

The bosses, on the other hand have done very well out of the accord. Their profits have risen steadily, many of them have had big subsidies from the government, and they've kept tax payments to a minimum.

It's time to reject the fraud of the accord and demand effective measures to protect wages and living standards:

- Full, automatic, monthly wage and pension rises in accordance with a cost-of-living index kept by the trade unions and community groups, including housewives, pensioners and the unemployed.

- An immediate catch-up wage rise of at least 9.1 per cent to compensate for losses under the Fraser "wage pause."

- An immediate increase in pensions and the dole at least to the Labor Party's promised level of 25 per cent of average weekly earnings.

Measures such as those outlined above would not immediately solve all of the problems arising from the capitalist system's economic crisis, but they would alleviate their effects on the living standards of those of us who work for a living.

They would free the trade unions to defend wages and conditions — something the accord prevents them doing.

The present depression is going to be with us for a long time. The bosses' greed and lack of planning created the crisis, now they're making us pay for it. The only alternative is to make the rich pay!

A vote for the Socialist Workers Party is a vote for the type of defence of living standards and democratic rights that working people expect of the Labor government, but which it has failed to deliver.

- I would like more information about the Socialist Workers Party.
- I would like to help in the 1984 SWP federal election campaign.
- I would like to donate \$ to the SWP federal election campaign.
- I would like to subscribe to the SWP's weekly newspaper *Direct Action* (\$5 for 12 issues introductory offer.)

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**vote Socialist
Workers Party**

**Break
the
wages
straight-
jacket**

**jobs
not
profits**

Prices are constantly rising. Unless wages rise along with them, our living standards must decline.

The federal government tells us that wage restraint is essential to create more jobs, that we should accept a cut in our living standards so that profits will increase and the unemployed can have jobs.

But that is simply not true.

Take the example of Australia's largest company, BHP. Last June it announced a record profit of \$622 million, yet it continues to lay off miners and steel workers.

Wages have declined in real value by at least 10 per cent since 1982 when the Fraser government imposed its "wage pause" (in fact a wage cut because prices kept rising).

During this time there has been only a very slight drop in unemployment. At present about 600,000 workers cannot get jobs.

When Labor came to power it maintained Fraser's "pause" for six months, then granted a small wage rise in September 1983.

After that we got another small rise in April this year. Then wages were again frozen for a year. There will not be another national wage rise until April 1985!

Medicare

Labor claims that the introduction of Medicare will compensate for this wage freeze. Yet its own spokesman, Doctor Neal Blewett, admits that Medicare will save most workers less than a dollar!

During all the time this wage-cutting has been going on profits have been rising, company taxes have been falling and the bosses have been doing very nicely.

But the most of us are forced to get by on lower wages, and no jobs have been created.

Allowing the bosses to make higher profits has not reduced unemployment.

There are measures that can reduce unemployment:

- Immediate introduction of the 35 hour week in all industries. Many bosses claim they can't afford this, that the 35 hour week would force them out of business. But experience shows that nothing they say can be believed. Let them prove their claims by opening their books to public

inspection.

Any company that responds to the introduction of shorter hours by threatening to close or by cutting production should be nationalised.

- Permanent and greatly expanded funding of schemes such as the Commonwealth Employment Project.

At present such schemes are carefully designed so that they won't take work away from less efficient private companies. They simply recycle the unemployed, providing a handful of people with jobs for a few months, then tossing them back onto the dole queues.

CEP should be expanded into a major construction operation, building new road and rail projects, and public buildings such as schools and hospitals. At present such projects are contracted out to private companies whose main concern is to cream off fat profits for a small band of shareholders. As a result they often turn out shoddy work.

- Such projects could be funded by introduction of wealth and capital gains taxes.



Taxation

This year company taxes are expected to make up only 9.4 per cent of the federal government's income. Companies presently can hire sharp lawyers to pick out all sorts of legal loopholes that enable them to dodge paying taxes.

Wealth and capital gains taxes would close some of those loopholes and make a great deal more money available for projects that would benefit everyone.

Such measures would begin to make a real impact on unemployment, something that cutting wages has not done.

There is absolutely no point in maintaining the federal government's wage freeze, which is only made possible by its Prices and Incomes Accord with the trade union movement.

What has this accord delivered?

The accord promised government measures to compensate for the wage freeze. Medicare, tax cuts and other measures were supposed to maintain our living standards even though we would get less money.

For all its promises the accord has delivered very little.

Medicare saves most workers almost nothing. For some it is more expensive than private health insurance. A national health scheme such as Medicare is a good idea. But the way this scheme is set up ruins it.

The tax cuts announced in the last budget will save workers a little over \$1, at the very best. And even this will be whittled away as inflation pushes wages back into higher tax brackets.

Indexation of taxes is essential to avoid this situation. Labor has promised to index taxes but done nothing to honor its promise.

On top of cutting our wages the government has not even taken the most elementary steps to defend our democratic rights. Going on for two years after Labor was elected, the Fraser government's arsenal of vicious anti-union laws is still intact and the secret police of ASIO are still free to snoop on trade unionists and labor activists.

Laws such as section 45D of the Trade Practices Act should be repealed immediately and not replaced by any similar measures. The secret police should be abolished.