguards in the deal were totally inadequate.

Immediately after the signing of the Ranger agreement, Doug Anthony began talking about the Government's next target – developing the Nabarlek uranium site in Arnhem Land.

This too will require NLC agreement. Anthony hopes to get it by Christmas.

This shows the Government's blatant contempt for the provisions of the pro-mining Fox report, which explicitly called for "sequential development" of new projects.

What does all of this mean for the uranium movement?

Clearly the NLC and the black communities do not have the strength – on their own – to resist the political, legal and economic power of the Government.

There is just an outside chance as we go to press that the Oenpelli community may still challenge the Ranger deal – but this would still only be a delaying tactic.

It is the absence of a clear stand against uranium from the union movement which has allowed the Government to get away with forcing the NLC into a corner.

The ACTU policy – agreed at last February's sell-out special congress – was to oppose new developments until aboriginal consent was procured and "safeguards" provided.

Ian Viner

vulnerable

This threw the onus for opposing uranium rights onto the shoulders of the small and vulnerable aboriginal communities.

The uranium movement cannot allow this situation to go on. Otherwise the Government will simply be able to get agreement from black communities, picking them off one by one.

Yet getting union black-bans on the building and mining of the new projects is also going to be an extremely difficult task.

Unemployment in the Northern Territory has made many workers prepared to mine uranium.

The Miscellaneous Workers Union, which will cover most of the mining jobs, has a Federal policy against uranium mining, but it is unwilling to enforce it on its own members in the Northern Territory for fear of letting the AWU in.

Nonetheless, there is still three avenues for unionists to pursue against uranium.

Firstly, rank-and-file members of the MWU need to force their officials to carry out their own anti-uranium policies.

Secondly, we need to build up the pressure on the ACTU to take a tougher stand against uranium mining, and ensure they don't cave in on the safeguards question.

The ACTU Executive meeting later this month will probably stall on the Ranger question, since actual mining won't start till 1981. But this will give the uranium movement time to regroup its forces.

That means building the opposition to uranium in our own workplaces and union, so that it is harder for the ACTU to sell out in future.

mined

Finally, we need to harden up the opposition in the transport unions so uranium, even if it is mined, won't be carried anywhere.

This still looks to be our best chance of stopping uranium in the long run, since the transport unions have a strong tradition of militancy and political action.

NSW prisons - the bash goes on

THE NSW Corrective Services Department continues to avoid implementing the recommendations of the Nagle Report on the state's prisons.

The latest fiasco concerns medical care at the women's prison at Mulawa.

Officially, the Commissioner of Corrective Services has adopted the Nagle recommendation that the "Medical care at Mulawa requires immediate improvement."

But the combined Health Commission and Corrective Services Working Committee that has been set up shows how much they mean to do about it.

incompetent

It includes the very people that the Royal Commission found to be incompetent: Superintendent Windmill, Ray Albrighten (nurse in charge of the hospital) and Dr Gundandena.

The Women's Health Centres have offered a two day a week women's health service in addition to the existing service.

And Women Behind Bars have promised a publicity and direct action campaign if this isn't implemented immediately.

Gary Andrews, a chief of the Health Commission responded to this by directing that the proposal be accepted. But it remains to be seen whether this is a stall tactic.

Meanwhile, the screws have been busy elsewhere, promoting their case to CES workers.

justifying

Two screws from the Long Bay Training Section turned up at a CES course for staff specialising in work with handicapped people, including ex-prisoners.

They were supposed to be describing what prison is like. But they spent the time simply justifying their own role.

Their props included a suitcase full of weapons, which they said had been manufactured inside jail.

This didn't impress all the CES workers the way it was intended to.

A complaint is being put in, with a request that, at the least, the Prisoners' Action Group should be given equal time.

HEALTH FRAUD

FRASER's Health Minister, Ralph Hunt, has been carrying on about a "dramatic slowdown" in health costs.

Hunt says his record compares well with the rapid growth in health costs on 1975-76 – implying that Labor's Medibank scheme was wasteful.

His claims are exaggerations, based on distortions.

First, the costs for 1975-76 include capital investment, from which we're now getting the benefit.

Since then, Fraser has cut back on capital investment – and we'll pay the price for that later.

Second, Medibank was more efficient in processing claims. So payment of benefits for fourteen months was compressed into twelve.

This "boosted expenses" – on paper.

Third, no one is pointing out that a chunk of Medibank's costs can be traced to rip-offs by doctors – the same ones who denounced Medibank as "socialist".

Ralph Hunt

Finally, a lot of the growth in cost in 1975-76 went to well-deserved pay rises for nurses and other health workers.

Not even Fraser has the nerve to deny that those rises were fair. So why blame Labor for them?

As the saying goes there are lies, damned lies, and statistics. Some governments are good at them all.

THEIR PHONEY STEEL 'GLUT'

by David Lockwood

IS there a steel glut?

Well, that's what they'd like to have us believe.

There's no doubt that across the world, the steel industry is in serious crisis.

And yet in large areas of the world, there are people crying out for more steel. Millions of peasants still grub the dust with wooden ploughs – and starve for want of a steel plough that will dig deep enough in the soil to grow a proper crop.

Millions of people don't even have a needle or a pin – let alone sewing machines or bicycles or hypodermic syringes.

Obviously, for them there's no 'glut'. Yet the steel bosses are in trouble because they can't sell their products.

In Europe, a vicious steel price war is raging amongst the major producers. It's estimated that there may be as much as 4 million tons of steel stockpiled because there are no customers.

France has just nationalised the three largest steel producers – mainly to try and relieve the burden of the $8.8 billion debt the industry has run up in the past three years.

But that probably won't help. After all, the British industry was nationalised in 1967 – and is now losing about $1600 a minute; about $800 million a year.

pressure

Japan's steel industry is meant to be more efficient. But in the midst of a slump, it relies on exports. Due to pressure from other producers – particularly in Europe and the US – Japan has had to hold back. This means that out of a steel producing capacity of 140 million tonnes, only 102 million tonnes is used.

Meanwhile the American industry is only working at two-thirds of its capacity. The top forteen steel companies lost $260 million in the last three months of 1977.

So what's gone wrong?

In 1973, the world economy went through a short-lived boom. Demand for steel reached record levels – and up went the prices. Profits soared too, and it seemed as though the industry would just keep on expanding. Great plans were made to expand production.

But in 1974, the effects of the oil price rise began to hit home. The bottom was knocked out of the world economy – and the steel industry along with it.

Demand virtually disappeared – everyone now had steel they simply couldn't get rid of. At any rate, not at a profit.

Competition became even more intense, and forced every steel producer to attempt "rationalisation" of their operations. That's a fancy name for pushing the burden of the crisis onto the backs of workers. And its effects on steel workers have been devastating.

The British industry has slashed 54,000 jobs since nationalisation. In France, it's thought that the new nationalisation could lead to the cutting of 10,000 more jobs – on top of the 16,000 already planned to go.

Europe as a whole has lost 80,000 jobs since 1974 – and under present plans, a further third of the workforce in steel would go.

Meanwhile, in the US, 120,000 jobs have disappeared since the mid 1960s.

In every steel producing country, there are calls for more protection for their industries; for import controls against foreign competition.

But they won't work. The Common Market held its imports of Japanese steel down in 1976; but Swedish imports went up by 75%. A quarter of them were then re-exported to the Common Market!

Not everyone wants import controls, though. The West Germans for instance, want East European steel to sell freely – because they want the East Europeans to earn more hard currency to buy West German goods and pay the interest on loans from West Germany!

The fact is that there isn't too much steel at all – on the contrary, there isn't enough. In order to give everyone the benefits that steel can bring – benefits like ploughs, pumps, tractors and cheap farm buildings – the world's present steel capacity of 700 tonnes, needs to be 3,000 million tonnes. And it could be quite easily.

But of course, the people that need those things – the people in the underdeveloped countries – can't afford to pay for them. And in a system that's based on profit, it's those that pay that get the benefits.

profits

There's no solution to the steel problem under capitalism. While they're not making profits, steel producers will continue to sack workers, and cut back production – despite the fact that the steel is actually needed.

Because the whole system is base on the profit motive. It's only when that motive can be destroyed – and replaced with production planned on a basis of need rather than profit – that the problem can be solved. And that basis will only come about through socialism.

... While these people starve to death

Athens after police smashed a building workers strike in 1975. Now they're trying the courts.

Frame-up in Greece

from Mark Matlock (Athens)

WHEN the Colonels' dictatorship was overthrown in Greece, their methods didn't disappear with them.

The last twelve months have seen a steady increase in government attacks on workers' rights.

Yannis Serifis is a metal worker who was active in the struggle against the military dictatorship. The junta had him on their wanted list for being a member of an underground resistance group; but he managed to escape arrest.

After the collapse of the dictatorship, Serifis helped organise a trade union amongst workers employed by the german multinational AEG at its factory in Piraeus.

He was elected to the strike committee when the plant went on strike for two months in 1977. At the end of the strike, he was victimised along with other leading militants.

Under a government desperate to put a stop to industrial action, Serifis was an ideal target for a frame-up.

In October 1977, an unsuccessful attempt was made to burn down the AEG factory. A group called Internationalist Solidarity, claimed responsibility and said it was acting in protest at the deaths of Andreas Baader and co in West Germany.

During the raid, one member of the group was killed and two policemen were injured. A few days later, police arrested Yannis Serifis and charged him with participating in the raid, murdering the dead group member, and attempting to murder the two police.

Since then, he's been held in jail, despite all the evidence that he's been framed. Highly dubious statements of recognition by police, and the fact that the group member was killed by the type of gun the police use are just two of the features of the case.

But this isn't just an isolated incident of police conspiracy. Since the end of the dictatorship, the right wing Karamanlis government has been trying to curb the limited degree of freedom won by Greek workers.

Legislation penalising trade unionists for strike action and giving police power to jail those taking part in demonstrations has been passed.

There are new laws against 'terrorism' – and already four people are in jail for extended periods for supposedly possessing molotov cocktails.

Eight people have been shot dead by increasingly trigger-happy police trying to make arrests for reasons varying from petty crime to political activity.

In such a climate, the campaign to free Yannis Serifis is important for the defence if those democratic rights that do exist in Greece.

Messages of protest (especially from Australian metalworkers) should be sent to:

Minister of Justice, Socratous and Zinonos 2, Athens 101, Greece.

DESPERATE RACISTS TRY BLACKMAIL

THE racist South African government is trying to use blackmail to avoid the threat of economic sanctions.

The Economic Affairs Minister, speaking in London, stated that South Africa would undercut raw materials prices from the Third World – thus pushing the underdeveloped countries to the edge of bankruptcy – if sanctions were imposed.

The renewed threat of sanctions comes about because of South Africa's refusal to give up its 'colony' of Namibia – South West Africa.

Five western powers – the US, Britain, Canada, France and West Germany – had agreed to a plan for Namibian independence with South Africa on April 25.

But when John Vorster resigned as South African PM on September 20, he announced that South Africa was opting out of the plan. The government decided to conduct its own 'elections' in Namibia towards the of November – which presumably would be about as democratic as the rest of the regime's behaviour.

Not surprisingly, the freedom fighters' organisation SWAPO refused to have anything to do with them – and called for economic sanctions against South Africa.

Now the five western powers and South Africa have come up with a new plan – to hold UN supervised elections after the South African poll. But once again, SWAPO has denounced the plan; and along with 49 African nations, has called for a meeting of the UN Security Council to consider economic action against the racists.

desperate

The west is desperate to avoid sanctions against South Africa. After all, countries like Britain and the US have enormous investments in the area, which would be threatened if economic sanctions were taken seriously.

But of course, they won't be.

The last time the UN tried to impose sanctions was against South Africa's chum, the regime in Rhodesia. And it's come to light recently that one of the main reasons that the Rhodesians were able to keep going was due to the supply of oil from the Shell and BP companies – with the full knowledge of the British government.

But South Africa is obviously worried about the threat. That's why their Minister warned the underdeveloped countries:

"If politically inspired actions against the South African economy should force this country to market its primary products in unorthodox ways and probably at discount prices that in itself could jeopardise the efforts of Third World countries in this field."

Anything that worries the South African regime can't be all bad. Although the western powers will try every trick in the book to get round sanctions if they're imposed, and although sanctions themselves are no substitute for the war of liberation going on in the area – they could be a great help to it.

SWAPO guerrillas prepare for battle

QANTAS ENFORCES PHANTOM BAN

WASN'T there a lot of fuss about QANTAS helping the Syrian government put a ban on Jews flying through Syria?

And quite rightly so. After all, bans against anyone just on the basis of race are reactionary.

On October 18, it was announced in the press that QANTAS had stopped Jews flying to London via Syria. This was apparently because the Syrian government had legislation against Israeli citizens and Jews of any nationality from entering the country.

Naturally, everyone was outraged. The president of the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies, Arnold Bloch, described the ban as appalling, and demanded (presumably of the Syrian government) that it be lifted.

Senator Carrick though it was 'abhorrent'. The Federal Labor Caucus condemned it. Don Chipp also though it was "appalling".

accuse

Senator Baume went so far as to accuse QANTAS of "commercial harlotry".

Meanwhile, poor old QANTAS didn't seem to know if the story was true or not. The day before the story broke, they agreed there was a ban, and said that their Melbourne reservation staff was not allowed to book Jews on the flights via Syria.

Early on October 18, they stuck to their story. But later on the same day, they denied banning Jews, and said that they had never agreed to enforce Syrian regulations.

In a report to the Government the next day, QANTAS apparently denied ever banning Jews – they had just 'discouraged' them.

For the newspapers, everything seemed to be going well; a juicy story, QANTAS in a mess, the government embarrassed, and the prospect of future flights via Syria in doubt.

Such a pity that the whole thing turned out to be bullshit from beginning to end.

The Syrian government informed Australia that the ban no longer existed – whether QANTAS thought so or not. The restrictions had been lifted progressively between 1968 and 1970, soon after the present president, Assad, came to power.

Which raises the interesting question – why did QANTAS ban (or 'discourage') Jews, when it was no longer 'necessary' to do so?

There the matter ended. But one small point was almost overlooked by the press in the whole affair.

And that is Israel itself has a ban on residents of Arab League nations – that is all Arab countries – from travelling on aircraft that re-fuel in its capital, Tel Aviv.

Of course, there were no headlines about that, no shouts of "appalling", no calls to ban flights through Israel. And if there had been, no doubt the pro-Zionist slant of the media would have managed to bury them all in an outcry about a ban that didn't exist.

When challenged on this question, Bloch of the Jewish Board of Deputies, said that no comparison between the Syrian 'ban' and the Israeli ban could be made. The ban against citizens of the Arab League was a ban on a national group; while the ban on Jews was against a racial group.

Naive people like myself had always thought that the idea of Jews as a national group was one of the fundamental beliefs of Zionist ideology.

That's why for instance, any Jew can go and live in Israel no matter where they're from, while the original Palestinian inhabitants cannot.

But I suppose that's one of those "fundamental beliefs" that can be conveniently forgotton when you're whipping up an anti-Arab campaign in the press.

by Nicola Catesby

Mr Nixon

President Assad

RELAX women win

SEVEN MIGRANT women – the entire workforce of Melbourne's 'Relax' mattress factory – struck and picketed their factory in October.

They were out for a $20 rise and improved conditions. The factory had no heating or insulation and bare concrete floors. Much of the women's time was spent on duties outside the award – like sweeping the Managing Director's office.

The women won all the major claims except the pay rise – they got $7.

Pictures show the Relax workers (top) and a barbeque on the picket line (bottom).

$20 down at GMF Motors

"TWENTY dollars less than other workers get around here".

That's the situation that has forced seventy tradesmen and process workers at the GMF electric motor factory in Arncliffe (NSW) out on strike.

The workers, members of the Electrical Trade Union, have been out for over two weeks. They are demanding $12.60. The company has refused to negotiate. GMF complains that they cannot afford it because of competition from imports.

A tradesman replied *"Thats the excuse they have been using for twenty years."*

Among the workers are many migrant women who say that they need the $12.50 to pay the high costs of getting established in a new land.

One woman said that on $124 dollars a week she had to do three jobs: working in the factory, looking after her children and looking after her husband.

The workers are meeting this week to decide whether to continue the dispute.

by Phil Lee

Queen Vic Hospital: Finger Lickin' Good?

THE relocation of the Queen Victoria Hospital from the centre of Melbourne to the outer suburb of Clayton continues to provide a headache for the Hamer government.

Recently they announced their latest plan – get an American company to build it.

This would relieve the government of construction costs. Presumably it would also relieve hospital patients of a dollar or two.

Private hospitals have not, up to now, been such big business as in the USA. What private hospitals American style might mean is suggested by the record of the biggest US company in the field, the Hospital Corporation of America (HCA).

HCA has more than a hundred hospitals in five countries. For example it owns the highly profitable King Faisal Specialist Hospital in Saudi Arabia.

Between 1971 and 1976 HCA's profit grew 26 percent, and their annual revenue is more than $600 million. The firm is now moving into the Australian market.

Much of the profit comes from a practice known as "skimming the cream". Short-term cases are the most profitable, so HCA concentrates on them and leaves long term cases, such as cancer and old age patients, to government hospitals.

HCA also keeps its profit up by keeping its workforce down. Take the case in California where 70 hospital workers have been on strike for over six months.

defence

The strikers, mostly women, are out in defense of their union. The management successfully smashed the nurses' union 1976.

Jack Massey, chairman of HCA, thinks prospects are good: *"The growth potential in hospitals is unlimited. It's even better than Kentucky Fried Chicken."*

He ought to know. He used to run Kentucky Fried Chicken.

by Janey Stone

Wanted - workplace uranium groups

BUILD workplace branches of the anti-uranium movement.

That was the central message of a talk given by John Phillips of the Islington Railway workshops C.A.N.E. group in Adelaide last week.

The talk was preceded by a film, "Sentence to Success", about the struggle of French workers in a nuclear power plant in le Hague.

Because of the high radiation levels inside the plant, some workers could only spend about three minutes actually at work.

This contrasts with the time spent putting on the protective clothing: twenty to thirty minutes in some cases, and almost the same time to take the suits off again.

Because of the contamination, the clothes all had to be thrown away after each working spell.

The health hazard of course is immense. One worker died from leukemia which was traced directly to the radiation from the plant.

A number of cases of cancer have occurred but the authorities are quick to disclaim any responsibility.

They refuse to carry out any inquiries into the deteriorating health of many workers there.

On finding himself continually coming up against the brick wall of the authorities, one worker decided to join the union.

He found a sense of solidarity with the workers in the union at the plant, whereas before he was just an isolated individual.

The union has started a campaign for better safety conditions in the plant, and along with the local townspeople, a struggle to stop a larger nuclear plant from being built on an adjoining site.

discussion

The discussion that followed the film encouraged many union members present to attempt to set up an anti-uranium group in their workplace.

The sponsor of the film night, the trade union action group of CANE, is willing to help any trade unionist set up a workplace branch and can be contacted at 74 1368. Meetings are held every first and third Wednesday in the Trades Hall bar at 8 o'clock.

by Ross McKenzie

ACT TEACHERS FIGHT CARRICK

IN October ACT teachers embarked on a campaign of rolling strikes.

They voted for the campaign at a mass meeting held at the National Sports stadium here in Canberra.

Over 2,500 teachers attended, the meeting – that's about four fifths of the teachers employed in state schools. As reported in the Battler, the Fraser government has frozen staff ceiling levels in the ACT school system.

This move meant that there would be no jobs for new teachers in the ACT in 1979.

The ACT Schools Authority has cut eight jobs, which has resulted in a new high school at Wanniassa standing empty, because there are no teachers to staff it.

Ian MacDougall, a teacher from Kambah High, told the Battler.

"A 4½ million dollar building left empty because the government refused to provide the teachers – it's ridiculous. Even if they opened the high school at Wanniassa as an annex to Kambah High, they would take a great deal of pressure off us at Kambah.

"A well-attended strike meeting of teachers from the area passed a very strong resolution calling for the opening of Wanniassa High".

The teachers delivered an ultimatum to Carrick, the minister for education, demanding that the recommendations of the ACT Schools Authority on staff levels be implemented.

But Carrick refused to negotiate.

Senator Carrick

met

The strikes met with a good – if mixed – response from teachers. On average, 50-60% of teachers have struck for the morning that their area is involved. But this is nowhere near the 80% turn out the Teachers Federation has got to its mass meeting, when the whole of the ACT government schools closed for the morning.

Community support for the strike was also high.

Several P & Cs have supported the campaign.

High school students supported the strikes by holding a rally for the teachers' demands.

At the end of October ACT teachers held another stop work meeting to consider a motion put forward by the Teachers Federation executive.

Over one thousand teachers attended the meeting in spite of the pouring rain. The executive motion, which passed, called for a pause in the rolling strikes until November 13 to give Carrick a chance to negotiate.

If Carrick doesn't come across by then, the rolling strikes will recommence.

The teachers' move to negotiate with Carrick is doomed to fail because Carrick has said he'll only negotiate if the teachers completely abandon their strike.

And when teachers recommence their rolling strikes the school year will only have another three weeks to run. Carrick may win by just sitting it out til then.

As one primary school teacher said:

"If we want to achieve anything we've got to continue striking and not back down at this point."

by Virginia Murray

A REPORT TO THE SHAREHOLDERS

by Alec Kahn

Whet[illegible] you like it or not, if you're a unionist then you're a share*holder*[illegible] ACTU Enterprises. So it's about time you got a decent repor[illegible] what's going on in the ACTU's little business empire.

The messy saga of ACTU Enterprises

THE ACTU's foray into the world of big business was born in a blaze of publicity.

Bob Hawke's sensational announcement in November 1970 that the ACTU had acquired a 50% share in Bourke's discount store im Melbourne created an instant furore.

Bosses everywhere were ropeable. The executive director of the NSW Retail Traders Association was typical: *"The decision was amazing and completely outside the proper function of the ACTU."*

Amongst many unionists, there was excited optimism. The idea seemed a winner.

Bourke's promise to maintain "controlled, fair prices" would force prices down everywhere.

Where might it end?

Maybe the ACTU would eventually control a major section of the economy, just like the unions in Israel and West Germany.

encouraged

Bob Hawke certainly encouraged these hopes. The ACTU Executive proposed to branch out into consumer credit, insurance, housing . . . and that was just for starters.

The deal looked like a beauty, too.

Without putting a cent down, they were guaranteed 50 per cent of Bourke's profits for the first five years.

After the first five years, they could decide whether to buy the store or pull out. If they pulled out, there was no liability attached.

Meanwhile, they had 50 per cent of the directorships as well!

Bob Hawke reassured everyone that there was no financial outlay.

"All the ACTU is putting in is its good name."

Within a few weeks, ACTU-Bourke's had won its first victory.

Eric Dunshea, boss of Dunlop, decided to enforce retail price mainte-nance against Bourkes to stop their price-cutting on textiles.

The ACTU threatened Dunshea with a nationwide blackban on Dunlop goods.

Dunshea was forced into a humiliating backdown and retail price maintenance was as good as dead.

The ACTU released a survey at its 1973 Congress showing that Bourke's prices were lower than its competitors on 47 out of 60 items (and under the recommended retail price on 37 of these items).

This supported an earlier survey, which according to Victorian THC Secretary Ken Stone showed that, *"Over a range of about 170 articles, ninety were cheaper at Bourke's, nine cheaper at other stores, and the rest about equal in price."*

But, as the months went by, doubts and questions started to grow.

The ACTU Executive maintained a shroud of secrecy over the profits at Bourkes and the directors' fees.

Most of the early questions came from union officials themselves. They were best placed to hear the rumours going around that the Bourke's store was not doing well.

When Bob Hawke and Sir Peter Abeles announce in late 1972 that the ACTU was going into partnership with Thomas Nationwide Transport to form ACTU-New World Travel, the questions turned to outright criticism.

The 1973 Commonwealth Conference of the AMWU called for:

" . . . The ACTU to take no further steps for joint business enterprises . . . The extent to which these ventures can assist workers is minimal . . . Even complete ownership of business enterprises does not provide any form of solution on a permanent basis to the problems of Australian workers."

Jack Egerton argued, *"If we become involved in economic enter-prises, profit becomes the motive and the traditional trade union work becomes secondary."*

And the right wing Federated Clerks Union moved at the 1973 ACTU Congress that

" . . . Any enterprise under-taken or sponsored by the ACTU should be based on a co-operate principle and not on a capitalist style structure."

Despite the criticism, the 1973 ACTU Congress supported the travel venture.

Bob Hawke also announced to the 1973 Congress that the Labor Government would make cheap land available for an ACTU cheap housing scheme, to be run in conjunction with the Lend Lease Corporation.

Hawke also had a partnership line up with General Mutual Insurance to set up a cheap insurance scheme.

Eventually both the housing and insurance schemes fell through.

The ACTU New World Travel scheme was quickly in trouble, too.

Response from unionists was poor. Six months after it started, John Halfpenny of the Victorian AMWU said *"We've had practically no response — maybe two inquiries among the 56,000 members in this State."*

In the first two years, the scheme lost $200,000. TNT paid for it.

The ACTU established a Leisure Club in conjunction with New World Travel. They claimed it had potential membership of two million.

Two years after it was established, its membership stood at 4893.

An independent publishing company run by a Mr Ron Stephens printed 350,000 copies of a Leisure Club magazine in colour.

Stephens told the Bulletin in 1975 that most of these were still lying around union offices, undistributed.

Undeterred by the ACTU Travel setbacks, Bob Hawke next turned to petrol retailing.

In league with four independent service station operaton [illegible] ACTU launched Solo p[illegible] Melbourne in 1975.

In its [illegible]ys, Solo had a contract [illegible]il to supply one service [illegible]n Brighton, a Melbourne [illegible]e-class suburb.

Reput[illegible]lo used a petrol tanker und[illegible]r of night to get the petro[illegible] to its other outlets, w[illegible]il tried to stop the deliv[illegible]ailing the tanker with a sec[illegible].

Unlike other ACTU operations, [illegible] has had some impact in [illegible] down prices. Petrol pricing wars were a regular fe[illegible] Melbourne even before Solo [illegible] along.

But [illegible]elped to keep Melbourn[illegible]ol prices substantially l[illegible] Sydney's for a year, b[illegible]o expanded to Sydney [illegible]as ninety outlets

Solo [illegible] across [illegible] ACTU has been [illegible]

Even the Government thwarted [illegible] prices. putting [illegible]

There [illegible]ral factors that determine [illegible] of petrol, and Solo has [illegible]ckled the very tail-end [illegible] petrol-pricing structure.

The [illegible] the move to Sydney [illegible]ed by a ban on cut-price [illegible] placed by the NSW T.W.U.

Dark [illegible] abounded that the oil [illegible]s were handing out bribes to keep cut-price petrol out.

But the drivers had a legitimate objection — cut-price petrol would probably result in speed-up and layoffs for them.

Bob Hawke's latest move has been to link up with Jetset Tours last July, taking over from the ACTU-New World operation which closed down.

Hawke finally admitted that New World was running at a loss.

Jetset's boss is Hawke's friend Isi Leibler, a rightwinger and leading Zionist spokesman.

hypocrisy

Leibler has come under fire in the Jewish community recently for a choice piece of hypocrisy.

He has done a deal with the Russians to get the contract for tours to the Moscow Olympics — at the same time denouncing the USSR for the plight of Russian Jews.

In February this year, the ACTU was forced to disclose the profit figures for Bourke's under amendments to the Companies Act.

The profits were:

1972-73	$146,920
1973-74	$331,228
1974-75	$247,000
1975-76	$152,800
1976-77	$202,000

Right-winger Jack Egerton — even he opposed ACTU Enterprises.

Bob Hawke with Bourke's chief Lionel Revelman (centre) when ACTU-Bourke's opened in January 1971.

"The extent to which these ventures can assist workers is minimal..."

Here's what's wrong with union businesses

WAS the original idea behind Bourke's and ACTU Enterprises a good one?

What about the workers at Bourke's? What did they gain out of the ACTU deal?

The Federal Secretary of the Shop Assistants Union, expected Bourke's to immediately institute equal pay for women, a five-day week, and conditions in advance of those in industry generally.

Naturally, it didn't happen.

Conditions for the workers at Bourke's are still no advance despite the store making a solid profit each year.

Bob Doyle, shop steward at Bourke's, told the Battler, *"It's just like working for a normal store with normal conditions."*

Bob told us that workers at Bourke's are still on a forty hour week. Apparently the ACTU doesn't even take its 35-hour week policy seriously for its won employees.

In 1976, ACTU-Bourke's got their staff to work through the Medibank strike. Hardly an inspiring example to the rest of the union movement.

One of the worst things about Bourke's and Solo is that they offer no discounts for union members.

Any non-unionist can come in off the street and get low-priced goods there, subsidized by the AGTU.

This is no accidental oversight. It is deliberate policy, as ACTU-Bourke's explained in a brochure in 1972:

"The concept that, in making retail purchases, only trade unionists, whether holding official position or merely membership should benefit by specially lowered prices is absolutely and irreconcilably in conflict with the general and fundamental philosophy underlying the whole concept of trade union participation in commerce."

When ACTU-Bourke's started in 1971, one of its stated aims was prevent the exploitation of consumers by forcing prices down.

But with less than 0.1% of Australian retail sales, there is no way that Bourke's can force prices down generally.

The idea that workers, by pooling their money into a venture like Bourke's or Solo, can mount a challenge to the bosses — or even "buy out capitalism" — has been around for a long time.

Its most common occurence is in the setting up of worker's co-operatives.

A tragic illustration of the shortcomings of these took place a few years ago at the Nymbodia mine in NSW.

Run as a co-operative by the Combined Mining Unions, the mine lacked the capital even for proper safety equipment. Checking for gas was done by the antiquated canary method.

The result was an explosion and cave-in, in which several miners died.

This lack of capital is hardly surprising. After all, most workers get little mor than enough to keep their families alive.

Without capital, there is no way that a co-operative — or a union enterprise — can beat a giant corporation in the marketplace.

And in England, where a Co-operative movement did get off the ground, little was gained.

The Co-ops are now just like other employers, and "strikes at the Co-op" are a common feature.

ACTU Enterprises haven't reached that stage yet. But they've had eight years to prove themselves.

And we'd all be ten times better off, if the ACTU had spent the same amount of energy on one decent wage campaign.

Yeroham Meshel, Histadrut president and head of its business empire, with Israeli PM Begin.

Hawke's ideal - the Histadrut

BOB Hawke's ideas about ACTU Enterprises are largely inspired by the Israeli trade union movement, the Histadrut.

The histadrut owns industries generating 23% of Israels gross national product and employing 24% of the workforce.

Hospitals, newspapers, medical clinics, banks — the Histadrut has them all.

It owns Solel Boneh, Israel's largest building contractor, and has major interests in electronics, cement and tyres.

Not surprisingly, the Histadrut is also one of the most bureaucratic union movements in the world.

In fact, it operates more as an arm of the State than as a trade union movement.

In 1975, 60% of Israeli strikes were wild-cat strikes, taking place against Histadrut rules.

One author describes what happened when the Histadrut leaders tried to introduce worker participation into the Histadrut's own businesses.

"The Histadrut leadership proved incapable of imposing its formal policy regarding participation on its own growing managerial group.

"The latter was powerful enough to interpret the policy and put it into practice — if at all, in such a way that it suited their needs.

"In a sense, the leadership has gradually become a captive of its own hired administrators!"

travesty

Presumably, this is the sort of bureaucratic travesty that Bob Hawke wants to create for Australia as well.

Fortunately, he won't succeed. The Histadrut only built its empire because it got in on the ground floor, when Israeli capitalism started in 1948.

The ACTU, by contrast, has given a hundred years start to Australian capital.

Sold out by the Histadrut — bedraggled Israeli pipeline workers come ashore after commandeering four tugboats for three weeks during a wild-cat strike in 1975.

Price Check

How do prices at Bourke's compare?

The Battler did a random spot check of a few articles against prices at Myer's, Melbourne's biggest department store. Here's what we found:

	Bourke's	Myer's
Vulcan Tangi 3 heater	44.00	52.50
Sunbeam whistling electric kettle	30.14	29.95
Metamec clock	30.10	34.95
Wiltshire cook's knife	10.85	14.95
Jason rocker armchair	199.00	205.00
Stanley chisel (32mm)	5.75	7.65
Kodak instamatic 76x camera	15.30	16.00
Brut deodorant	2.47	4.95
Betty Crocker angel food cake mix	1.99	2.70
Esky cooler (small)	20.60	17.95
Sunbeam 2-speed blender	53.90	52.00
Ronson cigarette lighter (varaflame comet)	9.86	9.95
Knirps automatic folding umbrella	19.60	25.50

These results confirm the surveys done several years ago, which showed that Bourke's was usually cheaper than its competitors.

On the other hand, they also suggest that Bourke's has not achieved one of its major aims — forcing other stores' prices down through competition.

So if you live in Melbourne and you can be bothered walking the three extra blocks to shop at Bourke's, you'll probably make a few savings.

On the other hand, if you work there, or if you live outside Melbourne, then Bourke's is no value to you at all.

THE FALL OF GOUGH WHITLAM

ABOVE: Whitlam listens as his Government is dissolved. BELOW: Riot at Melbourne Liberal HQ

By Rob Albert

HERE we are again "maintaining our rage" as another November 11 passes.

With Kerr now boozing it up in Paris, and Zelman Cowen playing it very cool, a lot of the heat and anger of that day three years ago has disappeared.

Last year, November 11 passed almost without incident. The only real excitement occurred a week earlier, when Kerr was jeered at the Melbourne Cup.

Strangely, even though it's now three years ago and the anger has died down, a lot of Labor politicians still haven't learned the lessons of that fateful day in November.

Many of the reasons Labor commonly puts forward for its downfall are correct. The problem is that, by working within the system, Labor just doesn't have any answers.

Some steps – like removing power to block Supply from the Senate, and abolishing the Senate altogether – can be taken even by a reformist government to make a "Kerr Coup" more difficult in future.

...three years later Labor still hasn't learned the lessons

unlikely

But the role of Lionel Murphy and others in increasing the committee powers of the Senate in the late sixties makes it unlikely that Labor will even face up to this task.

Obviously Labor should also abolish the position of Governor-General.

A common suggestion floating around the Labor Party, however, has been to replace the post with a "neutral" elected or appointed President.

This shows a touching naivety about the role of the State in enforcing the rule of the bosses – a role that Kerr made clear in 1975.

Obviously, there is no guarantee that such a President would be any less willing than Kerr to do the dirty work of the ruling class when they apply the heat again.

Kerr, after all, was appointed by his then good friend Gough Whitlam in 1974.

Labor is also right when it points to the power of the capitalist press in Australia.

There can be no doubt that the "small-l liberal" papers like the Age and the Australian helped Whitlam into office by laughing Gorton and McMahon out.

And when Australian and world capitalism went into recession in 1974-75, they turned right around and became viciously anti-Labor.

As Gough Whitlam so eloquently put it when speaking of the flimsy allegations made by Lynch and Khemlani during the Loans Affair, "The Age shall not query them, nor shall it condemn."

But what is Labor proposing to do?

A Press Council to "ensure fairness". This is just as toothless as the Prices Justification Tribunal's attempts to control company profits.

responsible

And the dry-as-dust idea of a "responsible" national newspaper similar to the ABC, shows that the ALP either doesn't know or doesn't care about really confronting the power of the capitalist press.

The Labor-owned or part-owned radio stations have certainly given no cause for optimism.

3KZ in Melbourne even refused to carry advertisements for the Vietnam Moratorium in 1970!

And in 1969, they were the only radio station in Melbourne to charge the ALP for broadcasting the election policy speech!!

Labor certainly could do with a bright, entertaining newspaper of its own (something, may we modestly suggest, akin to the Battler?).

massive

But to set up a mass newspaper without being at the mercy of capitalist advertisers, requires a massive involvement of rank-and-file Labor supporters in writing, financing and distributing it.

And plainly the Labor Party, with its top-heavy parliamentary structure and its bored, alienated membership, is incapable of organizing such a paper.

There's little point trying to put clamps on the rest of the Press either, if Labor is going to leave the social and economic power of the capitalist class untouched.

Many ALP members also believe that Whitlam lost because he "tried to do too much too quickly".

People weren't ready to understand the concept of Medibank; wages really did rise too fast; and too much money was wasted on education and social welfare schemes.

Medibank was costly alright. But it was costly precisely because it was not the "socialised medicine" which the Liberals branded it.

Socialised medicine means treating doctors as skilled salary workers, not as god-like businessmen free to set skyhigh fees and rip off Medibank.

As for wages rising "too fast" under Labor – yes, wages did rise quickly in 1974. But in the middle of all the wage rises, Labor managed to win the May 1974 election.

What really set Labor back was when they started agreeing with the Liberals that wages were getting out of hand.

Because that fed right into the Liberal propaganda offensive.

When the middle class saw Labor backing up the Liberals about wages being too high – instead of arguing against them – they drew the obvious conclusion: Restore the Liberals, the party of wage-cutting.

As for Labor going too fast they went their fastest immediately after taking office, with a flurry of changes in the first fortnight. Nobody complained then.

And by late 1974 and early 1975, Labor certainly wasn't going too fast – in fact, they were going backwards.

Jim Cairns, the hero of the left, buckled under to demands from GMH, APPM and EZ for handouts to protect their profits.

Possibly the most spectacular example of Labor's impotence was the GMH case.

GMH threatened to sack 5000 workers unless it received increased tariff protection. The leader of the Moratoriums gave in within three days.

proof

What happened here in 1974-75, in Chile in 1972-73 and in Britain both in 1967-70 and after 1974, is living proof that trying to pay off the ruling class and the working class at once only produces inflation, capital strikes and an enraged, right-wing middle class caught in between.

Even after Kerr sacked Whitlam, the ALP could have fought back.

There was a massive upsurge for a General Strike. But Bob Hawke told everyone to "Cool it", hoping to impress the middle class with Labor's "restraint".

They were impressed all right . . . but not by Hawke. With Labor holding back the working class, they were impressed with all the bosses' arguments about the economy instead.

By doing too little too slowly, the ALP sealed its own fate.

One of the most pathetic sights of the whole 1975 election was Labor Ministers Lionel Bowen and Charlie Jones arguing at an intended Labor rally with striking aircraft maintenance workers at Sydney Airport.

The maintenance workers wanted a wage rise. But Charlie Jones – who had been Whitlam's transport Minister – stood there in his nice grey-serge suit and blue collar and tie, pointed his finger at a boiler-suited worker and admonished:

"And you call yourself a Labor man!?"

So much for our parliamentary heroes.

Dave Nadel's MY SHOUT

EVERY so often when right-wing politicians can't find anything better to say they go on a teacher bash.

You know the sort of line . . . literacy is dropping . . . it's all because of open classrooms . . . community schools . . . nasty trendy left-wing teachers . . . why aren't they teaching the three "R's" anymore?

The far right on social questions, such as the Festival of Light, also run a line on this sort of thing.

They go in for accusing teachers of corrupting the kids and usurping the parents' role of moral instruction.

By which they mean the right of parents to keep their kids in sexual ignorance.

As a matter of fact, I never met a teacher who wasn't in favour of kids learning reading, writing and simple arithmetic.

Most progressive educators regard them as survival skills, which is one of the main things that progressive education is all about.

Schools are far from perfect and with the government cut-backs they might well get worse.

While the rich (who send their own kids to private schools) run the system that runs the state schools, you could hardly expect otherwise.

All the same, education has improved over the last thirty years, thanks mostly to "the trendy left-wing teachers".

What brought this home to me was a small article I found reprinted in a book about teaching that I catalogued in the library where I work.

It was written by a teacher in America thirty-five years ago. In three paragraphs it demolishes traditional education. See what you think.

"I have taught in high school for ten years. During that time I have given assignments, among others, to a murderer, a pugilist, a thief and an imbecile.

"The murderer was a quiet little boy who sat on the front seat and regarded me with pale blue eyes; the pugilist lounged by the window and let loose at intervals in a raucous laugh that startled even the geraniums; the thief was a gay-hearted Lothario with a song on his lips; and the imbecile, a shifty-eyed little animal seeking the shadows.

"The murderer awaits death in the state penitentiary; the pugilist lost an eye in a brawl in Hong Kong; the thief, by standing on tip-toe, can see the window of my room from the county jail; and the once gentle-eyed little moron beats his head against a padded wall in the state asylum.

"All these pupils once sat in my room, sat and looked at me gravely across worn brown desks.

"I must have been a great help to those pupils . . . I taught them the rhyming scheme of the Elizabethan sonnet and how to diagram a complex sentence."

Madeleine Matarozzi looks at:

YOUNG, GAY AND PROUD

SOMETIMES the system persecutes homosexuals actively – as in the case of Dr Duncan or Greg Weir.

More often, repression is more subtle – through anti-homosexual stories and jokes, or simply through refusing to admit that homosexuals exist.

Despite the "permissive society", and the large number of sex education and human relationship courses now offered in secondary schools an aura of mystery still surrounds the subject.

What information that is available is usually a mixture of myths half-truths and absolute lies.

difficult

Anyone over the age of thirteen knows how difficult it is to cope with growing up and discovering feelings of sexuality, without being made to feel that you are a freak as well.

All young people are vulnerable at this time. But young gay people, under pressure from their family and their friends at school to conform, are even more vulnerable.

Now at last, there is a book for them. Its called "Young, Gay and Proud".

It is a comprehensive book which starts by pointing out that "you are not the only one".

It goes on to cover a whole range of topics: from why homosexuals are hassled, to hpw to go about telling your parents.

It also has very good sections on sexual health and the law.

"Young, Gay and Proud" has several very good points. In particular, it is written as though the reader was gay, which should give any person reading it a positive feeling about being gay.

It tells them that there are a lot of gay people around, and that being gay is not "abnormal", it is a valid alternative.

It is also written from a socialist perspective.

For many kids, the book will be the first time they have heard unions talked about in a positive way – or that can be wrong, and can be changed by ordinary people (such as themselves) talking direct action.

Altogether, "Young, Gay and Proud" is a very successful book, which kids will find interesting regardless of their sexual preferences.

It may eve prod the reader into thinking a little about his or her own sexuality.

and here's how kids react

ONE Melbourne high school teacher describes the response of her students to "Young Gay and Proud"

I took the book into class with several others, and introduced it to the kids as having been written by homosexual students and teachers.

Students came out to select books to read, and "Young, Gay and Proud" was the one they were most keen on.

In each class I took it into three kids sat down at a desk and read through it, together, from cover to cover. Surprisingly there was no sniggering about it.

relationships

In one class they got onto a part where homosexuals described their relationships., and then there was some reading out of the material. In this case one boy read it out in a sniggering fashion but the other kids didn't snigger.

They were just interested.

In the other class the kids called me over and read out bits and pieces for my comment. Particularly parts which said that there were so many kids in every class who were likely to be homosexual and so many teachers in every staffroom who were likely to be homosexual.

As far as I could see there was no embarrassment about the book just very intense interest. Such intense interest that one boy asked me if he could borrow the book and take it home over the weekend.

The book is very very easy to read. It is divided up into very digestible sections and you can turn to just about every page and find something of interest.

class

In one class a group of the poorest readers in the class were able to have a look at it. It's a book that's very easy to get into even if you are a not a very good reader.

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

BRITAIN'S LIES CAN'T HIDE THE FACTS

Dear Battlers,

The British propaganda machine is pouring out its lies about Northern Ireland again.

Once more we are being told that victory for the British is in sight. The IRA have been beaten yet again.

On the Australian media, we are assured that "better times are ahead for the pople of Ulster".

The truth is very different. Unemployment is put officially at 13% and most of this is borne by the Republican minority.

prisoners

There are over three thousand prisoners of war. Torture, brutality and faked confessions are daily occurrences.

British terror gangs operate in all the Catholic areas. Using the latest electronic devices, they lie in ambush and shoot suspects on sight.

But despite the depression, despite the vicious military oppression, the republicans of Ulster have rallied round the slogan "78 and still not beat".

Thousands have marched in the streets, even though this involves the very real danger of arrest without habeas corpus, and a brutal beating to extract a confession.

The spirit of resistance – a Belfast women clips away the cover of an enemy British soldier.

In H-Block inside the Long Kesh concentration camp, the protest for political status continues.

The warders have been beating up the protestors, tampering with their food, hosing them with disinfectant, and throwing them into baths.

But still the three hundred protestors refuse to wear prison clothes or accept prison discipline. Still they demand to be treated as prisoners of war.

conflict

Northern Ireland has been in conflict for ten years. Never has the oppression been greater.

But the British are nowhere near crushing the spirit of the people.

There is no imperialist solution in Ireland. The people have shown they are perpared to wage a protracted struggle.

The lies of the British propaganda machine cannot hide this fact.

Gary McLennan
Brisbane

Dear Battlers,

Workplace MAUM groups– too hard?

Dear Battlers,

Some time ago (23-24 Sept) at the "Energy and U" Conference in Melbourne, our State Public Service anti-uranium group ran a workshop on "The Formation and Importance of Workplace MAUM Groups".

On the day, we found that we had been scheduled to conduct our workshop in conjunction with a union official, Gail, an Organiser with the Food Preservers Union.

We had prepared a paper on "How to Start a Workplace Group". Gail, however, told us she had come along to speak on the "difficulties".

She complained about the apathy of her members; disputed that the majority of them opposed uranium mining (as in the "Age" poll; and said that while they may vote Labor, they are "pretty conservative".

She said it was hard to get anything going in her union; there were large numbers of migrants and multilingual leaflets would have to be simplistic.

Also, you could not interest her members in anything political: they were only interested in industrial issues.

Most of us from the State Public Servants Against Uranium Mining group were astounded by Gail's assumptions.

We felt that if you could "get an issue going" in the Victorian Public Service, you could do it almost anywhere.

Most left-wing union officials complain that while they are concerned about issues, their membership is apathetic.

What do other Battler readers think? Is this pessimism and cynicism towards union members justified?

And how does one explain the political actions that unionists have taken in the past — and the rank-and-file action that has taken place already over uranium... and even the huge number of workers who have anti-uranium stickers on their cars?

Public Servant
Melbourne

Good old Joh

Look at that smile
On his tired wrinkled face
He has just put more people
In their proper place

I'm doing my best
He thinks with a sigh
My police work is hard
and that's not a lie

My courts are always full
With marchers, students, abos and crims
I wish they would stay home
And quietly sing hymns

They say things so nasty
About me and my kind
But surely I'm the best
That they could ever find

I've given them the dole
What more do they need
We all can't be rich
They must suffer from greed

With jails and brutality
I'll clean up this state
And profit from confusion
I'm sure to create

Yes, this state is mine
Where the milk and honey flow
And I'll keep it that way
Or my name isn't Joh.

Roger Sencabaugh,
Brisbane.

ACOA's one day of the year

THE Annual General Meeting of ACOA got off to an auspicious start in Sydney last month.

Because it was so badly advertised, it took a long time for the quorum of 30 to be reached.

The formal, bureaucratic part of the meeting dragged on for almost an hour.

Then we got to general business and the motions passed by Section Committees were put up for discussion.

The first of these was an affirmation of a policy the union supposedly already holds, i.e. to defend members against discrimination on the basis of sex, race, etc.

motion

This motion deals with a group presumably included under 'etc.' – homosexuals.

The motion gave Wattie Peck, our supposedly 'radical' Federal Secretary, a chance to get into a hysterically anti-homosexual rave.

Despite this, the motion was passed overwhelmingly, as was the next one moved. This dealt with the pilot scheme of post-grant interviews for people on the dole.

This is the scheme where Social Security is introducing monthly interviews at Social Security offices to harrass people on the dole.

Some union members working at Bondi Social Security, where the pilot scheme is operating, have objected to the scheme. Their management attacked them for this.

The motion reaffirmed the rights of members to oppose such schemes and, if necessary, to refuse to implement them.

There was also a motion to call a one day stoppage over a series of attacks on public servants' conditions of employment, arising from the last Federal budget.

These included the destruction of Medibank and possible loss of Medibank workers' jobs.

The meeting was closed by our branch officials before this motion could be put.

The motions passed then went to the next meeting of Branch Council in late October.

The bureaucrats and their cronies on Branch Council managed to spin out the meeting so that the motions weren't put until a few minutes before the mandatory 9.30 closing time.

The homosexual rights motion was merely amended, so that the words 'sexual preference' are added – the ACOA will defend members against discrimination on the basis of sex, race, sexual preference, etc.

The motions on post grant interviews were split. So a motion calling for an investigation of situations where members' beliefs might clash with government policy was passed.

But the motion calling for ACOA members to be able to refuse to implement repressive government policies was not put because of time. All the officials had to rush off to drink at the Catholic Club at 9.30!

by Di Fieldes, ACOA

INTO MONTH THREE

Brisbane brewery workers vote at Lang Park to continue their strike.

THE Brewery strike in Brisbane involving 620 Castlemaine Perkins and Carlton workers is now in its third month.

The workers are solidly united around their demands for wage increases to make up the 12% lost through indexation.

by Carole Ferrier

Brewery strikers fight bosses' lies

In response to the original claim for $25 a week, the bosses offered less than $2.

They also inserted a large advertisement in the press claiming that the average wage was $200 a week.

In fact, the liquor trades employee with dependents receives around $161 a week and takes home around $130 after tax.

Morale among the striking workers is good, and the voting at the five strike meetings held so far has been almost unanimously in favour of continuing the strike.

relieved

Hardship for the striking workers has been partly relieved by support from many other sections of the workforce.

Many Brisbane workers, as well as miners at Ipswich, and Central Queensland, and workers at Gladstone, have voted levies of up to $5 a head per week to support their fellow workers.

Money has also been collected at Griffith and Queensland universities where workers addressed a meeting.

The TLC has given the strike committee a room in Trades Hall in return for a cut of 12½% of all contributions to the strike fund.

And about all anyone's seen them do in return so far is put a small ad in the press.

The workers have now decided to call on their fellow unionists to stop all southern beer coming in.

Empty kegs have been shipped to Melbourne and come back full. Also a big shipment of beer was sent to Darwin for transportation south. Workers there are now trying to black it.

The Brewery workers did not want to take action to stop the southern beer because it would deprive other workers of a drink after work.

It might also lead to sackings, especially of bar workers.

Most bar workers can be hired and fired at will and have little security of employment.

The bosses have encouraged media to divide the workers by cynically using the demands of some bar workers for their right to work against the strikers.

Press bias against the strikers has been so bad that the media are now excluded from strike meetings.

Meanwhile Castlemaine has just put up its managing directors' fees from $25,000 to $30,000 a year and announced a record profit of $11.6 million.

motion

As one worker said, *"Giving us the full $25 right away wouldn't even have trimmed the point off the eleven million."*

Ampol jobs fight

OVER four hundred workers at the Ampol Refinery at Lytton, Brisbane are on strike in support of a ratio of one tradesman to one assistant.

The strike began on October 24 because the company had not payed money due to men for working in alkaline areas.

The next day notices of dismissal were sent to ten tradesman's asistants.

A mass meeting of the strikers (members of the F.I.A., A.M.W.S.U. and E.T.U.) decided not to return to work until the sacked T.A.'s were reinstated.

The following Monday the management agreed to reemploy the T.A.'s, but they would give no guarantee that the tradesman/T.A. ratio would not be increased by further lay-offs.

The union officials, who finally put in an appearance at the mass meeting the same day were for accepting the company's offer.

But one striker put his finger on the cause of discontent when he asked the officials what the tradesman/T.A. ratio really was. According to the company's figures it was 1.22 to 1 but this figure included scaffolders and riggers as tradesmen. The real ratio is more like 2 to 1.

After two votes, the strikers narrowly decided to stay out for at least another week-until the company agreed to the one-to-one ratio.

As one worker said, *"In places there are five or six tradesmen with only one T.A. running to keep up with them. Under those conditions, we can't go back."*

Leighton site's long haul

WORKERS at the Leightons-Christiani site in Botany (NSW) have had to fight the boss for the last eighteen months.

AWU workers have recently been out for nine weeks in an attempt to get the wet weather conditions of BWIU members. Then the carpenters, members of the BWIU, went out for a week over a number of claims.

conditions

This includes special conditions for water work, as carpenters sometimes have to work up to their waist in water.

Because of the bosses' attitude, the four different sets of award conditions on the site have been a special problem.

The carpenters are now asking for 36 cents (instead of 9 cents) in lieu of special rates.

And the unions are going for an establishment award, with tradesmen and operators getting the highest rates, and an 8% increase for others.

demanding

They are also demanding that BWIU and AWU members get inclement weather at site rate.

With about fifteen claims in all, other issues include recognition of the Building Industry safety code regulations, paid stop-work meetings on site, and forty hours stand-down notice.

One good result of eighteen months of disputes is that the bosses' racist attitudes have back-fired on them.

Apparently they hired a large number of migrant workers, particularly Croatians, who are supposed to have an anti-union attitude. When the workers realised this, along with their other problems with the boss, it made certain that the whole site was firmly anti-boss.

Union candidate suspended

SACK THE OPPOSITION! That's the way Victorian Clothing Trades Union officials are defending themselves in the current union election.

They have suspended organizer Joe Capizzi who is heading a ticket of rank and filers calling itself the Democratic Team.

The Democratic Team is campaigning on a platform of measures to increase membership involvement in the Union.

The contest itself is the first in sixteen years.

Five years ago, Joe was hired as the Union's first multi-lingual organizer for a workforce that is almost entirely non-English speaking.

Now the people who employed him are outraged at the suggestion that the staff and union publications should reflect this fact.

They also attacked a recently well publicised workers committee at Cottweave as "not being in the Union's tradition". The workers from the committee are standing on the ticket.

by Tom Freeman

APM workers picket – but Bob Hawke avoided them.

APM workers battle on

WORKERS at Australian Paper Manufacturers (APM) in Botany (NSW) have been on strike since October 3rd, when the company tried to sack 403 workers.

At a meeting on October 31st they were still looking to a long strike with the next meeting fixed for ten days time.

The strike is being drawn out by the bosses' intransigence. So far, negotiations have made almost no change in the company position.

Over the same period, the unions have increasingly compromised their position.

Moving from a demand for the reinstatement of all 403, to a demand for the reinstatement of all wanting re-employment for a guaranteed three month minimum period.

Many workers are bitter about the role played by the ACTU. Although the ACTU formally support the strike they are doing nothing at all to give the strikers any real help.

By Janet Vaux

In fact, the ACTU could be described as sabotaging the dispute.

This is because, as Don McDonagh, the plumbers' delegate, pointed out to the last meeting: *"The role of the ACTU is to settle disputes, not to win them."*

On the 23rd October, the strikers organised a picket outside the Trades and Labour Council in Sydney, where Hawke was due to join in negotiations between the unions and bosses.

But he couldn't face the workers, and managed to get there so early that he didn't have to go through the picket.

However the strike committee is not waiting on the ACTU to organise support in the rest of the industry.

They have already had support from a number of mills.

Most notably Fairfield Mill, which had already had two 32 hour stoppages, went out again on October 31st for another 32 hours, and placed a levy on all unionists.

APPM at Nowra which was recently out for four days is striking a $4 a week levy till the dispute is over.

The APM workers are also getting a good response in job site meetings in the Sydney area.

Donations and messages of support can be sent to:

APM Combined Unions Committee, AMWSU, 136 Chalmers St., Surry Hills 2010, NSW

Scaffold chaos

The rigging and scaffolding industry in Sydney is in a mess. All-in payment is now the norm. That means no compo in one of the most dangerous jobs in construction.

Worse than that, the major scaffolding contractors are sacking all their workers and giving over work to sub-contractors gangs of three.

Everyone is being forced to become a subbie just to stay in the game.

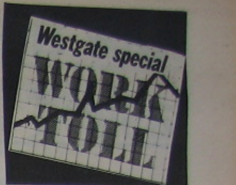
The contractors are playing these three man gangs off against each other. It'snow got to the stage where a gang has to quote so low that even if they work their guts out, they can't make the same as the award wage, let alone compo, wet time, etc.

One company S.G.B. is introducing 'target' work. Under this scheme you get paid a bonus if you get a scaffold finished within a certain time.

In the rush to get the scaffold erected, braces and ties get left off, planks go missing, and headrails are not put up.

Anyway Sydney's scaffolders are getting sick of it all. Flowing out of the BLF body hire stoppage, the scaffolders are holding their own stoppage this Monday 6th November.

THE BRIDGE OF DEATH



AT 11am on November 15, Victoria's Premier Rupert (Dick) Hamer will open Melbourne's Westgate bridge.

Three years ago, the bridge – billed as Melbourne's "gateway to the West" – buckled and collapsed, killing thirty-five workers.

The opening will be a media extravaganza. Full of back-slapping speeches about the marvels of technology, and crocodile tears for the relatives of the workers murdered, who have been invited to the opening.

The morning of October 15, 1970, was just like any other Melbourne mid-spring morning: a blue sky marred only by the smog cloud of Melbourne's industrial west.

At 11.50 am the men positioning the span between piers 10 and 11 were thinking about lunch. One gang had just entered the left descending to the ground.

Then there was a murmur, a gentle creaking as the bridge's metal plates began to move.

Rivets popped; plates buckled; and the 284 feet, eight-lane wide span weighing 2000 tons plummeted to the ground: scores of workers were injured – thirty-five were dead.

reassured

Only two months earlier, after the collapse of a similar box girder bridge at Milford Haven in Wales, which killed four workers, the unions had been reassured that there was no danger.

The unions immediately banned any further work. The Premier, Henry Bolte, ordered a Royal Commission into the accident.

The Commission was a thorough indictment of the incompetence and criminal negligence of the companies building the bridge.

by Steve Morgan

But it skilfully avoided blaming anyone for the death of the thirty-five men: for all its damning evidence, it was nothing more than a brilliant cover-up.

The Westgate bridge was of a new "box girder" design – the greatest innovation in design since the suspension bridge – pushing materials and techniques to the limits of present knowledge.

The design relies on fabricating high-tensile steel into units (boxes) far stronger than the individual components. However, if any weakening of the boxes occur or a part fails, the whole assembly rapidly collapses.

Blame for Westgate was sheeted home to the consulting engineers, Freeman Fox and Partners (FF&P).

They failed to give attention to construction details and to supervise two inexperienced contractors who had won the job: the John Holland group and World Services and Construction Pty Ltd.

When the two box half spans didn't meet, weights (kentledge) were put on the spans to close the gap.

No calculations were made of the stress likely to be caused.

The weights buckled the plates, so the bolts holding a splice were removed to get rid of the buckle. This triggered the collapse.

Behind this decision was growing concern at the mounting cost, which by 1970 had reached $40 million (final cost in 1978 will be nearly $200 million).

This caused a rush which led to the hasty decisions to unbolt the splice.

Although overall responsibility for the disaster was placed on FF & P, no single company or person had the responsibility for pulling the bolt on those thirty-five men.

Instead, by distributing blame, responsibility was diffused and as a result compensation claims from dependants are still being heard.

The tragedy of Westgate which snuffed out the lives of thirty-five workers, is only the tip of a very ugly iceberg.

What happened in October 1970 was spectacular, horrible, and many people were shocked.

But it was only an extreme example of something that happens all the time.

Last year about 400 workers were killed by their jobs in Australia.

Many died from diseases that bosses will never admit were caused by what they worked with and how they worked.

In the name of "efficiency", "cost-cutting" and "meeting deadlines", men and women around Australia are being killed every day by the same system that murdered the Westgate workers.

Ambulance staff rush away one of the injured after the Westgate collapse.

International Socialists

Fighting Fund

THE Fighting Fund last issue raised $235.55. Our thanks to:

Melb SE Menzies posters	50.00
Melb SE Wine Sales	52.40
Melb SE Raffle	30.80
Anon	0.60
Canberra Branch	4.40
Melbourne Car Rally	11.10
Melb NW Grand Final Party	29.15
J.W.	12.00
Weed	2.60
Sydney Posters & Badges	30.00
Sydney Play	10.50
Brisbane Branch	2.00
TOTAL	235.55

CAMP DAVID – What next?

Public meeting organised by the Palestine Solidarity Committee

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 12 3pm

Hungarian Hall 711 Punchbowl Road Punchbowl

Womens Abortion Action Committee

DANCE

November 10 Games room Adelaide Uni

$5 employed $3 others

Bands: Young Modern and U Bombs

Look out for this Bulletin

WHATS the point of working out how to fight Fraser if you don't let others know about it?

What's the point of producing a good workers' paper if enough workers aren't reading it?

These problems have faced Adelaide IS branch in the past weeks, as some regular Battler sales have fallen off. We sold a lot of papers at the anti-Budget rallies, but ordinary factory-gate sales have been declining.

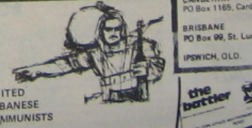
This reflects the decline in militant industrial activity here.

So what do we do to get our politics across to workers who still want to fight Fraser but don't want to fork out for a left wing newspaper?

We're going to use our Battler bulletins. We have produced these occasionally in the past, when major disputes were on: Latrobe Valley, Sanyo, Queensland civil rights. But now we will make it more regular.

It will have local inside stories plus brief national notes, and generally advertise the Battler. We shall hand this out while selling the Battler at selected industrial sites.

After all, what's the point of having the best politics in the world if people aren't finding out about them?



UNITED LEBANESE COMMUNISTS

Cabaret Night

Saturday 9th December at 7.30 pm

Newtown Police Citizens Boys Club
15 Erskineville Rd
Tickets $8 – Dinner included

phone 51 3665 for bookings and information

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 24 hour answering and message machine	376-9142 376 2783
I.S. NATIONAL OFFICE PO Box 46, Flemington, 3031	376-2783
MELBOURNE GPO Box 1473N, Melbourne, 3001	387 6351
SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown 2042	51-3665
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49-7939
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT, 2601	49 6406
BRISBANE PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067	368 3978
IPSWICH, QLD.	281 6113

Brisbane IS distributed these leaflets to workplaces when the meatworkers' picket was attacked by police.

Copies can be obtained by writing to the I.S. branch in Brisbane.

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If that's the sort of work you want to do– JOIN US!

How the cops lashed into our picket

Brisbane cops drag off one of the 45 arrested.

IT was only about a week or so before the picket that I heard about the export of live cattle to Japan.

Alice Hughes, our Union rep., told us a picket was going to take place at the wharves where the cattle were to be loaded.

So, feeling totally disgusted and annoyed by the fact that my job and fellow workers' jobs were to be shipped overseas, I offered my services.

It wasn't until Monday night that I got a call from a woman telling me to be on the wharf by 5 a.m. the next morning.

The response to the issue was good and a lot of the workers from Borthwicks were there to protest against the shipment.

We all knew the Waterside Workers and Transport Unions were not out with us at the time, but this did not stop the action we decided to take . . . nor did the suggestion of a peaceful, non-active picket.

We were angry and we

By Margaret Brednall, AMIEU Borthwicks

had a good right to be!

The first truck came through about 8.45. We took to the road to try to stop the truck from getting to the wharf.

There was a good crowd of people trying to push the truck back. Others were jumping on the sides of the truck.

thrown

I was grabbed and thrown up against a car along with a few other women by policy, so some of us ran alongside the truck and jumped on the side, only to be thrown off again.

The truck of course got through and at this point

the battler

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Cops rush in to prevent picketers getting at a scab truck.

one guy was arrested.

The police, as usual, went crazy.

Men from the sheds were utterly shocked by women who proved themselves to be as militant and prepared to get arrested as they were.

The next truck came about one and a half hours after the first. People ran across the road again only to be bashed by police as before.

A policeman grabbed me and arrested me for something I had said.

Later on at the watch-house I was joined by two other women, one of whom I knew was pretty angry, because a suggestion was thrown at the women by a few of the men to go home because they wanted to fight the police.

She assured the men that the battle they were fighting concerned everyone and that women's jobs were on the line also.

After all, the other woman that was arrested was two months pregnant and she had no fears even though it was her first demonstration.

I got out of the watch-house eight hours later . . . tired, hungry and angry . . . but never defeated!

picket

I hope to see many Unionists at the next picket, with my other comrades, fighting this profit making crime; and for our right to demonstrate in peace.

At a Mass Meeting at Borthwicks after the picket some men suggested the women should stay at home, but there was an uproar from the women.

We must all fight together to keep our jobs and defeat Bjelke-Petersen's attempts to break our picket lines.

Vic teachers tackle the tribunal

HIGH school teachers in Victoria are fed up with their Teachers' Tribunal.

And they have called a one-day statewide strike to do *something* about it.

The Tribunal has three members. One is elected by teachers.

The "independent" chairman is appointed by the State government, and the third member is a representative of the Education Department.

So in practice the employer has a two-thirds majority.

At the union's annual meeting last August, militants called on the VSTA to boycott the Tribunal, and to insist that salary claims be dealt with by direct negotiation.

flexible

Union leaders like Peter Vaughan opposed the motion, saying it was better "flexible" tactics to keep working through the Tribunal.

But now Vaughan & Co. have egg on their face.

For in the months since, Tribunal deliberations have become a farce.

Jack Baker, the Department's representative, has begun referring to the VSTA's well-researched case as "drivel" and he's refused to attend several meetings.

What's more, he claims the Education Department approves of his behaviour.

He says he will still turn up – quite uninformed – to participate in the final decision.

These insults have prodded the VSTA executive into activity.

The one day strike is a good start. But it will achieve little if it doesn't lay the basis for an action campaign over salaries and the right to direct negotiation next year.

I.S. teachers are calling for further action. We've also produced a special leaflet for the public, explaining why teachers are striking and asking for support.

by Tom O'Lincoln, VSTA

Nurses organize

Over one thousand nurses recently attended a national student nurse conference in Adelaide.

The theme of the conference was the transfer of nursing from the hospital-based apprentice system to Colleges of advanced education.

subsidised

Australian health care has traditionally been subsidised by nurses through low wages and poor conditions.

Even now it is not uncommon for a student nurse with twelve months experience to be running a busy ward at night.

Changing the orientation to learning rather than doing the work, was generally seen as a progressive step.

Whether the changeover is possible in the present health cutback climate was not really discussed.

Nurses in Queensland were stunned when the government proposed trebling our accomodation and meal charges.

Many nurses living in nursing homes faced an effective 20% wage reduction.

Several meetings, a picket, and a march to the first industrial court hearing were organised to oppose the rises. The commissioners there decided to embark on a tour of inspection of conditions and meals provided throughout the state.

At several hospitals, small groups met and complained to the commissioners about our poor conditions.

The next court hearing will be on November 20 in Brisbane. Many nurses will be there again to show that opposition to the increases has not died.

If the decision is against us, the government will be facing hundreds of angry and determined nurses throughout the state.

by a Brisbane Nurse

Traditionally nurses have shyed away from the politics of health care.

This attitude is changing, especially with the growing levels of unemployment.

Much of the conference discussion centred around this problem. From now on we won't be shying away from the government created problems that end up causing suffering to public patients.

J&W WORKERS JEER OFFICIAL

THE Johns & Waygood dispute in Sydney is over.

The employers and the right wing FIA cleverly used the threat of stand-downs of other workers to win the day.

After four weeks on the grass, we were still solid. We had just got our biggest dispute pay and the black bans at ICI Botany (NSW) were still holding.

Then Eglo, the new contractor on site, announced they were going to stand down dozens of their workers.

black

They said that while the erection of steel was black, the rest of the job could not continue.

Eglo and the FIA played on this to create a division between us and the rest of the workers on site.

We were outvoted at the ICI mass meeting. The bans were lifted and only 10 of the 27 sacked workers were reinstated.

John MacBean from the Labour Council and Bob Davies from the FIA played a shocking role.

booed

Davies was booed down by Johns & Waygoods and World Services workers when he tried to sell the deal the Labour Council had made with Eglo.

It looks like the bosses have got away with setting a new precedent. By changing

J&W I.C.I. WORKERS say THANKS for your SUPPORT

contractors they managed to remove a group of workers from the site who had stood up for trade union principles.

Throughout the dispute we received great support from the AMWSU and FED&FA officials. The bosses received support from the FIA who refused to recognise the dispute.

Thanks must also go to these jobs and others for their support.

A.O.R. Kurnell, Centrepoint Tower, Reserve Bank, Marts Cranes, Storey and Kearn, Balmain Welding, Reschs Brewery, Unilever – E.O.I., Alcan, World Services, Dillingham Qantas site, Phillips Petroleum, Homebush Abbatoirs, Herald-Sun, Daily Mirror.

A special thanks also goes to Johns & Waygoods workers in Melbourne. Their bans on loading steel for Sydney came at a crucial time in the dispute.

All is not completely lost. More Johns & Waygoods blokes may be reinstated with Eglo in the next couple of weeks.

twice

On top of that, the bosses will think twice about trying such a stunt again.

They might have won this time, but it cost them weeks of production and thousands of dollars.

by an FIA member

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PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

NO 62
2 December 1978
20 cents

Special Bumper MarXmas Issue

Fraser's message to school leavers

IF you're young and you've just left school, Malcolm Fraser has a nice Christmas present waiting for you.

It's called the dole – but you're not allowed to open it till eight weeks after you leave school. Meantime, just enjoy the summer – with no money, no job, and probably no future.

Of course, in the old days, some lucky school-leavers actually got jobs at this time of year. But times are hard, and we all have to make sacrifices. Especially you.

Some young people are still lucky though – and Fraser was talking to a bunch of them recently at the annual conference of the Victorian Young Liberals.

Very confidently, he ridiculed claims that the young unemployed were a "lost generation".

"It is not the whole generation", he said, *"or the whole age group. It is a segment of the generation, a segment of the age*

It's unlikely that any of that segment were in the same room listening to him. (After all, Young Liberals can always get a position in Daddy's business if the worst comes to the worst).

But later, on television, Fraser changed his tune. After all, you can fool some of the Young Libs all the time, but it's harder on TV.

"Unemployment is going to be a very real problem for some time.

"There is no hope for a quick improvement over a long, long while."

Which is more like the real situation. Many of those leaving school won't get a job this year, or the next – or for how ever long Fraser considers a "long, long while" to be.

But the PM did have a solution. Unemployment, he told us, could be reduced if only unions wouldn't make wage demands.

"If wages go up too much, they take jobs away from other people."

And it might seem plausible – except for one thing.

It has always been the policy of the Fraser government to reduce real wages. Ever since they came to power, real wages have declined – mainly through the con-job of 'partial indexation'.

Has unemployment been reduced as a result? Is there any hope that it will be in the future? Of course not. And what's more, Fraser admits it.

Unemployment is rising; wages are not. It's as simple as that.

damning

And that's the most damning indictment of this government, the system that it serves, and the union bureaucrats who refuse to fight it.

You might think about that over the next few weeks. It's not your fault you're unemployed – it's the fault of the government and the system that spawned it.

But remember, it's no good just thinking – action is what counts.

And if the unemployed are angry and active enough, maybe they can repay Malcolm for his Christmas present in the manner he so richly deserves.

"WELCOME TO THE DOLE QUEUES"

Ranger bosses meeting fiasco

Anti-Uranium demonstrators turned the annual meeting of EZ Industries shareholders in Melbourne into a fiasco on November 28.

Fifty demonstrators obtained shares and proxy votes. They infiltrated the meeting and kept up a barrage of questions and heckling, and placed anti-nuclear stickers around the hall.

When Sir Edward Cohen, EZ chairman, ignored anti-uranium motions from the protestors, they invaded the stage to prevent the election of the Board of Directors.

The demonstrators occupied the stage for 15 minutes and cut the public address system, before police dragged them off.

While on the stage, the demonstrators demanded that Cohen and two other directors sign an agreement to drop EZ's uranium mining plans. (The Ranger deal was signed after the consent of only three of the traditional black owners).

AURUKUN-BLACKS PUT THEIR CASE

ABORIGINES from Aurukun and Mornington Island have been touring the country to win support in their struggle against the Queensland Government.

The Queensland Government staged a take-over of the communities earlier this year, to make sure they'd have access to the bauxite and other resources in the area.

acquire

Now the people from Aurukun and Mornington Island are asking the Federal Government to acquire the lands, in order to give them the power to manage their own affairs.

They are bitter about the way in which the take-over was attempted. Frank Yunkaporta from Aurukun said: *"The local government said that there was drunkeness and lawlessness.*

"There were lots of excuses in words that they used, so that the whole of Australia would hear how bad the Mornington Island and Aurukun people are. But that is not so.

By Kevin Cook

"The local government was incriminating aborigines. That is terrible."

In fact, the people in the communities continued to recognise the community councillors after they had been sacked by the government.

Barry Lanley, from Mornington Island, explained what the land means for the aboriginal people there:

"The land is just like a mother. From our mother we learn how she provides food, understanding of nature.

"The sacred areas are where we're taught the custom and law of the aboriginal people.

"Combined that gives us our father and mother.

"When people come to our land and kill for sport, or mining companies dig into the soil, they're digging into our mother's guts.

law

"Any European law would hang or commit a person for life in jail if they broke the law in regard to killin of the mother or father."

The tour has been successful in giving the Aurukun and Mornington Island people a chance to talk to many aboriginal and white people.

In Melbourne there was a public meeting of about 3,000 people.

In Wollongong, the South Coast Trades and Labour Council said that they would meet with local aboriginal people to formulate action to be taken.

The Standing Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs has now recommended that the Federal Government should acquire the land and allow the two communities to manage their own affairs.

But from the Government's point of view the stakes are high – with the possibility of other resources besides the rich bauxite mines in the area.

For example, there is possibly oil off the coast of Mornington Island.

And the Federal Government has reneged on assurances given to the people of Mornington Island and Aurukun before.

Black representatives — Mackie from Aurukun (left) and Darwin from Mornington

between the lines

SOMEONE'S taken those Australia Post ads to heart.

My inter-galactic mailbag has been STUFFED with goodies for the Bumper Battler Break-up for Boozies issue.

THE first parcel contained a story of three JOHNS.

One was a famous Australian rock and roll singer another a famous advertising ocker and the third, a famous radio personality.

The LAW of libel (and the LAWS of the jungle) forbid us from naming them. But they were no SIMPLETONS, OK?

One day, John the Rock had a fight with his wife over tea in a Sydney restaurant.

She wasn't his baby and he wasn't SO TOUGH as he thought he was. He went home and took an O/D of sleeping pills and died.

John, the ex-rock, was driven to the Van Gogh hospital where the driver BRIBED a hospital person to put John the ex-rock onto a life support system.

The media were told he was in a critical condition. He was already DEAD.

When John the rock was finally listed as dying from a heart attack, the life support system had made sure that all traces of the BARBITURATES he had taken were now out of his system and all hint of scandal of attempted suicide would now be buried.

This was especially important since he had attempted suicide before.

But, thought Darth the persistent, who would want to protect whom from the truth about this suicide?

It seems that the other two Johns feared that any hint of suicide may force the Cops to take action on the LAWS they'd been breaking through their mutual involvement with certain illegal drugs.

I mean, did you ever ask your DEALER "Where d'ya get it"

Meanwhile in BANGKOK another three enterprising Australians were languishing in an uncomfortable cell, charged with activities related to the smuggling of HEROIN.

One of them is a Sydney Rugby League player, Paul Hayward. Hayward plays for Newtown. Newtown is owned by John SINGLETON. Singleton has been a frequent visitor to Bangkok lately, trying to secure "justice" for the three Australians.

I am also informed that at the end of the last season, all Newtown players were given holiday tickets to LA. Except Paul Hayward. He was given his THIRD trip that year to Bangkok.

Singleton is a founder of the Workers Party who belive that all human activity should be regulated by the unrestricted laws of the market. Does that include the price of heroin?

And, as Darth Vader trembles in his plastic mask, does it also include the market price of contracts on nosey journalists and special investigators trying to get to the BOTTOM of Australia's underworld scene?

John Singleton

GOOD ARGUMENTS AGAINST SOCIALISM No. 2

IAN SINCLAIR has opened up uncharted possibilities for tax evasion.

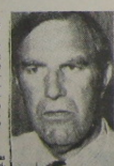
He stole money from his own companies – and then claimed the loss as a tax deduction.

Both he and his father, George Sinclair, were accustomed to forging each other's signatures.

Ian Sinclair even forged his father's signature on annual returns lodged in April 1976, although his father had died in January that year.

He then proceeded to blame his father for the large sums of money which had been stolen from two funeral companies, Allan Walsh Pty. Ltd., and Allan Walsh (Hornsby) Pty Ltd.

Ian Sinclair is a director of these companies and the Sinclair family are major shareholders.



Ian Sinclair

Ian Sinclair, as a director of the companies, signed the annual returns for all the years when money was stolen.

He has therefore always been personally responsible for the correctness of those returns.

He also received $109,995 under his father's will – practically the amount of money which was first stolen, and then claimed as a tax loss.

It seems unlikely that Sinclair could have got away with all this without a little friendly advice from someone in the Corporate Affairs Commission.

Presumably someone who was duly impressed by having to deal with the Federal Minister for Primary Industry.

BRISBANE'S Brewery Bosses may be HOPPING mad over the mighty beer strike, but the hospitals aren't.

We heard from a recent medical conference that the intensive care unit at one hospital is as EMPTY as a 4X keg and another hospital claims to have caught up on its outpatients backlog.

THE B.T.L Roll of Red Tape Award for Petty Tyranny goes to the Principal of Albert Park High School in Melbourne.

She told her striking students that their petition was worthless because it was wrongly worded. She can go jump in the . . . . . .

A close second are the Australian agents for "Peanuts". Charles Shultz may be into god and love, but the local agents preferred to play god and stop the editors of a school magazine from using a "Peanuts" strip with an article about the school's religious club.

IF IT was just for sheer pettiness, the Westgate Bridge Authority would have won.

They banned reporters from the local South Melbourne Community Newspaper, the Emerald Hill Times from the opening ceremony.

The "Times" has campaigned against the bridge because of the effects the extra traffic will have on their suburb.

But, typically enough, Sir Oscar Meyer and his crew are hopeless as tyrants.

WHAT would BTL be without its legendary Plastic Straw Award? If you're going to suck up to people, you need a decent weapon.

John Ducker

And if you're going to achieve proper recognition, you've got to win one of our famous, hand-crafted, cancer inducing straws (with GT stripes and SUCKPOWER).

That's obviously what John Ducker had in mind when he threw a special little bash for visiting British scab . . . . oops . . . trade union official, Frank *Chapple*.

In Britain, Frank expels dissidents and strikers from the union he controls.

He is in the job for life, having been elected by a small committee.

In Australia, he has made his name for advocating the export of uranium.

With politics like that, it was hardly worthwhile inviting too many other trade unionists or Labor Party activists to the party.

Even considering how right wing Labor is in NSW.

So John invited his real mates instead.

Like Noel Foley (President Bank of NSW), Gordon Jackson (chief at CSR Ltd), Stan Own (Managing Director of the international finance group Hill Samuel), that well known friend of the aboriginal people, Sir David Griffin (chairman Nabalco). Bosses from Concrete Industries, Boral, TNT the list goes on ad nauseum.

It must be a real pleasure to be able to relax with such people; gentlemen of taste, wit and such a refined sense of humour.

It's a pity they're only interested in you because of the strength of the "rowdies" and "irresponsibles" who make up your membership.

Still get rid of your tarnished cigarette holder and suck through the satisfying straw we're sending you.

|by Darth Vader

Layout by: A. Steventon, G. Patching, P. Griffiths, A. Kahn and negs by D. Lockwood

BRISBANE, DECEMBER 7

AT last the Queensland Trades and Labour Council has decided to back a civil liberties march.

The T.L.C. has called on unionists to stop work and attend a rally and march on December 7.

A meeting of job delegates on November 29 will be asked to endorse this recommendation.

The rally is another blow against the Queensland government's ban on political street marches and attacks on civil liberties.

Now Joh, begin to feel the power of our class!

by John Minns

As with other civil liberties rallies, there will be an attempt to march in defiance of Petersen's ban.

What makes this march very different from the others is that the T.L.C. has decided to come in behind the movement.

This means that there should be many more workers at this rally than ever before.

The initiative to hold the rally was taken by the Maritime group of unions.

At the last rally on October 30, hundreds of Maritime workers marched to the rally and took part in the main march in which 288 people were arrested.

displayed

This involvement of the Maritime workers, together with the militancy displayed in the long brewery strike and at the meatworkers' pickets, has forced the T.L.C to play a role in the fight against Petersen.

The last year of street marches, especially the march on October 30, has put tremendous pressure on the Government.

In particular, the pressure is on for the new leader of the Liberal party, Llew Edwards.

His predecessor, Bill Knox, was sacked because he was not ablt to stand up to Petersen.

Edwards could easily meet the same fate if he doesn't come out against Joh on the civil liberties question.

Already there are rumours that Edwards is planning to introduce an amendment to the Traffic Act to restore the right of appeal to a magistrate, (rather than to the Police Commissioner).

But the civil liberties movement will not stop fighting wif thishappens.

Even before the march ban was introduced, mana organisations were consistently refused permits.

The Campaogn Against Nuclear Power was refused permits to march for three years before the ban was brought down.

The Women's Movement was also refused permits before the ban, and demonstrations were harassed by the police and Special Branch.

The A.L.P. and T.L.C. have a different attitude.

They want organizations intending to hold a march to simply inform the police of the time and route.

It will then be up to the police to do the appealing to a magistrate. This is now A.L.P. and T.L.C. policy on street marches in Queensland.

fought

So Edwards' move in parliament will not be enough. This battle has not been fought and will not be won in parliament.

Applying for a permit allows Peterson to claim that there is no ban on street marches, as he did when the A.L.P. got a permit in July.

The T.L.C. has already decided not to apply for a permit for December 7. This is an important tactic.

AT least eight Federal parliamentarians, including George Georges and Tom Uren who were arrested in the last march, are prepared to march without a permit on December 7.

A Victorian union and A.L.P. delegation may also march.

Some unions officials have already, started to go weak at the knees.

Many have interpreted the December 7 stoppage as merely a conscience stoppage.

This means that most unions will not actually organise their members to come out for the rally.

simply

Instead they will simply say that they will support any member who leaves work to go to the rally.

The T.W.U. has already decided that this will be the form the stoppage will take for their members.

Of the major unions, probably only the Maritime group will seriously organise members to be there.

Petersen's attacks on civil liberties are clearly leading up to even worse legislation, such as the "right-to-work" bill – amove to abolish the closed union shop.

Many workers are already fully aware of this. Thousands have been actively involved in the campaign, many getting arrested.

The involvement of T.L.C. will be welcomed by all civil liberties activists. Thousands more workers will now join the fight.

They will make December 7 a day for Joh Bjelke – Petersen to fear.

by John Minns.

Marchers jailed

THREE people have been jailed for refusing to pay fines resulting from the October 30 demonstration in Brisbane.

More will go to jail later.

On Friday November 24, a picket of about twenty gathered at 8.00 am outside Brisbane jail.

They were there to welcome out Ken Ferrier, who was inside for taking part in the march.

The screws told us that he would be let out at 11.00. They were lying so that noone would be there to meet him. True to form, the straight press belived them.

Ken appeared at 9.30. He had been let out the back door, in the hope that he would miss us.

But he'd been told about the picket by another prisoner and walked around the prison to meet us.

There would have been a photograph with this article, but the chief screw and a cop (illegally) confiscated the film.

ILLEGALLY CENSORED BY QUEENSLAND POLICE

Budget demo - too little, too late

OVER 2,000 people demonstrated against the Fraser government's Budget in Canberra on November 21.

It was the only action called by the ACTU against the Budget, months after the event.

Hawke and Hayden addressed the rally. They offered no alternative to the Budget except voting ALP in two years time.

No campaign of action was offered to the workers who had travelled from all over Australia to attend.

The lack of commitment of the union officials to the fight against Fraser was shown by the fact that the special train from Sydney was only half full.

Yet many printers from Fairfax who wanted to go on the train were knocked back.

DID POLICE KILL THIS MAN?

Najih Ali Abou-Ali

"THE cops showed total disregard of innocent human lives."

Ray Darakat, a leader of the Lebanese community in Sydney, expressed their anger at the police action which led to the death of Najih Ali Abou-Ali, who was taken hostage by a bank robber.

Police were involved in a high-speed car chase and shoot-out with the robber, Kresimer Dragesovic, who had taken Ali hostage.

Ray added:

"The issue is one of negligence by the police. They were trigger-happy.

"And one could have the suspicion that the police apply different tests as to how to proceed – would they proceed in the same way if the hostage was a cop?"

involved

"And a sensitive Lebanese might think that they'd have taken more risks when dark-skinned people are involved."

Police claim that Ali was killed by Dragesovic as he fled from the car and was himself shot in a hail of police bullets.

They were also quick to claim that Ali was shot by a .32, whereas the police are issued with .38 caliber guns.

"This is only a claim, it had not been verified. We have now asked the premier for access to the bullet, the x-ray and the car."

A recent report, commissioned by Ali's widow, raises more questions about the police story.

A ballistics expert claimed that if a .32 bullet had been fire at four metres – as the police would have it – the bullet would have gone straight through the head.

In fact, there was only one entrance wound of four inches, and no exit wound.

Ali's family and friends were also disturbed to discover how difficult it was for them to get an autopsy on the body.

Ray said:

"many said they were eight pathologists.

"They were all enthusiastic at first – but as soon as they heard it was a controversial matter, they became reluctant.

"Many said they were too busy, and one even said 'Well, I don't want to find anything inconsistent with Dr Bride.' (the police pathologist)."

After the Briggs initiative

HOMOSEXUALS around the world have welcomed the news that the Briggs initiative, the proposal to fire homosexual teachers in California, has failed.

Political analysts had predicted a victory for Senator Briggs. And he did succeed with another proposal on the same ballot to extend the death penalty.

But the anti-homosexual initiative was lost with about 60% against.

The main reason for the defeat of the initiative was the mass campaign waged against it. Special effort was put into building support in the trade union movement.

The Californian Federation of Teachers was involved, since the Briggs initiative was an attack on all teachers, not just homosexuals.

Committees also sprung up in unions representing hotel and restaurant workers, office workers and hospital workers, Teamsters, car workers and machinists supported the campaign as well.

Other people joined in too. For instance, the Gay Freedom March earlier this year was led off by disabled people in wheel chairs.

They had not forgotten the events earlier this year, when a number of gays joined in an occupation of government offices by disabled people.

Organisers of a national boycott of Coors beer spoke at the march, too, in repayment of gay support for their boycott.

This particular battle for gay rights has now been won, but the war is far from over.

organized

The attack on gays is part of a broader attack by the organized Right.

Two other initiatives just missed out on getting on this ballot, and will probably appear in 1980.

One was an anti-abortion proposal, and the other the offing all over the USA.

Anita Bryant, who was responsible for successful anti-gay legislation in Florida, is a close political friend of Senator Briggs.

She is also close to the Ku Klux Klan, who provide her bodyguard.

Nor is the struggle confined to the USA. In Britain, the National Front regularly attacks gay pubs.

In response, a large gay contingent joined the recent Anti Nazi League carnival.

Greece is soon to consider vicious new anti-homosexual legislation.

And here in Australia, the Victorian Government is going to increase fines for homosexual offences five-fold.

Senator Briggs (right): defeated in his bid to fire all homosexual teachers in California.

GOVT GETS TOUGH ON TEACHERS

THE Victorian Education Department is considering two measures to gain greater control over secondary teachers to increase their workload, and to prevent them going on strike.

On October 17 the following proposal was put to the State Teachers Tribunal:

"A teacher who absents himself from duty without leave shall not be permitted to return to duty without the prior approval of the Director General, provided that where such absence from duty without leave exceeds five working days, the prior approval of the Tribunal must be obtained before resumption."

The implications of this proposal are obvious.

If a teacher was absent without leave for even one hour (attending a stop-work meeting for example) that teacher could be suspended from duty (locked out) until the Director General approved a return to duty.

Just as horrifying is the next proposal.

by-pass

Peter Vaughan of the VSTA announced at the strike meeting on November 9 that the government is planning to by-pass the Teachers Tribunal and to introduce legislation considerably increasing secondary teachers' workloads.

The vast majority of teachers are in the Assistant class: every assistant will be forced to teach twenty-five periods a week.

At present, the VSTA maximum workload for an assistant is twenty one periods a week.

And the increased workload will not include preparation and correction time: it represents both a maximum and minimum time that the teacher must spend in face-to-face teaching.

It also doesn't include time spent in form teacher duties, yard duties, the obligatory meetings teachers attend, or the inevitable 'extra' a week, taken to cover an absent teacher's class.

Teachers would find themselves in the class for five periods a day (out of a total of six), for five days a week.

The little time left would be constantly eroded by extra duties.

Most secondary teachers can't and won't tolerate such appalling working conditions.

This workload would increase drastically the number of teachers in "excess" and so would force many teachers out of their chosen school.

Ultimately, it would put many more teachers out of a job.

Bronwyn Jones, VSTA

MIGRANT ENGLISH BATTLE

"We've left things up to teachers for too long!"

This was the feeling of one parent who attended a lively Public Meeting on Cut-backs in Migrant English.

The meeting was held at Brunswick East High in response to proposed cutbacks in migrant English staffing of inner suburban schools.

About 150 parents, teachers and students attended. A motion demanding that the state minister not withdraw teachers but employ more was passed unanimously.

The meeting then gave the state government a one week ultimatum to meet this demand.

It was proposed and also passed unanimously that if the deadline was not met, parents from affected schools would withdraw their kids from classes, "for one or two days".

stoppage

Parents at Moreland High, one of the schools in the area had already taken action four days earlier.

Teachers in the area called a half day stoppage and demonstrated outside parliament house on Wednesday 15 November. Nearly 500 people were there.

Lindsay Thompson, State education minister responded with an immediate proposal which has shown to be as shallow as the man who made it.

Inner suburban schools would be given one extra migrant English teacher according to Thompson. But what he neglected to tell us is that this extra teacher is included in the already cut-back figure.

For example, Brunswick East High, with a migrant English figure of six, has been cut back to three for 1979. With Thompson's extra teacher this makes it four in 1979 --- but it's still not six teachers!

The school council has voted this as unacceptable. And so it is . . . . They've formed an action committee and are meeting with school councils in the area to organise proposed actions.

By Susan Scalise
Migrant English Teacher
Maribyrnong High School

Migrant teachers demonstrate against the cuts in Melbourne

BLF battles body hire merchants

by a BLF member

FOR the moment the divisions in the NSW BLF have been cast aside, as the union gets stuck into the body hire merchants.

Body hire is a system whereby a bodgie body hire companies hire out labour to the main contractor on an hourly basis. The body hire workers usually get paid under the award.

They get no compo, no sick pay, no wet time, no long service leave and no security of employment.

The body hire merchants usually pick you up on street corners at 6 am if you're lucky. Each morning you don't know whether you've got a job.

On Wednesday 25th October, we held the first state-wide stoppage since the $30 campaign last year. Mass meetings were held in Newcastle and Sydney.

The Sydney mass meeting was very small. Less than 100 blokes attended. This was very disappointing. Nevertheless the meetings voted to take a strong stand against body hire.

Decisions were:

1. Concrete pours to be broken on sites where body hire is found.
2. If body hire is forced off a site and then is found on that site again, then that site is automatically black for one week.
3. Building Trades Group to be approached for support.
4. A rank and file committee of all trades to be set up to co-ordinate the body hire campaign.

The last two decisions are probably the most important. The BLF alone cannot stop body hire, or even clean it up so everyone gets award conditions.

This is especially true as the union is losing its militant base, mainly riggers and scaffolders, to FIA sites. That's why we need unity with other trades, both at the top level and the rank and file level. This includes the metal trades, where body hire is a worse problem.

The body hire system, with its parasites like Comrega, and Skilled Engineering, threatens unionism throughout the construction industry. That's why it must be stopped.

International Socialists
SUMMER CAMP
Australia Day Weekend
All I.S. members and friends welcome.
Location:
Bushlovers' Camp, Minto. Just South of Sydney
Cost:
$24 for 2½ days
Games
Swimming
Discussions
Socialising
For details Ring the I.S. branch in your city.

RIGHT TO LIFERS IN DISARRAY

SINGING "Free abortion on demand, we shall not be moved", and shouting "Where were you during the Vietnam War?", counter-demonstrators confronted a Right To Life rally in Melbourne two weeks ago.

The Right To Lifers were demonstrating in support of a motion to be put to Federal Parliament by Stephen Lusher, MHR for Hume.

Lusher wants to remove abortion from the list of claimable items. Any fund which does not remove it will no longer receive Federal funding.

Right To Life have also organized floods of letters to MP's. Petitions are read out every day in the Senate.

front

Initially the counter demonstration was confined to chanting and heckling on the sidelines.

But when the Right To Lifers decided to march, we placed ourselves at the front, and led the self righteous moralists through the streets!

The Right To Lifers were forced to cut their march short. We were still ahead of them at their destination, Parliament House.

With our banner "Keep your filthy morals off our bodies!" and our constant chanting, we largely succeeded in disrupting the speakers and distracting the audience.

The Lusher motion is due to come up early next year. Both parties are divided on the issue.

The recent Victorian Liberal conference overwhelmingly condemned it.

And while many ALP parliamentarians opposed Senator Susan Ryan's recent motion on ACT abortion clinics, many Liberals supported it.

IRAN - A NEW CLASS MOVES INTO ACTION

BLACK FRIDAY, September 8, 1978, is a day burned forever into the history of Iran.
On that day 3,000 unarmed men, women and children were massacred on the streets of Tehran.

On that day 3,000 unarmed men, women and children were massacred on the streets of Tehran.

by Joanna Rollo

When the shooting was finally over fire engines were needed to wash the blood from the capital's streets.

Martial law had been introduced and 12 cities went under the rule of the army, their streets patrolled day and night by tanks and troops.

In the face of that awful repression the workers of Iran seized one of the deadliest of their weapons. The mass strikes were launched.

Wave upon wave of strikes has since swept through the country. First were government workers and those in the banks, steelworks, telecommunications and oil industry.

economy

After two or three days the economy was groaning and the government rushed in with 50% wage increases to get the workers back.

But it was like using wallpaper to stop up a breaking dam. When they saw how quickly the government caved in hundreds of thousands revolted.

At the beginning of October doctors, teachers, insurance workers, water workers, post office workers, electricty workers, struck for better wages, better conditions and the right to organise.

The schools closed and tens of thousands of young activists took to the streets in support of their teachers.

They ransacked government buildings and built bonfires with the contents. They burnt down schools and banks.

In the west, not yet under martial law, city after city was besieged by mass demonstrations.

People were now travelling hundreds of miles to demonstrate. In Tehran 10,000 defied the army.

In the biggest protest since Black Friday, they marched through the streets chanting 'Khomeini or death.'

By the end of the first week of October the death toll was rising rapidly. By the end of the month, it was to reach 4,000.

More and more workers joined the strikers. Tens of thousands of office workers staged a sit-in.

Justice Ministry workers went on strike, the court-rooms closed down and trials were suspended.

TV and radio stations, power plants, universities, government offices, railways, oil refineries, buses, and postal services were paralysed or severely disrupted.

Thousands of students boycotted classes and fought the police and army.

The street battles became bloodier and harder. New tactics were being learned. In Amol, on October 9, thousands of young people fought the police for hours. By nightfall the city was in flames.

There were similar battles in six other cities that day.

Nothing survived the fury of the masses. In cities across Iran no symbol of wealth or power escaped their hatred.

strikers

Railway workers fought with soldiers who tried to smash their picket lines. Hundreds of strikers had been arrested.

And all that week the rioting continued, people were shot down by the army.

But as soon as one demonstration finished, another began. As one group of strikers went back another came out.

For the first time in their lives millions of workers have tasted power.

In a few weeks they have smashed through 25 years of repression and intimidation.

For as long as they can remember, strikers and militants have been massacred and SAVAK has ruled the factories.

screamed

On every shop floor in every office, at every level there were informers: agents of the barbarous secret police in whose torture chambers thousands of workers screamed out their lives in agony.

Now SAVAK holds no fears for the workers. These brutes are powerless in the face of massive revolt. In city after city they have been identified and summarily brought to justice by the people.

Three days after the Abadan strikers returned to work, the world's largest political strikes in 10 years began.

One million civil servants demanded that the Shah release the political prisoners and end martial law. Half a million teachers joined them.

Two days later, on the Shah's 59th birthday, the prison doors opened and 1,500 political prisoners walked to freedom.

Since then thousands have echoed these demands. Thousands more have struck for wages and conditions.

In the eastern city of Mashad 25,000 people organised a sit-down and forced the authorities to stop the curfew.

freedom

The oilfields have ground to a halt, because the workers are on strike again for an end to martial law, freedom for political prisoners still in jail and the expulsion of the foreign oil technicians.

These workers control one of the most crucial energy sources of the modern world. They hold the power to shake governments.

The Shah's future now depends on the armed forces. But they cannot slaughter an entire people.

And thousands of conscripts, workers and peasants in uniform, cannot be trusted to shoot down their brothers and sisters on the streets.

At Abadan, on October 22, workers in the world's largest oil refinery ended their second strike of the month with a promise of a 50% wage rise and an apology from the director who had called the troops in to break up a meeting.

The people showered them with flowers, called out to them: 'Brother soldiers, do not kill us.'

Many laid down their guns and wept. Others shot their officers.

The spectre of revolution is stalking through the streets of Iran.

Ex-soldiers, students, factory workers, poets and writers, the black-veiled women, the turbanned followers of Islam, the young and the old, all are united.

All cry out with a single voice for 'Death to the Shah!' for freedom.

Rioters in Tehran burn the hated symbols of the Peacock Throne.

PLO under attack

In the wake of the Camp David agreement, the government of Iraq is trying to re-build its relationship with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Syria.

It appears that it has withdrawn its support from Abu Nidal's Black June guerrilla group which was responsible for a series of attacks on the PLO last August.

FADI YAMMINE gives the background to Iraq's interference in the Palestinian struggle.

The Palestinian revolution is here to stay.

Since the beginning of party rule in Iraq, an embargo has been placed on the Palestinian revolution.

During the 'Black September' of 1970, when the PLO was attacked by King Hussein's army in Jordan, Iraq refused to become involved on the grounds that imperialist forces wouldn't like it.

except

In Iraq itself, the government has made a deliberate effort to drive out the PLO. All PLO offices, except the one in Baghdad were closed.

More importantly, the confiscation of military bases, factories, arms stores and $200 million worth of overseas aid from China has hit the PLO hard.

Despite this, the PLO still has close links with the Iraqi people, and supports their struggle against the regime.

The Iraqis themselves are becoming fed up with their repressive rulers, and opposition is growing.

The government has replied by executing members of the Iraqi Communist Party. One of them, Souhayl Sharhan, said before his death:

"We communists fear nothing for our cause, for communism is an ideology, a thought that opposes and fights backwardness and imperialism."

The PLO has called on the Arabs to stand up against the terror of the Iraqi rulers, and had described their mentality as that of "gangsters".

The Iraqis have also paid agents around the world to join Abu Nidal in terrorist acts against the PLO.

Today, while the Camp David agreements aim to isolate the Palestinians, and repression continues in Iraq, the two peoples find themselves facing a common enemy.

The truth about Khomeini

THE ruthless SAVAK secret police have in the last twenty-five years destroyed any possibility of open political opposition – except during the rising in 1963.

This has kept all opposition deeply underground and very feeble.

The man on everyone's mind is seventy nine year old Islamic leader Khomeini.

Khomeini has been in exile since 1969 – the last time the people rose against the Shah.

Thousands were shot dead during three days of rioting. Khomeini was exiled.

action

Unlike today, there was no mass working class action.

But the Shah was only able to maintain control by declaring the so-called White Revolution which led to land reforms and industrialisation.

The British and American governments have been keen to brand Khomeini as a reactionary in contrast to the 'progressive' approach of the Shah.

Ayatollah Khomeini

True, Khomeini is essentially a religious leader. But he has come to symbolise total opposition to the Shah in a country which has only recently been industrialised.

He has consistently demanded the Shah's removal as a condition for his participation in government.

He has refused all overtures from the Shah and denounced all the governments which have propped up the Shah in the past.

He has criticised the British and American governments for their control over Iran's oil, and the Russian government for their tactical support of the Shah in return for the gas they get from Iran.

He has denounced the Chinese leaders for their friendly diplomatic visit to the Shah.

Khomeini is an Islamic nationalist who would like to turn the clock back to the 'golden age' of Mohammed. But there can be no going back.

Given the absence of any stronger left wing parties in the country, the mass support for him is entirely understandable.

For the moment, many worker and peasants articulate their feelings in religious terms. After all, Iran has been held in a vice of oppression and backwardness for centuries.

This may mean that when the Shah is overthrown Khomeini can restore calm for a while.

But not for long. The sense of power now felt by the mass of the people will find no real satisfaction in a capitalist government led by him.

And the massive foment in Iran also means that a revolutionary workers' party could very quickly spring up to carry the revolution right through.

The "Shah of shahs" in full military regalia.

No Nukes for Austria

THE anti-nuclear movement in Europe has won a sensational victory. Voters in Austria have narrowly voted against the use of a completed nuclear power plant.

They have voted that the recently completed, $400,000,000 plant on the Danube River be left idle.

The government had whipped up all the hysteria and paranoia it could muster. They claimed that the plant was vital to the economy and that a No vote would throw millions of dollars down the drain.

The Chancellor even threatened to resign if the referendum was not carried. The Austrian anti-nuclear movement is eagerly awaiting his resignation.

The most significant thing about the referendum was that it involved all voters, and not just the people who lived in the area of Zwentendorf, who were overwhelmingly opposed to the nuclear monster.

What the bosses are buying for Xmas

Above, the Gucci cork-screw at $47; and below, the Gucci note-book at $50.

HAVE you worked out what you're buying your boss for Christmas?

(Now, now, now. There's no call for that sort of comment.)

Actually, the darlings of the ruling class are going to be giving each other some very interesting presents this Christmas. You are going to to have to be really on the ball if you want to impress your boss with your own little offering.

So the Battler got hold of some catalogues to see just what's in fashion.

The first thing that caught our eye – something modest but functional – was a note-pad with the exclusive Gucci brand name.

They're retailing at Georges in Melbourne for a mere $50. (That's each, not for a hundred) Perfect for roughing out the 1979 investment plans on.

value

And for extracting the corks from the 1929 Chateau Latour when guests pop in unexpectedly, Gucci has provided just the thing – the Gucci cork-screw ("ideal for travelling"), a bargain at $47.

But for sheer value, we just couldn't go past the Gucci shoe-horn, at an incredibly low $68. How clever!

No longer need men of grace and elegance struggle to get their pudgy little feet into hand-crafted shoes, risking coronary occlusion and bruised heels. Gucci has come to their rescue at last.

Of course, then we realised that our readers might object to this sort of present.

They are a little, how shall we say, (ugh!) utilitarian. They lack that certain stylish extravagance that separates a true subarite from a callow, noveau-riche pretender.

So if that's your worry, how about giving an 18-carat gold, hand-sculptured paper clip?

clip

These are available in Perth at $637 each. (If your dividend cheque hasn't come in yet, you may have to settle for the silver ones at $93 each).

We recommend them strongly. Just the thing for keeping one's land deals together.

Possibly you're looking for something in a higher price bracket?

overseas

How about a sculpted silver bowl for the table, at $12,436? So that the managing director in your life can eat his All-Bran in the style to which he is accustomed.

Or a lovely little conversation piece – a five-branched silver candlestick, retailing at $20,272.

Of course, if you're jetting overseas to do your Christmas shopping, Nieman Marcus in New York is well worth a visit.

There you can pick up a carved desk once used by Queen Victoria, for $125,000.

Or there's His and Her mink coats for those freezing cold days up at the chalet – His for $25,000, Hers for $22,500. (No, they don't have His and Hers written on the back).

But perhaps the piece de resistance is – wait for it – a Monopoly set made completely out of candy and chocolate . The idea is that you serve it up at the end of that intimate dinner party for four.

The price? A mere $600.

There's just one thing that worries us, though.

What if some spoil-sport gobbles up the dice?

A porcelain rose available from Georges in Melbourne for [illegible]

by Alec Kahn

THE REAL STORY OF CHRISTMAS

How they turned a pagan festival into a money-spinner

By Tess Lee Ack

The image the Church wants for Christmas – glorifying motherhood and virginity.

IN the Catholic primary school, I was taught that December 25 was Christ's Birthday, the season of Peace on Earth and Good Will Among Men. (The women did all the cooking).

Christmas was rivalled in importance for us only by Good Friday, when he died, and Easter, when he rose again.

Of course, we always preferred Christmas because then it was school holidays and we got presents.

As it turns out, no-one knows exactly when Christ was born. In fact, no-one can really prove that he was born at all.

But the Christmas ritual has been very useful to certain elements of society, and these days it makes lots of money for the capitalists, so who cares?

Christmas as such was first celebrated in Rome in 336 AD, when the Christians took over the old pagan ceremonies associated with that time of year.

In the northern hemisphere, December is midwinter and a fairly miserable time of year.

It was a lot worse in those days of course, without power, light and heat and various other comforts of life.

The midwinter solstice (shortest day of the year) was a good excuse to forget your cares, and break out of the seasonal depression for a while.

The Romans had the Saturnalia, from December 17 to 24. They called the solstice the Day of the Invincible Sun.

For the period of the Saturnalia, businesses, schools and law courts closed. Wild merry-making was the order of the day: feasting, drinking, dancing, gambling and the odd orgy.

The Cult of the Invincible Sun was very popular with the Roman armies of the third century, and was followed by Constantine, until he became the first Christian Roman emperor.

After his conversion, the church authorities (no doubt taking a dim view of the feasting, dancing, gambling etc) decided that Christ was born on December 25.

Constantine co-operated and set up Christmas as a rival to the Saturnalia. Christmas eventually won out.

As Christianity moved north, it incorporated other popular customs and symbols, like the German Yule log (originally burned in honor of Thor, god of Thunder), and the use of evergreens, symbolising survival, as decoration.

In spite of this accomodation to local traditions, Christianity has had a hard time trying to enforce Christmas as a time of solemn religious celebration.

The midwinter need for merriment of some kind was strong. And the average person would rather go to an orgy than to mass.

puritans

In England during the middle ages, Christmas celebrations were so rowdy that the Puritans banned the observance of Christmas completely in 1643.

Some American colonists followed the English laws. The infamous Blue Laws of Massachusetts Bay and Newhaven even outlawed mince pies!

The Christian Christmas, then, is very repressive. It has always attempted to divert the population's attempts to have fun into mystical bullshit.

The Church's main role in history has been to keep people in their social place by promoting fear of the hereafter.

Our Santa Claus originated with St Nicholas, a bishop of Myra. There are various other figures who have the same function.

He's the one with the presents, bu the children have to assure him that they've been "good" (which usually translates as "obedient") before he'll come across. A nice touch of reinforcement of authority.

With the triumph of capitalism, there came a change. By then the church wasn't quite necessary for keeping people in their place.

Darwin and technology were doing their bit to undermine its foundations, which is why it's been slowly dying ever since, except in extremely underdeveloped countries.

Nonetheless, the capitalists weren't slow to pick up that they could make money out of this Christmas lurk.

In Britain in the 1840's, a bright printer came up with the idea of Christmas cards.

These proved very popular, and today it's a status symbol: how many you send out. Keeping up with the Baillieu's and all that sort of thing.

The giving of presents is in memory of the Three Wise Men from the East, who brought gold, frankincense and myrrh (I never did find out what that was at the Catholic primary school).

Gold is the one that's appropriate these days. Christmas presents have been getting bigger and better and of course more expensive all the time.

Advertising starts months before the event. Everyone gets in on the act. Even ordinary groceries at the supermarket get a special Christmas label and a hike in price for the occasion.

Banks get in for their chop – special Christmas clubs so you can save all year to afford that one day.

sales

It's been estimated that in America, Christmas sales account for a quarter of the annual sales of retail stores.

In some places, the workers might even get a Christmas bonus. Great stuff!

But one author has soberly written that this is good business practice, as it keeps the workers happy and quite possibly forestalls demands for higher wages!

Old Scrooge had the right idea about Christmas? Bah! HUMBUG!

Move over Liz .....

HERE'S *OUR* NEW YEAR'S HONORS LIST!

AT this time of the year all sorts of people are drawing up lists and making awards.

At the end of the year the Government cunningly disguised as the Queen will present new years honours for services to the ruling class, which they describe as services to the community.

Here at The Battler we thought we'd get in early and present a few new year's honours of our own.

First, for some of the outstanding political performances of the year.

The Richard Nixon award for truthfulness goes to Malcolm Fraser for the third year running. Amongst the broken promises are the tax cuts which lasted barely four months, the promise of consultation with the original owners over the Ranger mine, and Medibank, which has now been totally disbanded.

sacking

Speaking of tax-cuts, Fraser also wins the Lang Hancock fist full of dollars award for the tax cuts that made such a good election gimmick. What he didn't tell us at the time was that the fist full was not going to us: it was taken from us.

In a year in which a hundred thousand people lost their jobs, the sacking of the year award goes to John Kerr, who was sacked as UNESCO ambassador before he had actually started in the job.

Last time Kerr's name was mentioned in this award he was doing the sacking. Never mind Sir John, everyone's got to get the boot sometimes.

The Better late than Never award goes to Pig Iron Bob, who almost lived long enough to be forgotten, if not forgiven, by the millions of Australians who suffered from his years as Prime Minister.

The Billy MacMahon award for the best use of a telephone by a politician goes to Reg Withers (we understand Eric Robinson is making the presentation).

The Moss Cass award for irrelevent Cabinet Ministers goes to Tony Street. Andrew Peacock was considered for this award but we felt well publicised affairs with foreigners might actually be a deliberate part of Liberal foreign affairs policy.

Bill Hayden won two awards. The Moderate of the Year award for his 'responsible'' leadership of the opposition and the Captain Courageous award for his reform of the Queensland ALP.

Actually he was almost beaten for the courage award by Tom Burns, whose outspoken opposition to Bjelke's march legislation has been an inspiration to all Queenslanders.

The Pope John Paul I award for getting out while the going's good, goes to Victoria's Pat Dickie whose ill-health forced him to retire from politics . . . he was suffering from an acute case of bruised fingers from getting his hand caught in the till.

The Billy Snedden award for not winning, but not losing, goes to Peter Coleman (Remember him?)

The Carlton and United award for tired emotional performances (won last year by Sir John Kerr at the Melbourne Cup) goes this year to Victorian Liberal Ex-Minister Roberts Dunstan.

The Lockhead award for good government and sharp sales practise (not necessarily in that order of importance) goes to Dick Hamer, Alan Hunt, Charles Hider, Sir Kenneth Wheeler, Lou Leiberman and all the other Victorian Liberals who haven't actually been caught yet.

The Idi Amin award for sophisticated democratic government goes, as usual, to Joh Bjelke-Petersen.

circus

The Eliot Ness award for honest cop of the year goes to Adelaide's Harold Salisbury, who was only disobeying orders (as they said at Nuremburg).

The P.T. Barnum Circus of the Year award goes to the Liberal Government, the Army and the NSW police for their massive show of efficiency after the Hilton Bombings.

We had hoped to present a dynamic government award to Neville Wran. But we couldn't actually think of anything that he'd achieved except for winning an election.

The Business Awards list is quite short but there were a few cases of enterprise we thought we should recognise.

The Oedipus award to Bob Ansett and Budget Rent-a-car.

The Phillip Lynch family trust award to Ian Sinclair and all those who trusted the Walsh family.

In the industrial relations field, we felt that award was due to the Telecom spokespersons who tried to convince the public that strike action which led to free phone calls was against the public interest.

Bob Hawke as usual wins the firefighter of the year award.

Barbara Biggs wins the Paul Krutulis award for martyr of the year .. wonder if she has a brother?

Finally a few awards for sporting and entertainment triumphs.

Jeff Thomson wins both the John Howard award for good budgeting and the Lionel Murphy award for legal studies.

The Australian Swimming Union wins the Australian Cricket Control Board award for sports administration for their sporting principle that it isn't winning that counts . . . it's how well you obey the administrators.

The Australian Mining Council wins the Colleen McCullough award for historical fiction not for their sponsorship of Against the Wind but for the advertisements that they presented during the program.

And Olivia Newton-Plastic and the Gibb family win the Barry Humphries award for successful expatriates that we'd rather prefer to see stay overseas.

Dave Nadel's **MY SHOUT**

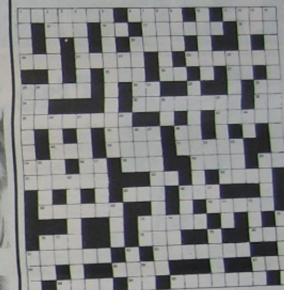
Olivia Newton-John

Pat Dickie

Peter Coleman

Kerr – from sacker to sacked

BATTLERWORDS



Across

1.Permanent revolutionary (7).
6.Killed for raising Cain? (4).
11.Nifty fellow (4).
15.Lawson's character was too old to (3).
16.Mining co that houses Uranium Producers Forum (2).
17.He aren't a skinny Palestinian (6).
18.Anti-Medibank quacks club – abbrev(3)
19.Nibble, neither? (4).
20.Tomorrow's bacon (3)
21.Peter at the Stockade . . (5)
23. . . . Eureka! An Italian! (7)
25.Uranium in the raw (3).
26.Her Royal Uselessness's initials (2).
27.Indefinite article (2).
28.This Russian knew what was to be done (5).
30.ac, 32 down. Gold man with black flag? (4).
33,38. South American race of printers? (4)
34.They're TT – abbrev. (2).
35.Neo-nazis put up this front (8).
38.See 33.
39.United Mick is a newspaper.
43.Insurrectionist, hopefully with a cause (5).
45.A nice sort (4).
48.All right with a union card (2).
49.Stalin's KGB – abbrev (3)
50.Executive Committee of the Communist International – abbrev (4)
51.Bird on a Solo flight (5)
54.Ozzie ostrich (3).
56.Good Christian – abbrev (2).
58.Vic agency that gave 48 ac. to Newport – abbrev (3).
59.Texas teacher did this? (4).
60.Political Economy – abbrev (2).
61.Uranium Co is a Texan cop (6).
63.Long-playing record, or party with one – abbrev (2).
64.Imperialist alliance – abbrev. (4).
65.Fidel's friend (30)
66.He should have stuck to peanut farming (3).
68.A flag – we have found it! (6).
70.Religion for the people (5)
73.It's got to be smashed (5).
76.Tastes good with tonic (3)
78.Beknighted teacher? (3)
80.Energy unit (3).
81.Builders' Jack (6).
83.I am yellow, I wonder? (7).
84.A before a vowel – or a consonant (2).
85.Employer who's a police spy in South Africa? (4)
87.Mightier than the sword, say liberals (3).
88.Liberal dynasty that died recently (4).
89.Mike? He's ma's mate. (2)
90.The mongrel sacked him (7)

Down

1.Acid voyage (4).
2.Source – of Darwin's species (6).
3.Thanks for a baby (2).
4.Soviet dictator (6).
5.Coloured dough should be blackbanned (10)
7.See 19 down.
8.Rub out (5)
9.Known to be an ass (3)
10.Begin's new buddy (5)
12.Uranium miners better beware this gas (5)
13.Is, in the morning? (2)
14.Do it under workers' control (11).
19.and 7. Tactic used by 81 across. (5,3)
22.Follows either, not neither (2)
24.Swiss city not a Rathbone (5).
28.Percy was a great labour leader(?)
29.What they lent Anthony (3).
31.See 30 across.
32.Act, O cook, as a parrot (8)
33.Type of pick that killed 1 ac. (3)
36.Closed (2).
37.Black reserve fighting 66 ac (6)
40.Zionist terror gang (5)
41.Qld Labor abolished the upper one (5)
42.Charming French city (4)
44.Builder's labourer – abbrev. (2)
46.They coalesce with 63 ac – abbrev (3)
47.Marxist logic (10)
48.Sigh in Calcutta (2)
52.Court holds court here abbrev. (2)
53.Peanuts in the Basque country? (3)
55.Piggish kind of chauvinism (4)
57.Afrikaaners' long march (4)
60.Left party in Spanish Civil War – abbrev (4)
62.Militant aboriginal tribe (8)
66.Yugoslav airline – abbrev (3)
67.Viet uncle (2)
69.A menagerie afloat (3)
71.Italian river (2)
72.Employ and exploit (3)
73.Storm troops – abbrev (2)
74.First union to strike over 5 down – abbrev (3)
75.Ethel Rosenberg framed as a Russian one (5)
76.Power comes from its barrel (3)
77.Trendy. (2)
79.PM who got out of his depth (4)
81.Dead Chairman (3)
82.Politzer term for 20 ac (3)
86.Donny Dunny's state – abbrev. (2)
87.Malcolm's one in the afternoon – abbrev. (2)

Solution p.10

Hiroshima Day – and 15,000 march against uranium in Melbourne

Brisbane police brutally arrest two more marchers

Shop stewards in Melbourne cheer a call for General Strike action against the Budget

Chinese expelled from Vietnam during the war with Cambodia, cross the Nenhsi river into China.

The world crisis got deeper...

CHRISTINA Onassis got married, a couple of popes died, and the idiot prince Charles turned thirty.

Reading most newspapers, that would just about sum up the world scene in 1978. But what really happened?

By David Lockwood

For most workers – everywhere – the most important thing about 1978 was the continuation of the world economic crisis.

The world economy kept slowing down and the fundamental problem of the bosses' unwillingness to invest in America and Western Europe remained.

This meant a continuing crisis in key industries – for example, shipbuilding, steel and textiles.

And it has led to a confrontation between the three strongest western economies – the US, West Germany and Japan.

It has also meant an increased attack on workers' living standards all over the world.

But this hasn't gone unchallenged. The US saw a mighty outburst of working class resistance at the beginning of this year, when the miners went on strike for three months.

In response to this, and other signs of movement in the working class, President Jimmy Carter introduced an 'anti-inflation' package at the end of October.

But predictably, while its price controls are to be 'flexible', wage rises are to be held rigidly down to 7 per cent. Organised labour in the US has already promised action against this plan.

Carter though, has more problems of his own. His unpopularity became so worrying that he was forced to stage the elaborate 'Camp David' summit on the Middle East.

Ironically the Camp David agreement saw an end to early 1978's Arab disunity – and it now seems that the Arabs, minus Egypt, will try to present a common front against Israel.

Close by, the working class of Iran erupted into action against the Shah – just when those with investments in the area were congratulating themselves on how stable it was.

battling

In Britain, the year began with the defeat of the firemen's strike. It will end with the Ford workers still battling the 'Labour' government.

The firemen staged a heroic thirteen week strike against the government's ten per cent limit on wage increases. They were only beaten when their own leaders gave in.

This financial year, the government tried to cut the limit down to five percent.

The trade union leaders, and the Labour Party conference refused. This didn't meant much on its own – ritual statements of refusal had been made before.

What made it important was the workers at Ford coming out on strike for a $20 increase and one hour off the day.

This could be the beginning of the long awaited fight back in Britain.

The sophisticated form of social democracy known as 'Eurocommunism' staggered from failure to failure in 1978.

The Union of the Left in France, against all predictions, managed to get itself defeated in the March general elections.

The Union – an alliance of Communists, Socialists and Radicals – was the showpiece of the French Communist Party's new 'eurocommunist' strategy.

In Italy, the Communist Party has been busy sucking up to the right-wing Christian Democratic government all year.

Having distinguished themselves by calling louder than anyone else for repression in the wake of the Aldo More assassination, they spent the rest of the year demanding hard work, wage restraint, larger profit margins – and everything else needed to restore the failing capitalist system.

As a result, they are losing support from the young unemployed, students, radical workers – and even the established trade unions. They made considerable losses in both the local and city elections.

The other major trouble spot for the West has been in Southern Africa.

Probably the most surprising thing to happen was in Rhodesia, where Ian Smith was able to cobble together an unholy alliance known as the 'transitional government', with former militant nationalists Muzorewa and Sithole.

Originally, this may have had some support in the black population.

But the refusal of the guerrilla leaders to come to terms with Smith, and the hopeless failure of the transitional government to be anything but puppets of the white regime, has probably wiped this out.

Meanwhile, in the 'socialist' camp, things aren't all that rosy for the ruling classes either.

The Soviet Union, demonstrating that it wouldn't be talked into providing 'human rights' by Carter or anyone else, initiated a new series of show trials of dissidents.

But it would seem that the dissident movement is growing nonetheless.

Early this year, an Association of Free Trade Unions of Workers was formed – which means that the movement is spreading beyond isolated groups of intellectuals.

At the same time, Vietnam and Cambodia, formerly inseperable allies, are engaged in a border war, with the possibility of Chinese involvement on the Cambodian side.

It's a war that has more to do with the problems of the combatants' state capitalist economies, than with either side being more 'socialist' than the other.

Altogether, it's getting more and more difficult for those with sentimental attachments to the countries in the eastern bloc to maintain that socialism exists in any of them.

In 1978, it became clearer than ever that we live in a world system, in which each component part – capitalist and state capitalist – is dependent on the others.

There is no possibility that any one country can 'opt out' of what Lenin described in 1922 as *"the world market, to which we are subordinated, with which we are bound up, and from which we cannot escape."*

It's a world system – and it needs a world struggle to change it.

A black woman and her two children flee a raid by South African police on a squatter camp

THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT WAS

"Tee-a anyone?" Tamie Fraser in an unaccustomed role, at an auction at Nareen

..and in Australia, the Libs are starting to crack

1978 started out looking distinct[illegible]oomy.

Fresh from a second landslide election [illegible]ry, the Fraser government seemed set to take the o[illegible] against the Labor movement, uranium activists and w[illegible]

By Tom [illegible]coln

The ACTU Special Union Conference added to the gloom with its cowardly compromise on uranium exports.

The unions would fulfill existing contracts, and recommended a ban on future mining only until the ACTU executive thought "adequate safeguards" existed.

This decision was a blow to uranium activists, and especially to the workplace MAUM groups that had been growing.

In the north, it began to look like Bjelke-Petersen was going to get away with his Hitler impersonations.

He gave Fraser himself a hiding over the dispute at Aurukun and Mornington, both men showing how much they really cared about aborigines.

And w[illegible] Brisbane's [illegible]n's Day International [illegible] determined brought a[illegible] demon- attempt to [illegible] march ban strations a[illegible] were growing [illegible] consolat- May brought [illegible]d death ion with the [illegible] tremen- of Pig Iron Bob [illegible]hen and dously successful [illegible] Sydney. Labour Conf[illegible] the rose Morale in [illegible]0-strong again, with a [illegible] May Day march [illegible] National But in June [illegible] Melbourne- Front set up shop [illegible] sensat- a joke in itself [illegible] press. ional billing [illegible] depths It was not [illegible]

of winter that the tide began to turn.

Angered by Fraser's moves to export uranium to Britain and Finland, thousands of people marched on Hiroshima Day in an impressive show of strength.

In Sydney, a militant new gay movement emerged after police bashings in King's Cross.

budget

And then Fraser overstepped himself. His August budget pushed the long-suffering Australian consumer a bit too far, and provoked a powerful response.

Big protest rallies were held in all capital cities, with many workers walking off the job.

In both Melbourne and Sydney groups of demonstrators broke away to march on the Stock Exchange, and in Sydney militant building workers led an invasion of the sacred premises themselves.

Meanwhile in Brisbane, the August 21 mobilisation for civil liberties produced the biggest illegal demonstration for months.

This success drew the left wing of the Labor Party into the civil liberties movement, with Senator George Georges calling for further action.

In September the right suffered three serious reverses. The Northern Lands Council in the Northern Territory faced up to Federal Government intimidation and told Fraser where to stick his uranium proposals.

And while the NLC was later forced into line, the resistance of the aborigines has by no means been broken.

Mary Whitehouse, brought out here by militant wowserdom to attack gays and women, proved to be a flop.

After small rallies in several places, met by militant demonstrators, she was humiliated at Sydney University where 1000 demonstrators swamped her small rally.

The next day demonstrators added insult to injury by hurling pies and cream buns at her outside Sydney Town Hall.

And in Victoria, Dick Hamer was rocked by new scandals. With Ministers being discredited and resigning, Hamer was forced into a by-election in Ballarat.

By October, Liberal Party misfortunes were no longer limited to Victoria.

thrashing

Neville Wran, who had managed to occupy not just the middle ground but the right wing as well, gave the NSW Libs the thrashing of their lives.

Liberal leader and ASIO consort Peter Coleman lost his seat.

About the same time, Bill Knox was dumped as Liberal leader in Queensland. In Victoria, Labor got a 9 percent swing in Ballarat.

So 1978 ends a lot more brightly than it began. Still, there are difficult times ahead.

The Liberals, though hurt at the state level, are still well-organised and entrenched. The Labor Party has won a few battles, but mostly by appealing to conservative sentiments.

An angry US mineworker burns the sell-out contract proposed by his union leaders

A CHRISTMAS KARL

A story of Yuletide struggle

By Nicola Catesby

Menzies was dead.

In the cold, yet spartan atmosphere of his office, Scrooge MacFraser brooded on that inescapable fact.

Menzies, his senior partner, mentor and friend (to the extent that Scrooge had friends) had passed away one evening, lovingly pawing his private cash box. And left him alone! Alone to face the unknown terrors of a struggling corporation, greedy grumbling workers and unfair foreign competition.

But Scrooge hadn't just knuckled under. Braced each morning with a character-building cold shower, he'd built Liberal Enterprises — manufacturers of surgical supports to the gentry — into an aggressive modern firm, A firm of which Menzies himself would have been justly proud.

By a simple, but brilliant economic trick, he'd reduced his workforce by half, by making those that remained work twice as hard. Now if only he could get rid of the rest . . .

He was interrupted in this pleasant line of thought by a disturbance outside. His window was always open to let in character-building fresh air. Looking through the December snow, he saw a motley group of carol singers warbling away on the other side of the street.

clasping

All around, the residents of Dingley-Dell were bustling in and out of gaily decorated shops, clasping what meagre gifts they could afford.

So, thought Scrooge grimly, it's that time of year again. He had mixed feelings about Christmas really. On the one hand, it meant more sales; after all, what better gift than a merry surgical support? But on the other, it meant holidays for his workers — and so, no production.

Still, he'd been threatening them for some time with no holidays at all. They'd been pretty quiet this year too. Maybe now was the time to try it.

Once again, his reverie was interrupted, this time by a respectful — not to say crawling — knock on the door. Howard, a flunky, entered. From a prostrate position, he murmured (mostly into the carpet):

"The workers are asking about the Christmas holiday arrangements sir".

Right, that was it then. Scrooge would put up with so much, but one had to draw the line somewhere. Asking about the holidays — as if they expected them! Next it would be wages, working conditions — where would it all end? This sort of thing had to be nipped in the bud. He decided there and then to cancel Christmas holidays.

The last thing he did, before going for a character building pre-dinner drink, was to put a notice on the works notice-board. It read simply:

"The management will make an announcement tomorrow (December 24) on the subject of work over Christmas"

Betty Crachet wasn't really interest in surgical supports — but she'd spent the best part of the last ten years making them.

At about the same time that Scrooge was thinking about Christmas, Betty was thinking about her job. Of course, you didn't get much time for thinking, what with working three levers and a foot pedal on the machine.

But there were times. It wasn't a good job. There was no getting around it, it was a lousy job. Poor wages,bad conditions, long hours, the lot. And to top it all off, the boss MacFraser, seemed to be getting harder and harder on them.

He'd already sacked half of them — and there were rumours that he wanted to get rid of more.

But what could you do? The number of happy villagers in Dingley-Dell now gaily tripping about without a job was getting ridiculous. And one wrong move at MacFraser's could mean that Betty would join them.

Still, now wasn't the time for such gloomy thoughts. Christmas was here, and the day after tomorrow, she'd be off on holidays with everyone else.

wild-fire

News of Scrooge's notice spread round the factory like wild-fire (or rather, given the condition of the place, like rising damp). They all knew what it meant. Scrooge had been threatening this for months now. The awful prospect of no Christmas holidays was now a reality.

Some of the workers wanted to hold a meeting to see if anything could be done about it. But to most of them there seemed little point. The majority of them, like Betty, just wanted to get home — home to anywhere that wasn't the factory.

After all, it looked like they'd be seeing quite enough of each other over the next few days.

When Scrooge got home that night, he had the satisfying feeling of one who had done what society expected of him.

His workers had put in a day's production, his secretaries had composed, typed and dispatched a sheaf of letters; and finally, his accountant had coaxed him through a couple of juicy tax loop-holes.

All in all, a productive day, thought Scrooge. And with the prospect of cancelling Christmas holidays the next day, he felt really contented.

With that in mind, he retired early. After all, he wanted to be fresh for the frey. Not that there'd be much frey. The workers seemed to acquiesce in what ever new demands he put on them. And with the unemployment situation what it was, there seemed no reason why that wouldn't continue.

equal

Scrooge was asleep. A sound, dreamless sleep, which, all things being equal, would last until morning. But things aren't equal — as Scrooge of all people should have known.

His repose was shattered by a crash. Peering through the darkness, Scrooge could just make out the figure of a large portly man, who apparently had tripped over a chain that was wrapped around him — a chain made, it appeared, out of ballot boxes.

The figure rose with difficulty to its feet; and Scrooge recognised with disbeliefed, the unmistakeable frame of his former partner Menzies.

"Menzies", he said, summoning all the power of his cold logic to the situation, "You're dead."

"Dead yes, but gone never", said the figure, in the measured fruity (some would say pompous) voice reserved for addressing meetings of the stock-holders. "Gone but not forgotten. Hidden but still present. Departed but -"

"Yes, yes" interrupted Scrooge, "but why do you disturb me?"

"I am condemned to haunt the leaders of my company that follow me, to show them the error of our ways.

"I will show you how things could be. I will take you to see a vision of the future — a *future in* which the harmonious interests of employer and employees are as one. And end to confrontation, conciliation above all. A rosy future, which will come-"

"Piss off" said Scrooge. And he turned over and went back to sleep.

In another part of town, Betty Crachet also slept.

But it was a troubled sleep, filled with time clocks, overtime sheets, rapacious machines and arrogant foremen.

As if by cosmic coincidence, she was woken too by a light tapping on the shoulder.

She opened her eyes to see an ethereal figure, in Victorian dress, with a mass of grey hair and beard, and a strangely familiar face. Before she had a chance to speak, he announced:

"I am the spirit of working class consciousness"

"Class what?" said Betty through half shut eyes.

"Consciousness", replied her visitor. "The object is not just to describe the world, but to change it. You've got to be for yourself, not just in yourself. Follow me!"

surprise

So saying, he stepped neatly through the nearest wall, and Betty — much to her own surprise — followed him.

They were soon walking down a long street; one of those streets designed to hold only factories, with no people in mind.

But the factories were very different. Outside nearly all of there were signs nailed on the gates:

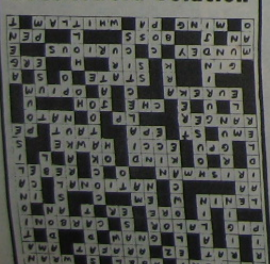
"We demand the Right to Work", "No layoffs, No sackings", "The full claim" and so on. Around some of them, groups of men and women stood, with the obvious intention of stopping inward and outward movement.

"Where are we", asked Betty.

"The future", said her spirit. "Gosh, just look how the past is

Continued p11

Battlerword Solution



The Battler asks the question

IS IT REALLY CRICKET?

By Tony Roberts

ABOVE: Workmates congratulate plumber Bill Lawry on his Test selection.
BELOW: Good Riddance! Tory candidate and snob "Lord Ted" Dexter is brilliantly caught in a County game for three.

WHO'S captaining the major cricket teams in Australia this summer?

Mike Brearley, Graham Yallop, Ian Chappell, Tony Greig. All former public schoolboys — and Chappell and Yallop are company directors as well.

It's amazing how, for a game that people of all classes play and follow, the top jobs in cricket are still firmly in the grip of the old school tie.

Bill Lawry is about the only solid working-class, Labor-voting captain Australia has had in living memory. ("Lord Ted" Dexter used to make derogatory remarks about his plumber background.)

Lawry also copped the most humiliating dumping ever given to an Australian captain by the Australian Cricket Board.

control

In England after 50 years of appointing blue-blooded amateur captains, the M.C.C. finally picked professional Len Hutton in 1952. Some of the more neanderthal M.C.C. members immediately resigned in protest. Until the late 1950's, all West Indian teams were captained by white plantation owners. Last century, Test Players actually elect their own captains and managers.

All this ended when the M.C.C. took control of English Test sides in 1903, and the Australian Board of Control (now Cricket Board) formed in 1905.

English sides came firmly under control of bluebloods such as Sir Pelham Warner and even the Duke of Norfolk.

Mediocre amateurs captained for a tour and dropped from sight, while great professionals kept on taking orders from the next upper-class twit sent by Lords to lead them.

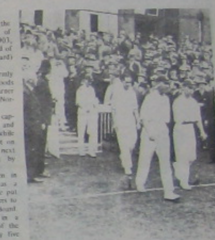
This didn't happen in Australia. Probably as a result of the resistance put up by early Test players to interference by the Board.

This culminated in a sensational boycott of the 1912 English tour by five top players.

The Australian players wanted Victorian Test bowler Frank Laver as manager. But the Board was determined to appoint someone else.

This led to a spectacular first fight around the selection table between Australian captain Clem Hill and Board man Peter McAlister.

Hill, Victor Trumper, Warwick Armstrong, Tobby Cotter and Vernon Ransford — five of Australia's greatest players — pulled out of the side in protest.



History is made as champion Jack Hobbs becomes the first professional to captain England in 1926. Hobbs, seen leading the side out at Old Trafford, only got his chance when amateur A.W.Carr became ill during the match.

sovereigns

Naturally, the 1912 side was the weakest touring side ever.

Politics and class are not just confined to cricket captaincy. If you're from the ruling-class, you get a big head start right through cricket.

A classic example was the Nawab of Pataudi (senior), an Indian prince who played for England.

At his private net in his mansion in India, he had a unique way of getting practice.

He'd put gold sovereigns on top of the three stumps, then get urchins in off the street to bowl at him for hours.

They went unpaid for their efforts. To earn anything, they had to knock the gold sovereigns off the stumps and then they could keep them.

The facilities laid on at private schools give upper class kids a flying start too.

Scotch College in Melbourne has eight turf wickets. Most state high schools are lucky to have one or two concrete pitches.

For over a century, the English system has involved hiring promising young working-class players at age 15-18 as "ground professionals" for county clubs.

They work full-time on ground maintenance at apprentice rates, and serve as hack bowlers to batsmen practising in the nets.

If they're lucky, they'll be "capped" (get a regular game) within five or six years. But of course, most don't and drift out of the game.

Earlier this century in England, professionals had to use different hotels, dressing-rooms and even gates to walk onto the ground.

beer

Working-class players haven't merely had to grin and bear the amateur Blimps. Some have suffered grievous disciplinary action.

Bobby Peel of Yorkshire was a great Test spinner of the 1880's and 90's. But he like a beer.

One day he turned up pissed at a game. His captain, Lord Hawke, summarily kicked him out of the game for life.

It is widely believed that fast bowler Les Jackson, a Derbyshire miner, and spinner Bert Ironmonger, a Melbourne garbo, missed out on many Test tours because they were "Soap-slurpers" and didn't say the right "make" things to lords and ladies.

The pros didn't always take this on the chin.

After the 1873-74 tour of Australia, when professionals got total wages of $170 against the rumoured $1500 "expenses" for champion amateur (!) W.G. Grace, things were bound to come to a head.

In 1880, several players for Notts — a leading pro county — threatened to strike if they didn't get $20 for the match against the touring Australians. They won.

So when players again began demanding more in the early 1970's, the reaction of cricket's bureaucrats was predictable.

"We can always pick from 500,000 others", Australian Board Secretary Alan Barnes said when Ian Chappell raised the issue in 1974-75.

They soon got their chance, with the advent of Packer cricket in 1977.

The tragedy is that the cricket world is now caught between the commercial selfishness of one member of the ruling class, and the feudal attitudes of the cricket bureaucrats.

We can now watch Test cricket played by Mickey Mouse test cricketers, or Test cricketers playing Mickey Mouse cricket.

A CHRISTMAS KARL CONT.

weighing like a nightmare. Never mind — here we are."

They had reached the end of the street, and a factory with more than the usual number of workers round the gate. They opened it and let them in.

Inside, the factory wasn't empty like others in fact, it seemed that it was housing its own workers and their families.

"The workers have occupied their factory and are refusing to leave until their demands are met", explained the spirit. Betty asked why. "Ask one of the workers"

When she did so she was told: "Well, management tried to take our holidays off us, didn't they? Course that was just the last straw — they've been working up to it all year. They were going to sack a whole lot of us too.

"So we'd just had enough. We moved in and we're not going to move out.

"It's not just here either. This sort of thing's happening all over the country."

consciousness

Suddenly, Betty began to recognise the factory — and the people in it. And she began to see what it all meant. "Working class consciousness"? Just a fancy name to say that if you're attacked, you defend yourself. And if you're united you can't lose — you can go on the offensive.

"The task of the class itself" muttered the spirit; and Betty was back in her bed in Dingley-Dell, thinking over what she had seen that night.

The next day was the day before Christmas.

Scrooge got to the factory early — but the workers had got there earlier.

"They're simple decent people, if somewhat communist inclined!"

They'd taken over the place, and were waiting for Scrooge in the cold yet spartan atmosphere of his office. Scrooge was dismayed to say the least. But the workers were ecstatic.

Because Christmas you see — and for that matter, happiness itself — is a class question.

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Phil Griffiths gets the dope on a new movie:

The jail pimp "negotiates" with another inmate

EXPRESS TO NOWHERE

"MIDNIGHT Express" is going to be a very controversial movie when (and if) it opens in Australia on December 7.

It tells the story of an all-American college kid, Billy Hayes, who is busted at Istanbul Airport carrying a couple of kilos of finest Turkish hashish.

He goes to court, gets four years, and just before he's due to be released an appeal by the prosecutor is upheld. His sentence is increased to thirty years.

He ends up in the jail's insane section and eventually escapes when he accidentally kills one of the warders.

A very typical story, with over 100 young Australians and thousands of Americans doing time in overseas jails for drug offences.

struggle

This is not a pretty picture. It concentrates on Billy's struggle for survival in a foreign jail, with the difficulty of being forced to cope with foreign customs as well as the standard brutality, sadism and madness of all jail systems.

At first, he is patheticly lost, like a little boy being separated from his home. Then, he becomes hardened and embittered as he struggles with jail life.

He is beaten sadistically when he is first locked up, beaten when he participates in an escape plot and has continual fights with the jail pimp (who also supplies most contraband in the place).

The pimp fingers Billy's friend and on the day the pimp is being released, Billy attacks and kills him, biting his tongue off.

The critics of this film, who accuse it of racism, have a field day with the retrial scene.

Billy, having endured four years of hell, is faced with a retrial dictated by political expediency and breaks down attacking Turkish justice when his new sentence is passed.

There is no doubt that there is the usual dose of xenophobia you'd expect from any American movie.

The movie makers would not have been thanked for pointing out that trials like Billy's in Turkey, have been largely dictated by American domestic policy.

Hashish was legal for about 500 years in Turkey and most other Middle Eastern countries, until the U.S. Government pressured the local regimes to ban it.

There are no human sympathetic Turkish people in this movie. Not surprising, since the only Turkish characters are screws, judges, cops and other forms of bureaucratic scum.

And (not surprisingly) the Europeans are kept apart in a separate division of the jail.

But it's not as if these incidents only occur in Turkey. Ask Keith Faure (currently in Pentridge Maximum Security) how it feels to have the prosecution appeal against your sentence.

victims

Ask Joan Little (a black American woman) how it feels to be raped by a warder and then tried for killing him.

Or thousands of Australians and Americans who've been victims of legal corruption and deals with the prosecution. Ask them how they feel.

It's not as if Americans are idealised. Billy's dad is shown as a loving middle-class dickhead whose response to Turkey is to hide in the Hilton eating steak with lots of ketchup.

reveals

Billy reveals he was smuggling the hash back home for money (not even for a couple of years great smoking) and his escape is purely a matter of total luck, not the usual "We're the greatest" ingenious escape scenes that are standard in American movies.

This is a very powerful movie from Alan Parker, who made the kiddie masterpiece "Bugsy Malone." The scenes in the mental division are particularly harrowing.

It's worth seeing because tens of thousand of people are being locked away in both local and overseas jails for the "terrible crime" of smoking and smuggling dope.

by Phil Griffiths

Billy is led away for his second trial

SUBURBAN BOY MAKES GOOD

DAVE Warner's ambition is to outsell Skyhooks' "Living in the 70's". In a lot of ways, he deserves to.

"Mug's Game" is one of the most original albums to come out of Australia in recent years.

You might have heard the singel, "Suburban Boy", on the radio. It's a fair indication of what Dave Warner's From the Suburbs are on about.

Like Greg Macainsh, Warner writes about aspects of Australian life. His outlook is slightly different though.

He speaks as a representative of the Suburban Army (his term), who he sees as a group of outsiders.

Outsiders aren't"cool" or "trendy". They are uncomfortable and ill at ease in a world where you have to play the game to get ahead.

attitudes

But to Dave Warner, it's a Mug's Game. He doesn't want to fit in, he wants to get rid of the game.

A lot of the songs send up Ocker attitudes. In "Convict Streak", Warner sings as an Australian's Australian.

While the lyrics are very funny, it's not a pretty picture. But it's spot on.

"Suburban Boy" is about being on the outside. Going to the footy, going to the pub, watching TV on Saturday nights, waking up alone every morning: loneliness."*And I know what it's likr to be rejected every night, and I'm sure that it must be easier for boys from the city.*"

The album's masterpiece is the final track, "Mug's Game" This is one of several monologues Warner performs on stage.

Hopefully some of the others will be on his next record, already in the making.

The Mug's Game is going out on Friday night, trying to score. Like all of Warner's songs, it is told very much from a malepoint of view.

But it's not sexist, because Warner is portraying the attitudes which are all too common in the average Australian male. (*"You hit the pub at nine and you're looking for a root . . . ."*)

The games and rituals are accurately and hilariously described.

The main characters are Derek (sales rep with a Dennis Lillee moustache, he drives a Celica, is 27 but looks 32 and is trying to look 21) and Sandra (22, doctor's receptionist, wearing all the latest gear).

Derek and Sandra meet on the dance floor, and after 3 minutes discover a "bond" between them.

Derek uses the classic lines to get her back to his place (complete with water-bed) and the inevitable happens.

It's a mug's game, and Warner despises it. The ritual, the pretence, the games.

respected

"All I want is to be respected for who I am, and fo you to be respected for who you are.

"No more Bee Gees, no more Wella hair shampoo, no more Bic throwaway razors.

"I'm waiting for the day when the Dereks and Sandras will be on the outside, condemned to an eternity of Australian Friday nights . . ."

Well, maybe after the revolution.

Dave Warner has a lot to say, and he says it very well. His lyrics are witty, honest and often very funny. The music is great too.

I only hope he doesn't become a hero to the very people he puts down, like Barry Humphries did.

But Australia being what it is, it's all too probable.

by Tess Lee-Ack

The spray that kills

By Janey Stone

IN January 1977, the sports oval in the Victorian country town of Sale was sprayed with the herbicide 2,4-D.

A few months later, four women living opposite the oval gave birth to children with major deformities, and a fifth miscarried.

In another series of deformities and still-births in Mossman (Qld), the same herbicide, and another called 2,4,5-T, are suspected.

Both herbicides are completely banned in Holland, Italy and Sweden, and severely restricted in the rest of Europe, the US and Canada.

Yet the Victorian Health Minister, Mr Houghton, continues to shilly-shally.

His only concession has been to consider a limited ban for "psychological reasons" because of the "emotional reaction" of the public.

And he has gathered a friendly group of scientists to support his contention that there is absolutely no evidence to link 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T with birth defects.

In fact, there is evidence. Among scientists it is controversial, not settled.

But by concentrating on birth defects Houghton is avoiding the main question.

Take 2,4,5-T. In itself, it might be safe. But dioxin, which usually contaminates it, is accepted as one of the most poisonous substances known.

There have been several accidents involving dioxin.

The best known was in the Italian town of Seveso in 1976, where it caused fifty-one spontaneous abortions.

Australian law allows .1 part per millon of dioxin in 2,4,5-T.

But experiments in America have found it causes birth defects when over .0001 parts per million.

2,4-D is little better. One scientist from the Department of Primary Industry claims: *"There's never been a shadow cast on 2,4-D."*

Obviously he hasn't had to work with the stuff. Workers who do, complain of nausea, dizziness, fatigue and skin conditions.

Fortunately, no-one is just waiting around for Houghton to pull his finger out.

The Sale City Council banned the herbicides last month. Other Victorian country towns are considering doing the same.

And the AWU is surveying its members' health.

All workers in the Lands Department who handle the herbicides are in the union – so a ban by them would be very effective.

What's On

MELB. — SAT DEC 2, SUN DEC 3
Conference on Sexism in Schools. Princes Hill High School Arnold St, North Carlton.
10am-4pm
For further information contact Judy Munro 82 6081

MELB — TUES DEC 5
Melbourne I.S. general meeting. Topic the Middle East. 7.30 Unitarian Church, Grey St. All Melbourne members to attend; friends of IS welcome. For further info contact 376 2783

MELB — SAT DEC 9
Campaign Against Repression meeting. Society 5 126 Franklin St, City 2 pm

MELB — SUN DEC 10
I.S. Bush day. Sherbrooke Forest 12.00 onwards Fun and Games; For information contact Janey on 913548

MELB — SUN DEC 10
Demonstration against Pentridge bashers. 2.00 pm Main gate, Pentridge Organised by IWW

MELB — TUES DEC 12
Melbourne South I.S. branch meeting. Technology and change 7.30 pm Friends of IS welcome for further information contact Janey on 913548

MELB — SUN DEC 17
I.S. Fete – barbeque and jumble sale 39 Valley Pde Glen Iris 1.30 pm. $2.00

BRIS
Queensland Civil Liberties Campaign General meetings each Monday 7.30 Trades Hall. Trade Unionists should contact Trade Union Civil Liberties Committee Room 23 Trades Hall, phone 2293190

SYDNEY — SUN DEC 3
I.S. branch meeting 111 Enmore Rd, Newtown. 7 pm Friends of IS welcome Speaker, George Peterson Topic, Building the Left in Europe.

SYDNEY — SAT DEC 9
Fete for Stock Exchange ten defence and Women Behind Bars. Behind Tin Sheds, Sydney Uni City Rd

BOLSHEVIKS TOO BUREAUCRATIC

Russia 1921: Decimated by world war, then civil war. But did it necessitate dictatorship?

Dear Battlers,

Some comments on Tom O'Lincoln's article "What About Russia" in Battler no. 60.

Two essential conditions are necessary for socialism. One is an advanced industrial economy.

The other is a revolutionary process where workers smash the capitalist state and establish their own organs of proletarian-democratic power.

With the defeat of the European revolution in the early 1920's, concrete socialist construction in Russia was not possible. Europe's industrial economy could not be used to develop backward Russia.

This meant a 'holding operation' was required, where the other essential feature of socialist revolution – the dynamic of workers' democracy – was maintained until utilization of advanced industry was possible in the future.

Objective conditions worked against perservation of workers' democracy. The civil war dispersed workers as a class, many were killed.

While O'Lincoln is correct in stating the working class virtually ceased to exist as a social force, his conclusion that this was an unavoidable consequence of the war, ignores deficiencies in Bolshevik practice.

workers

Good leadership from the Bolshevik could have reorganised workers remaining in cities (in 1921,still half the 1917 figure) into effective workplace councils and unions, which could have re-established the workers' presence (if not dominance) as a social class.

The Bolsheviks didn't do this because they had come to rely on bureaucratic rather than political methods.

This was demonstrated by their suppression of the factory committees and introduction of one-person management (in Lenin's words, 'absolute dictatorship in the workplace') before and during the civil war.

The continuing workers' political institutions, the soviets, were rendered ineffective without power at the pointof production.

The Bolsheviks took centralisation to the extreme by suppressing worker initiative at the local industrial level.

Lenin acknowledged the centrality of the factory committees in the revolution when, in mid-1917, he dropped his slogan "All power to the soviets", and urged greater effort in building the workplace-council movement. The committees were dismantling capitalism at a rapid rate.

But Lenin's temporary support for the factory committees was one of opportunism, rather than believing in local worker-control as an important aspect in defeating the counter-revolution.

In the civil war crisis, it was necessary to suppress those elements which were working against the war effort. But this did not necessitate an across-the board dictatorship in the workplace.

Maintenance of local-issue decision-making for factorycouncils co-operating in the war, would have preserved some scope for worker initiative.

Not any easy task, but then, political solutions are always more difficult than bureaucratic ones.

The counter-revolutionary crisis was, of course, an extremely changeable situation. There was no guarrantee that any aspect of the revolution could survive.

defect

But the Bolsheviks' paternalist politics ("we'll do everything in the workplace for the workers") ensured defeat.

When Trotsky called for return to a very limited form of workers' democracy in 1923, it was too late. Bourgeois elements had already swamped the party and bureaucracy.

Which demonstrates the necessity of correct revolutionary politics in times of crisis. We must learn from the Russian experience.

All revolutions experience chaos and the threat of counter-revolution. Our response to these problems will measure our potential to protect and build the future socialist revolution in Australia.

Phil Ilton,
Melbourne

Dear Battlers,

CUT THE LIES!

Dear Battlers,

As a reader of your paper and a person in sympathy with your general aims of attacking those forces which are bleeding and exploiting the great mass of working people in this country, I feel I must reply to the inaccurate, deceptive and blatantly dishonest article submitted to your paper by Marcus Banks, APTU, Central Mail Exchange (page 10, 21 October 1978).

In this article Mr. Banks informed readers that a survey of our members was carried out to obtain their views on industrial action. This is basically correct, and the Victorian Branch received a very good response of 70% in favour of action.

But from here on, Mr.Banks gets right off the rails. He refers to a petition calling for a special lunch-time meeting at Unity Hall.

members

This Branch of the APTU has over 12,500 members, most of whom work outside the central business district. They would not have been able to attend such a meeting.

As the issue was of such an important nature it was decided to hold the meeting at the Victorian Trades Hall in the evening, when most of the membership could attend. We publicised the meeting at every work place throughout the State.

The recommendations of the meetings were constructive and were forwarded to our Federal Executive. They were forwarded to the Federal Executive because our union is a Federal union, and State Branch recommendations must be consolidated. When this is done a log of claims will be prepared and served on Telecom and Australia Post.

Now, referring back to the union survey – Mr.Banks states that it arose as a result of the meeting. This is blatantly incorrect. But as Mr.Banks has not long been a member of this union, he may not be aware that this initiative arose out of a motion put by the Victorian Branch of the union to the July meeting of the Federal Executive.

He may also be unaware that the Victorian Branch of the APTU has for some time been calling on CAGEO and the ACTU to break with the repressive indexation guidelines. I personally moved such a motion at a meeting of the Victorian Division of CAGEO with the support of the ATEA, only to see it decimated by an amendment.

realise

When Mr.Banks has been a member of this union long enough to know what we are all about, he will realise that the Victorian Branch of the APTU has and will continue to have a progressive and militant attitude in protecting and improving the conditions of its members.

David B. Bowler,
Branch Secretary
Australian Postal &
Telecom Union

Marcus Banks replies:

Mr Bowler is correct in stating that the wages survey conducted by the APTU originated before we organised the petition at work. This was an honest (but careless) mistake on my part and was not intended to be deceptive.

The rest of his article is just a steady stream of bullshit. Mr Bowler's assertion that the State Executive is "progressive and militant" would be greeted by howls of laughter in my work place.

He states "the Victorian branch of the APTU has for some time been calling on CAGEO and the ACTU to break with the repressive indexation guidelines."

Great. At the CAGEO meeting on August 31, David Bowler supported a motion calling for workplace discussions to be held over the Budget. At that meeting in the Town Hall, a tougher motion calling for four-hour stop work meetings was passed. The anger at the meeting was obvious.

Has the APTU organised any workplace discussions? No.

A genuinely militant union backs up its rhetoric with action. The action we called for was a lunch-time meeting over indexation.

Mr Bowler himself agreed with me over the telephone that it would be worthwhile to hold such a meeting "down the road at Unity Hall" (his words). But this turned out to be just more rhetoric.

The argument that 12,500 member of the union should have the opportunity to come to the meeting is really a red herring. Fewer than fifty people usually attend night-time general meetings. The meeting they did hold at Trades Hall attracted about 80 people.

But surely if the State Executive was sincerely worried about the membership not being able to attend, they could have called a four-hour stop work – as suggested by the CAGEO meeting.

Our "progressive and militant" State Executive seems to be afraid of large gatherings of its membership. And with policies like the one they've suggested against the new Telecom satellite system:

"one way of doing this is for all members to relay their objections to their local member of Federal Parliament" –

I'm not surprised.

Marcus Banks
APTU

What We Stand For

Workers' Power

Workers' control over the whole of society, based on workers' control of the factories and workplaces. Only the organised working class has the power to create a society free of exploitation, oppression and want. Russia and China are not socialist because they are based on the exploitation of workers by a bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolution, not Reformism

We believe in overthrowing the capitalist system, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it.

Smashing the Capitalist State

The state – parliament, courts, the law – is a weapon of class rule and can never be used to serve the interests of the working class. There is no Parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

A socialist revolution cannot survive in one country. It must help build revolutions in other countries or it will be defeated like the Russian revolution of 1917. We are building an international movement, opposed to patriotism and working to overcome national divisions.

Full Equality and Liberation

For women, blacks, migrants and all oppressed groups. Racism, sexism and discrimination against migrant peoples are all pillars of the capitalist system. We are opposed to the social persecution of homosexuals.

Revolutionary Party

To smash the capitalist state, we need a revolutionary party, organised and built in the workplaces. Without a revolutionary party, the struggles of workers will be crushed.

Rank and File Organisation

Workers need their own rank and file organisations to fight the bosses when the paid officials are unwilling. We work to bring them under rank and file control.

I.S. works to build a revolutionary party of the struggles workers are waging today. We fight for a program of industrial and social demands that can strengthen the self confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

If thats the sort of work you want to do: JOIN US!

Write to The Battler: P.O. Box 46 Flemington, Vic 3031

How to contact the International Socialists

BATTLER EDITORIAL PO Box 46, Flemington, Vic 3031 24 hour answering and message machine	376 9142 376 2783
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SYDNEY 111 Enmore Rd., Newtown 2042	51 3665
ADELAIDE PO Box 139, Unley, S.A., 5061	49 7939
CANBERRA PO Box 1165, Canberra City, ACT. 2601	49 6405
BRISBANE PO Box 99, St. Lucia, Qld 4067	358 3978
IPSWICH, QLD.	281 6113

Fighting Fund

The fighting fund last issue raised $246.62. Our thanks to:

Adelaide Branch	4.00
Melb NW Branch Cup Eve Dinner	46.00
VSTA strikers	1.40
Canberra Branch	1.00
D.W.	1.00
Brisbane Branch	51.60
Brisbane Anti-Fraser Badges	4.00
Sydney Branch Jumble Sale	78.48
Sydney Branch Party	46.00
Sydney Branch Donations	3.00
H.C.	1.00
G.L.	1.00
Gay Comrades	2.00
Clayton Shoppers	5.14
M.H.	1.00
TOTAL	246.62

UNITED LEBANESE COMMUNISTS

Cabaret Night

Saturday 9th December at 7.30 pm

Newtown Police Citizens Boys Club
15 Erskineville Rd
Tickets $8 – Dinner included

phone 51 3665 for bookings and information

I want to join the International Socialists

NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE NO.
TRADE UNION
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Clip and Post to: IS National Secretary PO Box 46 Flemington, 3031

THE BATTLER 5 April 1975

PTC bureaucrats derailed

Bob Pringle addresses PTC workers during the Transport House occupation.

NSE railway construction workers have won a resounding victory against bureaucrats in the PTC.

Last year, after a 4 week strike, the construction workers, all members of the AWU, had won a 32 hours a month wet weather agreement with the same condition as builders labourers. This was agreed in a decision by State Transport Minister Peter Cox.

But the PTC bureaucrats decided simply to over-ride this decision and they set out to sabotage it.

The site engineers were abiding by the new agreement. But PTC officers were trying to get the AWU to sign an agreement which was actually different than the agreement decided by Cox.

Tony Perera, secretary of the AWU Construction Workers Negotiating Committee, said: *"They used cunning words to try to confuse things and make us work in the rain.*

"We spent three months continuously negotiating. Then they sent a letter to the Minister and said we'd re rejected the agreement."

The construction workers went out the gate on Thursday 9th November. The next Monday they held a meeting in Wynyard Park, so that they could make their views to the PTC, who have offices opposite the park.

sabotaging

The delegates and union organiser went in to see the bureaucrats responsible for sabotaing the agreement, Allen SMith and Viv May, who reacted very arrogantly.

Smith and May had an appointment with Cox at 11 that morning. So the mass meeting of workers decided to march over to Cox's office, to encourage Cox not to do a deal with the PTC officers.

About 170 men occupied the foyer of Transport House — while AWU officials, Charley Oliver and Digby Young met with Cox and the PTC. The Minister refused the workers' demand that union delegates should be present at this meeting.

The meeting with Cox left a couple of points unsettle. With the document still not signed, the men decided to stay out and meet again on Wednesday, giving the PTC a chance to make a better reply.

The pressure worked. Wednesday's meeting was told that the PTC had conceded all their wet weather demands.

They returned to work the next day, but still had bans on for lost time.

One of the bans is on removal of a Bailey bridge in Martin Place where contract labour had been brought in during the strike. The labourers had not known this was a PTC job.

In fact, the PTC's tricks nearly brought on a tragedy. Because the workers were new to the particular job, the bridge collapsed squeezing a brand new compressor and nearly killing two workers.

Tony Perera addresses PTC workers before the march

Delegates cop $464 costs

SYDNEY AWU delegates Max Callaghan and Tony Perera have been charged $464 costs in their court case.

The court case was over them allegedly using indecent language on a Public Tranport Commission construction site.

The $464 includes the court costs of police witnesses.

The magistrate, who described the offence as "trivial", ordered that it shouldn't be recorded.

The magistrate repeatedly claimed that it was irrelevant that the charges came out of an industrial dispute.

But unionists working for the PTC don't agree. Many PTC construction site delegates were in court, as well as delegates from the Chullora railway workshops.

After the court case, Brian Dummett, assistant secretary of the Combined Transport Union Committee at Chullora, commented that delegates would now be reluctant to enter negotiations with the PTC, since they'd be liable to be hauled into court on similar charges.

PTC workers aim to take action to get the PTC to pay the $464, and to give safeguards that similar actions will not be taken against other delegates.

Women unionists organise

ON Friday, 24th November, 40 women attended a public meeting held in Brisbane to publicize the formation of a committee of women unionists to promote the A.C.T.U. Charter for working women.

Similar committees have been operating in other states for some time since the A.C.T.U. adopted the Charter in March, 1977.

At present the T.L.C. requires that members of the committee be delegates of affiliated unions. But with that system of setting up a committee, we'll be waiting ten years before it's off the ground.

Only two delegates have been nominated so far but there are many ineligible women unionists who wish to be on such a committee.

Had the T.L.C. called for an open committee of interested women members of affiliated unions i.e. not requiring delegation from each union, then we would be able to start doing things right now.

The meeting passed a resolution asking for a full time co-ordinator of the committee, but as usual the A.C.T.U. isn't prepared to back their sentiment with the necessary money.

It seems that once again it will take pressure from rank and file women workers, before Union officials will take up the issues that effect working women.

by *Chris Rose* and Judy McVey

ABC TO STRIKE AGAIN?

Militant ABC workers meet in Sydney

ABC Staff Association members in NSW are back at work after significant gains at this stage of the dispute.

At the centre of the dispute is the demand for a staff-elected commissioner — a position which was recently abolished.

Cuts in funding and staff are also major issues.

The strike began on Tuesday November 14th with bans on the broadcasting of parliament.

On Thursday the action was stepped up to a full strike because of the stand-down of Lionel Barr the operator who pulled the plug on parliament.

Lionel Barr

lifted

On Tuesday 22nd November, the strike was lifted following the unconditional reinstatement of Lionel Barr and the beginning of negotiations over the matters in dispute.

Managment had also conceded a demand that two members of the Industria Action Co-ordinating Committee and two members of the NSW branch of the Staff Association be included in the negotiations.

Before this, management had at times refused to speak to NSW branch members.

The Thursday meeting was the one which set the terms for a resumption of work.

It was a large meeting, with over 1,000 members attending. It was also very militant — apparently more militant than the Co-ordinating Committee had expected.

Their rather weak demand for "the provision of adequate representation of staff at the policy making level of the ABC" had to be amended from the floor to a demand for a staff-elected commissioner!

The ABC staff have won the first round, but the issues are by no means resolved.

ACOA members win meeting

AT least one week before the Christmas break, a special general meeting (SGM) of the Victorian ACOA will be held to discuss the issues of staff ceilings and wages.

This is almost certainly the first time that the Victorian membership has forced such a meeting.

Members of the ACOA Reform Group circulated a petition which secured the 1150 signatures (ten percent of the branch membership) required to convene an SGM.

Wages and staff ceilings have been the two largest of a lot of issues smouldering with public servants since 1975.

Like all other workers, public servants have lost money through partial indexation. But in the Budget, Fraser actually threatened to pay no further Arbitration rises to Federal public servants.

An Indexation decision in the next few weeks gives him a chance to put public servants' wages where his mouth is.

Staff ceilings is probably the issue that ranklies most with public servants.

declining

Three years of "natural wastage" and declining recruitment have left those public servants who still do have jobs with more work — but less organisation and resources to cope with it.

And now Fraser wants to see another 2500 public servants sacked by June to get the numbers down further.

Just about everyone wants something done. A CAGEO mass meeting at the Melbourne Town Hall in August voted overwhelmingly in favour of four hour stoppages to discuss action.

When ACOA branch officails delayed matters by holding a spot plebiscite of members, most social welfare-type departments endorsed the stoppages two or three to one. The Bureau of Statistics has already held theirs.

But it's become obvious that with the do-nothing attitude of the branch officials, action in individual sections will achieve nothing.

An SGM has the advantage of discussing only the issues for which it is called.

And if it passes the motions proposed by the Reform Group, it will commit the whole Victorian branch to action on staff ceilings, and will give a strong push to the Federal Executive to submit a catch-up wage claim to the Public service Arbitrator.

by an ACOA member

"ONE OUT, ALL OUT!"

"One out, all out!" was the unanimous and traditional decision made at a mass meeting at the Williamstown Naval Dockyards.

This was in response to the standing down of 34 welders and joiners as a result of a three wekk strike by the Electrical Trades Union (ETO) workers.

The ETU were out as a result of management's breaking of accepted normal working practices. The management wanted to take on the responsibility of operating and maintaining the temporary venting and lighting of the ships on night shift.

This should be done by a qualified tradesperson and of course it would have been at the expense of the workers' safety. The managment not only broke an agreement they had made on shift work, but tried to use emergency wartime clauses to do so. (Maybe the Middle East War has escalated).

The ETU, not being a member of the shop committee (for reasons I don't understand), decided to strike over this issue, because they were directly affected.

They had to wait for management to stand down other workers before they got support, and it wasn't until the rest of is threatened to take action that management agreed to negotiate.

We were out two and a half days and the hard-line local management were over-ruled by their superiors in Canberra.

This was done in conference with the unions and the shop committee, and the local management was proved to be in the wrong.

Even with this victory, I feel we could have used the conference to sort out other misleading clauses in the agreement. And it seems a shame that we were right but we had to lose two and a half days' pay to prove it.

I think the ETU should learn from this and join the shop committee, for our strength is in unity.

by an AMWSU member

Newlands

CLASSES in the laundry. A library that you can't use because lessons are being taken there. And a "soccer field" that hasn't even got soccer goals.

These are just a few of the complaints that have brought students at Newlands High School, in Melbourne's northern suburbs, out on strike for a week.

The strike started, oddly enough, in the girls' toilets.

allowed

That's where Form Four girls go if they want to smoke — a privilege that is only allowed for teachers and Form Six students.

Three Form Four girls started to discuss why they had to put up with it all and came up with the idea of a strike.

Debbie Mack, one of the three said, *"We went out and mentioned it to our class, and the word just went around the school."*

Cathy Bickley, student rep on the School Council and another of the strike leaders, said,

"I was in Form Five and we didn't hear much about it. But then we heard the racket.

"It was so rewarding walking out and seeing everyone out there."

"We had a meeting outside. We expected the teachers to come outside to tell us to go back to class.

"When they did, we all sat down. They're not going to pick up 600 of us to carry us back inside."

The students marched to Preston to present their demands to the Education Department regional director, Rosscollier.

But his office had shifted, so they arranged a delegation to see him.

Rosscollier first whittled the delegation down to three students.

When they met him, he was flanked by two other Education Department heavies — a pathetic attempt to intimidate the students.

"They were so rude. They wouldn't commit themselves," said Cathy. *"Rosscollier would smirk when you'd ask a question — you felt like you were at fault."*

The students have gone back for a week while they wait for an appointment to see the Minister for Education, Lindsay Thompson.

Cathy Bickley and Debbie Mack think there'll be more strike action if Thompson refuses to see them.

During the strike, the students had good co-operation from the teachers, who deferred several exams.

As one teacher told a meeting with parents — this is a real education for the students, finding out what you have to go through to change things.

"It's the working-class schools that get neglected," said Cathy, *"not the business areas."*

"I think the Government doesn't want to notice us so they don't have to spend the money."

Out for a fair deal from the Government — striking Newlands High School students

STUDENTS STRIKE!

Albert Park

STUDENTS at Albert Park High School took strike action on November 6 to prevent the transfer of two of their migrant English teachers.

About three quarters of the kids at Albert Park High come from migrant families; and as one of them said:

"Albert Park High is understaffed as it is — there just aren't enough teachers."

So when news got round that two migrant Enlgish teachers were to be 'declared in excess' — transferred — they were justifiably angry.

One of the striking students, Vicki told The Battler:

"The migrants at this school need a hell of a lot of help. They were only saying the other day how well the migrants were doing. If these transfers go through, it'll just mean they're pushing them down again."

The teachers held a stop-work meeting at ten o'clock. They've since been in the forefront of the campaign to defend migrant English teaching in the inner city.

Cathy, one of the organisers of the student strike, told The Battler that at first the students had waited in the courtyard for the teachers' stop-work to finish. But then they decided to go on strike too. They led about 150 students out of the school for a meeting across the road.

Another organiser, Darren, said:

"It's only fair to the Greeks and Italians that they get the same education that we do — and they won't without the migrant English teachers."

The teachers went back to work after lunch — but the students decided to stay on strike. A delegation took the petition up to the staff, and explained why they were staying out.

Kelly, a student from a migrant family, said:

"It was a migrant English teacher that talked me into staying at school."

She added:

"I've always supported teachers' strikes and gone along to the rallies."

With more united actions between students and teachers, the campaign to defend migrant English teachers could really get off the ground.

the WORK TOLL

WORK Toll has received an interesting item from Rhonda Burke, a nurse.

Occasionally, one comes across an almost comical safety harard.

It might seem ironic that those people we entrust with researching the effects of work on workers, the medical profession, is blind to a health risk which occurs daily in he operating theatres of many hospitals.

And it affects the health of doctors and nurses most.

We picture those working operating theatres as wearing gowns and gloves and masks. What could be risky in that?

The answer is simply that many of those masks are made of fibreglass — a substance which could be almost as dangerous as asbestos.

Those masks which are safe to use are described on the packaging as either 'filter free' or 'glass free filter'.

THE little town of Wittenoom in Western Australia is taking on the Federal and State governments to clean up their town.

Wittenoom was the last blue asbestos mine operating in Australia, owned by CRA and mining magnate cum 'workers party' financier, Lang Hancock.

Asbestos is now known as a cancer causing substance. It is estimated that in the next 20 years, of all the workers at Wittenoom in 1966, one in three will die from asbestos-related diseases.

residents. Their ultimatum: who had worked there only three years as a secretary died from the rare cancer mesothelioma.

Two weeks ago the town people had a meeting of all residents. Their ultimatum: Clean up all the loose asbestos dust in the town now or we will not pay any tax.

TEACHERS have it good don't they? — three holidays a year, and of course they only spend about 20 hours "face-to-face" with children.

But these so called 'bludger' teachers do have problems on the job every bit as serious as someone handling dangerous chemicals.

The Victorian Education problem, the Department is calls for an investigation into stress-related illness affecting them.

The State Superannuation Board is now restricting the number of ill health retirements granted to teachers who are being forced to leave the teaching service because of stress — related illnesses.

There are instances in which the board refused pensions, despite the recommendation of the School Medical Office.

This decision seems to be prompted by the increasingly large number of teachers retiring on ill health grounds.

But instead of facing the problem, the department is sweeping it under the paperwork.

JEFF Wallmann, a metal worker, writes.

The quest to find better ways of doing things is often at the expense of workers' health.

For example, at the place where I work, we weld aluminium. This is most often done with oxyacetylene, and the use of a flux.

Fluxes are made from some weird and wonderful chemicals such as Lithium Fluoride and Lithium Chloride.

To the workers, this doesn't mean much. But as I found out recently, Lithium Fluoride, when exposed to extreme temperatures — for example, in oxywelding — releases poisonous vapours such as Hydro Fluoric acid.

These are sent hurtling into the air for us to breathe. These gases cause eye irritation, nausea, vomiting and dermatitis.

They are governed by a standard of five parts to a million — anything over this is illegal.

Nowhere on the lithium fluoride container does it say anything about this, nor does it say to use in well ventilated areas.

I wonder how many other products technology has created to shorten our life spans for the sake of profit.

by Steve Morgan

Clyde Master Misers

AFTER nearly four weeks of picketing, metal workers at Clyde Master in Melbourne have only made minor gains in their settlement with the company.

But their dispute provided an interesting insight into the mind of Ken Turbet, the former union bureaucrat who was recently appointed to the Arbitration Commission.

During the struggle, Turbet quite blatantly sided with the company.

According to shop committee member Bill Waddell, *"He just recommended we all be good boys, and lift all bans.*

"At the shop committee meeting, there was a motion for a letter of no-confidence in Commissioner Turbet.

bastard

"He told us that if we didn't like it, we should go and get another job!

"He's a real bastard dickhead."

The Clyde Master workers were fighting for a log that included a pay rise, indexation on the full shop rate, and increased allowances.

But despite Clyde Industries making $7 million profit, they were only prepared to concede a miserable 5 cents increase in the CO2 allowance, fifty cents increase on overalls, and payment for this year's Cup Day holiday.

The workers also won full reinstatement of three crane-drivers, who were blatantly victimized by the company in an attempt to break up the initial campaign of bans.

On the picket line at Clyde Master

Luna Park not much fun

LUNA Park in Sydney doesn't have a history of militancy.

When members of the Association of Theatrical and Amusements Employees went on strike for one Saturday night last month, it was only the second strike in its history.

But it was a well-planned strike, initiated at rank and file level by a negotiating delegation — and they won major concessions.

Guy Morgan who has worked there for five years, told the Battler: *"With all casual workers and a high turn-over rate, we have no power.*

"A lot are working there because they don't have any other money. Some are too poor to strike, because they're living on about $70 a week."

recent

The recent strike followed eighteen months of negotiating between the union and management, in which the union had won virtually nothing at all.

The union was trying to get a loading to cover holiday pay, sick pay, etc. The bosses claimed sick pay was already covered in the casual rates.

And the ruling on holiday pay was 1 unit per 6 shifts in a week. In fact there are only 4 shifts worked in a normal week at Luna Park!

The bosses only really began to move their position when rank and file workers began to apply pressure.

A mass meeting of workers elected a seven person delegation who joined in the negotiating between the bosses and the union.

But this was still not enough actually to move the bosses far.

The Saturday night strike speeded up the hearings in the Arbitration Commission, where Commissioner Mancini recommended an interim 8% loading while negotiations continue.

Guy said *"It's really important what's happend.*

"Now that the workers have seen that backing the union brings results, I think we'd be prepared to stand up again if something similar happens."

the battler
PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

BREWERY WORKERS SOLD OUT

Members of the brewery workers' Disputes Committee at a mass meeting. Worsnop is on the left.

From John Minns in Brisbane.

"TUESDAY 28 November is the blackest day for Brewery workers for three years."

This was the reaction of one member of the Brisbane Brewery workers Disputes Committee, after their twelve week strike.

On Monday 27 November, a mass meeting of Brewery workers voted to stay out for a ten dollar wage rise plus the package deal offered by the Breweries, and not to go to Arbitration.

The same day, Bill Stone, FEDFA secretary, and Jim Worsnop, chairman of the Disputes Committee, said they could get the men back for $5 *inside* the package deal, and whatever Arbitration was prepared to offer.

Without consulting the whole Disputes Committee, they called a second mass meeting the next day, November 28.

At the meeting, Stone and Worsnop argued for a return to work for the $5.

To justify it, they said that workers would lose their long service continuity and their Christmas bonuses. But this should have been known weeks ago.

They claimed that the situation had changed so much in one day that it justified a second meeting and a return to work.

The reaction from other members of the Disputes Committee was angry. One said:

"We're now found something weaker than water, and it's at this meeting – Jim Worsnop."

To get the motion through, Worsnop claimed that eleven of the seventeen-man Disputes Committee had no right to be there.

These men had worked for twelve weeks, with no help from the TLC or even from the officials of the unions involved, to raise money for the relief fund, to feed the workers, their wives and children.

When Worsnop felt the time was right to argue for a return to work, he simply threw these men off the Committee.

The agreement is for two years – one lousy $5 increase in two years! Three years ago the Brewery workers went on strike for one year agreements. Now Worsnop and Stone have slipped a two year agreement in under the workers' noses.

Worse, the Breweries have insisted on four continuous shifts in the cold rooms.

This means that workers there will have to work three weekends in four and will not have the option to work overtime.

After twelve weeks, this is pathetic. With Christmas coming up the Breweries would have had a lot of pressure on them to settle for the ten dollars and get the beer out for Christmas trading.

Yet Worsnop and Stone argued to go back – and this after the secret ballot held on the Friday before, when over 75% of the workers voted to stay out.

The Disputes Committee had many times appealed for help from the TLC. Instead, the TLC took 12½% of their strike fund and then gave them the smallest store room in Trades Hall as an office.

But the majority of the Disputes Committee is not beaten yet.

They will continue to meet without Worsnop and they have learnt a lot from the campaign. They will not allow themselves to be sold out again.

WHAT THE BREWERIES HAVE OFFERED

SO far Castlemaine and Carlton have offered only
1. a $2 increase in laundry allowance
2. an increase in meal allowance of 25 cents per meal – about enough to buy an extra half a cup of coffee
3. a $2 service grant after 3 months service . . . this will apply only for weeks during which workers are not absent on any day it is a way of discouraging workers using their sick leave entitlements
4. Increase in penalty rates on Saturdays, for continuous shift workers . . . .

And the Breweries have insisted on 4 continuous shifts of 5 workers each in the cold rooms.

This will mean that these workers will work 3 weekends in four. They won't have the option to work overtime when they want and if they refuse to go on the continuous shift they will get moved to much worse jobs.

THE BREWERIES HAVE NOT OFFERED ONE CENT OF THE WAGE CLAIM.

Cartoon from a Brisbane brewery worker after a compulsory secret ballot failed to break their strike.

WIVES ORGANISE

THE wives of the striking brewery workers have formed a Strike Support Committee to help the other wives of the brewery workers.

"Our main aim is to show our husbands that they have our full support", said one member of the Committee to Battler. The Committee meets every Thursday at the Trades Hall.

"We women feel that the more wives who become involved the better, and this will lead to a better understanding of the situation", she said.

The Committee is organising distribution of bulk food purchased with some of the money given by fellow workers to support the strike.

fight

"Our husbands owe it to their fellow unionists to fight to the end, even though we suffer financially, it will be a moral victory for our husbands, not just for their sakes but for the benefit of workers throughout Australia.

"They are counting on our men and to let them down now would destroy all hope of their support again", she said.

"They want equal pay to what their fellow workers in the South receive.

"Although we are finding it hard to make ends meet we would rather our men have principles and be able to return to work with their heads held high!"

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Meatworkers' Goosechase

ONCE again Queensland meatworkers have been led on a wild-goose chase by their own union.

A picket was planned by the meatworkers as part of the continuing campaign to stop the export of live cattle outside the quota established by the A.M.I.E.U. and the Cattlemen's Union.

The cattle were due to leave Brisbane on Wednesday 22nd November.

The union office had conveniently forgotten to inform a number of sheds of the picket or the 24 hour stoppage planned for the day.

The result was that when 13 trucks carrying the cattle arrived at the wharves they were met by a picket of only about 120 meatworkers.

pounded

Despite the small numbers the meatworkers did not give up easily. Many climbed on the bull-bars of the moving trucks and pounded on the sides.

But 500 police had been mobilised for the day and several hundred were at the wharves. Petersen's thugs did their job well. The scab trucks were ferried through the picket lines.

Animal lovers demonstrate against meatworkers in Brisbane

At least one of the drivers had bought his T.W.U. ticket at 3am that same morning. Southern District Secretary, Ray Lette then decided to call the picket off supposedly because he *"didn't want to embarass the wharfies."*

Two Dinmore works officials discovered that some trucks were picking up more cattle outside Amberley – from trucks owned by the Hines and Fraser companies.

But there were more surprises to come. When the meatworkers phoned the union to tell them of the extra loads they were told that the office already knew.

If they knew then why did they disband the picket, especially since some picketers had doubts that all the cattle had arrived? There would have been plenty of time to get workers from sheds all around Brisbane and Ipswich down to the wharves.

The answer might be contained in a leaflet that the union officials printed just before the picket.

It was titled "Advice To Pickets" and contained such gems as:

"We don't want people to come to pickets if their intention is to stir up a hornet's nest for entertainment reasons."

In Queensland, of course, it is very difficult to hold a picket that doesn't quickly turn into a hornet's nest.

How do the officials think they are going to win this dispute? Certainly not by staying away from pickets – as Southern District Secretary Ray Lette and State Secretary Col Maxwell did in October.

But the rank and file in several sheds have again led the officials.

demanded

Bans were immediately placed on the trucking companies Hines and Frasers at Dinmore, Bremer and several other sheds. True to form, Maxwell has demanded that the bans be lifted.

If the exports are to be stopped it will not be through the efforts of heroes like Maxwell and Lette. They will be stopped by the militancy of the meatworkers themselves.

by an A.M.I.E.U. member

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The fight against Joh

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URANIUM

Look who's pushing a sell-out!

IRAN: The tyrant topples

—6,7

SOUTH Australian Labor Premier Don Dunstan is about to undo all the hard work that opponents of uranium have put in across Australia.

Dunstan is trying to create a hole in the ALP's anti-uranium stance, by engineering a reversal of policy in South Australia.

Dunstan has gone off overseas on a "fact-finding mission" to check if uranium mining and enrichment are safe after all.

The trip is a fraud. His new policy has already been decided.

An ALP policy committee has already put together a document preparing the ground for a reversal of ALP policy on uranium.

When he returns, Dunstan will try to get a Special State ALP Conference to allow him to hold a referendum to approve uranium mining in South Australia.

Faced with the highest unemployment rate in Australia, Dunstan is grabbing at uranium as the economic salvation for his state.

All South Australians have to do is let the Western Mining Corporation develop the Roxby Down uranium-copper deposit, and just put one enrichment complex on Spencer's Gulf at Redcliff.

According to a well-placed Battler source, Government money is being diverted so that these projects will be as "attractive" – ie profitable – as possible.

$1½ million is to be "saved" from the State Education budget alone.

It will possibly be spent on another Redcliff project – the petro-chemical works – but may already be earmarked for the uranium enrichment plant.

The ALP Special Conference will be presented with five main arguments:
1. A State Labor Government should provide a balanced debate on the uses of nuclear energy
2. There will no mining or processing of uranium unless ratified by a referendum
3. A State Labor Government will not build nuclear power plants
4. There will not be any storage or depositing of nuclear waste in South Australia
5. Nuclear powered vessels will not be allowed to visit South Australian ports

Dunstan knows very well that in any referendum, the mining companies will have a massive propaganda advantage.

The day that his overseas trip was announced, the Adelaide press carried four pro-uranium articles, plus a full-page ad in favour of mining.

Dunstan's fact-finding trip itself is such a rushed cover-up, that his own office did not know the itinerary on the day it was announced!

The irony is that Dunstan was an architect of the ALP's anti-mining policy adopted by the 1977 Federal Conference.

A switch in South Australia will probably tip the balance in the Federal ALP as well.

Dunstan can be stopped – if we mobilise to block him.

After all, it has been rank-and-file pressure in the unions and the ALP that forced Labor to take a stand against uranium in the first place.

As a first step, we have to commit our unions to banning any mining or facilities for the South Australian nuclear industry – no matter what the outcome of Dunstan's stacked referendum might be.

Dunstan setting up stacked referendum