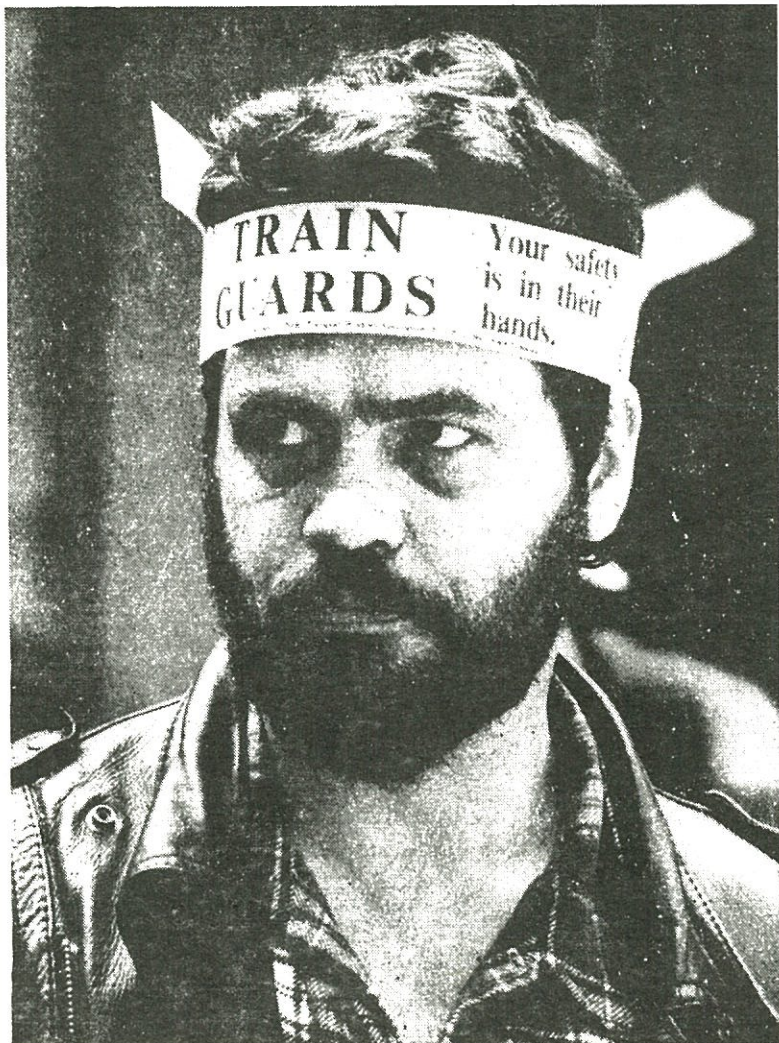


# SPARKS

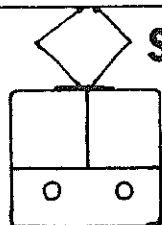
The Paper of the Public Transport Workers  
Association



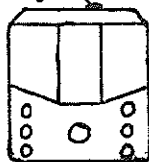
NO. 12

JAN - FEB  
'88

**INSIDE: Driver Only Operation, Guards Strike,  
Celebrate '88?, Interstate & Overseas News,  
Sparks 'Bogey Awards', & MORE!!!**



**SOLIDARITY!**



**SPARKS and  
the PTWA  
—get involved**

Welcome to **SPARKS** No.12. In this issue there's an understandably heavy emphasis on the recent guards strike and the various issues involved with the move to Driver-Only-Operations.

Public Transport Workers Association members were deeply involved in the strike. Striking members issued a strike bulletin, the PTWA produced & distributed 4000 stickers around saving guards (and keeping connies on trams since they're under threat), we put out a 'Special Strike Edition' of **SPARKS**, and members assisted in organising a fundraiser for the strikers (it raised over \$500).

With 1988's first issue, **SPARKS** now enters its 3rd year. We want to see the paper further improve, both in content & interest. Feel free to write in with news on your part of the industry. Every issue has carried pieces—poems, graphics, articles—done by transport workers not in the PTWA. It's your paper if you want it to be.....

Interest in the activities and aims of the PTWA through our fundraisers/socials, discussion nights and, most importantly, our activism, is high. We encourage involvement in the various activities of the PTWA.

Subscriptions are available to **SPARKS**—\$5 for a year's worth of the best transport workers paper around. A sub. ensures you get every issue and assists in keeping the paper (and other PTWA activities) going.

**SPARKS** is produced by the PUBLIC TRANSPORT  
WORKERS ASSOCIATION

The PTWA is a federated member group of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation. We can be contacted at: P.O. BOX 1066, Nth. Richmond, 3121.

# DEAD — ON — ARRIVAL

(or keep Guards on trains)

THE 12 DAY GUARDS STRIKE-the longest rail stoppage Melbourne's had in 37 years-ENDED ON DECEMBER 20.THAT DOES NOT MEAN THE FIGHT FOR 550 JOBS IS OVER.....

## WHY ARE DRIVER-ONLY TRAINS BEING INTRODUCED??

\*Management,with the governments blessing,reckon technology has superceded the guard.The reality is it's a cost-cutting exercise.Afterall,MTA H.Q.and Transport House cost a lot to maintain.

## WHAT'S SUPPOSE TO REPLACE THE GUARD??

\*Drivers cabs on some trains need extensive modifications to allow viewing down the off-side of a train.Other trains require enlarged mirrors to be fitted on the sides of the cab.

\*A lights and buzzer system has to be installed in all carriages so as to warn passengers when doors close.

\*A new radio system has to be put into each drivers cab.

\*Mirrors have to be installed at stations with curves.As well some stations need work done to platforms.

## WHAT'S WRONG WITH THESE REPLACEMENTS??

\*Mirrors are useless in wet weather as well as easy targets for vandals(or ex-guards).

\*The new radio system is there so that the lone driver can try to get help if he/she needs it.With a guard on board,help is only seconds away.

\*The lights and buzzes are a suspect means of warning passengers.They are sure to become targets for vandals and like all electrical equipment,liable to faults.As it is now,not a day goes by without some major electrical fault occuring on a train (or trains).

\*The money spent on installing all these things would be better spent on useful transport needs like new rolling stock,etc.

## WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR KEEPING THE GUARD??

\*Major safety issues are being ignored by management in it's pursuit of D-O-O.To the points listed above can be added the overall security we offer to users,especially on the night trains.Guards are actually in charge of trains-they're the ones who determine whether it's safe to move.Is it safe to have the driver checking the track ahead while looking down the side of a six car train in peak-hour?

Continued Over →

## Dead-On-Arrival Cont.

\*The type of service offered to users will definitely deteriorate, drive people away from the trains. Guards are there to assist the elderly, people in wheelchairs, etc., they prevent people from falling out of trains or getting caught in the doors, they keep trains to timetables, as well as moving luggage, correspondence and parcels through the network.

\*The guard ensures signals are properly observed by drivers. If necessary, can stop the train using a lever in his cab. As well, he's able to protect the train in an emergency or offer assistance to the passengers or driver and if the driver is injured, can drive the train.

### WHAT ARE THE RAMIFICATIONS FOR THE INDUSTRY IF GUARDS DO GO??

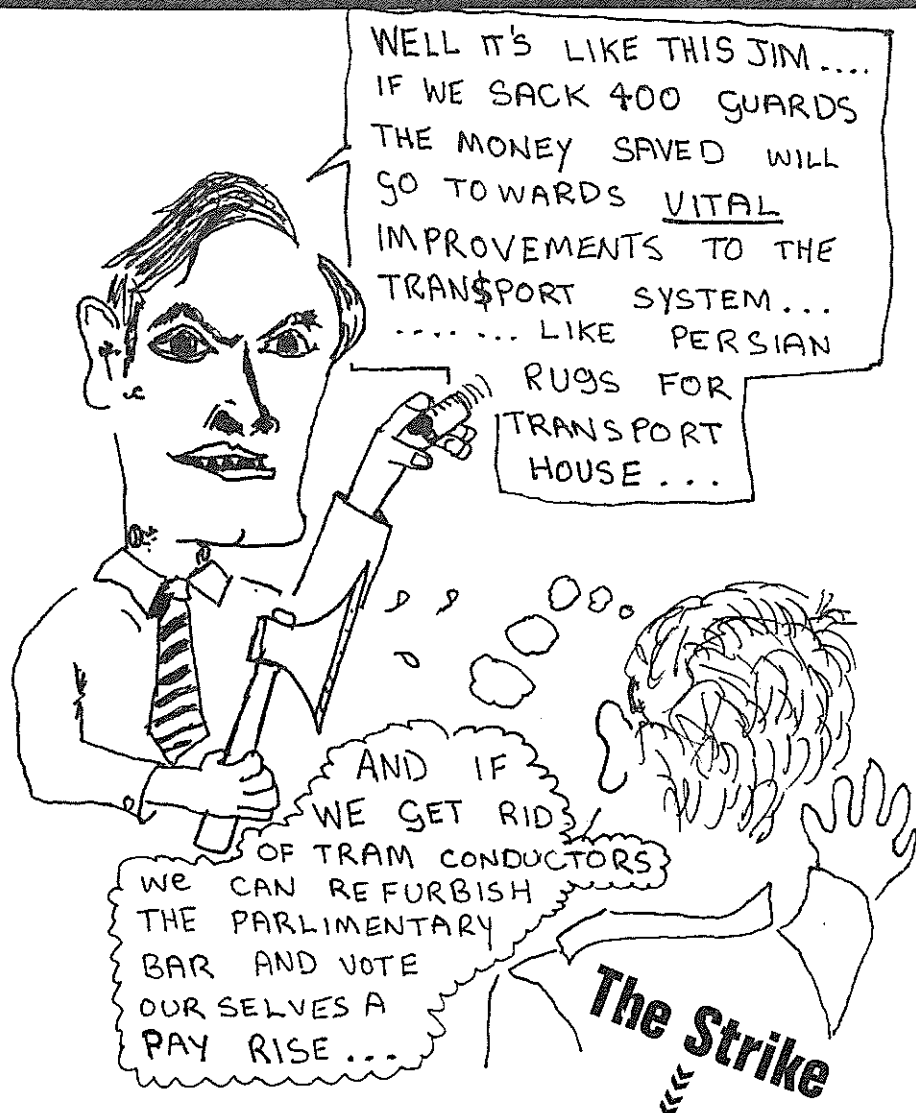
\*A significant drop in patronage, especially off-peak. Would provide the bureaucrats with the excuse necessary to close down some or all lines after 8pm. The fleet could then be reduced while hundreds of jobs would disappear—drivers, station staff, cleaners, signal staff, fitters and other maintenance jobs. Is this the hidden agenda of the D-O-O project?

\*The ARU would lose significant muscle. Shunters and signal controllers would be the only ones left capable of immediately stopping trains and their numbers are decreasing owing to cutbacks and technology.

\*Over a thousand tram conductors would find it hard to justify their position if D-O-O gets a start in Melbourne.

There's an old anarchist slogan that goes like this....AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL. This industry is under massive threat. We must support the guard fight because our futures are tied up in theirs.....





What follows is a brief outline of the guards strike and what needs to be done as the fight continues...

Throughout the first week of the strike the morale of the guards was high. "After months of uncertainty coupled with inaction, we were at last fighting back. It seemed we were in a strong position given the effect we were having on the city retailers and their Xmas trading. We know our cause is a just one since management aren't looking at safety, just the technical side of things. Besides, technology isn't infallible—imagine what can go wrong with the equipment or what could happen if the driver was incapacitated in some way?" said one guard.

(continued on next page) 5

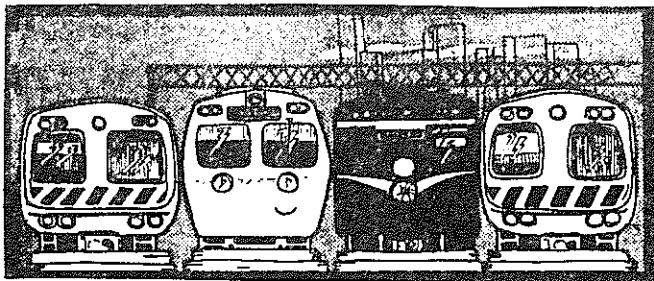
## "THE STRIKE" continued.....

This attitude got carried into negotiations. The guards demanded nothing less than the scrapping of the moves to D-O-O. Another factor contributing to the initial confidence and resolve was the way in which the dispute was being run. Any guard who wanted to came along to negotiations or involved themselves in the campaign-speaking with other workers, drafting and then distributing leaflets, sitting in on the disputes committee meetings. Unity Hall had little choice but to follow directives coming from the guards: the guards wouldn't have accepted anything else.

Many guards realised the dispute had to be widened to ensure external pressure was put on the government. This became a priority as the strike went into its second week without any shift from them. Unfortunately the move to spread the dispute largely faltered at an all-sections meeting of ARU reps. The excuses offered were disappointing at best and pathetic generally. To add to this, other unions both inside and outside the industry were not prepared to take action unless the ARU as a whole fired up. With hindsight, it appears that though the Arbitration Commission decision against standing down all workers went against the strike. If mass stand-downs of workers in different unions had occurred then other non-affected sections would most likely have taken action.

So after 11 days, the decision to return to work was made (approx. 60/40) but not without serious misgivings about the likelihood of a successful conclusion if guards returned with nothing. So the ban on running the rad test train was kept on—that indicated the resolve was still there.

What does Unity Hall do? Five days later they called a special meeting of guards and begged them to lift the ban. The fact there were only about half the number present at this meeting compared to the last one meant little. Why lift the ban? "Tactics Comrades, tactics". By relying on the financial desperation of many guards, the ban got lifted. One guard told SPARKS, "Perhaps the lifting of the ban wouldn't have mattered that much if the section decided to apply a bit of heat in other ways, or if the general direction of the campaign—delegation to other sections, publicity, meetings with other unions—had been discussed. It was the officials got the decision they wanted and hurriedly closed the meeting. Now, through inaction, we appear to be saying to the government, "right ahead and fuck us" .



# THE WAY TO STOP D-O-O

## SOME SUGGESTIONS ON THE FUTURE:

\* The deeper management gets into the D-O-O project the harder it'll become to stop as they'll present it to the government as a fait accompli. If action doesn't occur by the end of January, then morale amongst guards will deteriorate making it much harder to resist the scheme.

\* Links with groups outside the industry must be encouraged. Also info. about guards needs to be conveyed to users. Talk with passengers. Resources must be allocated in a big way towards leaflets, stickers, etc.

\* Guards delegates can attend your workplace. Contact the guards depot on 632709 or 6197592 between 6am and 4pm Mon-Fri. and ask for the ARU Guards representatives.

\* Workers in the following areas can ban all movement or modifications connected to D-O-O: shunters, signallers, all workshops.

\* Immediately guards take action, supportive action must occur across the city. Perhaps initially bans can be implemented or free fares introduced on buses and trams but within a couple of days, strikes must occur. The effect of any rail strike is seriously undermined whenever trams and buses continue to run. Take action together and this city can be brought to a halt and a favourable result far more likely.

\* V/Line services must be affected. Freight is where the money is and do any of us really care if Peter Abeles loses money on his 'Superfreighters'? Besides, the industry as a whole will be affected if guards go (see article on pages 3/4).

\* Unfortunately many workers won't take action unless it's 'officially endorsed' by the union bosses. Those bosses don't necessarily have the interests of workers at heart or are often too caught up in short-term tactics and thinking to want to encourage actions. When guards take action, organise an immediate stop-work at your depot and don't deviate from concrete action.

\* Start saving those hard earned dollars. If your section isn't involved in actions, then start a Solidarity Fund for those out on strike.

\* We got told at the August Festival Hall meeting by various union bosses "The day the first redundancy notice goes out Comrades, we'll all walk out the door". Well scores of pink slips have gone out and from March, 550 guards get phased out. The promise of that 24 hr stoppage and mass meeting of all transport workers needs to occur. But we don't need another rhetoric filled talk-fest from the officials. We all know the issues—it's time to act.





who's next for the  
*CHOP?*



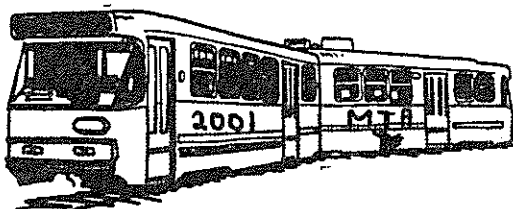
# TALL SHIPS, TALL STORIES

MTA advertising has assured public transport users that Light Rail (a big tram) would be fast, clean, effecient, and reliable. Try telling that to passengers who went to the Tall Ships at Port Melbourne. MTA advertisements told the public they could get the new Light Rail service in Collins St. and Bourke St. But in Collins St. there were hardly any LRVs (big trams, Labour Re-election Vehicles, call'em what you like!) to be seen - but plenty of angry would-be passengers. And in Bourke St. there were scenes of unprecedented safety-zone congestion where trams ran packed to capacity from Russell St. to Port Melbourne without picking up on the way.

As for the advertised all night service all trams were run in by 3.15 except for one which remained in service until 4.40 because FOC had failed to notify.

The much acclaimed articulated tram 2001 ran in service with its AVM inoperable and its disc brake failing to prevent roll-back when moving off uphill. It has since been black-banned and sent to Workshops leaving Melbourne's Light Rail system without any Light Rail (2002 is at Workshops also).

If the government was hoping that the New Years Eve and Tall Ships service would vindicate its stubborn determination to push through with Light Rail in the face of protest by public transport users and workers it was hoping in vain. On New Years Eve hundreds of people waiting for trams to take them to see the Tall Ships at Port Melbourne eventually gave up and walked along the tracks to Station Peir.



**A LIGHT ODDITY 2001!!**

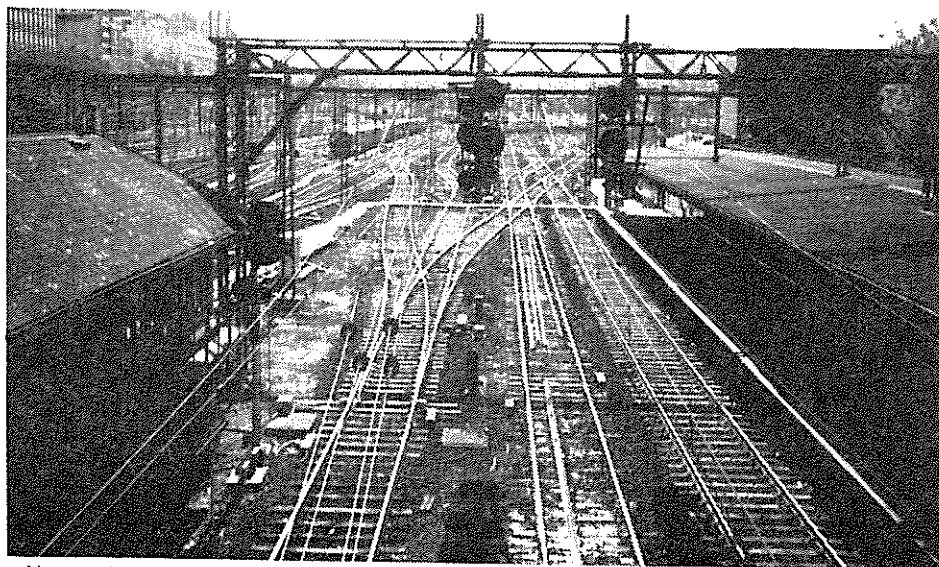
The whole fiasco raises serious doubts about the MTA's ability to manage public transport. The MTA claims the right to manage and insists on having the final say in regard to the future direction of public transport development. The MTA abrogates its right to manage through its lack of ability and its gross incompetence bordering on sabotage. In its drive to cut costs and achieve its stated aim of keeping within the budget the MTA is disregarding its responsibility to provide safe and reliable public transport.

More and more public transport users are coming to realize that in order to arrest the steady decline of public transport they must actively intervene to protect the industry.

Leigh Kendall  
Tram Driver  
South Melbourne Depot

## SPOT THE TRAIN...

## CoMpeTiTiOn



Yes, it's the latest edition? to **SPARKS!**-our 'SPOT THE TRAIN' competition! Simply mark an X on the track where you reckon the train is! Send your entry to us no later than Feb.15 to win your years subscription to **SPARKS.** Here's a hint-the shot was taken during the recent 10 guards strike..

# THE CLAYTON'S DELEGATE

(part 2)

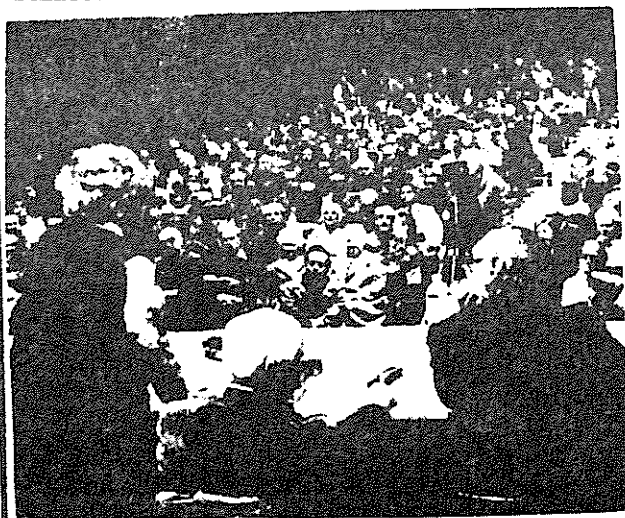
Throughout most of 1987, South Melbourne tram depot had to put up with a dictatorial, disruptive, meddling union delegate (see SPARKS No. 9 p. 13). By November we had had enough and steps were taken by the rank and file members to rid ourselves of this disruptive person.

A meeting was called, or rather demanded, on the 4th. of Nov. to discuss yet again the depot's dissatisfaction with the delegate. She refused to recognize the meeting and stormed out shrieking "I'm still the delegate". The meeting was held without her and a motion of no confidence in the delegate was passed again.

When word of this "illegal" meeting reached our beloved leaders, quick measures were taken to have a "scheduled" meeting the next day. (We can't have workers holding meetings and making decisions without supervision)!

The meeting on the 5th. was attended by the entire union executive, a measure no doubt of the bosses fear that they may lose control of the situation. The meeting voted to hold a stopwork on the 9th to solve the delegate issue once and for all.

The stopwork meeting was duly held and the union President arrived with a ballot box and an assurance from the delegate that if the depot wished it she would resign. There was an immediate rush for the ballot box. The depot seemed unconcerned that it must be the first time in A.T.M.O.E.A. history that a simple no confidence motion has been decided by secret ballot.



(cont. over...)

The vote went two to one against the delegate and all that was left was for us to endure her insulting farewell speech. The applause and cheering at the end was for the fact that she had resigned rather than for the contents of the speech itself. Our union secretary further insulted us by declaring that we had nothing to be proud of and that we had established an unfortunate precedent that would never be repeated. (The precedent is a good one and should be repeated whenever necessary.) Like all good dictators, however, our ex-delegate tried one last ploy, and next day withdrew her resignation!!, and informed us that she would take us all to the Industrial Court!

This was too much even for our union executive and, it appears, M.T.A. management, for our ex-delegate was promptly transferred to the hapless Glenhantly depot, which, incidentally, had previously kicked her out. After the vote, S.M. depot unanimously endorsed J. Christie, the proxy delegate, as acting delegate, until elections can be held early this year.

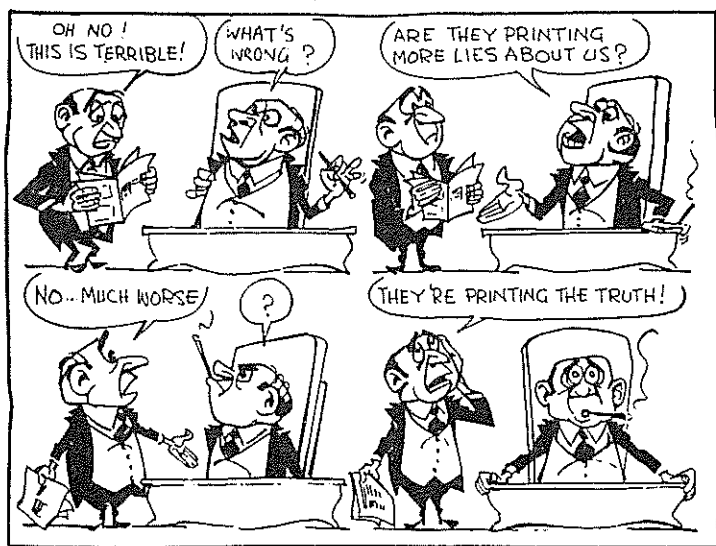
This isn't the end of the grand comedy, however, for we have persistent reports from the person herself that she will return and contest for the position of delegate!

To repeat the point made in my previous article, the most important issue to come out of this whole saga is union accountability.

In this particular case a united and determined rank a file refused to back down in the face of strong leadership opposition.

A precedent has been established, and it is a good one.

Patrick Cook, tram driver, S.M. depot.



**DANGER!**



**CHROMATE  
AT WORK**

(following two articles are reprinted from SPARKS No.11 because we consider them important-you may have missed them....

## **POISONED AT STH. DYNON**

At the South Dynon Locomotive Workshop, diesel maintainers are being subjected to daily soakings in a rust inhibitor called CHROMATE, a proven cancer causer. Obviously the rust in loco's has to be prevented in some way but not at the expense of workers' lives. Alternatives to CHROMATE including better maintenance procedures and different, less dangerous cleaning agents, have been put to management by the Workshop Committee. Management obviously wish the issue would go away. They called in some 'expert' from Occ. Health & Safety who informed the workers the quantities of CHROMATE being used were safe and that cancer rates from exposure to the stuff were "not much greater" than the normal cancer rates in the wider community. His 'reassuring' words did nothing to pacify the workers. **\*\*WE WERE WRONG!** In the last issue of Sparks there were some errors in the above report. We reprint the article minus mistakes as we feel this health and safety issue is important.

## **WORKERS FREE TRAVEL**

The ATMOEA has indicated it'll pull out of the Reciprocal Travel Agreement signed in March '86 by all unions in the MTA & STA\*. This has been done because ATMOEA members have been booked and in some cases issued with summons, particularly along the Geelong line.

Perhaps the failure of the agreement in this case is a reflection of the lack of communication within the ARU. Ultimately, governments or unions don't decide who will or won't travel free. **That decision is up to those on the job, and since we're all in the same industry, all p/t'port workers should travel free on the different systems.**

(Trammies have now banned all parliamentarian's free travel passes. One conductor at South Melb. confronted an MP. and got commended on trying to make up the transport deficit!).

\* The Reciprocal Travel Agreement means p/t'port workers recognise each other's employee passes as free travel passes.

LEIGH KENDALL, driver, SOUTH MELB.



## Railway Annie asks

### Ever get the feeling you've been HAD?

So at long last ,all transport workers have got the **WHOPPING!** 4% second tier wage rise.That means we've now only lost about 15% on our real wage against the cost of living rises of the past six years.Don't you feel absolutely marvellous with all that extra lucre in ya pockets!!!!!!???????

The December issue of the irregular rank & file paper 'Stopping All Stations',sums the 4% case neatly:

"The second tier wages system was implemented by the ALP party machine and delinquent trade union officials to stop the development of any wage struggle by the workers.The V/Line and MTA bosses,supported by the Cain Labor Government,have used the 4% deal to erode hard won conditions and cut jobs.The ARU officials,in response to these attacks,have meakly followed every compliance set by the Arbitration Commission and continued with their strong ALP links".



Rail workers at the 4% hearing in the Arbitration Commission last October.

**STICKERS:** From PTWA-  
P.O.Box 1066,  
Nth.Richmond,3121.

**TRAIN GUARDS-Your safety is in their hands.**

**TRAIN GUARDS-You'd notice them if they weren't there.**

**TRAM CONDUCTORS-You'd notice them if they weren't there.**

In the latest ARU Gazette, State sec. Sibberas reviews 1987:

**It has been a most successful year —**  
a year in which the ARU was  
victorious in gaining wage justice for  
rail workers, a year in which the ARU  
defeated the government in its wish to  
sack 2,600 workers, a year in which an  
attempt to sack an ARU Chief  
Executive Officer was quashed.

Well Joe, we know you haven't  
been well lately. We were  
led to believe the illness  
was physical, not mental.  
Don't they let you read the  
papers in there? Maybe

they've got you sussed out. Well, since October  
scores of pink slips have gone out, and from March,  
550 guards are getting phased out. It's true, Joe,  
honest.

Elsewhere in the gazette, ARU members get given this  
pathetic apology from another official:

The problem with Commissioner  
Neyland's decision was that it did not  
allow members to have the final say.  
Unfortunately, our hands are tied; his  
decision states that it can only be  
changed by Appeal to the  
Commission. And an appeal would  
jeopardize the entire 4%.

Jeopardise the entire 4%?  
After we gave so much away  
for it??? "Never, Comrades,  
never!"...yeh, never mind  
democracy and never mind  
fighting for a decent wage  
rise that doesn't see hard won conditions sold-out.

## DEMOCRACY RULES, COMRADES.

Showing how important democracy is to the Unity Hall mob, state branch rule 108 E, which relates to the filling of casual vacancies within the union hierarchy, has been changed to prevent 'troublesome' elections having to be held if section officials or exec. officers resign, die, etc. The rule change means elections are now required only if the vacancy occurs in the first 12 months of the four year terms. After that, the chief exec. officials choose who they want to fill the job!

As things stand, the PTWA places little importance on elections to seriously change things. However, we recognise when dictatorial power is further entrenched, limiting the rank & file's say in the running of the union (however limited that say really is). We believe limited terms of office & recallable delegation must be introduced into union structures otherwise any elected figure can do as they please—and indefinitely.



## the \$40 million CON.



On Nov. 20 the 'Grand-Opening' of the Light Rail Vehicle run to St. Kilda took place. The Public Transport Workers Association and People for Equality Not

### Institutionalisation

organised a protest just to remind the poli's we weren't conned by their bull. And, as we knew it would be, the "Service you've all been waiting for", is a sham.

After being stalled by the on track presence of 3 workers, PENI and supporters, the 'dignitaries' travelled through the city to Albert Park along a scenically graffitied route. At the end of the line it was unwelcomed to residents, angry at the prospect of their community being carved up for big development, the loss of train lines and the accessible service they provided.

A big party was set-up at Albert Park with free beer and free food for the workers who converted the line, the residents and poli's. After all, they had to get people to attend somehow! Protestors spiced the 'event' up with soapboxing, singing and interrupting Snappy Tom's press conference.

As for the tram's that replaced the trains, the AGF & SUN have run letters canvassing the service and 1 in favour. SPARKS travelled down the lines, timing the runs. The worst run on the St. Kilda run was 35 minutes - the best 17 minutes, still double the old 9 minute train time. Figures are comparable to the Port Line. **The lesson is clear; No train lines should be replaced by trams.** (the accident down the line at South Melb in December, could not have happened with the old train service. Trains must follow signals and in case they don't there's a guard on board to stop it)

*Roving Connie.*

# WHY CELEBRATE

88?

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statement of the  
Victorian Coalition  
of Aboriginal  
Organisations.

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Aboriginal people have lived in this land since time immemorial. The fact is that all evidence to date suggests occupation of this land for over 100 000 years. Aboriginal people have lived in harmony with the land as true conservationists in that time. The invasion of Europeans has not only meant dispossession, dispersal and destruction of the people but also of the land. The often violent confrontation between our society and the coloniser took place on a number of levels.

Aboriginal society at that time was much older than that of the invaders. It had persevered through communal and environmentally conscious laws. It was collective not acquisitive. The laws governing our social relations had developed over thousands of years. Violence and war were not a continual part of our society.

European colonisation, by contrast, was established with the gun and continued its domination with violence or the threat of it. The colonial society whose descendant we live with today is based on individualism and the accumulation of material wealth. Although it has



### Why Celebrate '88 cont'.....

achieved incredible technological changes these are inevitably used for increasing personal wealth and gratification. The colonial and present day Australian society see nature and the environment as an opposite - something to be exploited for personal enrichment rather than conservation for human survival. This society was baptised with the violent shedding of the blood of our people and it continues to flirt with the means of destruction.

Contemporary Australian society sees fit to spend billions of dollars on conventional and nuclear weapons and very little on health, education and social welfare. Whilst our society was based on collective development, today's Australian society thrives on inequality. Some are able to gamble away millions on the stock market and corporate takeovers: others don't even have a roof over their heads.

Although we, the Aboriginal people of this land, are at the bottom of the pile, we see many others who are there with us in poverty on the fringes of society, if not in spirit. In spite of the severity of oppression against us **we have survived**, and if there is anything to celebrate in 1988, then it is this.

We are still a distinct people with unique cultural and spiritual traditions and ways of living. All around us we see the growing "Americanisation" of Australian society and the increasing isolation and alienation of the individual. From where we stand it looks very much as if the future holds more decline and despair for all Australians.

Ordinary non-Aboriginal people have more in common with us than with the 32 000 Australian millionaires and the media magnates. Yet we see many non-Aboriginal people feeling threatened by what we demand and have been fighting for over the last 200 years. Our demand for sovereignty is the soul of Australia crying for freedom from cultural and economic domination by the overseas financial markets and by useless consumerism. All Australians will benefit from the realisation of our demand for sovereignty. We need to develop an Australian culture based on thousands of years of indigenous culture and tradition.

Our demand for land-rights is for economic security and tenure. No Australians can say they have secure homes until we all have inalienable, freehold titles to our lands. We also demand restitution for the years of war waged against us. The government has an obligation to set aside a proportion of the gross domestic product for our use as we see fit. Australian society has enriched itself from our land for over 200 years.

It is about time we got more than just the crumbs off the table. Since white people came here we have always sought to live with them but we have been rejected time and again. We need an agreement based on recognition of our rights as the original people of this land. We say that the Australian governments should begin to "Pay the Rent" for 200 years of the use of our land. We do not want hand-outs, this money or "rent" is rightfully ours. The have-nots in Australian society should not just be demanding a "slice of the cake". We should be taking over the whole damn bakery.

We also want Australian economic development based on conservation of the natural environment. Jobs in constructive not destructive production. We have the means in this society to make life easy, yet we are all struggling.

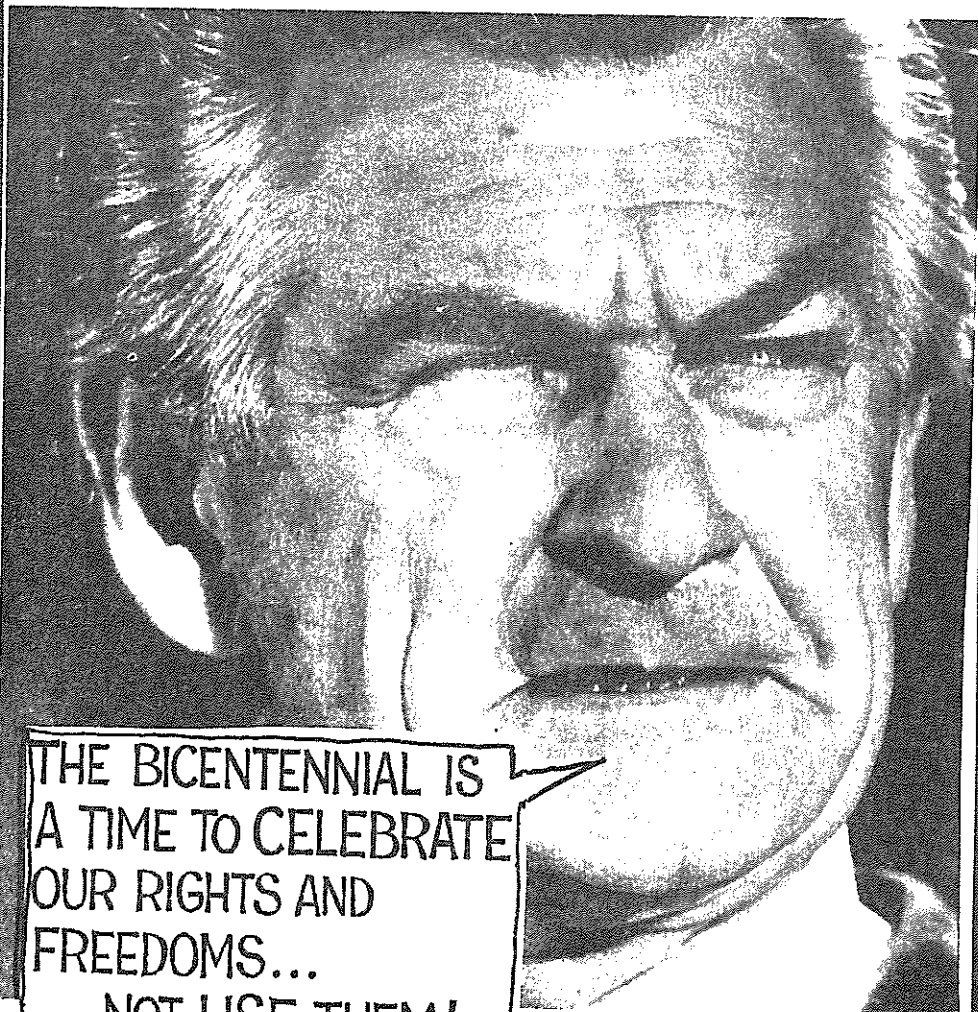
There is nothing to celebrate in 1988 for anybody. Just because you get a few more crumbs off the table than we do does not mean that you are alright. Open you eyes to the



Why Celebrate '88 cont'....

house of cards that you live in. See that your interests and ours are the same. Join us in recognition that we are the owners of this land and have the best interests of this land at heart. After all, if the land is destroyed so will we be. We have nowhere else to go. If you are Australian, then neither have you.

The bicentennial celebrations are not the celebrations of the struggling in this society. So why celebrate '88???????



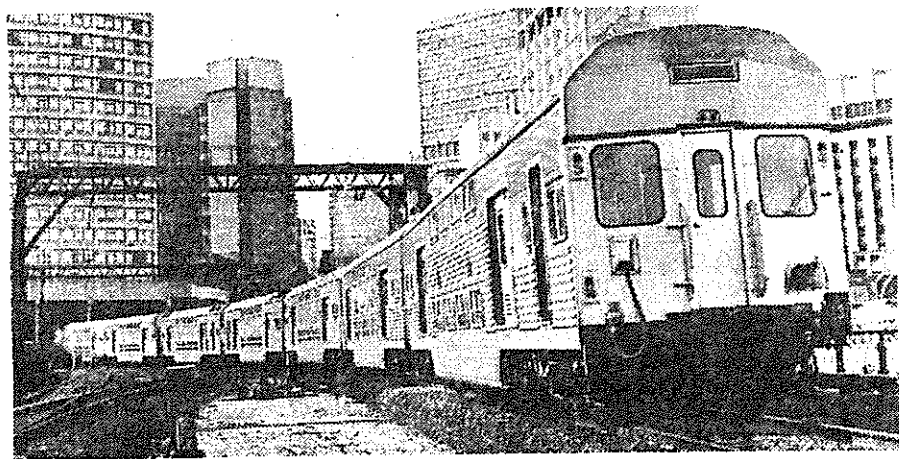
THE BICENTENNIAL IS  
A TIME TO CELEBRATE  
OUR RIGHTS AND  
FREEDOMS...  
NOT USE THEM!

## SYDNEY

Workers at the Eveleigh Loco Workshops have rejected plans to close the place down. At a mass meeting on Dec. 8 they voted to fight a deal made between rail union leaderships and the State Rail Authority. The deal would see 630 jobs wiped out. After the meeting 200 workers marched through town to Transport House.

While 630 jobs are being tossed away, the ARU leadership is threatening strike action around the January bi-centenary 'celebrations' in protest at the deferral of the national wage case. State president Harry Dwyer reckons his members are fuming: "The expectation was created by us because it was suppose to be the second part of the first tier and an integral part of the wage package we persuaded our members to accept". Dwyer's demanding the Unsworth Labor Government pay up immediately "or else".

N.S.W. ARU members should ask themselves whether it's worth striking for a measly \$7. Unsworth faces elections within four months—with so much 'prestige' riding on the bi-centenary, he'd be under heaps of pressure to resolve a strike at any price. Why not go for a decent wage rise, say 20% so you catch up on what you've lost over the last 5 years of the Ache-ord. What about water tight guarantees on the future of Eveleigh? But watch the union bosses. Most, if not all, have their grubby fingers in the Labor Party pie.

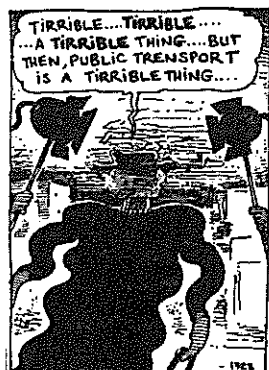


# International News

**SPARKS** has been going now for close on two years. Over the past year we've brought you news of transport workers struggles from around the world. Why? Firstly because nowhere does freedom exist with equality. Everywhere people are being screwed, lied to, deceived; power remains in the hands of a few. Secondly because only by breaking down the barriers of race and nationalism can we, the working class, successfully take on that global blood-sucker Capitalism.

The **Public Transport Workers Association**, because of our participation in the **International Workers Association**, has contacts with transport workers in Brazil, Spain, England and France. As well, brothers and sisters in Nth. America, Japan, Italy, Germany, and a dozen other countries, forward onto us, news of various struggles from the transport industries in those places.

**LONDON:** Most will have heard of the terrible November fire at London's King Cross Station where at least 34 innocent people died. It turns out that apart from the total lack of fire safety equipment, Thatcher's budget cutbacks are the real cause. Faulty maintenance and housekeeping led to an accumulation of rubbish under the ancient wooden escalator, which continued to operate during the blaze because the manual override



failed to work. Staff cuts meant there weren't enough station staff to lead people to safety. Also trains continued to run, first dropping people off into the inferno, then running through, thus preventing escape. An inquiry is currently underway. If it's

anything like the Zeebrugge ferry cover-up, no official, manager or politician will get the blame. "This time the inquiry must finger some famous collars" one Labor MP. stated. We're pessimistic. After all, cleaners and station assistants generally don't have friends in high places....



## Overseas News

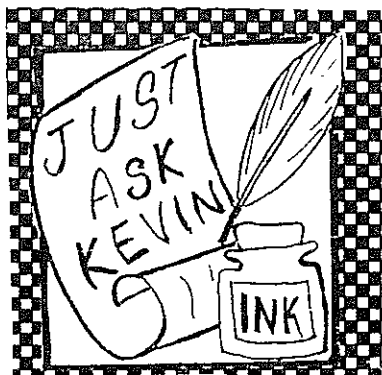
**NEW ZEALAND:** SPARKS recently spoke to Danny, a New Zealand Railways 'clippie' (equivalent to conductor here). Over there the railways are a national system. The Lange Labor Government has set out to make the railways profitable. Like here in '83 with the Transport Act, legislation's been passed making N.Z.R. an Authority (Corporation in Lange-speak) that must be run as a business, with that sole business objective, profit. That of course means 'rationalisations'. No prizes for guessing whose going to bear the brunt of it—4000 rail workers are to lose their jobs in the next year, lines are being closed and services on other lines are being reduced. Meanwhile road freight is being de-regulated making profits easier to come by for the multi-national freight movers like TNT.

Danny works in Wellington, the only N.Z. city with a suburban network—4 lines. Already the Lower Hutt-Melling line's been reduced to a peak service. Clippies and guards are facing the axe leaving Wellington trains with just the driver on board. Freight trains are soon to move to Driver-Only-Op.

What are the unions' doing to oppose Lange's plans?? The Locomotive Engineers Assoc.—the drivers union—is in favour of 'rationalisation' because of the redundancy package on offer. Narrow, selfish interests rule all over the world. The National Union of Railworkers, an allegedly militant body, has had talks with other 'militant' unions (meatworkers, wharfies, coalminers), to look at setting up a new, independant labour federation separate from the present Labor Party aligned one. Other than that, the NUR's doing little in the way of fighting. After all, talk's easy.

TOM'S BEEN  
PUT IN CHARGE  
OF ABORIGINAL  
AFFAIRS - HAVEN'T  
THEY SUFFERED  
ENOUGH OVER  
THE LAST 200  
YEARS??





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

DEAR KEVIN,

I have a few questions about the current guards dispute:

- 1.Can the guards call on the maintenance unions to ban the installation of radios in trains until the matter of 400 jobs is settled?
- 2.If the drivers decide to D-O-O,couldn't the signalmen take supportive action.I consider some of the drivers selfish in thier attitude.Some I have spoken to have said " serve the guards right, we are getting a pay rise". The ARU is always on strike.
- 3.Could the guards call on the Victorian Trades Hall Council to block any trials of one man trains until the matter of 400 Guards is settled.

In concluding I have ridden one man trains in Germany and Holland and they carry a ticket checker and all stations are staffed ( in Munich). In the U.K. guards have been returned as revenue protection officers.The clowns who run Metrail want to have one person trains on the cheap!

Yours

Annett Lock.



A guard at the  
Arbitration Commission  
makes his feelings  
known.

## Just ask Key

### DEAR ANNETT:

Thank you for your letter. I agree the Met Bosses are clowns! Particularly the Bozo who does the juggling act with Budget figures. Whoever decided aren't needed must have ballast for brains. Saying guards have no place on trains is as stupid as suggesting firefighters or ambulance officers are un required in the community.

During negotiations the bosses have referred to passenger safety as a philosophical issue not worth discussing. Transport Monster Patsy Kennan stated during negotiations at Bullshit Castle that he would proceed with D-O-O "even if it's a bad idea because it's in the budget". The efforts of the guards have been hampered by the fact that Frank Lacey and the ARU leadership are involved with the negotiations. The same ALP supporters who lost the Goods Guards, Shunters Review, Station Assistants Review, many country rail lines, Port and St. Kilda lines, and of course untold fortunes in wage cuts. The Guards are watching them carefully.

The Guards have little reason to have confidence in ex-Guards, part-time, Section Official John Bowles hanging around our depot. He knows how Guards feel about him. Last year they voted no-confidence motions against him twice. Also, the Section Committee is falling apart. Reg Lewis, Peter Ahern, and John Bowles along with many committee members have resigned but no election has been held to replace them!

Despite all this against them the Guards staged a heroic twelve day strike in December. During this time the members themselves ran much of the dispute. The PTWA had an important role to play in all this. In your letter you ask did we attempt to gain support of other workers in the industry.

PTWA members put several motions to the floor. One such motion called on signallers, workshops, and shunters to ban all work on D-O-O. During the 4% pay dispute Joe Sibberras and the other transport union officials promised to call a 24hr strike and stopwork meeting as soon as the first pink slip was issued. We called on the ARU to organize that meeting and strike.

Both motions were voted on and passed unanimously. Nothing has been done about the 24hr strike. Another motion ignored by Graham Bertrand and his mates was to donate a lousy \$5,500 of our Guards union dues towards a toy fund for the striking Guards kids at Xmas. This was not done because signing a cheque is apparently too hard for the ARU bosses to arrange. I wonder how hard it was to sign one for their Xmas break up!

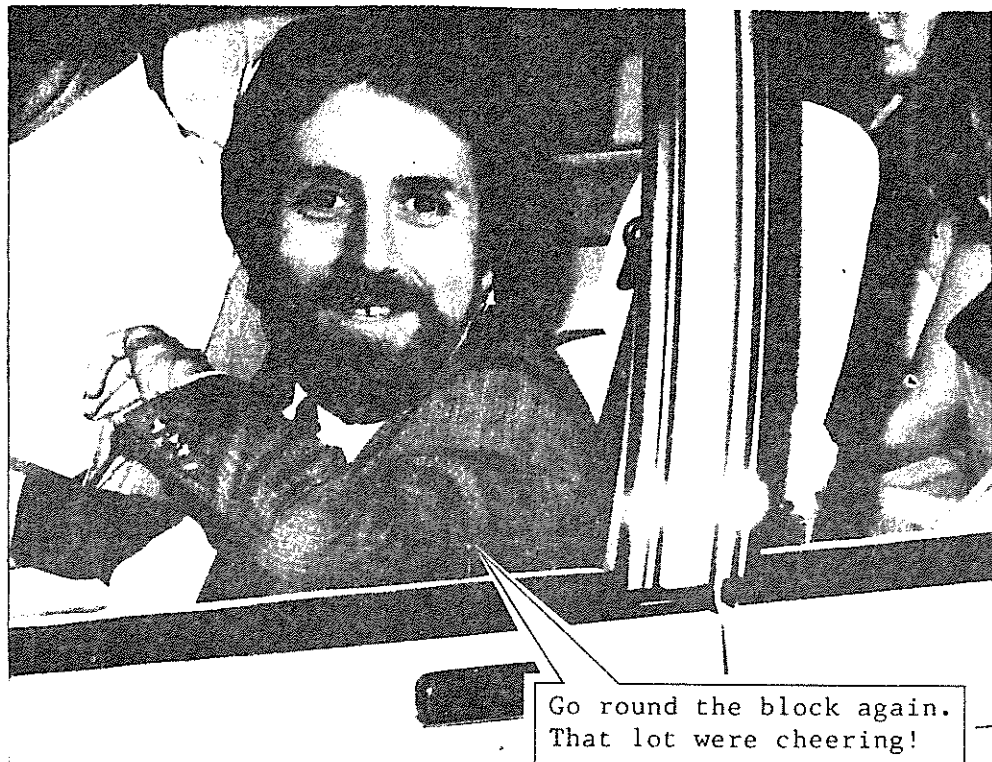
Also promised, and so far undelivered, have been newspaper advertisements on our dispute. The ARU executive contributed nothing to our strike fund. Now things look like moving again, it would be a mistake to focus on the gloomy side of the dispute. Good things happened as well. However, the role of the union officials cannot be ignored.

The ARU bosses are also members of the government through their ALP affiliation. They cannot usually be trusted. The sell-out over Light Rail proved that they will do almost anything to protect 'their' government. During other disputes the ARU bosses stood behind us all the way and in their hands was a knife ready to plunge into our backs.

Cheers,

Kevin

P.S. The drivers won't get their pay rise, Kennan reckons in negotiations 2% at the most.



The ARU el-Preseidenti! caught by the roving SPARKS camera on his way to negotiations. We pose the question: is this a practise run for a political career?????????????????

## SHUT-UP or WALK

Sunday church and they look fetching  
Saturday night saw him retching over our fence  
By day, reserved and quiet,  
By night a gaudy riot-both are pretense  
The same person will ignore you  
Love you and deplore you, at an eyes wink  
They're all running in their race  
To get from place to place, and they just don't think!  
Though in a minority  
They share a certain quality- they think we are slaves  
Or out the window they stare  
To avoid paying the fare- for the small amount it saves  
Dressed immaculately it would seem to me  
That money's not a worry  
\$50 for a \$2 fare, you feel something is missing there  
When they say they're "sorry".  
Decent and respectable disappears with a skinful  
On the last run for the night  
So loud you can't hear yourself talk  
So you say, "SHUTUP OR WALK"  
and they say "don't get uptight"  
The boys are all out and lusting, being crude and disgusting  
Out of an amber haze they stare  
The girls wear tiny little bits  
To emphasise bums and tits  
Mindless chatter fills the air  
Ah but it is not for me  
To point disapprovingly and say "well I would rather die"  
"give them all a lobotomy"  
This only strengthens the dichotomy  
Between "them and I" Moreover being sweet and kind  
Is casting pearls before swine  
To coin a phrase of course  
And filling yourself up with hate  
Leaves your head in a sorry state-  
I must work closer to the force  
I'll develop inner strength  
So no matter what the length-  
They go to hurt me, it won't hurt  
No more black cloud  
Black and White, myself and the crowd-  
No longer treated like dirt.

Christine King  
Conductor 1144  
Poet  
Human.

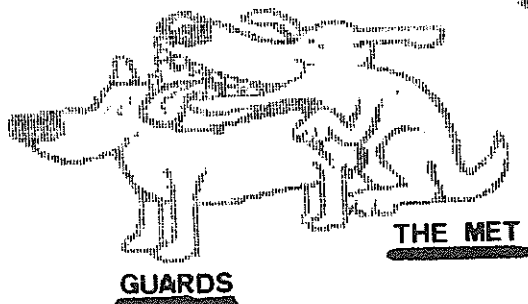
## KEEP THE GUARDS VAN GOIN'

You can see the press all at it again  
You can see their very concerned frown  
The trains are out again  
Let's put the train guards down  
The Government started this blue  
Leavin' the travellin' public  
right in the bloody stew  
The Guards only want a job  
What a terrible blue  
Now fellow Public Transport Travellers  
Of course they sympathise with you  
They know you're the hardest hit  
Whenever there's a transport blue  
But we must look at the facts  
and give the Guards their due  
How many old people, women, babies  
even me and you  
Owe our lives to the Alertness  
Of our train guards staunch and true  
You, see, modern technology,  
Often makes a blue  
Automatic closing doors  
You can get caught in them too  
So come on all you workers  
We can all lose in this blue  
Because, remember, when dear old mum and dad  
Go on a Sunday outing  
and their Guardian angels have bolted into the blue  
Don't let them be on their own  
Make sure there's a train guard too.

G. Despard.



RAILWAY GUARD  
a dogs life



THE MET

D. O. O.

## A Drivers View

There a 3 broad scenarios that can be envisaged coming out of the current guards dispute:

1/ No change in work practises for guards, consequently no change in drivers work environment.

2/Change in guards work practises such as roving, selling tickets, collecting; guard in old role for peak.

-Driver's work environment minimally changed unless no guards in off-peak.

3/Eventual abolition of guards-possibly redeployment or redundancy offered to them.

-Drivers work environment drastically changed.

Which of the three alternatives becomes a reality depends on which ingredients give the strongest flavour to the final result.



# A Drivers view cont.

## THE RECIPE

### INGREDIENTS:

Drivers-attitude depends on how much cash is offered for the extra workload and what the extra workload will entail.

The AFULE(Drivers Union)-attitude depends on current election results, and no. of deals worked out between rail management and Union Exec.

Guards-depends on personal circumstances. Either for staying in one of the roles or wanting redundancy or leaving the job before changes take place due to uncertain working conditions.

ARU(Guards Union)-Different views and approaches between officials and rank and file. Rank and file largely for action while officials largely reliant on political connections(how successful have they proven??)

Management-Visions of promotion, overconfident, fear failure. Can be white anted by government. Bureaucrats largely limited by government interferences or contradictory directives.

The Government-Always counting numbers. Even then they often go against them.

Safety-purely subservient to economics.

Economics-We all know what that means.

Passengers-May riot, riot letters to MP's, abandon the system, move to QLD.

Outside Interests during a strike- shops lose trade, work attendance down, trams and buses overloaded, taxi drivers retire early, petrol companies get record sales at record prices, pollution levels sky-rocket, stress rates soar, car accidents increase, etc, etc.

### METHOD:

Take a long strike with support from some of the ingredients. Hope the government capitulates.

**RESULT:** The Government tastes success?-The guards taste failure?

Why wasn't there a lockout of guards on the Sunday return to work?

**ANSWER-** Pressure on the Government to get the trains running for the last days of Xmas trading.

Why did the guards go back to work?

**ANSWER-** a) Lack of supportive action from other sections of the industry.

b) Financial pressures.

**ROUND ONE-** a). guards lost money..b). radio ban got lifted..c). other workers stood down re-instated.

**ROUND TWO-** a) through to z). Adjust the ingredients.

# Break the vicious circle of authority...

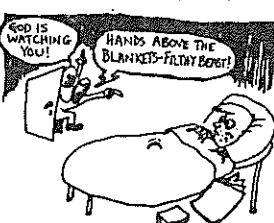
WHEN YOU'RE BORN THE FIRST THING YOU FACE IS AGGRESSION - A SLAP ON THE BUM



THEN THEY STICK YOU BEHIND BARS



A CHANCE FOR UNDERSTANDING GETS LOST IN THE CONFUSION



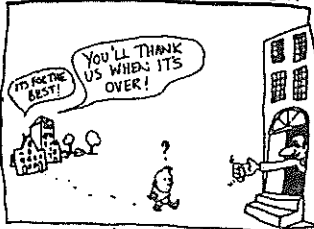
THEY MAKE YOU EAT SHIT  
(\* FEED THE HAM HEAT \*)  
EAT IT ALL UP!



THEY STUFF YOU INTO SILLY CLOTHES...  
(BLUE IS FOR BOYS AND PINK IS FOR GIRLS! UNIFORMS, UNIFORMS - FROM SCHOOL TIE TO BUSINESS SUIT / ARROW / JUNGLE GREENS...)



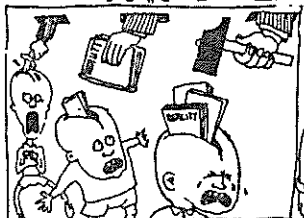
AND THEY PACK YOU OFF TO SCHOOL...



WHERE YOU'RE FINALLY BROKEN IN. (LEARNING HOW TO ENDURE THE WORLD RATHER THAN HOW TO CHANGE IT)



THEY TURN YOU INTO CONSUMER DURABLES



REBELLION IS BADLY ORGANISED (ANGRY OUTBURSTS, PENT-UP FRUSTRATION...)



SOME PRACTICE PASSIVE RESISTANCE...



...WHILE OTHERS ESCAPE



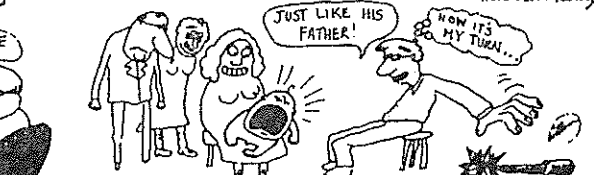
BUT THE SYSTEM ALWAYS HAS THE UPPER HAND... (IF IT'S NOT A SLAP, IT'S GUILT)



BECAUSE THE MAJORITY CAPITULATE AND COLLABORATE (CHANGE JUST SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE)



...AND SIMPLY END UP SUPPORTING THEM! (DREAMS TURNED SOUR, HOPE DESTROYED...)



STOP GIVING ORDERS STOP TAKING ORDERS

STOP GIVING IN!

# YEAR OF STRUGGLE 1987

December 31, 1986- no trains, trams after 8pm in protest at lack of security on public transport.

March 19, 1987-Four hour stop work when workers discuss plans to close Port Melb' and St Kilda lines  
March 26-April- No service after 7 pm when guards refuse to man trains without radios.

April 30 and May 6-Trains stop for six hours over light-rail plans.

May 6-Mass stop work meeting of rail-workers to discuss the bans on the LRV project

July 7-City Loop closed for two hours in dispute over operations of new express track.

July 17-Suburban and Country trains cut between 5.30 pm, and 8.30 pm when two guards supervisors are stood down.

July 29-31-Seventy percent of Trams, and 40 percent of Trains stop during disputes over maintenance and plans to cut transport jobs.

August 1-Skeleton service only as unions voice concern over Government plans to axe transport jobs.

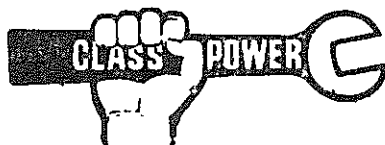
August 3,4,5-Major cuts to train services as workers discuss State Government plans to axe 1411 transport jobs.

October 3,4-Major cuts to weekend rail services over rail 48 claim.

October 5,6-48-hour rail strike over second tier wage claim.

October 19- Suburban and Country trains disrupted between 8.30 am, and 2.30 pm by stop work meeting to hear progress report on wage claim.

December 8-20-Guards strike in opposition to government moves to introduce driver only operation of suburban trains.



# YES IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!!! the SPARKS-PTWA BOGY AWARDS

Get your nominations in SOON! Entry must close with the last post, FEBRUARY 31!

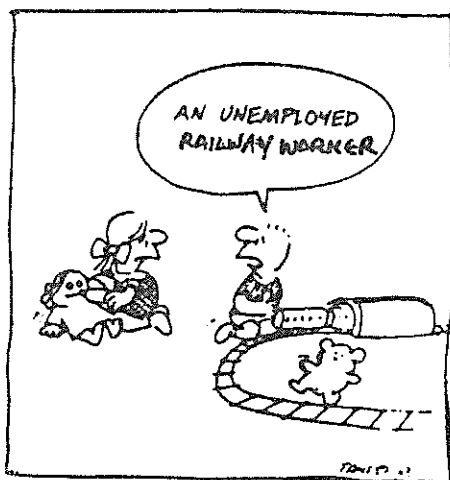
Nominate your fav. figure for one or all of these categories:

1. "How Low"-for all out bastardry.
2. Scumbag of the year-for sellouts above and beyond the call of duty.
3. Golden Platter-for best headkicking.
4. Golden Dunny Seat-for best contributions to verbal diahorrea.

Will Russell, Frank, Joe, Jim Tom and Dennise, sweep the awards again this year???? Is there some dark-horse likely to carry off the coveted "How Low" Medallion?



# SUBSCRIBE..



Just Five Smackaroos or \$5 in proper English can ensure you get every copy of 'SPARKS' for one full year! Not only that... a subscription to 'SPARKS' ensures for you a peaceful nights sleep... secure in the knowledge that you are helping to fund The Transport Workers Magazine that is sending the Class Traitors CRAZY!

Fill in  
And Send  
To-day

PLEASE HELP ME CONTRIBUTE  
TO MY BOSSES NERVOUS STATE

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

34

# ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

Anarcho-syndicalism is the theory and practice of reorganising traditional unions, the workplace and society at large. The aim of this is to achieve a self managed society, which is based not on the exploitation of one by the other (whether by boss over worker, man over woman, old over young etc. . .) It will be rather, a society based on the active involvement of all the members in the decision making process and the implementation of these decisions. Importantly, it also means acceptance of responsibility for the consequences of these decisions.

This is unlike all present societies where the decision making and responsibility is handed over to the minority in positions of authority.

We advocate a society based on the voluntary, active participatory democracy of each for the welfare of all.

We advocate unions based on limited tenure of office, recalability of all delegates, delegates to be given a limited co-ordination to cover areas of certain activity.

That is, we do not want the election of union bosses who have full executive decision making powers over union affairs. We advocate that all decisions be made by the membership that affect the membership, in fact all decisions.

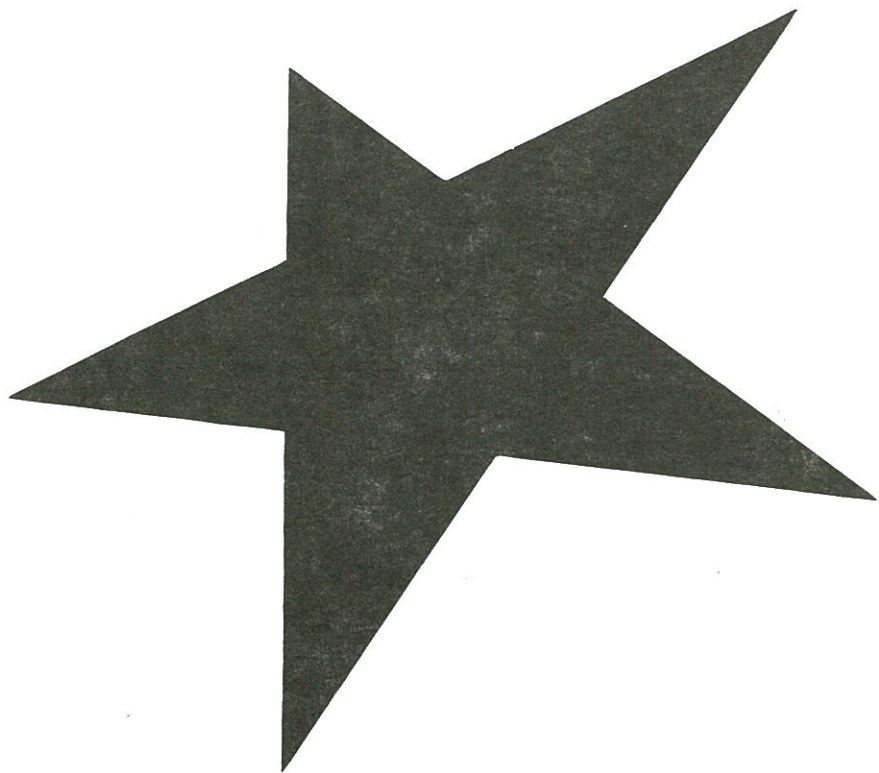
In this form of organisation we see the germ of a liberated society where the people are not dominated by any form of hierarchy: whether it be of a political party, of a religious nature, by a bureaucracy, or one of the 'technical experts'.

We want a society where the community is in control of the decision making. We base this firmly on the belief that this must be achieved throughout active participation within an international framework.

As anarcho-syndicalists we stand opposed to all who would rule on our behalf or in the name of the dictatorship of the proletariat. There is no room within our movement for the authoritarian ideas of Marxism or the collaborationist ideas of the social democrats.

For each according to their ability: to each according to their needs.

# **SOLIDARITY IS STRENGTH**



**DIRECT ACTION  
STUFFS  
THE BOSSES**