

# SPARKS

The Paper of the Public Transport Workers  
Association

MAY - JUNE '88

No. 14

## welcome sydney



Scare your boss with the Good Work strike! P.22

Exclusive PENI interview. P.26

AND: Union Elections, PLD rip-off, Connies update,  
Roving Guards, New Sydney Supplement and More!



## Happy Birthday

This issue of "Sparks" marks its second anniversary. The first issue of "Sparks" appeared in May 1986. It was 8 pages and over 500 copies were distributed. We reprint the lead article of that first issue.

The people who have produced this paper are a group of anarcho-syndicalists who all work in the transport industry. We want to break down the divisions between rail and tram and bus workers. We all have the same boss - the State Transport Authority - we need to organise together.

WE DO NOT NEED bosses or managers - they need us. Their rules and regulations usually hinder our work and in fact it is because we - the worker - co operate and help each other that we get the job done. If we worked to rule and followed all the regulations the result would be chaos.

Our aim in this paper is to give voice to the workers who don't want to be told what to do by politicians and bureaucrats. Anarcho-syndicalists are not like the militants of the left wing parties who want to win power themselves.

We believe in SELF MANAGEMENT, where decisions are made in meetings of workers and each person has an equal voice and equal decision making power.



SPARKS is produced by the PUBLIC TRANSPORT  
WORKERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 1066, Nth. Richmond, 3121.

## P.L.D. RIP-OFF

Before the granting of the 4% wage rise we had, as part of the 38 Hour Week Agreement, a Paid Leisure Day (PLD) every third and fifth week. At the South Melbourne Depot meeting to discuss the trade-offs for the 4% we were asked to agree to changes in the way PLDs were rostered. We were told that instead of PLDs being rostered every third and fifth week they were to accumulate and be taken with our annual leave; effectively seven weeks.

That's great if you want to endure; week in, week out; forty-five weeks of stress per year. But what if you'd prefer to take a week or a few days off here and there when you felt the job was getting to you or your health was suffering?

At this meeting, held last August, I asked our Secretary, Jim Harper, that if we agreed to this trade-off would we still be able to take days off. I gave the example of every third and fifth week. **He assured the Depot that we could still do this.** It was on this understanding that many members voted to agree.

When the new Light Rail blocks were introduced PLDs had disappeared from the roster. Initially, individual PLDs could be arranged providing your work could be covered. But after a couple of months we were told that PLDs can only be taken in blocks of five and not until after May. **This is not what was agreed.**

On a yearly basis we still have a 38 Hour Week. But in real terms i.e. week to week, month to month, we have a **40 Hour Week**. A week with a DOC is a **48 Hour Week**.

In real terms we have had our hours increased for a pay cut!

No more trading off hard fought for conditions in exchange for wage rises that don't come anywhere near the rate of inflation. Less bullshit more action.

Leigh Kendall  
Tram Driver  
South Melbourne Depot







### WHO IS CLARRIE O'SHEA?

Clarrie O'Shea was from Essendon Depot and was Secretary of the AMOEFA from 1947 until 1971. In 1969 he came to national prominence when more than a million workers all over Australia took industrial action demanding his release from jail. Six days later he was freed. This led to the successful struggle against the penal powers of the Arbitration Act. Upon his retirement he was made a life member of the union.



An Historic Moment: Mr. Laurie Carmichael (Victorian State Secretary, Amalgamated Engineering Union) announces the arrest of Clarrie O'Shea to a meeting of unionists outside the Industrial Court in Melbourne on May 15th, 1969.

## INFORMATION IS POWER

In the last two months an open letter to trammies by former ATMOEA Secretary and life member Clarrie O'Shea has been circulating in the depots. The reason given for the letter being published is **"to expose the lies told by the union officials about their sell-out of the Port Melbourne - Bulleen bus route; which cost the jobs of more than 100 conductors"**.

In the letter Clarrie details the history of the bus conductors dispute and points out that Commissioner Horan made four different awards granting the union's claim, **"that no two-man service be changed to one-man" unless the Union agreed or a Court order was made.**

He goes on to say in the letter **"...this great struggle was given away for peanuts in 1986. This sell-out was disgraceful..."**

This letter was sent to the Tramway Record in response to an article by Jim Harper in the December '86 issue of the Record. Why hasn't it been published?

This is not the only time that attempts to suppress free access to information and freedom of speech has occurred in the tramways by union officials. On two occasions in the last six months copies of SPARKS have been confiscated by Doncaster Delegate Bill Donnelly.

Union officials are not elected to decide what we will and will not read. That members of the ATMOEA can have their letters to the Tramway Record refused publication without reason is an abuse of office.

Jim Harper says bus conductors were sold out years ago. Clarrie O'Shea says our union officials are sell-outs and liars. What is the truth? Rank and file trammies have a right to know. More so now that speculation is rife in the industry about the future of tram conductors and other changes outlined in Metplan.

There has been numerous calls from the rank and file regarding the consultative process between the bosses and the union officials over changes proposed in Metplan but very little has been devoted to this issue in the pages of the Tramway Record. It raises serious doubts about the ability and/or willingness of our union







## WE WERE WRONG

In our last issue of Sparks we ran an article entitled "It's Time to Disaffiliate!". This article drew quite a response and sent tempers soaring. The article shit-canned the ALP and asked the question: "Why do Public Transport Unions fund the ALP in affiliation fees to the tune of 20 000 dollars a year when the ALP in Government shits all over us?".

Well, when we said 20 thousand dollars a year from the ARU in affiliation dues, we were

quoting a now departed union official. BON VOYAGE, ROY! (hope you have a rotten time in Sydney).

This particular STATE PRESIDENT told angry rail workers at mass meetings that it was ONLY 20 000 dollars a year. The latest ARU gazette, in its budget figures, reveals that in fact 49 692 dollars was handed over in affiliation fees (page 17). Care to explain that one to us FRANK?

No wonder you won our how low medal.



## Shunted to Court

In early March this year a Preston driver suffered the humiliating spectacle of being pulled off his tram and directed to court over an incident that occurred on xmas eve 1986. During peak shopping time that xmas a pedestrian allegedly walked into the back of his tram, and he was stopped further up the road in Bourke St and charged by police with leaving the scene of an accident. The driver was never summonsed to appear in court. Management had accepted a summons on his behalf and failed to pass it on.

This management blunder was enough to make the driver and many of his workmates angry, but mismanagement of the case continued and resulted in a stopwork meeting at Preston depot on the 25th of March, followed by industrial action until management were forced to financially support their employee in an appeal case.

What was at issue at the stopwork meeting on the 25th of March was that the driver had been found guilty at the first court case and placed on a one year good behaviour bond and had to pay some costs; being innocent, he wished to appeal, and management had been asked to pay for costs involved in an appeal. Management refused.

Unlike the ATMOEA bureaucrats, who were not interested in helping the driver, his Preston workmates were fully behind action in support of him. The meeting decided that management had a responsibility to pay for any costs involved in his appeal, and that furthermore, management should pay the Preston depot members strike pay for that meeting as it was as a result of their incompetence and irresponsibility that we had to stop work to deal with the issue. The action which was agreed upon to back up these demands was that we would go back to work and not collect fares that afternoon, and that as of the next Monday, we would not take any trams into Bourke Street. That Monday morning virtually all Bourke St services were blocked. The ban effectively cut out all trams on that road as Nth Fitzroy and Sth Melb. trams were held up at the Spring St shunt where Preston trams were turning back.

cont' over



### Shunted to Court cont'

The bans were lifted after only half a day as management suddenly saw reason and agreed to pay the drivers court costs, and admitted fault in agreeing to pay the strike pay.

This victory was a morale booster, of which all Preston workers should feel proud. We stood behind a workmate and won. The driver is still to have his appeal heard, perhaps he should have similar support in court.



This incident is a typical example of the contempt and disregard that our bosses have for us; we get no help from them if we are attacked or arrested in the course of our duty. Our union, the NIMOE, were not much better in

cont' over.

### Shunted to Court cont'..

this regard, the comfy chair crew from King Street were not interested in helping the charged driver until after Preston depot members had struck in support of him. However, we showed that we don't need the bureaucrats, what we can rely on is the support of each other on the job.

Connie. Preston depot.

The latest issue of "Metlines" (you know, the one with the dope eating Pandas on the cover) contained this little gem. The MET bosses once again provide us with ample proof that they are useless bludgers. →

## OUR SAY

Well Graham, it may be a pleasure for you to watch us slave away all day, but don't you think you should concentrate on your own job.

I mean, the tax payer forks out a fortune for a pretty stuffed system. I don't think many would be too happy if they knew you lot do nothing but sit around watching us work.

Metrol is operation bosses headquarters and gets cleaned day and night, unlike suburban passenger

## Your say

■If you feel there is someone in your department, whose work seems to you above and beyond the call of duty, why not drop us a line. Keep it brief, and clearly state the reasons you think he/she deserves a mention. We'll do our best to get it printed.

The following contribution is from Graeme McNeil, area controller, Metrol.

Mr ~~James~~ ~~James~~ Leading Hand Cleaner employed at Metrol — ~~James~~ is a tireless worker with a cheerful disposition who is never seen idle.

If he is not working inside the building then you will see him working outside.

It is a pleasure to come to work, if only to watch when ~~James~~ is working in your area and observe the cheerful way he goes about his duties. ■

trains. Bosses like Graham McNeil have sacked hundreds of train cleaners but make sure their "work" place is kept spotless.

What a waste of time the Metrail bosses and their stooges are. They need us, we don't need them!



## Roving Guards = Moving Targets

During the past few issues of SPARKS much attention has been focused on suburban Guards and their attempts to protect their jobs at the back of the van. The latest development in this fight is the release by Met management on March 28 of a proposal to change guards jobs to "passenger assistants".

The guts of the ten page document outlines management plans to have us work as roving ticket sellers **in the train** during off-peak hours. During the peak we would switch duties to that of station assistants. We would still be expected to assist drivers during breakdowns as well as clean trains and deal with trouble-making passengers.

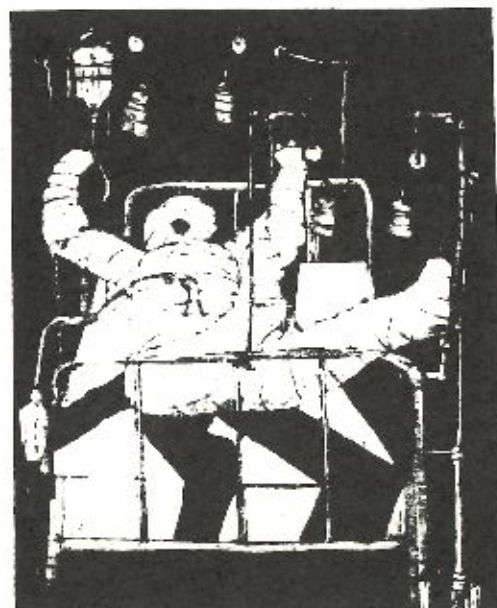
If management have their way an "open barrier" concept will operate at most stations during the off-peak period. This will open the door for sacking even more station assistants and broken shifts for those who do remain. For train guards it means replacing an important job with a dangerous and shithouse task to perform. No mention of increased pay for extra duties is made in the government document. In fact, guards duties will be downgraded with the elimination of safe working practices.

Last year over 30 required time on WorkCare as a result of assaults on staff by passengers and stress. Legally we are not allowed to defend ourselves. At the moment one unfortunate guard has been stood aside for defending himself after one of a group of four male passengers punched him. Last year a guard Don McKellar had his head repeatedly bashed into the ballast and suffered brain damage.

Anyone in a green uniform is already a target for louts and yobbos. It doesn't take much brain-power to work out that if you are made to wander through a late night train with a bag full of cash and tickets it will be worse. Management claim it will be a maximum of \$50 but that is enough for a gang of kidsto buy a bottle of whiskey and deal of dope. We will be on our own and, unlike tram conductors whose tracks cross the streets of Melbourne, our terrain is isolated stations. The animals

Roving Guards cont'.

who terrorise our late night trains could bash you and chuck you onto the tracks and most likely you wouldn't be found for hours.



A lot of fuss has been made lately about the Transit Police and their "we're riding with you" bullshit. Well, the boys in blue are big; armed with guns, batons, and handcuffs and they won't go into a train unless there is four of 'em. We guards are going to be expected to travel inside trains, unprotected and alone.

The government plan, outlined above, was quickly withdrawn in April. The reason for this is supposed to be ARU concern over the removal of safe working aspects. That does not mean it has been abandoned. It is rumoured that the ARU and the government is negotiating a compromise deal between this proposal and a similar one the ARU rammed down our throats in January. It is also rumoured that the ARU has applied to the courts to cover the new job of "passenger assistant". If this is true (it has been confirmed by two Guards Reps) then it provides, yet again, proof that guards have been sold out by the ARU.

Cont' over.



## Roving Guards = Moving Targets cont'.

Despite all this some hope remains for guards who wish to stay in their present role, but **only** if we are prepared to flex our industrial muscle! The Cain ALP government is under attack from all sides. Electorally, the ALP is being devastated around the country, particularly NSW. In Victoria they have forced to back down on many issues, most notably the Overhead Electric Powerline System from Brunswick to Kew.

The Transport Ministry is reeling at all levels from top to bottom because of resignations and reshuffles. Roper, Ingersol, and former Guards Superintendant Wayne Walsh are all gone. The new transport bosses know fuck all about the job. Industrial action has seen trams and trains stop in the last year. A mountain of leaks from within the department has exposed our bosses for the incompetant bludgers they really are.

On the union side of things, Unity Hall is in chaos. Graham Bertrand's resignation, Frank Lacey pissing off to Sydney, and P. Dwyer defecting to the government have left them understaffed. What it means for guards who still want to save the job is that Unity Hall has run out of bullshit artists to come down to the Depot and sell us out. The AFULE is also facing trouble from rank and file drivers who are pissed off they won't get their thirty pieces of silver out of D.O.O.



Most importantly, a chronic shortage of guards seems set to embarrass the bosses. After the 12-day strike a mass resignation occured. Operation numbers have dropped from a required 560 guards to 480. At present rate of resignations it will take less than two months for the system to collapse. All guards need to do now to stuff the system is to thump it once a week or refuse to work the 12th shift. When guards dock up trains or relieve them they should take extra care to insure they are in perfect order. Why? Because 35 trains are still out of action due to recent industrial action at Jolimont Workshops. Knock 'em out if you can. Cont' over.

## Roving Guards cont'.

Guards owe the public transport bosses no favours, they have treated us like shit during the last two years. Now the government, union bosses, and Met bosses are down on their knees. The time to act is now! We've got the bastards down - let's sink the boot in!

Iain Macpherson  
Suburban Guard

## WHY DISCRIMINATE?

Two suburban guards - we'll call one John and the other Paul. John arranges seven months paid long service leave and takes off on a holiday. Paul does his back in crawling over trains at three in the morning and requires seven months compo.

When they both come back John picks up his normal shift and begins work in the guards van as usual. When Paul returns from compo he faces a gruelling oral exam that could last more than five hours. If he fails this 'safe working' exam he loses his job as a suburban guard. Why?

### The Met

How is it that ~~Y~~ arrived at the notion that a guard relaxing on the beach for more than six months won't forget his job but injured workers do? Is it because management are stupid?

Surely an injured worker faces enough hassles while they are on compo without the prospect of re-examination at the end of it. Metrol should show a bit of consistency when they set these arbitrary rules. At present all guards regularly face re-examination every three years but only **some** face re-examination if they have been out of the van more than six months. To make the situation even more ridiculous, guards union officials made a practice of only running **one** train every six months to avoid re-examination.

We think the six month rule is unnecessary all together. We spend six months learning our job parrot fashion. Then we perform it year in, year out. It's pretty hard to forget what's involved. In any case, if the bosses were serious about maintaining standards why don't they provide refresher courses in first-aid or firefighting? Come to think of it, why don't they sack themselves and not guards? That would improve the industry no end.



# BRUNSWICK STOPWORK

In late April Brunswick Tram Depot held a 4 hour stop-work meeting to demand action over two lost tables (rosters). These tables were taken from Brunswick Depot last year, and this year the tram workers want them back.

The meeting sent a delegation to management to demand the tables be returned. As a result of this industrial action management were persuaded to return the two tables for a one month trial period. During this trial a passenger count would be carried out to determine whether "extra" trams were "really needed".

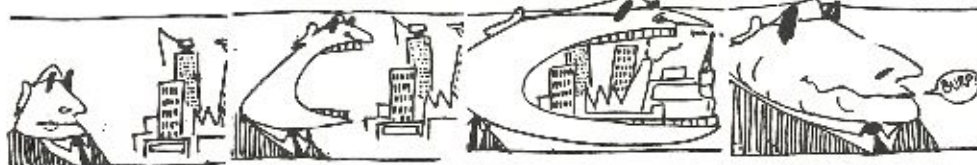


**"Direct rank-and-file control of the struggle is the road to workers' self-management of society"**



We reckon these passenger counts are bullshit exercises. If management really want to know how infrequent and crowded no. 19 (Coburg) trams are, all they have to do is get out of their chauffeur driven limos and catch Public Transport for a change.

The four hour stop work at Brunswick depot was successful in returning the two tables, if only for a month. If management try to worm out of it or cancel the tables after the trial then we suggest more direct action!!



# welcome sydney

In early April this year a meeting of Public Transport Workers who are readers of Sparks in Sydney was held. As a result of this meeting a group of Sydney P.T. workers decided that they would like to contribute a regular four page supplement to Sparks, and distribute more copies of Sparks in N.S.W. New South Wales Public Transport workers who are interested in contributing material should contact:

**Editorial Address:-  
P.O. Box 1066  
Nth. Richmond, 3121.**

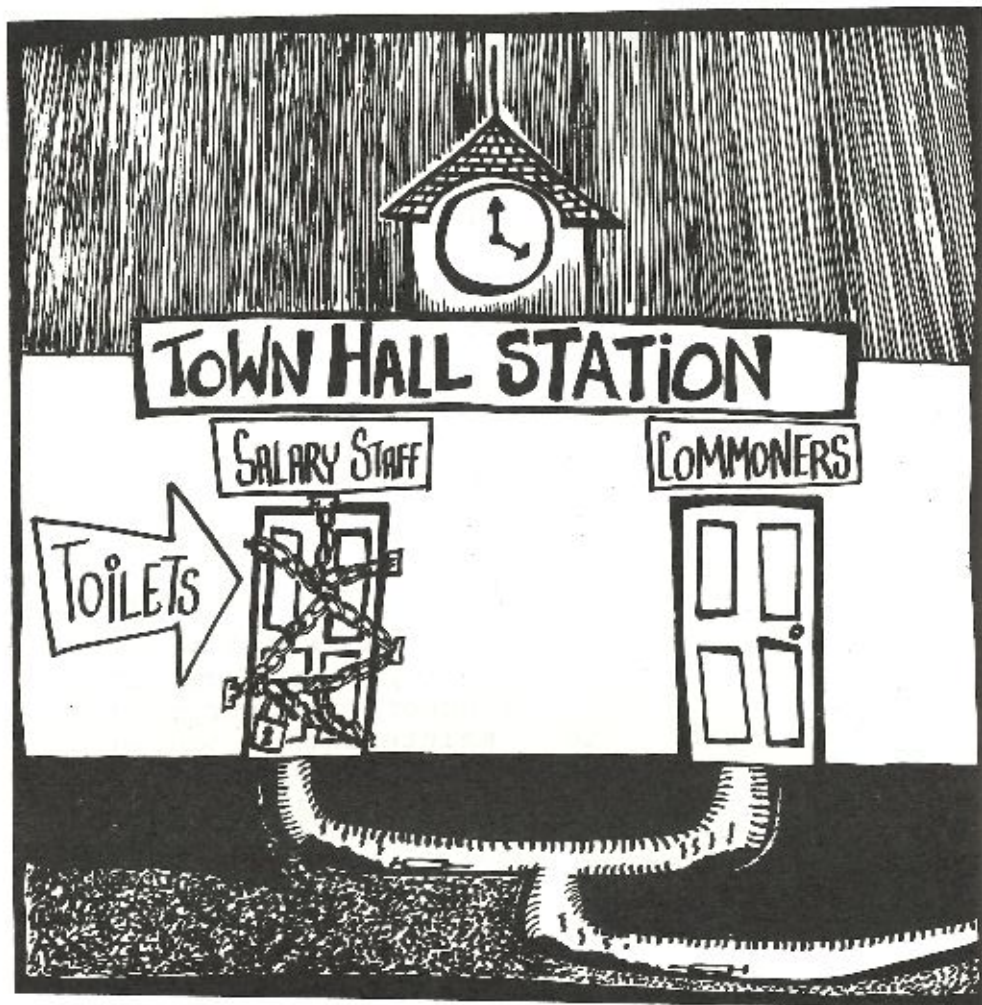
**A Sydney address will be available next issue.**

Please note that the Public Transport Workers Association is open to any rank and file worker in the Public Transport Industry; from traffic staff to maintenance workers, cleaners, caterers, and electricians (and all of you others). We believe it is in us workers interests to have one industrial based union controlled by the direct will of the rank and file, with the aim of doing away with bosses and for workers self-management of industry and society.

(see also "Where We Stand" at the back of Sparks and contact us for more info.)







*Dis crimination  
within  
the*

*Sexist: Racist. Authority.*

## COMPLAIN and be SACKED!

This is a transcription of a report made by an R.S.A. It makes a basic point: that wherever a worker makes a complaint, the bosses and their crawlers close ranks like good little boys.

Museum

13th April '88

Report:

The reason that I wrote a memo on the Station Master at Museum is as follows:

Having read a memo from the Station Master (9.4.'88) I became upset that Mr Reynolds (SM, Museum) could be such a hypocrite as to suggest that staff were signing off before their shift had ended.

From the time Mr. Reynolds first came to Museum, he has left early almost every single day. Usually at least half an hour early.

I know that writing the memo was wrong, but as I have stated, I was upset that Mr. Reynolds could be such a hypocrite.

He also leaves safe keys unattended when he goes off duty early, I have witnessed it myself, and have statements from other staff at Museum to this effect. I really don't think that this is a good example to set for my fellow workers at Museum. His attitude is simply that he couldn't care less.

Furthermore, I would like to state that when Mr. Bennett, acting Traffic Inspector (Strathfield), asked me to write this report I became upset on the grounds that I did not expect him to actually be here (at Museum) whilst I wrote. Besides, I already told him that I would give him a report, anyway.

I then left to do my duty at Bathurst St. booking office. But I was told I would have to go back to the



Complain and be Sacked cont'..

S.M.'s office to make out a report to the acting traffic Inspector, Mr. Bennett.

When I got there, I told Mr. Bennett I didn't want to make a report without a union rep. present. Mr. Bennett told me to ring the Union, but the phone was busy.

I had been told that I either made a report or I would be signed off duty. Then I was told that unless I could get a Union rep. to Museum within thirty minutes I would still be signed off duty. I decided then that I would make out this report.

I'd like to point out that whilst writing this report I was under duress because I had not been given time for a Union rep. to come to Museum.

I would also like to state that I have not sworn at Mr. Reynolds while writing this report or beforehand. I haven't sworn at anyone - even though I over-heard Mr. Bennett stating this to someone over the S.M.'s phone.

I also would like to state that this is the first time I have written any memo on Mr. Reynolds.

But now I know that it was the wrong move to make.

REPORT FROM MUSEUM STATION

SYDNEY



# WANT Your Child To Be a bastard?

NEW!  
IMPROVED!\*



EACH KIT CONTAINS - LOTS OF 'LITTLE PEOPLE' TO ABUSE, 2500 REDUNDANCY NOTICES, 1 BIG SCREW, 1 Mallet for WORKER-BASHING.

\* PRINCIPLES NOT INCLUDED.



## A.S.F. DIRECTORY

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Broadway, NSW 2007.

ASF MELBOURNE LOCAL  
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PUBLIC TRANSPORT  
WORKERS ASSOCIATION  
P.O. Box 1066  
North Richmond, Vic. 3121.

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY  
P.O. Box 199  
East Brunswick, Vic. 3057.

The ASF was formed in 1986 from groups and individuals believing in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism. It is the Australian Section of the International Workers Association. This was formed in 1922 and has national sections in more than a dozen countries.

### WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

I would like more information about the Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation - International Workers Association. Please send me information.

Name .....

Address .....

Send to any ASF Group or to  
FEDERATION SECRETARY  
P.O. Box 1066  
North Richmond 3121.

## UNITY

THE VOICE OF THE POSTAL WORKERS  
AN ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST PAPER

PO Box 214 Broadway 2007.

## Rebel Worker

REBEL WORKER is the monthly paper of the A.S.F.-I.W.A. for the propagation of anarcho-syndicalism in Australia. The A.S.F. is the Australian Section of the International Workers Association.

Unless otherwise stated, signed articles do not necessarily represent the position of the A.S.F. as a whole. Any contributions, criticisms, letters or Comments are welcome.

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## ON RENT STRIKE FOR 6 MONTHS

## FIGHTING FOR DECENT HOUSING



### A BENEFIT TO SUPPORT THE BRAYBROOK & MAIDSTONE PUBLIC TENANTS UNION

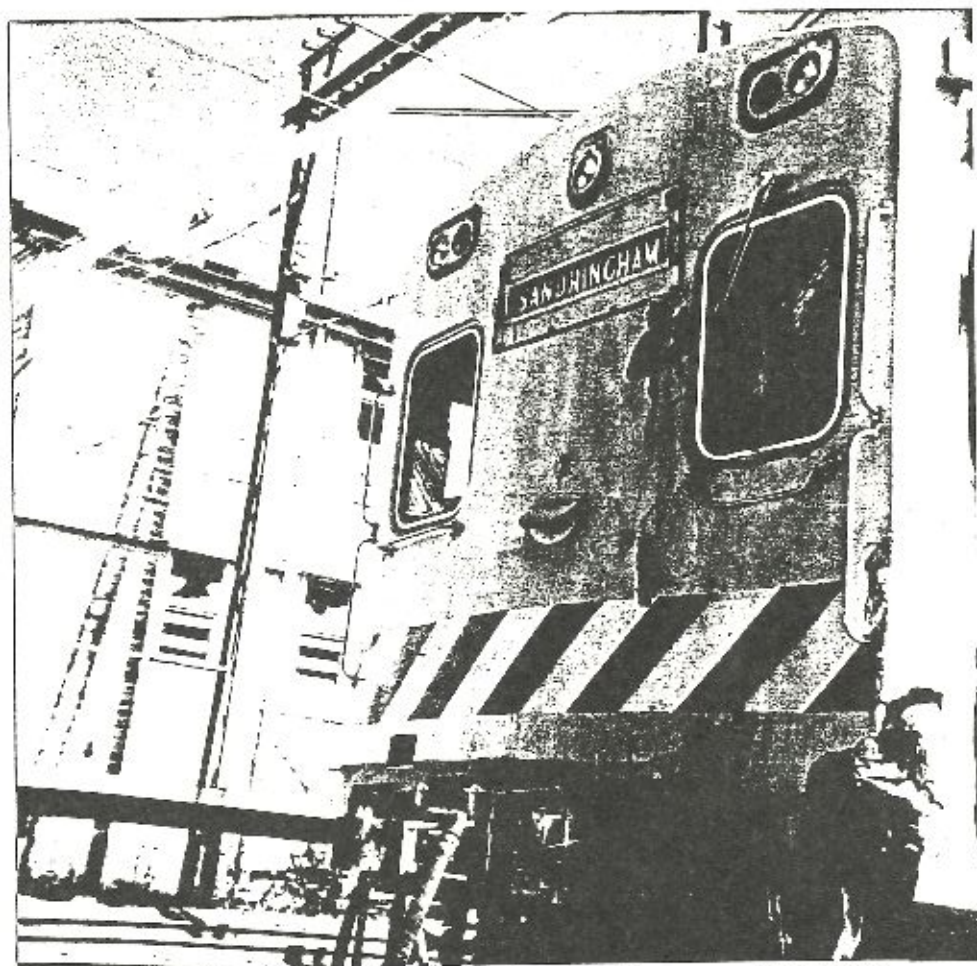
"We went on rent strike because of the pathetic conditions for the tenants here. We were having quite a lot of health hazards; and also cracks 2&3 inches wide in most of the flats; and heaters (gas fires) without fans, which cause enormous gas bills. There is also bad wiring which is causing very high electricity bills. We have very cold winters and the houses are like ovens in the summer, condensation is causing mildew and we think they should be knocked down." Gwen Homes, a tenant.

WHERE? THE MUSIC HIVE  
37 Moreland St,  
Footscray.

WHEN? SATURDAY 28th MAY  
COSTS: \$8 with meal (waged)  
\$4 with meal (unwaged)  
or \$6/\$2 without meal  
Childcare near venue.



## The Wreck of M901



M901 hit a backhoe bucket, 11.10 a.m, 22/12/87. Driver injured. Guard left to deal with the aftermath. And if guards go????

During the 12 day strike, Management and Union bosses bullshitted to us about how infallible their technology is. "New safe working equipment and wizz bang gadgetry would replace guards no worries." This photo and the story which outlines an incident occurring two days after the strike ended provide solid proof that our bosses are liars.

continued

On monday 22/12/87 the 11.10 down Sandringham 4 car refurbished Harris train collided with a backhoe of a work gang working on the line between Ripponlea and Elsternwick. The flagman who should have been protecting his workmates was riding on the backhoe. The tram collided with the backhoe causing extensive damage to the front cab and gouging a chunk out of the side of all 4 cars.

The bucket of the backhoe hit the front of the tram about 8 inches from the drivers window. The driver could have lost his head and now three months later is still off work. The guard had to protect the train from following traffic. He had to arrange relief for himself and the driver and guide the passengers safely to a platform. An off duty station assistant was called in to help.

The ABC cameramen were going to film this incident and were told to "fuck off" by management representatives. Perhaps Mr Kennan and his ratbag mates who are so keen to get rid of guards would care to explain how their radio would replace us when their safe working system fucks up.





# DIRECT ACTION STUFFS THE BOSSES



\*This article is reprinted from a pamphlet titled, "Direct Action in Industry" by the Direct Action Movement in England. This pamphlet is available from the Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation, P.O. Box 1066 Richmond 3121 for 60¢ + postage.

## GODD WORK

One of the serious problems facing militants in general and workers in the service industries in particular is that they can end up hurting the consumers (mostly fellow workers) more than the boss.

This isolates them from the the general mass of the population, which enables the authorities to whip up 'public opinion' against the strikers. One way round this problem is to consider techniques which selectively hurt the boss without affecting other workers - or better still are to the advantage of the public.

The 'good work' strike is a

general term which means that workers provide consumers with better service or products than the employer intended. An example would be if shop workers consistently under-charged and gave over-weight. Or if workers building working class flats put the best quality craftsmanship even into the most shoddy materials. Obviously there are numerous occasions when the good work strike is not a serious proposition, but it could certainly be used more often than it is. For instance if car workers took the company's hypocritical

appeals for 'more quality' seriously, it would be interesting to see managerial reactions when they got more good quality than they bargained for. One good side-effect of the good work strike is that it places the onus of stopping a service on the employer.

## Lisbon Transport Workers 1968.

'Lisbon bus and train workers gave free rides to

## TRY Good work SABOTAGE

GUARANTEED TO GET INSTANT RESULTS!!

all passengers today. They were protesting because the British-owned Lisbon Tramways Company had not raised their wages. Today conductors and tram drivers arrived at work as usual, but the conductors did not pick up their money satchels. On the whole the public seems to be on the side of these take-no-fare strikers and schoolboys are having the time of their lives. Holidays have begun, and they are hopping rides to pass the time.' (The Times, July 2, 1968.)

There should be thought here for Australian Transport workers who have tended to be rather unimaginative in their forms of struggle. It could be argued that a refusal to collect fares could lead to a lock-out by the employers. Even if this happened the passengers could clearly see that it was management, not workers, who was depriving them of transport. And it would not even be possible to counter a refusal to collect fares by a lock-out if the workers acted suddenly, without notice, and for limited periods - and then repeated the treatment later on.

In New York City IWW restaurant workers, after losing a strike, won some of their demands by heeding the advice of IWW organisers to "pile up the plates, give 'em double helpings" and figure bills on the lower side.

One might imagine similar situations in other industries, for instance postal workers behind a counter only accepting unstamped letters or petrol pump attendants dishing out free petrol, etc, etc. o



# INTERNATIONAL



## News

### POLAND

Public transport workers in the central city Bydgoszcz won a big pay rise after a 12 hour strike, the biggest in Poland since 1981. It seems it doesn't matter if your boss is a capitalist or a communist, a boss is a boss and workers have to fight for everything they get.

### FREE BUSES IN LIECHTENSTEIN

As of January 1, 1988, the Principality of Liechtenstein became the first country in Europe to offer free mass transit in a bid to discourage private vehicles being used for commuting and to combat pollution. For a one-year trial period, buses to and from the capital and the 10 other villages of Liechtenstein can be used free of charge.

## Catering Workers Under Attack

Catering staff in London Underground's 30 staff restaurants face a fresh attack on their wages and conditions. Having fought one campaign, in 1986/87, it seems they've got another round ahead of them in 1988.

Back in 1982, prior to the closure of London Transport's Croydon Food

Production Centre, an internal LT report set out some new thinking on the in-house catering department:

*"The eighties are likely to bring further changes in eating habits whilst food production is changing equally fast... when it becomes impossible to keep up with developments, jobs are inevitably lost in the end."*

International News cont'...

By May 1986, the picture was getting even clearer when catering staff were told that:

*"ways will have to be found for reducing wage costs and achieving more flexible working arrangements."*

This was not, of course, good news for LRT's 1,300 catering workers, many of them black women who've served London Transport for decades. During the 1986 pay negotiations, LRT tried to force pay cuts on them and brought in private agency labour to undermine and divide them, tendering of the work to outside contractors was also

proposed.

The response of catering workers throughout LRT was to walk out when agency staff were brought into canteens and to organise a one day boycott of all tube canteens in September '86.

The NUR strike ballot in early 1987 was largely sparked off by these actions and led London Underground to suspend private tendering.

Today, a year later, LRT is back again with the same list of demands for tube catering staff. Management has withheld their last years pay award, demanded more part time work and agency staff and proposed that all weekend work be paid at flat rate.





# The Light Rail disaster

## "Social Apartheid"

The disabled persons rights group People for Equality Not Institutionalization (PENI) has taken the Met to court. Katie Ellis, on behalf of PENI, has taken the Met to the Board of Equal Opportunities claiming Light Rail is discriminatory. The case arises out of the Met's demolition of Pt. Melb. and St. Kilda rail lines and replacement of services with Light Rail (articulated trams).

The court action is based on two main problems with Light Rail. The first is that unlike trains with the use of ramps anybody could use them, Light Rail trams are built with steep steps to climb. This prevents people in wheelchairs, the aged, the injured, people with prams or shopping jpeeps from using the Light Rail system.

Katie Ellis also correctly points out that the special buses provided for people confined to wheelchairs are a form of segregation. They prevent disabled people from having the normal social interaction they may have on public transport. The PIWA would like to add that the old train service was a lot faster and more frequent than either the special buses or the almost always off the road Light Rail vehicles 2001, 2002.

The Board of Equal Opportunities was set up by the government so it will be interesting to see their form of justice when the government is on trial. Judges know which side their bread is buttered on; and will it influence which way it will rule? In any case Katie deserves to win if determination or guts has anything to do with it. We wish PENI well and hope the Met get a kick in the arse for which they are long overdue. We spoke to Martin Stewart from PENI:-

**SPARKS:** What is it about a Light Rail vehicle which makes it unsuitable for people with disabilities?

**MARTIN:** Well, the steepness of the stairs combined with a vertical metal bar in the entrance makes it impossible to get a wheelchair onto the thing. The steepness of the

cont' over.

## The Lie Trail disaster cont'..

steps also make it difficult for the elderly, the injured, or arthritic, as well as people born with disabilities to enter them. I mean, someone could have an accident and be prevented access to public transport.

**SPARKS:** We can think of a few bosses we'd like to see have a nasty accident. Martin your group talks about social isolation caused by special buses... how does that work?

**MARTIN:** Well apart from the obvious ability to form friendships with the broader community aboard public transport being taken away from us, the buses are a lot slower. Sometimes they take up to two hours to arrive. Disabled people are same as so-called normal people. All that separates us is that part of our body doesn't work properly. We don't want to be cut off from society by a public transport system that doesn't work.

**SPARKS:** Joe Sibberas has a part of his body that doesn't work, it's called his brain. How do you think the social isolation caused by the destruction of train services will effect disabled people?



**MARTIN:** It is essential for us to have contact with the general public because it keeps them aware of what we can do. If they see we can read a book or carry on an intelligent conversation it makes them see that we are people too. We want to avoid the social divisions that

cont' over.



The Lie Trail disaster cont'...

can create a general fear and misconception of people with disabilities.

**SPARKS:** What do you hope to achieve in court?

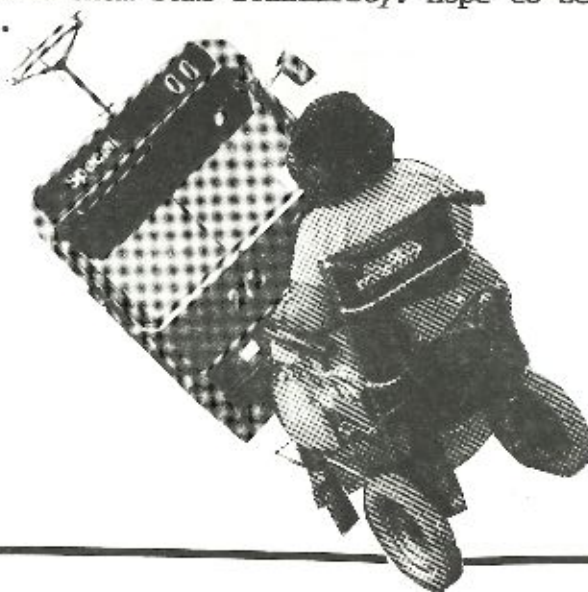
**MARTIN:** We hope to obtain a ruling from the court that Light Rail is discriminatory, that the so-called 'demand responsive' bus service be declared equally discriminatory because it segregates people. We also want the Met to be ordered to make Light Rail available to everyone. In 1985 when ex-Transport Minister Roper announced Light Rail he conned us and the public into believing disabled passengers could travel on it. It is supposed to be public transport after all. Why can't we use it?

**SPARKS:** Any final remarks?

**MARTIN:** Yes, a message to all public transport workers in the industry. We hope they can take note of our complaint against Light Rail trams. We hope you will take up this important issue with your workmates at the next union meeting and pass a motion of support.

**SPARKS:** Thanks Martin. PENI were always there to lend a hand in the Light Rail dispute. During the guards strike they organized a demonstration of support outside the guards depot.

The final summing up of the discrimination case resumes on 30th May at 356 Collins St., Level 3. PENI have supported us in the past and now it is time for us to show them some solidarity. Hope to see you at the hearing.



Trains after dark are pretty hairy places. To add to a pleasant cocktail of unlicensed thugs we now have the heady bouquet of the Met's Transit police. These uniformed thugs come from a marriage of the previously discredited Railway cops (minus those stupid enough to make it to the front page of the Sun) and our very own favourites the Vic Police (who are generally clever enough to do their bashing in private.)

Transit police can chase you off railway land, do strip searches and generally harass at their own discretion... It's completely up to them if they don't believe the station you got on at was unstaffed or if you're only 14... I reckon our only protection against these thugs is the presence of the public transport workers... It'd be great if the cops on trains were met with a few of the beer bottles stashed under seats but in reality many people although sympathetic to you as you get busted can't afford to get busted as well...

I'm still really grateful to the train worker who stood around for 20 minutes after I got busted by these filth and was dutifully searched and questioned by 6 plainclothes -ers all at once (you know the joke - why do police hang around in 3s?... Coz one can read, one can write and the other likes the company of intellectuals - well with railway coppers they have to do it in sies). I reckon the only thing stopping the cops taking me away for the night was the fact that there was someone hanging around...

Members of the Ticket forgers union are not the only ones to have to fear these cops... what the government wants to do you see is sack all the guards and conductors and just employ more police to make sure everyone is still paying for the increasingly shitty service... the ads for the transit police say that if you call their hotline they get coppers there fast... how can you call the hotline from a train eh?...

## GUARDS NOT GENDARMES...

It's stating the obvious that guards are there all the time to keep trains safe and accessible to all - and the same goes for connies too. Next time they go out to protect their jobs they'll be needing our support too - just remember the knowing smile you get from a con as they give you a ticket without a concession card... or when they don't look too hard at your bodgie...



ppps

noticed how the met has issued new size tickets to make it harder to forge 'em in early days on the tickets...

- connies have to pay for any tickets they haven't sold so stealing from them is pretty fucked...

- connies now also have identifying ticket stamps so if you've got the time, cutting a ticket to a normal shape if you haven't got a concession card is a good way of protecting a con who's supported you (what is a normal shape? a rectangle like on buses and trains).



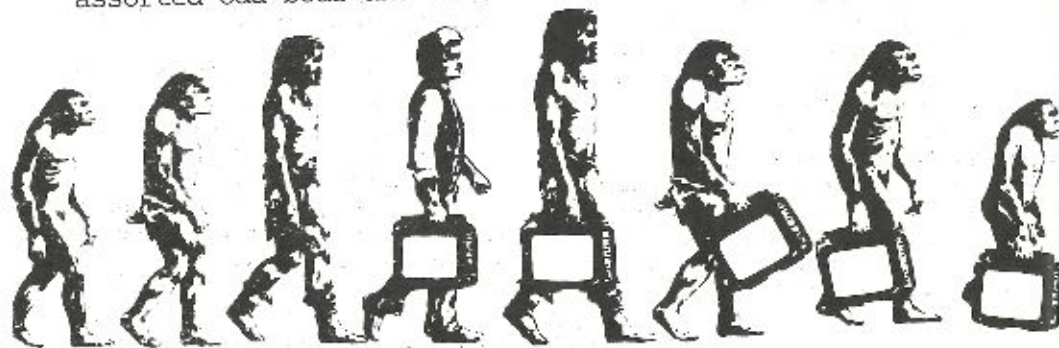
# KEVIN GOES TO MAY DAY

Every year on May the 1st class conscious workers around the world gather to remember the Haymarket Martyrs and the achievement of the 8 hour day struggle. It's become a bit of a joke in recent times, what with Russian tanks rolling down the streets of Poland while the local steel workers fight a desperate battle to win a living wage. Over here the trade union bureaucrats march with the workers to spy on militants who may be active in their particular union.

Despite the farce that modern May Days have become, workers world-wide still feel it is important to have a day to celebrate our victories. As part of the anarchist movement, PIWA members went along to join the proceedings.

In Melbourne there are two (2) May Days. One is organised by Trades Hall and is held on the first Sunday in May because our union bosses don't want to upset their pals in industry by calling a strike on a working day. The other May Day celebration is organised by Melbourne anarchists and is always held on MAY the 1ST.

As it happened the first Sunday in May was MAY the 1ST so the two marches became one this year. About 10 000 to 15 thous. members of trade unions, political parties, national groups, community groups, lobby groups, lefties, assorted odd-bods and US (the anarchists) marched.



The Anarcho Syndicalist Federation's banner which led the anarchist mob on May Day.

A group of Koories (Aborigines from Vic area though not necessarily confined to colonial state border) led the march and the theme was "DON'T CELEBRATE '88". We had no problem with that. Afterall, the Bicentennial is just a colonial celebration of a murderous invasion and rape of Australia and the indigenous Aboriginal peoples.

The March began at Trades Hall, wound through the city and ended at a park in Batman Avenue.

At 2.40 pm the march set off as the unlikely gathering chanted and stomped towards Batman Ave. We got stuck behind the Socialist Labor League (looney-left) who became most upset with our chant "Lenin was a wanker....

And Trotsky too,.....  
And Trotsky too!"





The pace of the March was slow and being stuck behind the S.L.L. was boring so we livened up our step as we went towards the park. Along the way we passed various groups including a small A.R.U. contingent made up of ARU bosses and would-be ARU bosses. The way they carried their ARU banners they looked like PALL BEARERS lugging around the coffin of their dead union. The ARU bosses were most upset with our chant: "One, two, three and a bit,  
The ARU is a pile of shit!"

When we arrived a stage was already set up. Standing on the stage was **Jim Harper** (ATMOEA secretary), who was **Master of Ceremonies**. He introduced each speaker with a fire and brimstone speech about the need to destroy capitalism, smash the bosses and fight back against the government. What a joke! That bloke's got repetitive strain injury from signing sell-outs.

Also present was **Graham Bertrand** who has resigned from the ARU to run a nursery in Eltham. Graham is the same prick who sold out the suburban guards. What a cheek that man has; first he sells out the guards, now he sells gardens, changes from commo to cappo and then thinks he has the right to join a workers march!

Over all MAY DAY was good and I'm glad I went.



Cheers, Your Pal **KEVIN**

If you have a problem and need advice, write to "Just Ask Kevin", C/o Sparks,  
P.O. Box 1066  
Nth Richmond 3121.

## "PENI BUZZ"

People for Equality Not Institutionalisation are pleased to report on a victory in their struggle for accessible public transport. The MET is "looking into" an idea which PENI has pushed to make train travel safer for blind passengers. The idea is to have an audible warning mechanism linked up to automatic doors on trains. When the train pulls up to a station and the doors open, a noise will go off to indicate on which side of the platform the train has arrived.

We hope that the MET institutes this innovation, and many others that are possible. Then, integration into the wider community for disabled people can start to become a reality rather than a neat election slogan.

### A PUBLIC MEETING IN SUPPORT OF THE

B.L.F. WHERE: Auditorium

WHEN: Wednesday  
June 1st 1988 <<  
7.30 pm.

>> Trades Hall Council  
Cnr Lygon & Victoria Sts  
Carlton.

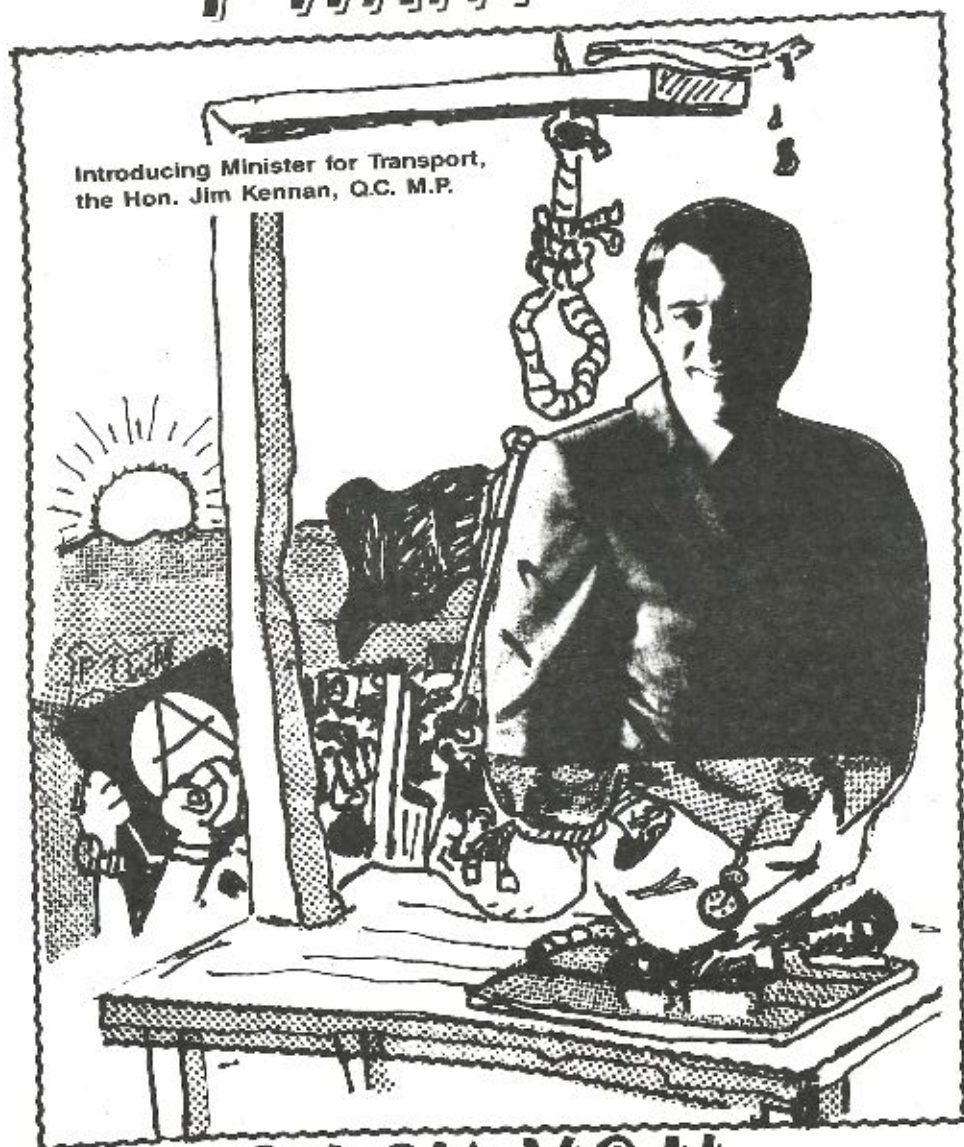
The final Sharpe report will be presented to Parliament at the end of May. So far, none of the previous reports have justified the disgusting raid on the BLF office or the seizure of their assets. The next report will no doubt be the same pack of lies dressed up as half baked truths. These attacks on the BLF are an attack on all workers. Our wages are getting worse. Our conditions are getting worse. We are losing the right to organise. If the bosses get away with destroying the B.L.F. we will all be next. We must show solidarity. Don't be complacent. Come to the Public Meeting.

Childcare and Supper provided.  
W/chair access through carpark.



# I WANT TO

Introducing Minister for Transport,  
the Hon. Jim Kennan, Q.C. M.P.



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# SINDICALISMO ANARQUISTA

Anarco-sindicalismo significa sindicalismo anarquista, que é o oposto de sindicalismo mercante. Nós defendemos que todos os trabalhadores em uma indústria pertencam a um sindicato, a fim de remover divisões artificiais entre os trabalhadores. Tal sindicato deve ser totalmente organizado e controlado pelos membros.

Para conseguir isto nós queremos um sindicato organizado segundo as seguintes normas:

1. Que nenhuma pessoa empregada pelo sindicato ganhe mais do que a média de salários dos membros;
2. Que os oradores não tenham nenhum poder executivo - todas as decisões são tomadas pelos membros afetados;
3. Os oradores devem agir somente como delegados eleitos pelos membros a fim de carregarem as decisões tomadas pelos membros;
4. Que um mecanismo seja instituído a fim de remover instan-

aneamente oradores/delegados que quebrem as regras acima:

5. Que todos os cargos dentro do sindicato sejam de caráter temporário, ou seja, dois anos (a menos que ninguém mais se candidate);
6. Não deverá haver nenhum grupo de administradores pagos período integral. Todo o prejuízo nos salários deve ser compensado pelo sindicato, no limite da diferença somente;
7. Que um programa de decisões descentralizadas seja implementada dentro da estrutura sindical, a fim de que nós não precisaremos de cargos de período integral.

Somente desta maneira nós ver uma organização democrática, unida e batalhadora, que se levantará pelos direitos dos trabalhadores e suas famílias contra todos os governos, partidos políticos e todos os patrões.

Qualquer pergunta por favor  
dirija-se a nós.

**TRANSIT PIGS—WE'RE RIDING WITH YOU!**

