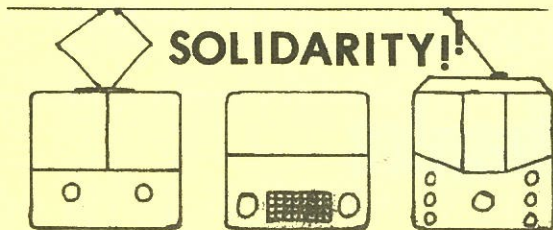


# SPARKS

The Paper of the Public Transport Workers  
Association

№ 10 Oct–Nov, '87



**AND**

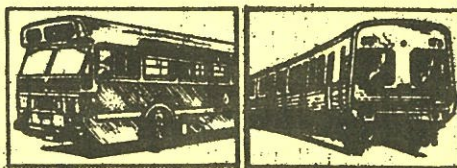
**HEAPS MORE!**

**inside:**

**METPLAN; 4p.c. FIGHT;  
DANGER MONEY;  
INTERSTATE &  
O/S NEWS**



FRONT COVER: Courtesy of REBEL WORKER.



## PEN NAMES

Pen names appear in **SPARKS**. It's a fact that using real names does lead to harassment from the bosses. It is PTWA policy to leave it up to the discretion of contributors as to whether they sign articles with their real names.

# thanks

Up until the last issue of **SPARKS** (No.9), the PTWA was able to get the paper printed for next to nothing thanks to friends in the printing business. Unfortunately that fell through and we had to get issue No.9 printed commercially. This issue, No.10, has also been commercially printed though thanks to many transport workers, costs to us have been minimised. When we explained our dire financial plight to those we work with, the response was overwhelming. **THANKS COMRADES**. An especial thank to all those that made it to the **SPARKS** fundraiser on Sept.12th. We made over \$200 towards this issue. We hope you all enjoyed yourselves, and to those that couldn't make it, hope you can make it to our next social/fundraiser.

So if you enjoy reading this paper, why not make a donation or take out a subscription. \$5 equals a year's supply of headaches for the bosses...

Spencer Street Station-\$21.00	Malvern Depot-\$6.00
Sth.Melb.Depot-\$13.00	Preston Depot-\$5.00
Flinders Street Station-\$9.00	Subscriptions-\$40.00
Electric Running Depot-\$73.90	

The deadline for the next issue of **SPARKS** (No.11, Dec-Jan), is the 30th November.

**SPARKS** is produced by the **PUBLIC TRANSPORT WORKER ASSOCIATION** a federated member group of the **ANARCHIST SYNDICALIST FEDERATION**. Our address is P.O.BOX.1066, Nth.Richmond, 3121.

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## 4% OF NOT MUCH IS VERY LITTLE

As we go to print ARU and Metal Workers Union members are striking for 48 hours over the governments intransigence in granting the 4% second tier wage increase. If necessary, the strike will be followed by a series of bans and limitations. More strike action will probably occur. If the PTWA considers it useful we will be putting out a special info. leaflet on the fight for the 4%

The government, through the STA & MTA, want an awful lot in trade offs for that miserly sum of 4%. That 4% amounts to an increase of \$10-12 on an average railworkers wage, buggery all considering how our wages have slipped so far behind price increases over the past 5 years thanks to the ACTU-ALP Accord. We've all been doing "our bit for the country" since we were born! That hasn't stopped the boss class tightening the screws even more. While they threaten to leave unless taxes are lowered, we get told to trade off hard won conditions in order to make profits for them easier to come by. HA! It's a shame the jokes on us.

Two months ago, transport unions undertook a united campaign for the 4%, and against job cuts. Now all unions (or rather, their leaderships) bar the ARU and AMWU, have accepted drastic tradeoffs that will eventually end up costing jobs. The AFULE agreements are the most pathetic of all. Here's some of what they've agreed to do in return for 4% - **extended mileage per shift**. This is certain to lead to the closure of country depots as well as increasing the workload and stress of drivers.

- **use of mainline loco's for shunting**. This is certain to threaten shunting loco's, leading to quite severe shunting and driver no. reductions.

- **agreement that in 'certain circumstances', second persons will do shunting**. Ultimately less jobs but more work for those remaining.

The leaderships of the ARU and Metal Workers Union are quite capable of selling us out. All members need to keep in mind that **4% OF NOT MUCH IS VERY LITTLE**. We must not give in to the governments demands that we do away with straight shifts, travel expenses, washing times, or that we accept contracting in the industry or draconian conditions applied to sick leave, etc.

RAILWAY ANNIE.

# Second Tier Wage Deal

Last month, we in the tramways were presented with a 2nd tier wage deal based on "productivity increases".

The reality of course, is that we gave away a number of hard won working conditions in exchange for a few "crumbs"

The most significant losses to my mind are the scrapping of Paid Leisure Days and the loss of the delegates table.

We have all been assured that P.L.D.s have not been scrapped, we now get them as a block, an extra 2 weeks or so on our annual leave.

However, when you consider that, having won a 38 hour week a few years ago, we all agreed to the P.L.D. system

(not an extra 2 weeks leave), this decision to go back to what is, in effect, a 40 hour week is a major setback in our conditions. We all appreciate the 3 days off now and then.

In addition, it will be now so much easier for the bosses to argue that 7 weeks leave is far too generous, and we may yet lose even that.

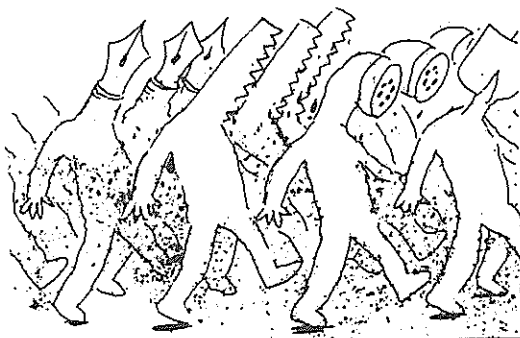
The loss of the delegates table is another lamentable concession. It was fought for and won only a few years ago to enable our over worked delegates to be in the depots at specific times so that members could discuss with them grievances and work related problems. It also enabled the delegates themselves to attend to their duties without having to do so in their own time with all the personal stress that entails.

To simply sign away this important condition is outrageous.

It should be borne in mind too, with this deal, that a dangerous precedent of giving away our working conditions for meagre wage rises has now been established

What do we do next year?

One final disturbing point to be made concerns the



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way the whole deal was made.

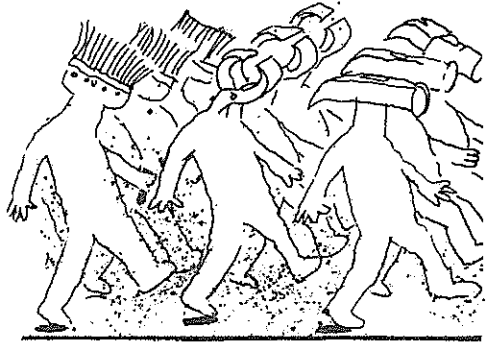
A nice sweet heart arrangement between the M.T.A. bosses and the A.T.M.O.E.A. bosses, that was then presented to us on a simple yes/no basis. No initial consultation of, or participation by the members.

It makes you wonder just what they're arranging now.

One-person operation, perhaps?

M.M.

Driver. S.M. DEPOT



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# HOW MET PLAN WAS UNCOVERED!

METPLAN is the ALP's Lonie Report. It is to form the grand master plan for 15 years of service cuts, job losses, and change projects. The METPLAN project is a type of yuppie think tank and all sorts of Government and Management bureaucrats will take part. Under the terms of reference "the transport unions are to actively participate in the study".

We found out about it when PTWA members supported by workers on the job went on a hunt for information. We were suspicious that Joe Sibberas (ARU State Secretary) was lying to the suburban guards about job cuts. Our suspicions were confirmed when information was obtained on a number of documents that are supposed to be freely available to public transport workers. These documents reveal a conspiracy between Unions, Management, and Government to secretly re-shape the system according to ALP policy. We all know what that ALP policy means in practice; job cuts, service cuts, and more work for less money.

## METPLAN cont.

In the last issue of SPARKS we revealed which documents we liberated from the bosses' padlocked filing cabinets this time we tell you more on what's happening, where to get your own info, and suggest some good questions to ask the union delegates about METPLAN. Happy Hunting!

The project co-ordinator of METPLAN within the Ministry of Transport is Jim Webber so he is the bloke to abuse if your job is up for the chop. If you have enquiries then he can be contacted by calling 618 2217 or try visiting Corporate Planning on Level 9, 50 Queen St. Julie Marginson might answer the phone but she is on the project team so don't let that put you off. You are entitled to information, under the terms of reference they must consult with the community.



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## **METPLAN cont.**

By now they should have completed their discussion paper which will form a draft for the final METPLAN report so make sure you ask for a copy of that. Also ask for a big green document The MTA Business Planning Report, The METPLAN Terms of Reference, and The METPLAN Study Approach. Make sure you remember to ask for Annex D - The Detailed Consultation Programme for Transport Unions not included with the other annexes.

Although he is reluctant to give it to you Peter Parkinson at Trades Hall on 662 3511 has bundles of top secret negotiations stashed away in his filing cabinet. A well-planned approach to obtaining this info would be best or perhaps if the depot sent down a large delegation to grab it. If this approach fails, hassle the union for info on METPLAN and the Change Projects and don't give up till you get it. This stuff affects your job and livelihood and you shouldn't allow the bastards to hide it from you.

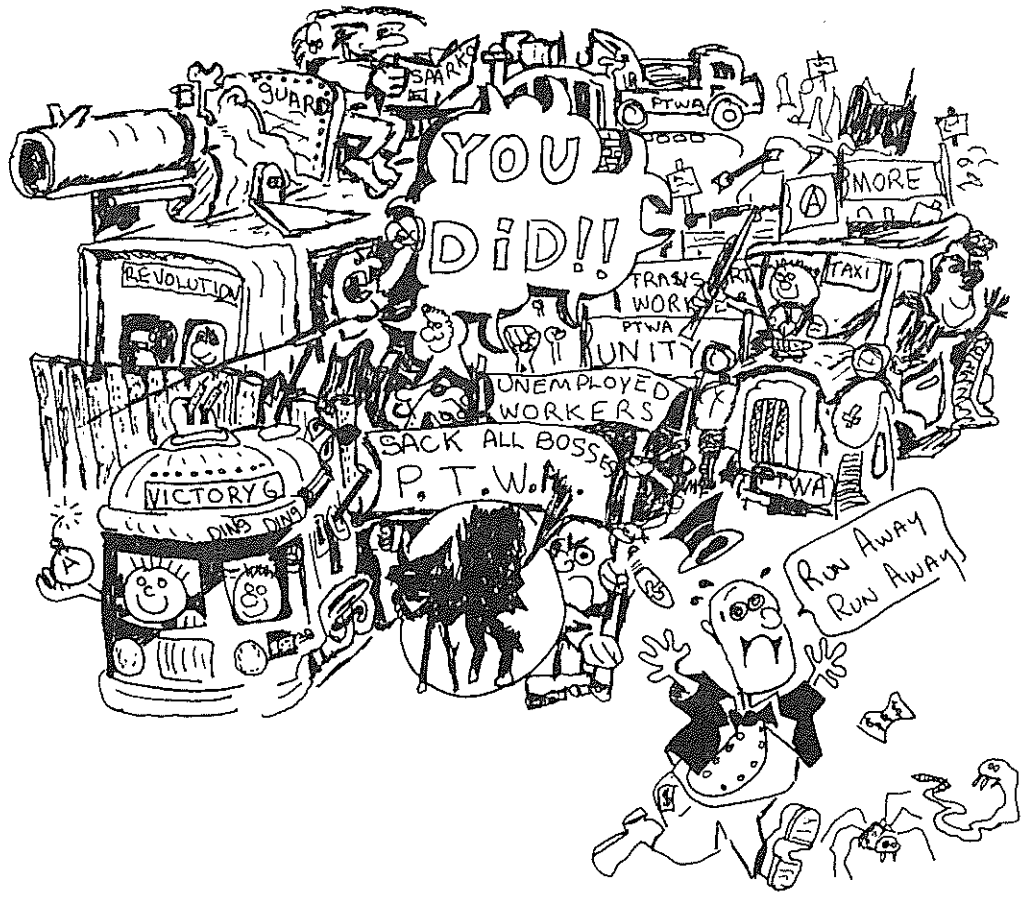
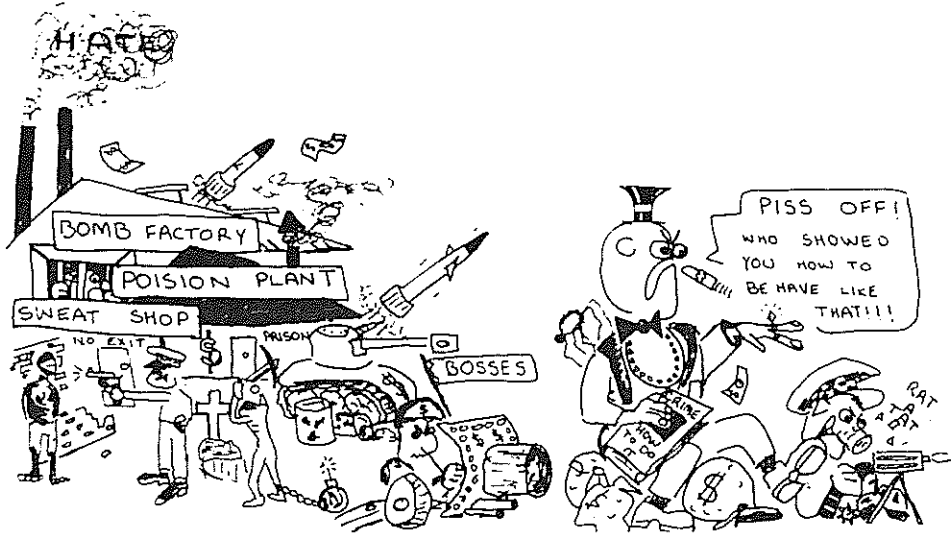
Tell the union bosses you want a copy of MTA Change Projects, the MTA Budget Documents, especially the 1987 Recurrent Budget Situation Statement and a full copy of the 4% trade-off agreements. You are entitled to this and if they try telling you a bit of photocopying is too expensive, then ask them how much the union donates each year to the ALP.

If all else fails, contact the PTWA, publishers of **SPARKS**. We will reveal all and provide you with copies of the relevant documents. We have stuff the union bosses don't even know about to show you so why don't you send us a letter or better still come to our public meeting in December. Watch a great video on Spanish anarchists in the revolution and stay around for our presentation on METPLAN.

EMMA

(Special thanks to the 'quiet acheivers' at Head Office and VTHC.)

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# UNITY WORKS BOTH WAYS

## -LIFE AT SOUTH

We often hear the call for unity from our union leaders; "Get behind your union" they say. Lack of unity is often blamed on 'trouble-makers'. At Sth. Melb. depot the biggest trouble-maker is the union delegate (see Patrick Cook's article in the last issue of SPARKS).

Recently, the Sth. Melb. Depot Committee sought action from our union executive after presenting them with signed statements attesting to the mischief created in the depot by the delegate. Our Secretary, Jim Harper, asked the delegate from Sth. Melb., Denice Stevens, if she would resign in the light of overwhelming evidence of widespread dissatisfaction with her delegateship. She stubbornly refused.

In the Executive minutes it was said that action could only be taken in "special circumstances".

But what are these special circumstances? Since then, our delegate has; withheld information about the special executive meeting (over the 4%) from a depot meeting claiming it was secret(!); falsely accused a member of distributing leaflets (which were, in fact, approved by the union office) ; behaved in an appalling manner at the retirement luncheon for a member of 38 years service. Are these special circumstances?

Members at Sth. Melb. have taken action of their own - refusing to speak to the delegate (sent to Coventry). Many members with long service have remarked that they have not seen morale at such a low point.

Our delegate has refused to account herself to the members - she has done very little but cause disunity at Sth. Melb.

By way of protest, and on principle, I have requested by Special Day Report that union dues no longer be deducted from my pay packet preferring to pay direct to the union. I urge all my fellow workmates to do the same.

Leigh Kendall  
South Melbourne Depot

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# SENDING THE RACISTS BACK TO WHERE THEY CAME FROM.....

by  
**HELEN SAID**

Why let your face boil and your tongue freeze every time somebody attacks your own or your friends nationality? If you fight fire with fire, your smart answers will send even the slimiest rascists scuttling back to the sewer. Here are some tried and true comebacks to the most common pig-ignorant comments:

**RACIST PASSENGER:**"Where do you come from?"

**COME-BACK:**"I come from my mother. Where do you come from?"

**RACIST PASSENGER:**(speaking to other passengers) "Stop speaking those damned languages so loud".

**COME-BACK:**1. If you can speak the same language as these other passengers, join in their conversation as loudly as possible, making obvious references and gestures towards the rascist. **OR...**

2. Put on a customer services-style voice and advise the rascist to move to the back of the tram or bus. **OR...**

3. Join in the rascist's conversation mock-seriously and start pining for the good old days of gas chambers for those that speak a different language. As passengers start laughing, ask others if they agree.

**RACIST PASSENGER:**"How come all the wogs are working on the trams?"

**COME-BACK:**"Because you have to pass the intelligence test before you can start on the job.

**TRANSPORT WORKER:**(addressing other workers)"Why don't you lot speak English?"

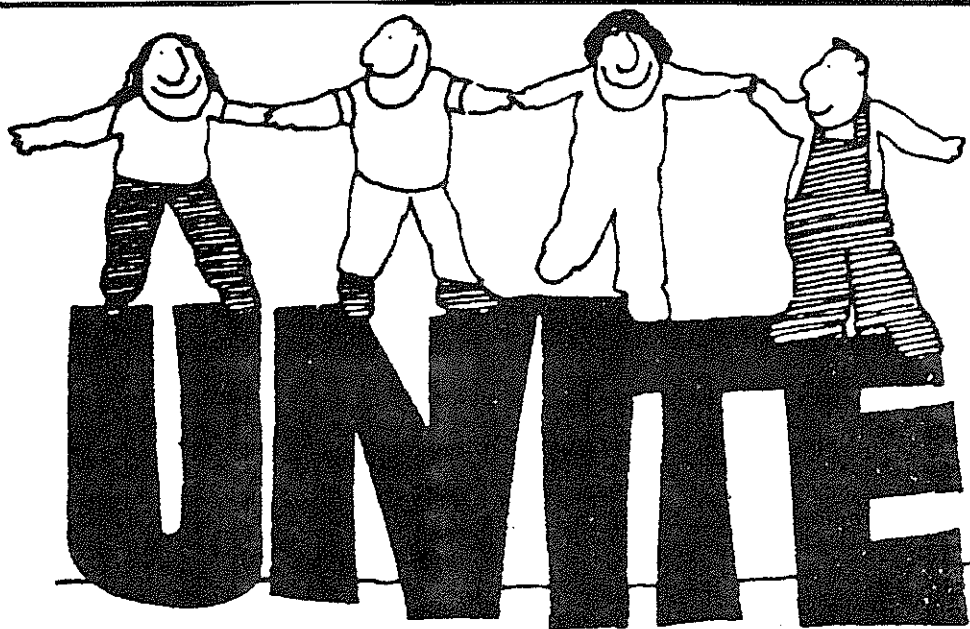
**COME-BACK:**"Because we aren't in England".

**TRANSPORT WORKER:**"Well speak Australian then".

**COME-BACK:**"We are trying to learn but since your race killed off so many real Australians, there are none here to teach us". Then turn your back on this worker and keep talking to your friends in your own language as loudly as possible.

**RACIST PASSENGER:**"Thank God your not Vietnamese as well".

**COME-BACK:**"I must remember to thank Him for it after I thank Him for my daily bread".



**TRANSPORT WORKER:**"Why can't they(migrants) be more like us?"

**COME-BACK:**"Who is Us?"

**TRANSPORT WORKER:**"Australians of course".

**COME-BACK:**"What are Australians?" Continue this line of questioning until it becomes clear that the English are just another ethnic group.

**TRANSPORT WORKER:**"They should become like us.And if they don't,let them go back to where they came from".

**COME-BACK:**"Captain Cook didn't like the people that were here before him.He didn't just go back to where he came from.So perhaps the migrants are just trying to be good Australians by copying Captain Cook".

Don't wear a racist nickname.If somebody calls you "chop-sticks" call them "knife and fork".Likewise,someone calling you "dim-sim" deserves to be called "dim-wit".And why should anyone call you "chocko" if they look like a vanilla dairy queen?

Don't get obsessed with answering each and every racist comment.But giving a racist a taste of his/her own medicine is a good policy from time to time.If you are not successful in putting a persistent racist back in his/her place,don't just put up with the humiliation.Tell other workers,let the union know,even management if you reckon it'll have some affect.You can also try the Equal Opportunities Board but don't expect a great deal.Whatever you do,don't let them hound you out of your job.

## MTA Change Projects equals Job Losses

over 800 jobs to go in Tram and Bus Division by Dec. '88

### CASUALTY LIST

630 connies to go - new ticketing system, LRV, removal of 'Z' seats.

50 maintenance positions to go - review of work practices.

35 revenue clerks to go - review of work practices, new technology.

30 Operations Inspectors to go - introduction of AVM.

30 Tram drivers to go - introduction of LRV.

30 Bus drivers to go - introduction of articulated buses, service cuts in St. Kilda Rd.

The MTA is planning to introduce microprocessor based ticket issuing and cancelling technology and the use of off-vehicle ticket selling systems to facilitate one-person-operation (OPO) on trams (Change Projects MC56,57). Further reductions in the number of conductors are expected with the planned introduction of LRVs on seven existing tram routes (Change Project MC34). This is expected to result in the loss of 630 conductors by MTA estimates. Plans are already underway to remove connies from all 'Z' and 'A' Class trams (Change Projects MC56). Preston Depot recently banned two "Zeds" that have had connee seats removed. There is even a suggestion that 'W' Class trams be modified for OPO.

Regarding OPO the MTA document "MTA Change Projects" (dated May 1987) notes "Managements position is that this change is not feasible without a major change to the ticketing system" implying that the ATMOEA has had discussions with the MTA about it - but what details have the union given its members? **SPARKS** is yet to substantiate a rumour that the MTA has signed a contract with Amcal Chemists to install ticket machines in their outlets.

Talk of getting rid of connies has been around for years, the only thing that deterred Management from bringing it in sooner was a militant response from the rank and file. Drivers must support connies on this issue - don't be sucked in by a measly increase in pay (\$3.65 for LRV!). A loss of a connee means a weakened industrial position, a poorer standard of service, and decreased staff security (ask any Doncaster driver).

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## CHANGE PROJECTS cont.

The PTWA considers any industrial tactic a legitimate response when it comes to defending jobs and conditions.

Connies won't be the only ones to cop it under the projected changes. The MTA is looking at a reduction of revenue clerks and DM's clerks (by at least 35) with the introduction of new technology and the re-negotiation of work practices (shades of the New Right!)

At least 50 maintenance positions are to go through a general review of work practices and the introduction of new traction sub-station equipment.

30 Operations Inspectors are expected to go with the introduction of Automatic Vehicle Monitoring (AVM). All government owned MTA buses have AVM but since its introduction many drivers have complained of breakdowns in the system - some drivers don't even bother using it.

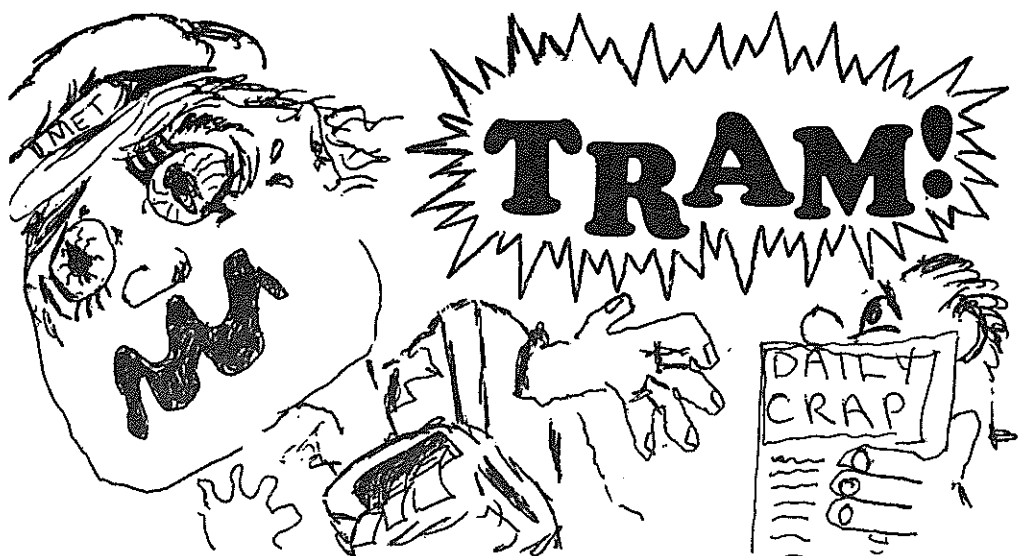
With the introduction of articulated trams and buses there will be one less driving job for every articulated vehicle brought into service and the review of services in St. Kilda Rd. will a loss of 15 jobs at Elwood Depot.

MTA Changes Projects is typical of the New Right mentality currying favour amongst MTA bureaucrats. It is obvious from MTA Business Planning Report No.1 that the MTA intends to sack staff, increase the workload on remaining staff, reducing wages in real terms, reduce burden on government coffers (after all, there are Taberets to build and Ministers to pay) whilst increasing subsidies to private bus contractors.


What does all this mean for public transport workers? Increased workload and stress for less pay (for which hard-fought-for conditions have been traded off), lower work morale, higher staff turnover, poorer service to the public. In short, the MTA is to reduce the cost of public transport to the government at the expense of public transport workers and users. The ATMOEA has shown no desire to seriously resist these attacks despite their preliminary discussions and consultative structures.

It is up to us - the rank and file - to gather information, to talk about and discuss the issues, and begin to organize and fight. It is our responsibility to ourselves and the public transport users of Melbourne to prevent this vicious attack on the service.

SAM THE TRAM



My uniform's like school  
I feel like a fool  
With a number on my lapel-  
-It's an Anarchist's hell!  
I get up at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 4  
And I stumble out the door  
And I don't know who I am,  
And my head is full of tram.

Punching tickets all day long  
"Fares Please"  is my song  
Office girls have haughty airs  
People stumble on the stairs.  
School kids & drunks make noise  
But I must maintain my poise  
So I can't be what I am  
And my head is full of tram.

I gotta be there on the dot  
Whether I like it or not-  
Drivers can't be kind  
They have to leave me behind  
I take it all in stride  
It's not a chore, it's a free ride  
But I don't know where I am  
If my head's too full of tram

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Gotta protect myself from cold-  
Feet are aching - getting old?  
12 o'clock the sun is streaming  
-There is no time for dreaming  
"Change the sign, we're running late!"  
No time to mediate  
Back into the traffic jam  
And my head is full of tram!

My hand's filthy with cash  
They're just as black as ash  
Oh- woops, sorry - oh no!-  
I stepped on your toe-  
But it's really not my fault-  
-A somewhat abrupt halt-  
-I said sorry, ma'am!-  
Oh my head is full of tram!

Through the city in peak hour  
Many faces, mostly sour  
But still some crack a smile  
As I walk the miracle mile  
Keep a smile on your face-  
Makes the world a better place  
Yeah you do the best you can  
When your head is full of tram

No, I like this job a lot-  
Don't let it be said I do not  
Though there's 1 thing I'll admit-  
Broken shifts are full of shit-  
But it's better than the dole-  
(But I intend to keep my soul)  
Yeah you can keep your air conditioning  
And your office partitioning  
And your business talk jive-  
I need people - they're alive!  
Yeah I'd rather be here  
Than 30 floors in the air-  
Yeah I'll stay where I am-  
Working on the tram

Chris King  
Conductor 1144,  
Poet,  
Human Being

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**”GO FORTH AND MULTIPLY”**  
**— the creed of**  
**the**  
**BUREAUCRACY**

Rail workers who read Cain's recent statement about "a leaner and more efficient transport system" must have had a good laugh. As a speaker at the August 5th joint union meeting at Festival Hall pointed out, a world's first has occurred here in Victoria—the only rail system known to create two head offices where once there was one. And all in the space of a couple of years.

Tens of millions of dollars have been wasted on this dual management. At least \$13 million was recently spent on renovations to Metrail's Market Street H.Q.—about the same amount the government is saying it needs to save through redundancies. Despite a motion adopted at the Aug. 5th mass meeting directing union officers to put to the government the alternative cost-cutting measure of abolishing Metrail, the ARU leadership has for some unknown reason, failed to put it. The massive and continuous savings in such a proposal are obvious. Why aren't the unions exploiting this??

The double management structure is a painful joke—a joke at the expense of the industry as a whole, and on all those paying taxes to maintain it. The brains trust at V/Line has determined to haul large volumes of parcels around in trucks in the suburban area, since they closed the rail parcels coach service down. You see, the coaches were a V/Line service but staffed by Metrail. Whenever Metrail were short of train crews, they took staff off the coaches, "because they are a V/Line service". Never mind the fact they ran on exactly the same type of track as the old VICRAIL...

Spencer Street Station provides another example of the wastage we now suffer under. One station has now become two. Of course that's meant two separate offices, two separate staff centres, etc. Supervisory numbers have increased from eleven to twenty three over the past six years while the number of staff at the station has decreased from approx. 250 to 120. You now have 3 V/line SM's and 2 Metrail SM's there.

Nothing better demonstrates the irresponsibility of these bureaucrats better than the remark of a senior Metrail manager when asked "What happens to peoples luggage, perishables, etc, if suburban guards are abolished?" His answer—"That's V/Line's problem".



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## GO FORTH & MULTIPLY cont.

How did this crazy management structure come into being? The MTA and the STA were created by the 1983 Transport Act, but Metrail actually has no legal basis. It was a backdoor administrative creation by an unpublished Ministerial directive sometime in '83. The unstated reason for its creation was the possibility (hardly likely at the best of times) of the sale of non-metropolitan lines to the Federal government. Such a massive and costly transfer (for the Commonwealth) has never looked likely. Indeed it is not necessary for effective co-operation between state rail systems.

Ingersoll, Fitzmaurice and the like keep telling us "to show pride in your business". What a farce! We are the one's coping the wrath of the public for that huge deficit-not them. We are totally justified in taking action to preserve this industry-we can see where that deficit really comes from.

**W.D.**



WHICH  
BUREAUCRAT  
ALLOWED THIS  
NOW-ATMDEA  
MEMBER TO  
DRIVE THIS  
TRAM AT THE  
OPENING OF THE  
BUNDOORA LINE  
EXTENSION??

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# workers ran the industry

In July 1936, workers all over Spain decided that their answer to the fascist uprising was to take over their workplaces, throw out the bosses and the bureaucrats and to take up arms in defence of their decision to control their own lives.

There were many examples of how self-management (no rulers, or, anarchy) worked in practise. One was the collectivisation of public transport.

The administrators and directors were dismissed and the amount saved from this was used to increase the wages of the lowest paid workers 40%-60%, while the intermediate and high paid workers got a 10%-20% increase. The working week was reduced to 40 hrs - it was to be reduced to 36 hrs but there was a war on. Fares were decreased and many people, invalids, schoolchildren, the aged, those injured at work, travelled free.

The tramways serving Barcelona - the second largest city - covered 69 routes. There were also buses and taxis. Of the 7000 workers, 6500 belonged to the transport workers section of the CNT, the anarcho-sindicalist union. During the fighting with the fascists, the streets were torn up and obstructed by barricades. After estimating the damage and specifying repairs, a commission of workers representing different departments (electric power, cables, traffic signalling, rolling stock, running grades, etc) arranged to resume operations and calls went out on radio for all personnel to return.

Working around the clock, service was restored only five days after the fighting ceased. 700 trams newly painted in the black and red colours of the CNT were placed in service. This was achieved because the various trades co-ordinated and organised their work into one industrial union, of all transport workers. Each section was administered by an engineer designated by the union and a worker delegated by the general membership. The delegations of the various sections co-ordinated operations in a given area. While the sections met separately to conduct their own specific operations, decisions affecting the workers in general were made at general membership meetings.

The engineers and technicians did not constitute a separate privileged elite (as in 'socialist' and capitalist countries). The work of the technicians, engineers, and manual workers was permanently interwoven and intergrated. The engineer, for example, couldn't undertake an important project without consulting the other workers, not only because responsibilities were to be shared but also because in practical problems, the manual workers

acquired practical experience. The manual workers' committees advised technicians on the feasibility of various plans, and put forward their own proposals.

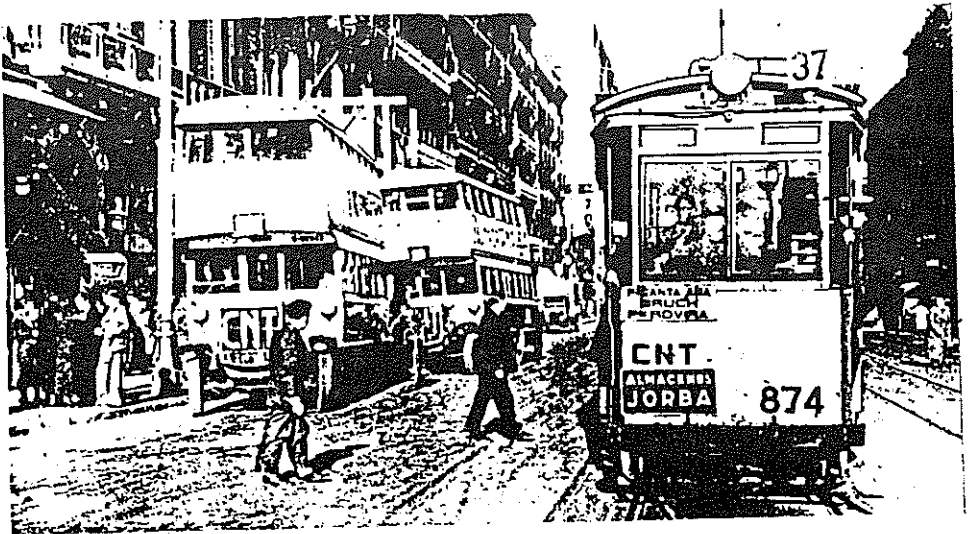
Under self-managed transportation, better service was provided for more users (an increase of 50 million trips in one year). Before the Revolution only 2% of supplies for maintenance and repairs were manufactured by the privately owned company that ran the tramways. Under self-management, within one year, 98% of the repair supplies were made in the workshops. The CNT Union also provided free medical services, including clinics and home nursing care, for the workers and their families.

Similar examples of co-operation between workers, without bosses, occurred all over Spain where the fascists had not taken control. The railways were likewise organised by committees of workers, and new truck and bus services were provided to isolated areas previously deprived of an adequate service. The deficit incurred was made up by better revenues from other lines.

The Spanish Revolution was defeated by the combined might of the world powers—Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Chamberlain and Roosevelt all had too much to lose if the truth got out.....

THE BOSSES NEED US - WE DON'T NEED THEM !

## When the Anarchists ran Public Transport

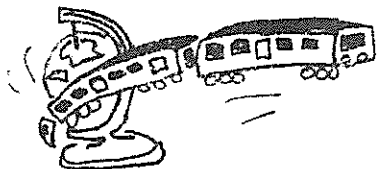


It ran on time

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# INTERNATIONAL



# NEWS

**SOVIET UNION:** Bus drivers in Chekhov a town of 60,000 near Moscow, struck in protest at a new wages system which would have seen their pay cut if they failed to provide an adequate service to passengers. The weekly Moscow News quotes one of the strikers, Niklai Konkov as saying "How can we fulfil the plans when most of the buses look like tanks after a battle?"

Soviet papers have in the past rarely reported industrial unrest. To do so would have contradicted the official line (read LIE) that the country is a workers state, and in a workers state where the workers hold power (Ha, Ha, Ha), why would workers have need to strike? Why indeed.

We don't know how the strike was resolved. It's not so long ago that strikers in the Soviet Union were jailed. The report only states that within 90 minutes of the strike becoming known, Party officials had arrived from Moscow to talk with the strikers. The fact Konkov was quoted favourably suggests the strikers were listened to.

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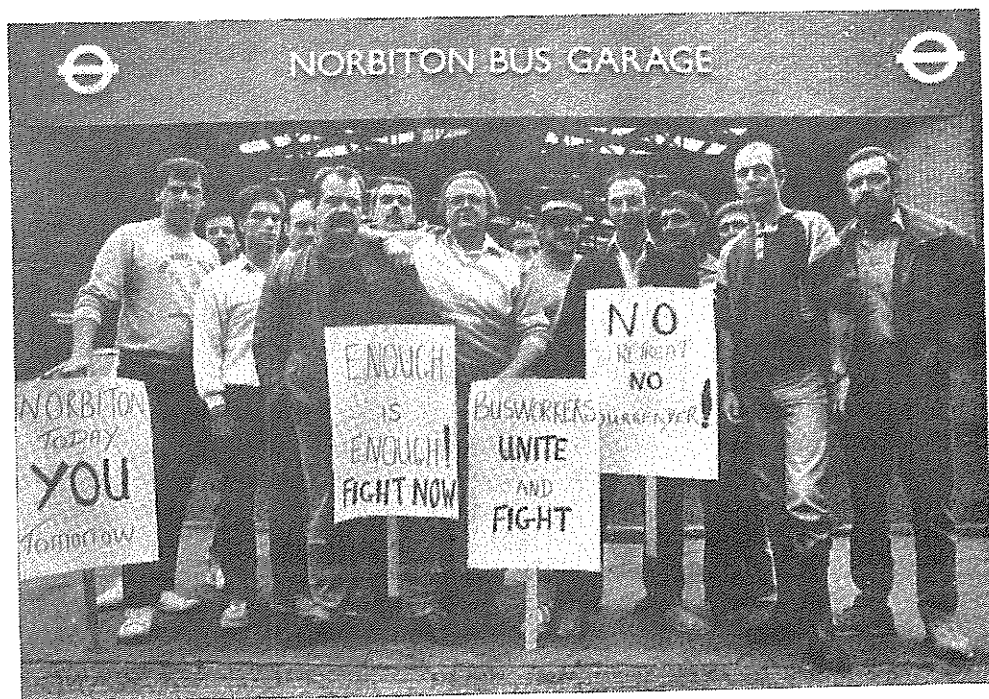
**SOUTH KOREA:** The photo above shows striking bus drivers picketing in the city of Inchon. 18,000 drivers in Seoul threatened to strike for a 10% pay rise until the government stepped in the day before the strike was to begin and granted the pay rise.

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**LONDON:** After an overwhelming 3-1 vote for industrial action, London Bus crews and engineers held 2 one-day strikes both 100% solid. The general public were sympathetic and some private operators were also affected despite threats of dismissal.

The situation at Norbiton garage sparked off the dispute. Drivers were told that, before competitive tendering of local routes their hours would be increased from 38 to 43 and pay cut from £4 to £3.50 per hour. Feeling on the picket was general discontent with worsening conditions. London Buses Ltd's action at Norbiton is the latest in a long line of grievances, including introduction of one-person-operated buses (OPO), resulting in delays in services; increased stress for drivers; and redundancy for conductors. Also ancillary services have been privatised; compulsory short-term contracts introduced in preparation for tendering; and LBL still fail to give staff proper protection against assaults.

The result of privatisation, with emphasis on profits at the expense of service, is already seen in the suburbs. The Woolwich to Sidcup route is a good example. When London Country Buses first took over buses were reliable and clean. Over the last six months standards have fallen - buses regularly break down, are in poor condition and the service is generally erratic. This is a direct result of not enough support staff due to massive cost-cutting in order to win the tender.



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# interstate

## Adelaide's Train Heroes

In the last issue of **SPARKS** we reported on the Sth.Australian Labor governments attempts to close down the Belair-Bridgewater Line.15 AFULE drivers at Bridgewater went on strike in early July.Soon the dispute spread,stopping all Adelaide's trains for 6 days.The govt.then backed down and agreed to re-open the line.

Woman's Day,the magazine that has the fetish for stories like "Why I still love my little boy even though he's got five arms",has,in it's Sept.14 issue,written up a very favourable account of the dispute.To quote-"The story of the Bridgewater train heroes is a heart warming example of what can be done to beat bureaucracy when the public and unionists get together to work for the good of the community".It goes on to quote residents describing the drivers as local heroes,while drivers state they couldn't have stuck it out without the backup of the locals.

Perhaps if the ARU leadership in Melbourne hadn't been so willing to backdown to the govt.over light rail-therby screwing the St.Kilda and Pt.Melb. communities-Woman's Day would now be doing an in-depth article on where Frank Lacey gets his red ties and tweed jackets from...

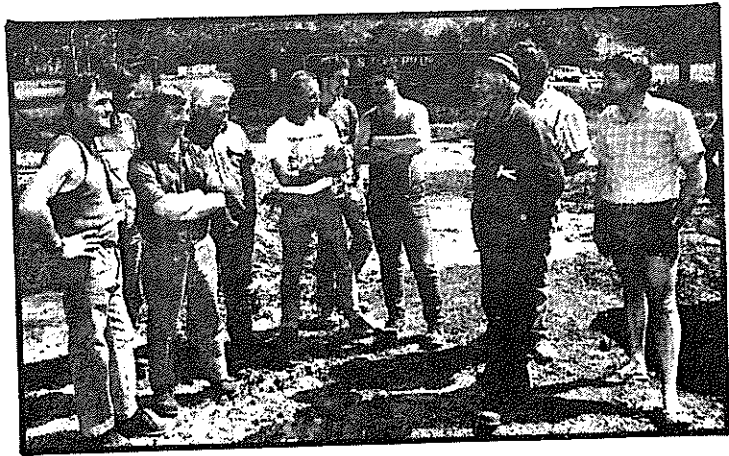


# Hunter Valley

17 steam rail enginemen were sacked on Sept.24 after they hijacked a steam loco at the Stockington Colliery at Hexham in the Hunter Valley. The owners of the colliery and the line that services it, Coal and Allied Industries, announced they were closing the line down and from then on moving all coal by road. The workers then responded with the hijack and local residents supported them by blockading the trucks carting the coal. The locals stated they were not only fully supportive of the workers in the fight for their jobs, but were opposed to the closure because of the huge increase in traffic it would mean on their roads.

The line is (was??) Australia's oldest continuous steam railway. 13 engines and thousands of wagons make up it's rolling stock. Coal and Allied claim it's no longer profitable to move the coal by rail. They have threatened to close the mine down if trucks aren't used. This is despite assurances given to the railworkers by Premier Unsworth and Coal and Allied a year ago, that the men were guaranteed employment for at least the next ten years.

STEAM      ENGINEMEN  
OUTSIDE    THE  
STOCKINGTON  
COLLIERY



## Country N.S.W.

At the end of September, the NSW Labor government announced it will be closing down 12 branch lines used for wheat traffic. The government claims—ho hum—the lines are too unprofitable to maintain. Some things never change. Rail unions and affected farmers have joined forces in opposing the closures, holding meetings and exchanging info. Of course line closures mean less jobs in the railways. For farmers, they'll be hit particularly hard. They'll now have to pay for road haulage to the nearest rail head, then pay out again for rail haulage, as well as paying out more in rates to local councils for the upgrading of roads. A lot of country people would be sympathetic towards industrial action taken to preserve these lines.

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# A LETTER FROM ESSENDON

Dear Comrades,

I came across a copy of the P.T.W.A. paper the other day and I began reading it. It was the first time I had seen the paper and I found it quite by accident, but it was so damn good that it will be no accident when I read the next copy (if you can make sure I get a copy...)

This paper was so good, so hard hitting, so very powerful and so full of so much punch that I enjoyed reading every article. I even tried to read the Greek bit on the back!!

What I liked most about the paper was the fact that it said exactly what I feel about things. A good deal of the writing seemed to centre on the non-existent leadership we are having to **ENDURE** from our so called union (big heads). Just recently, our delegate, Louie di Gregorio, rang Jim Harper at the union rathole H.Q., to ask him to come to the depot in relation to the bashing of our connie Joe Gilder. Harper told our delegate that he was 'busy'-busy pulling himself propably. He then told the delegate that if he wants to see him, he should come to the union office. Our delegate explained that he couldn't leave the depot as our depot was in a serious dispute. Harper still refused to come to the depot.

Harper didn't give a stuff about Joe Gilder who was brutally bashed, he just chose to ignore this serious situation.

Our union does not care about our rights, they are more interested in selling us out to the MTA and government, keeping those **TERMITES** happy in order to protect their own well cushioned arses. Why should our union leaders care about us; they're getting their thousands, and their various lerks and perks.

Have you noticed that when there is serious industrial trouble which could warrant a mass meeting, our union leaders shy away from that idea. They know full well that, should there be a mass meeting of trammies, we will want action on things, and they don't want that because they know



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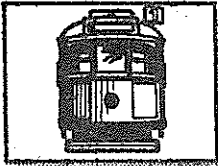
it's easier for them to sell us out behind our backs rather than obeying our wishes to take a hardline stance on matters. They also know a mass meeting could pass a Vote of No Confidence in them; they obviously don't want that because then they couldn't bleed us dry! Don't get me wrong, I believe in **SOLIDARITY** and the need for a good union, but not one that is so full of shit as the ATMOWEA.

In order to have a decent union leadership that is prepared to fight for us when we want them to, we have to oust these parasites at King Street and replace them with members from our Rank & File. Only when this happens can we once again feel safe and secure in our jobs.

Once upon a time, I used to look forward to coming to work each day but now, I get a knot in my guts when I get my uniform on.

Please have this letter published as it is what I have in my mind, and I think that all trammies will benefit from knowing that someone else feels the same way as they do.

Yours Sincerely,  
**DAVID EDWARDS--Tram Driver**  
**ESSENDON DEPOT (2½ Years)**



Dear Dave,

We're glad you like **SPARKS** and we certainly agree with your feelings about the ATMOWEA leadership. Not only should the present leadership be ousted but there should be fundamental changes to the structure of the ATMOWEA. Without these structural changes rank and filers turn into union bureaucrats (Jim Harper was originally elected on a rank and file ticket).

If the Union Executive has lost the confidence of the membership they should be (after due process) instantly removed from office and a new Executive elected - the same goes for Depot delegates. Accountability to the membership is the basis of a truly democratic union. These much needed changes cannot be elected into office, they must be brought into place by the action of the rank and file.

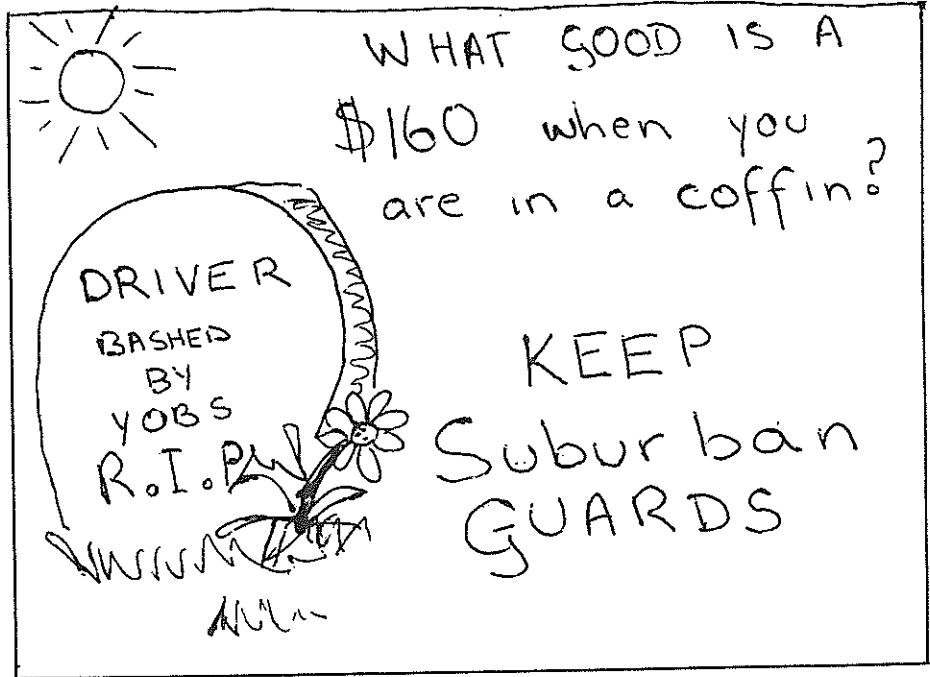
Yours in Solidarity,  
the PTWA

# THIS YEARS **WOODEN SPOONERS**



**WINNERS OF THE SPARKS**

**DROP KICK AWARDS**



over 400 By now most transport workers would be aware that suburban guards face the chop early next year. Suburban drivers, members of the AFULE, have indicated they'll run trains without guards if they're given an extra \$160 a week. (Isn't it reassuring to find those you work with standing right behind you. I'll pretend I didn't notice the knives in their hands).

Are drivers just being realistic in recognising "guards are no longer necessary" and are therefore justified in seeking compensation for the extra responsibilities? Aren't they actually assisting the governments plans by indicating how little they care about other workers livelihoods, not to mention the decrease in safety and service to the public??

If driver only trains go ahead it will only be a matter of time before the suburban system is reduced to a primarily peak service. The public won't want to travel at night if there's minimal protection and once drivers start getting threatened and bashed, they'll be refusing to run trains off peak. The government would have to backdown on it's plans if drivers refused **right now** to run trains without guards. Nothing beats solidarity.

ADAM MUYT, suburban guard, ERD.

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THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT WORKERS ASSOCIATION is holding a  
FILM AND DISCUSSION NIGHT.

*FILM: 'THE ANARCHISTS' A one hour long film on the  
Anarchists in the Spanish  
Revolution.*

*DISCUSSION: MET PLAN - what does it mean for us  
workers in the P. T industry?*

Put this in your diary. WHEN? TUES. 8th DECEMBER TIME: 7.30pm  
WHERE? Lincoln Hotel  
91 Cardigan St  
Carlton. (Cnr Cardigan & Queensberry Sts)

**GO ON.**

**'PHONE IN SICK.**

There are thousands of things you'd rather  
do than work. **Do them.**  
But only together can we create a revolution  
where pleasure is the only aim.

**GO ON.**  
**'PHONE IN SICK.**

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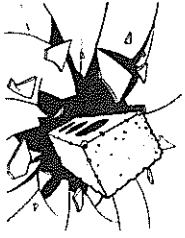
# SOLIDARITY AT BRUNSWICK

At Brunswick Depot a worker there with quite a history of militancy was called up before the Disciplinary Panel allegedly because of the number of sickies she'd taken-six in six months. Brunswick Depot workers met before she went up. They agreed there were far worse attendance records than hers'and therefore management were harassing her. They let management know that if she was harassed again, the Depot would take industrial action. Management decided, wisely, not to do anything to her. **SOLIDARITY!!!**

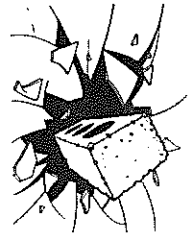
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## STOP PRESS:

On Monday 29 Sept. a redundancy package affecting up to 100 jobs was offered to workers at Preston Workshops. Unconfirmed rumour has it that the deal offered is considerably worse than the V/Line deal. **SPARKS** is seeking further details for the next issue.



## DANGER PAY



Most bashings and injuries that occur on the job go unreported and unnoticed but all operational crews on trams, trains and busses know the risk. A mate of mine describes it this way, "I'm a guard and see some real violence out there. On afternoon shift we come back in for tucker and often the topic of conversation is who copped it this time and how, it's almost like working in a war zone."

Our jobs cannot be described as safe. Staff numbers have been reduced drastically, presenting us with a situation where we are usually outnumbered by the animals when they turn violent. Safety has also been thrown away by management attacks on track gangs, maintenance workshops and the like. Trains, trams and busses are simply not always safe to run on our decaying public transport system. Excessive overtime and poor wages contribute to fatigue and sickness, not a good way to be when zooming along at 70 km/h with a thousand passengers in tow.

So what proof do we have that the system is unsafe? Operating crews are already convinced but for the others let's look at recent incidences.

The staff at Clifton Hill rail station need no reminding of that cold and bloody night in August when Julian Knight went off his rocker and shot up Hoddle Street and the surrounding area. Top marks are awarded to Fernando Mira, Station Assistant, the shy hero who risked his life to save 12 passengers Tom Roper might reckon that station staff are unnecessary but the death toll could well have been higher if brave Fernando had not led the terrified commuters into the safety of the platform station.

The drivers, guards, and signalmen involved also deserve praise for their cool handling of a terrible situation. Not so our valiant train controllers or police who fucked it up completely.

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## DANGER PAY CONT'.....

Whispers are that train traffic was not closed down immediately and one train was allowed to travel right into the danger zone without proper warning.

Other examples of danger are regular stonings of transport vehicles, derailling of vehicles or pulling down overheads, collisions between rolling stock, shunting accidents, bashing of staff and passengers. Health is also a major problem. Asbestos poisoning, lack of sleep, stress, back injuries from lifting, repetitive strain injuries are all rampant in this industry

So what do we do about it? I reckon now is the time to push for **DANGER PAY**. Keating's balanced the budget and profits are soaring so the bosses have plenty of money to pay it to us. We have copped a massive decrease in real wages ever since Fraser's wage freeze so lets make a huge claim for danger pay. How about \$100 per week for starters?

There is no way to put a price on human life, but it has to be a lot.

Money is always welcome but does not solve the problem so let's raise the demands. We want full staffing in every workshop, station platform, track gang, maintenance depot and operations division. We want reduced hours so we can sleep properly and recover from illness. We want roads and traffic signals fixed and looked after so they are safe to travel on.

We want a whole new society as well. The violence we encounter is simply a result of ratshit economic and social planning. Poverty, injustice, unemployment, boredom, excessive drug use, violence and social disruption are all by-products of capitalism and big government. More cops wont solve these problems, only workers control of industry and distribution according to need and equality can remedy society's ills.

In the meantime let's reduce the danger in our jobs by refusing to perform duties that involve excessive risk. If the bosses get upset, tell them to do the job themselves. Demand better pay, shorter hours and more staff at union meetings and organise with your friends at the workplace for effective radio communications at all hours. **This summer let's put the heat on the bosses!**

public transport workers & friends come  
to the Sparks fundraising

# PARTY

friday 6th 6-11pm  
november

At the

lincoln hotel

91 Cardigan St  
carlton

\$5 & 3 conc.

(kids free)

**GO ON.**

**'PHONE IN SICK.**

There are thousands of things you'd rather  
do than work. Do them.  
But only together can we create a revolution  
where pleasure is the only aim.

food, entertainment,  
sing-along, drink.



Well G'day Maties,  
Strewth! Wot a month! Someone  
must've taken my advice to send  
a crate of prunes to the  
bosses, the rivers of shit have  
been flowing ever since. I  
know we need a pay rise but 4%  
is pissweak! We deserve 40%.  
In any case, the issue is JOBS!  
What good is 4% when you're on  
the dole? The union bosses  
should be fighting the

government over jobs but they won't do it because they're  
all in the same political party. Well, stuff them!  
Start saving your milk bottles, old rags, and any half  
bricks you happen to find and organise yourself. This  
country is being brought to its knees by the lazy bastards  
who think they own us and it's time to fight back. Thanks  
for your letters, keep sending them in.

Your Pal,  
KEVIN.

Dear Kevin,

Why should I have to go on strike and lose pay  
for a scummy \$10 pay rise when the bastards in Canberra can  
vote themselves a \$100 pay rise just like that? Ever since  
the new Parliament House started to rise out of the  
urine-soaked sheep paddocks of Canberra I've had an  
overwhelming desire to blow it up! Am I mad?

Worried  
Melbourne Yard

Dear Worried,

Well, you know what they say about Guy  
Fawkes, he was the only man to enter Parliament with honest  
intentions. You're not mad the system is! There's nothing  
wrong with a good honest strike so long as you win and the  
demands make it worth your while. We shouldn't be losing  
money over a tiny 4% pay rise, we should be fighting for  
40%. We shouldn't be letting dickheads like Joe Sibberas  
tell us how to fight but decide for ourselves what we want  
to do and include job protection in our demands. We would  
do better in our industrial battles if we made all our  
decisions at democratic depot meetings and mass workers  
assemblies and only used the tactics of direct action.



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## JUST ASK KEVIN- CONTINUED.....

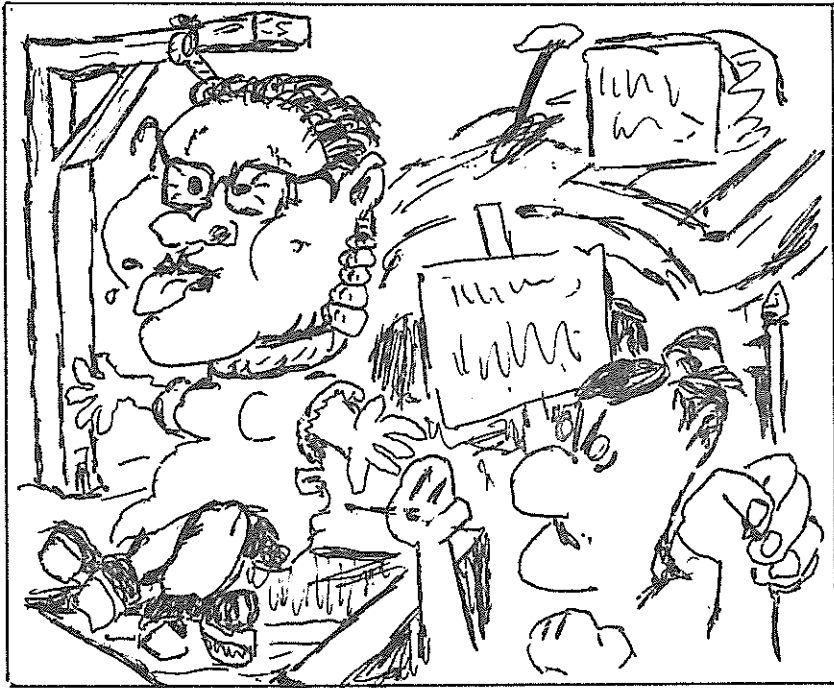
As for the idiots in Canberra, I'd like to see them justify to us a 4% productivity deal. I'm sure these bastards have enough perks to give away. The only good politician is a dead one.

Cheers,

Your Pal Kevin

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### IF THEY WON'T STAND DOWN; STRING 'EM UP!



## Brewery drivers sacked

Transport Workers Union (TWU) members at Carlton and United Breweries (CUB) have been sacked after brewery drivers struck in support of Shop Steward Hamish Wier who was dismissed on Sept. 17 for having one drink at the end of the day - previously agreed to by Linfox and the TWU. The TWU is opposing its own members over the issue.

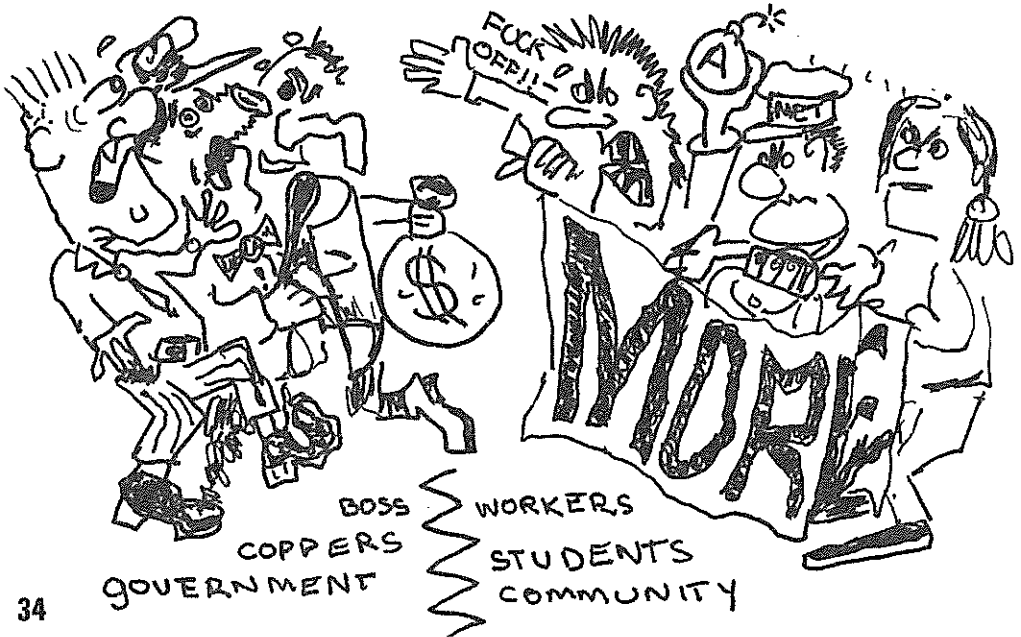
The 'Defend the TWU Rank and File Committee' is calling for support. Contact them at the picket, Church St., Abbotsford. 7.30AM - 3.30PM.

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# What do we Want? everything!

Although it is difficult to believe, there was once a time when Unions took on the bosses and won! Of course in those days ordinary workers had more control of their unions, although the officials would still sell 'em out first chance they got. One thing they did then was present the bosses with a Log of Claims and back them with full-on industrial action.

We in the P.T.W.A. want to see Public Transport Workers stand up to the bosses and win. We don't want to be leaders like the union officials, we want you as fellow workers to show the way forward. We intend to present an industry-wide log of claims to the bosses next issue and want you to help us compile it. What do Public Transport Workers want and how do they intend to get it? That's what we want to know, just fill in the form and mail it to the PTWA. P.O. BOX 1066, NTH RICHMOND, 3121, and check out the results in the next issue.



DEPOT: \_\_\_\_\_

DIVISION:  V/LINE  MET  
 PRIVATE

JOB: \_\_\_\_\_

I THINK WE SHOULD FIGHT FOR:

- | YES                   | NO                    |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | WAGE INCREASE<br>How much? \$ _____ extra per week         |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | SHORTER HOURS<br>Hours per week we should work: _____      |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Improved Conditions:<br>What sort? _____<br>_____<br>_____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | FREE FARES   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | FREE CHILDCARE   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | SACK MANAGEMENT  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | OTHER DEMANDS:<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____         |

HOW DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD FIGHT? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

Anarcho-syndicalism có nghĩa là nghiệp đoàn dân chủ. Đáp lời của nghiệp đoàn công nhân, chúng tôi muốn bình vực quyền lợi của tất cả mọi công nhân trong một xí nghiệp - bằng cách thành lập một công đoàn để loại bỏ sự phân chia riêng rẽ giữa những nhân công.

Một công đoàn như trên chỉ có thể thực hiện khi tất cả những xếp đặt và quyết định đều phải phát nguồn từ mọi công đoàn viên. Để thực hành quyết nghị trên, chúng tôi ước mong các bạn thực hành những điều lệ sau:

1. Không một nhân viên nào làm việc cho công đoàn được hưởng mức lương trung bình cao hơn những công đoàn viên.

2. Người xuống ngôn đại diện cho ban không có quyền quyết định bất cứ một việc gì. Mọi quyết định đều do sự lựa chọn của chính ban và những công đoàn viên.

3. Người xuống ngôn đại diện cho ban chỉ có thể thi hành nhiệm vụ của người đại diện khi có sự đồng ý của bạn và những công đoàn viên.

4. Công đoàn sẽ điều tra hoặc có thể rút lại quyền đại diện của người xuống ngôn đã không thi hành những điều lệ trên.

5. Tất cả những nhân viên đại diện cho ban sẽ giữ nhiệm vụ trong một hạn kỳ nhất định, thí dụ như hai năm (ngoại trừ trường hợp không có người nào khác thay thế).

6. Không một nhân viên nào làm việc cho công đoàn được hưởng mức lương full-time (trả bằng công đoàn). Họ chỉ được trả cho khoảng thời gian thi hành nhiệm vụ, để bù vào khoảng lương đã mất.

7. Phương pháp địa phương nhân quyền được áp dụng để chúng tôi không phải trả một mức lương full-time nào cho những người đại diện công đoàn.

Chỉ có những phương cách trên đây mới cho bạn thấy rõ nghiệp đoàn đấu tranh dân chủ được tạo ra để giữ lấy những quyền lợi của người công nhân dưới bất cứ một chủ nhân, chính quyền, tổ chức chính trị nào khác. Mọi thắc mắc xin liên lạc "Direct rank and file control of the struggle is the road to workers' self-management of society".

