

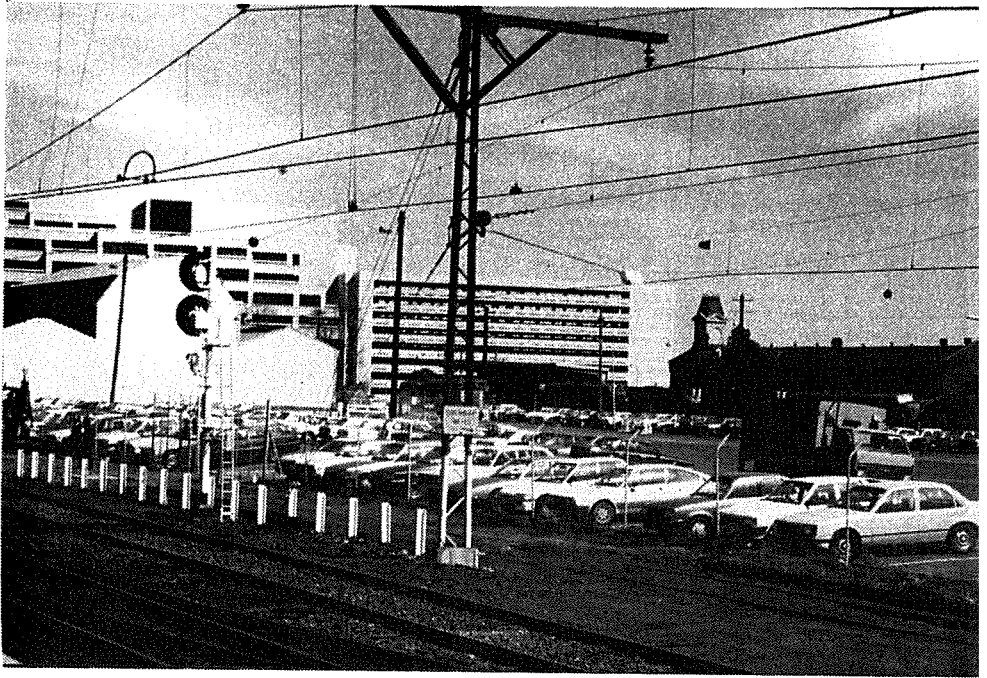
SPARKS

The Paper of the Public Transport Workers
Association

NO. 17; Nov-Dec 1988



**INSIDE: Upfield Light Rail;
Flinders Street Station cuts;
\$4,000 ripped off Train Drivers;
!!! PLUS LOTS MORE !!!**



The photo above shows what's become of No.1 Good Shed, Melbourne Yard. Yes folks, where trains once ran, cars now park. You'd think with the Greenhouse Effect/pollution/degradation of the environment/etc an effort would be made to discourage car use in the city. But no, there's money to be made charging car drivers for the 'right' to park at the city's edge. This act of vandalism's made worse because the car park is situated directly opposite one of Melbourne's best serviced stations—Spencer Street. The irony of it all!!!

**FORGET POLITICAL PARTIES,
WE'RE HAVING A TRAM PARTY!**

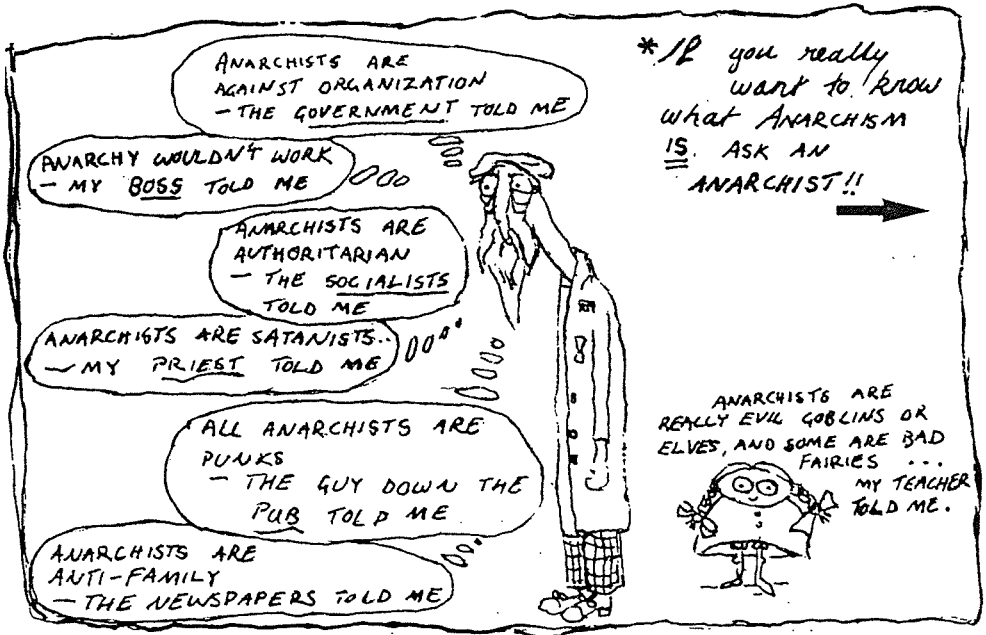
To celebrate the end of another long year,
come and party with us on a party tram
all over the tracks of Melbourne.

SAT 26th NOVEMBER

Tram will run out of **STH MELB DEPOT**
at **8.30 pm SHARP!!**
Be there at 8.15pm

To get to South Melb. Depot, take the **no.1** tram
in Swanston St, City, or any tram in St Kilda Rd,
and get off at Dorcas St.

Bring the kids!



ECONOMICS

VERSUS

ENVIRONMENT

(Or, THE DEATH OF THE CAR)

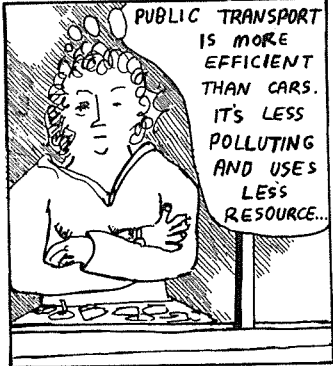
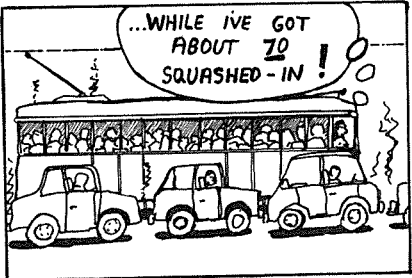
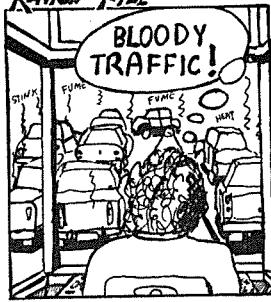
Most of us are aware of how bad the world environment's becoming. The planets being changed for the worse as people gobble up non-renewable resources and waste other resources on purchasing useless products. That's the nature of the economic system dominating our lives. You work, consume, die (the quieter the better). The slow death of the planet's been getting lots of coverage in the media recently-after all, it's hard to ignore dying forests, salinated/unusable lands, unswimmable waterways, crazy climatic changes, poisoned foods, nuclear accidents, etc, etc, etc. In future issues of **SPARKS** we intend running regular pieces on environmental issues and ways of personally and collectively dealing with the ecological crisis. In the meantime.....

The politicians, bureaucrats and big business figures have been at us for years to produce more-consume more. The basis to just about every political decision has been '**ECONOMICS**'. Election campaigns have been remarkable for their focus on the 'big economic picture' which roughly translates as belt-tightening for the working class while the bosses make more profits. Scant regard has been paid to the environment by any political party and now -unfortunately-the chooks are coming home to roost in the form of the **Greenhouse Effect**. Too much energy consumption in search of 'economic growth' means the planet's going to warm up by around 5 degrees Celsius over the coming 50 years. Coastal areas face inundation, the snow line will recede 1000 metres, vegetation unable to adapt will disappear, rainfall patterns will alter dramatically affecting the food supply. Billions of \$\$\$ will need to be spent globally coping with the consequences.

Fossil fuel consumption is the major contributor to the Greenhouse Effect. Carbon Dioxide: from factories, farts(Yes!), smelters, power stations **and motor vehicles**. Reduce the output of any of the above and it follows that such an act will reduce the impact of the global warming.

Mass transportation has to be pushed as the **environmentally sensible** alternative to the private car. Economic 'arguments' for closing services down are unacceptable in today's world (they never were acceptable in yesterday's world but that's another story...). Public transport's benefits simply can't be reduced to figures on a balance sheet. Less cars and more mass transport means less pollution. It also means less accidents, less traffic costs, less health costs **and** less money in the hands of greedy oil & motor companies. Transport workers have a duty to fight for the expansion of the industry. The world's future depends on it.

RANKIN FILE



Graffiti



Since the start of graffiti in the ghettos of New York in the late sixties, graffiti has become a popular art form worldwide.

Melbourne's graffiti started in its present form in the early eighties.

The artists take their work seriously and believe that it will be all out war with Transit Police unless some agreement can be made about legal spaces.

The artists don't want war but are being forced to become more devious and aggressive in order to express their artform.

On Tuesday the 18th of October at the Youth Information Centre in Little Lonsdale St a meeting was held for all graffiti artists.

The meeting was run by the Youth Information Service to discuss the possibility of getting legal space on railway property and the back of buildings facing the line.

Some legal pieces have already been done and a few artists have even been paid to do different pieces around Melbourne.

The head of the graffiti squad was at the meeting to answer questions although he did become defensive of his squad when some of the artists asked questions about alledged violence by some of the squad's members.

It would also appear that the graffiti squad has sprayed over one of D.M.A.'s (Da Mad Artists) legal pieces.

Then there is the blue train taken out of service several months ago because of asbestos. D.M.A. did a piece the whole carriage length. The graffiti squad came along with their own spray and vandalised the whole piece of art.

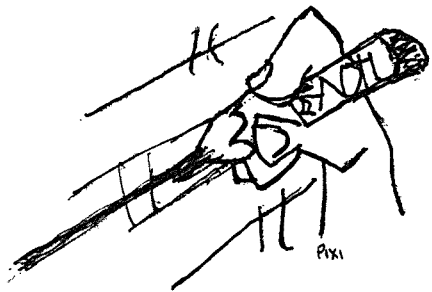
It would seem in a way that the graffiti squad have become the destructive vandals they are supposed to catch.

It's true that the artists technically break the law by entering railway property and spraying carriages but that does not mean the graffiti squad should waste their time and our money spraying over these pieces. I'm sorry but two wrongs don't make a right.

Let's get this right: there is more than one form of graffiti.

The most popular although lesser form of the art is TAGGING. That is writing a chosen nickname on the interior and exterior of trains and on station walls. A real name is not used for legal reasons. The idea behind tagging being that the more your tag is seen by other artists, the better the recognition from other artists. It's not just the amount of times you get your tag up but the style as well.

I believe this form of graffiti has no benefit to the public as the styles used are only readable to other writers and the tags which look like scribble tend to make the trains and stations messy. Also a fair percentage of these people are the ones who enjoy the game of cat and mouse with the Transit Police.



The other higher form of the art is doing 'PIECE' (or pieces) - spray can art. A lot of time and effort goes into each piece of art. The artist may take many hours doing drawings of the proposed artwork, working out colors, getting paint (legally or otherwise), casing the area to be used, and sometimes preparing the surface. Then several hours over the next few nights will be spent doing the piece. One layer is applied and then left to dry before the next coat is put on.

THANKS: SAD1, BGRAT, PIXY

These artists have found that doing a good piece is a far better way to get recognition for being a good artist - in other words, one 'piece' is worth a thousand tags.

This is the form of graffiti that the graffiti artists want legal space for.

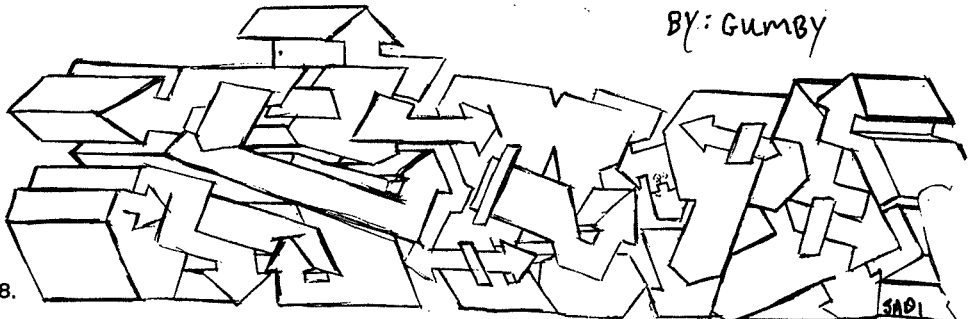
And why not colourise otherwise dull concrete walls.? I'm sure given the opportunity, these artists would be able to produce artwork of a much higher quality with heaps more pictures and a little less signatures if they didn't have to contend with the transit police.



AND WHO KNOWS? ONE DAY PEOPLE MIGHT CATCH TRAINS TO SEE THE ART AROUND MELBOURNE'S TRAIN NETWORK!

If you have thoughts or suggestions to make regarding graffiti art, please write to Sparks and let us know.

BY: GUMBY



Train Drivers Cop \$4,000 Payout (but for how long?)

Suburban train drivers have just commenced working a 19 day month and I'm yet to find one driver whose happy with the cut in hours. Understandable when each driver's lost around \$4000 from their pay packets per year.

The 19 day month was initially accepted by drivers some nine months back largely on the basis that an aggregate wage would be brought in to compensate for any loss of pay. (An aggregate wage is roughly like a salary. All allowances are inclusive and variations in pay due to holidays, sickies, etc. are minimised). Well the aggregate wage got knocked on the head by rail authorities but they certainly didn't turn down the opportunity to cut their wages bill. Management used the excuse of an oversupply of drivers to reduce each drivers' workload.

A reduction in the 35-40 hour week should be a prime goal of all workers; technology abounds to ease our burden and give us back the time that's been stolen from us. But a payout can't be part of the deal.

Rank and file drivers are fuming and a volatile situation appears to be developing. Don't be surprised if action takes place but in what form, who knows?

Of considerable concern are the moves by AFULE Jolimont officials looking to deflect criticisms by pursuing a work-value case that largely rests on nicking duties from guards. I hope drivers don't get sucked into taking their (justified) frustrations out on guards. Keep in mind guards are fighting for their whole paypackets, not \$4000 of it.

Undoubtedly, the work-value claim will be harder to get if it isn't based on screwing the guards long-term future. So what happens if the claim gets knocked back??

In 1986 Melbourne Yard shunters had their shifts reduced from 12 to 10 per fortnight. The resultant huge payout sparked a long industrial campaign that eventually saw shunters compensated. It's a fact drivers are in a far stronger position than the shunters ever were. Of course the Ache-ord reins supreme across the union leaderships who'll restrain 'extra' claims wherever they can. Drivers can take the easy approach and sit back and watch their wages further deteriorate under the ALP-ACTU marriage. Then again, they could use their immense industrial muscle to bust open the imposed belt tightening. What's to lose when you're losing anyway?

FLINDERS STREET:

PLATFORM STAFF TO

DISAPPEAR ??

Flinders Street Station is set for redevelopment in the next few years. The plan is to construct a multi-level retail block behind the familiar station buildings. In line with this significant change, the way the station is staffed and run is now being reviewed.

Management have just released a 'Draft' document listing possibilities for platform staffing levels. While the options list allows the bosses to claim they're unbiased at this stage towards any one option, a close read of the 'possibilities' shows management favouring the **destaffing of all platforms, with a central control room being set up to run all platforms.**

The document tries in a none too subtle way to win Flinders Street staff over to the Control Room concept by painting a bleak picture of current platform work at the station. This is undeniably true. But rather than address better platform cabins, the document jumps to the conclusion that the Control Room idea would make work more tolerable.

If the Control Room does come in at Flinders Street then whatever staff are left will face an even worse working environment than the one currently in operation. Correspondence luggage and parcels will still need transferring, platforms will still get filthy and have to be cleaned while people with disabilities will continue to require assistance. This means station assistants are going to have to be on the platforms—possibly one per platform, fulltime. Even when the service flows well, scores of queries are directed at platform staff. And when the system stuffs up as it does almost daily, the queries escalate. Anyone in green is going to cop heaps of attention (and abuse). Understandable really. After all tele screens aren't designed for two way communication.

As well, the Control Room will inevitably lead to a stricter hierarchy evolving at the station. The limited jobs available in the Control Room will mean those unable to get in there will do the shitty tasks. The 'soft' job of sitting in front of tele screens, pressing a few buttons and making occasional announcements will go to those 'good' workers who basically do as they're told. Muck up and you'll serve time on Devil's Island (Platform 6/7).

Flinders Street Station currently has abysmal platform arrangements for staff. Except for platform 8/9, the cabins allow for no privacy, little space and hence no escape. The open design, antiquated equipment and crowded conditions are beyond a joke and no doubt some platform staff would welcome the Control Room concept. But what's the cost in terms of staff cuts, the drop in service to users and the establishment of a more rigid work environment??

CONT. NEXT PAGE _ _ _ _



**ANTIQUATED
PLATFORM CABIN,
FLINDERS STREET STATION.**

The Control Room plan needs to be rejected outright and a campaign begun to replace the present cabins. In 1985 station workers on the country platforms at Spencer Street fought to replace the telephone boxes they worked in. Blackbans on these boxes affected the information flow from the platforms to Control. Efficient train running was disrupted. Within days, new cabins were agreed to by the bosses. Similarly, Metrol relies on info coming from the platform staff at Flinders Street. Bans on this info flow as well as certain duties such as cleaning, would be bound to get a response. And in order to strengthen the case, approach guards, drivers and signal staff for assistance since their jobs would be affected by reduced platform staff.

Turn managements argument for change on it's head. The say the Control Room will provide a better service but that's garbage. Flinders Street workers can easily argue that better working conditions on the platforms will improve the service given to users.

Adam Muyt

SLAVE TRAIN

*The 7:16 train every morning
everyone's still yawning
the 7:16 haunts my mind
during the short night...*

*The 3:08 train home
obsesses me all day long.*

*Every fortnight I'm paid
for giving over my free time;
It doesn't seem right
selling my lifes time,
still just managing to survive.*

*It's like some bad dream,
once I was free.*

*Now I think one day
I'll wake up and life
will have passed me by,
and I'll still be yawning
yawning on the 7:16,
and still having nightmares
about the slavery
of the morning.....*

trammies election

This month (November) another round of Union Elections will be held, for both Delegates and "Officals". Of course the promises and pledges of the standing candidates will come thick and fast, minuture versions of what we get-ad nauseum-in local, state, and federal elections.

The PTWA, which produces SPARKS, has a standing principle of opposing the election of "Union Officals" on the grounds that they are neither accountable, nor recallable by the members, once they are elected into office (or is that Ivory Tower?), until the next round of elections. Experience counting, one can see how easy it is for them during this time to ensure members have as little say as possible in the running of our union. You'll understand the cynicism, of course.

Delegates can be made accountable for their actions, and recalled if they consistantly refuse to serve the members interests. South Melbourne had such an experience just on a year ago where a delegate was dismissed for the blatent abuse of her position which she was elected to. The members at this depot used a secret ballot to record their decision; one that was unavoidable, but nescessary. The delegate in question had served only twelve months of her term as elected delegate.

Nevertheless, the PTWA would encourage you to vote for Delegate candidates in the wokplace/depot where you work, as these "members" are on the shop floor. It goes without saying that they should be in constant contact with the members.

In conclusion we would ask that you consider all of our arguments, and not dismiss them out of hand, as this is your union, you pay the dues, and you do the work!

LRV's for UPFIELD ??

The future of the Upfield train service doesn't look to rosy. Now the election's out of the way for four more years, the government is preparing the way for it's closure and replacement by LRV's (big trams). Frank Hussey, the AFULE state secretary made a bald admission in September's 'AFULE Divisional News'. Reporting on a meeting between top union officials and Kennan prior to the election, he's written:

" We agreed jointly with the minister to leave the whole question of Upfield aside during the next four weeks-**it is potentially divisive**" (our emphasis).

A review of the Upfield 'Corridor' is about to commence. Like just about every governmental review that takes place, the different options will be listed but the report will be loaded to favour one above the rest. (Check out STAPLAN; 1987's St. Kilda/Pt. Melbourne light rail review Flinders Street Station staffing review to name just a few loaded 'Options Lists').

Kennan's already gone public with the government's preference—the 19/20 Sydney Road trams eliminated, the trains eliminated, LRV's 'replacing' both services running down the old train line. He claims the new service will be wonderful since the LRV's are capable of joining into the tram network. Of course that's true—but the bloody things **can't join into the train network!** What Kennan is deliberately ignoring is the fact some 50% of the users of the trains are factory workers, most of them coming from the Western Suburbs. At present they simply change trains at North Melbourne for a quick connecting service. He's also covering up on the fact Sydney Road shops get much of their business from the trams passing through. It should be obvious to any concerned transport worker that replacing viable, accessible services is ludicrous when so much of Melbourne has inadequate public transport. Put the LRV's in where they're needed!!

The different union leaderships have kept pretty quiet on the whole scam. We are extremely doubtful they'll do much more than huff and puff like they did over the Port/St. Kilda train closures. After all, it is **their political party doing the closing down.** Stay tuned for developments as the campaign to keep the trains and Sydney Road trams begins....from the residents and users. We should be standing with them.

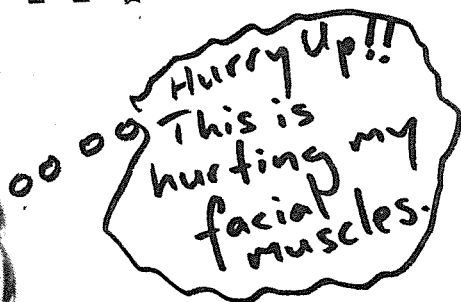
RAILWAY ANNIE.

MR. 17% CLAIMS

The ARU state secretary Joe Sibberas has claimed victory in the union's recent quadrennial election. This is in spite of the fact only 17% of ARU members actually voted for him!! He's got the gall to write in October's ARU Gazette that "...the membership overwhelmingly returned the leadership...in a strong vote of confidence for progressive policies". Who is kidding who, Joe? The only progress we can see is backwards. All that the ARU members have got in recent years is sackings, wage cuts, deteriorating conditions; where jobs have been 'saved' has been at a price, ie. 230 station jobs traded off to keep the yards on trains. Unity Hall's "voting with confidence" for the Labour Government.

Joe claims the membership is "to be commended on their assistance to calls that the leadership has 'sold-out' ". Look again Joe. As the major opponents of the Unity Hall mob, the IWA has repeatedly pointed the bone at your lots sell-outs. We called for a boycott of executive position voting so members could record their dissatisfaction. 71% of ARU members didn't bother voting. So who wins that argument Joe??

VICTORY



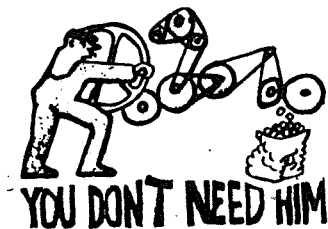
MR.17% CLAIMING VICTORY

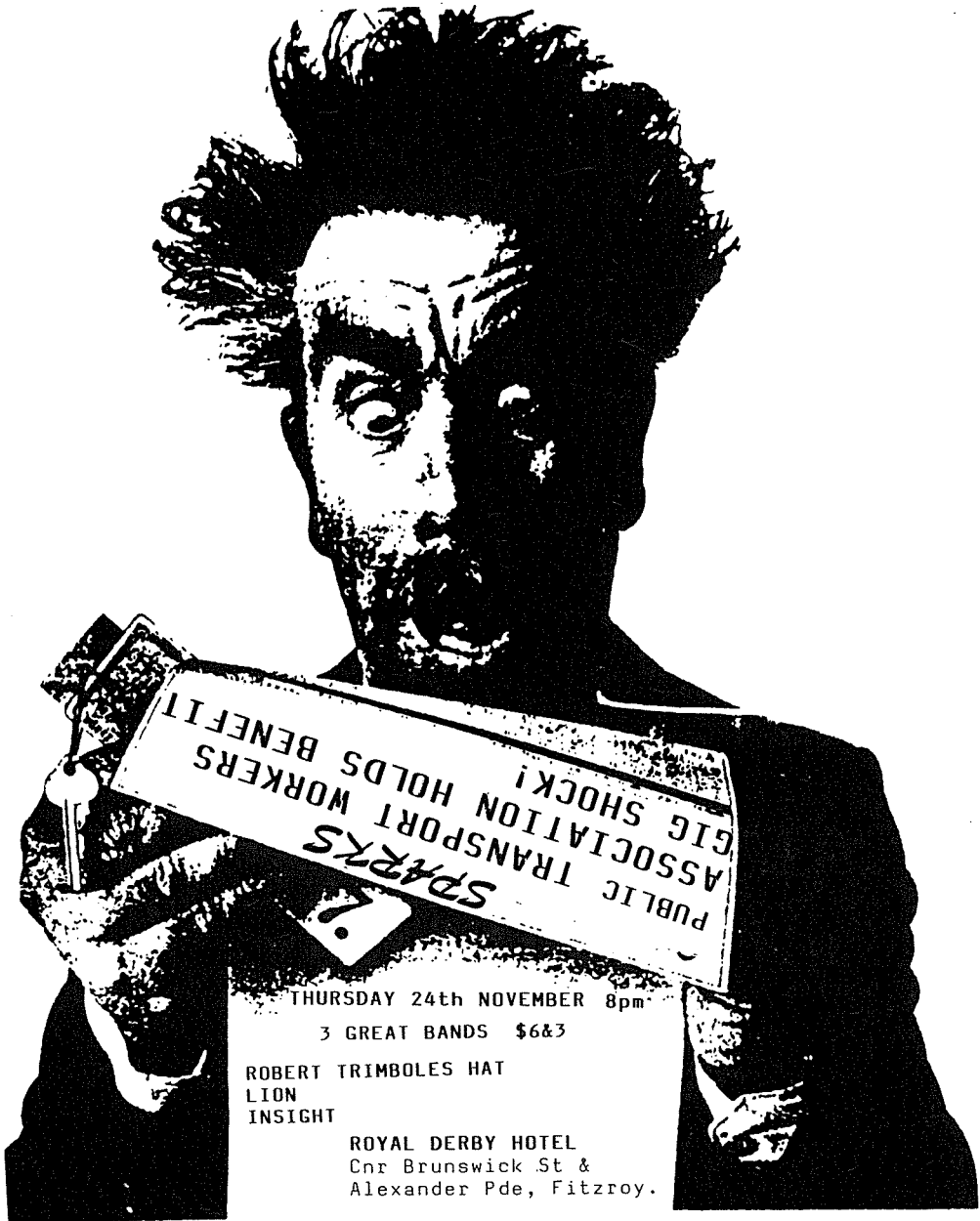
In a mental masturbation exercise Joe lists the 'credits' of Unity Hall's (bankrupt) ledger book. Amongst these is the inference Unity Hall won the guards their jobs. What a load of rot! During the 12 day strike guards repeatedly rejected the pleadings of Unity Hall to return to work empty handed. Despite the fact Unity Hall refused to contribute to strike funds and rejected the guards calls to spread action across the union, guards stood firm. It was the industrial action which saved the guards jobs. Guards won despite Unity Hall, not because of it!

Since the guards have been chosen as the litmus test by Joe to show his supremacy over his opponents, it's worthwhile looking at the election results down at the guards depot. If the guards were so pleased as punch with the stitched up deal Unity Hall made with their pals in the ALP, one would expect the Unity Hall aligned, 'Militant' candidates to have romped in. And what happened?? Out of the ten positions on the section committee, Sibberas supporters held nine. Guards voted Joe's mates out of all but three of the positions. All three of the section executive positions had been held by 'Militant' members. They all got dumped. So much for your "rank & file support" Joe.

Well the elections are over and we've got the same sour faces occupying the seats in Unity Hall for the next four years. There is no way a 17% vote can be considered a mandate. Trammies at South Melbourne Depot proved that an unpopular union official can be removed by sustained pressure. With the 'promise' of further cuts, all rail workers need to keep their eyes on Unity Hall's relationship with their pals in the ALP/Cowards Castle. If officials of the ARU (or any union in fact), cannot be made accountable to the membership, then it's time for members to ignore them and build on the networks created and sustained by the rank and file.

Russell





PUBLIC TRANSPORT WORKERS
ASSOCIATION HOLDS BENEFIT
GIG SHOCK!
SPARKS

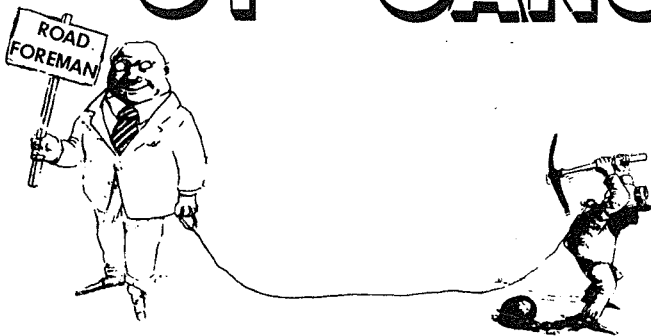
THURSDAY 24th NOVEMBER 8pm

3 GREAT BANDS \$6&3

ROBERT TRIMBOLES HAT
LION
INSIGHT

ROYAL DERBY HOTEL
Cnr Brunswick St &
Alexander Pde, Fitzroy.

THE POLITICS OF GANGS



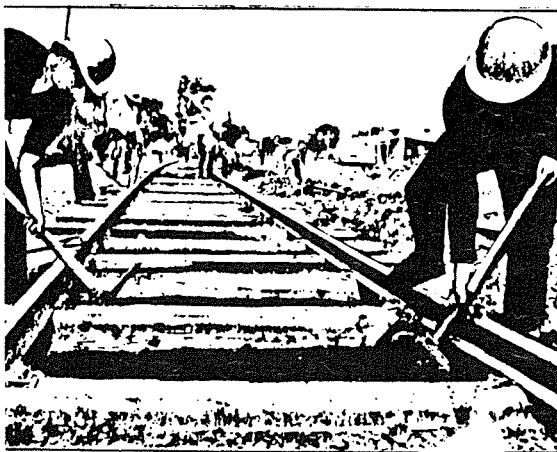
Work gangs are a unique social structure that are developed especially for working, the emphasis being on hard physical labour. The hierarchy of a gang can be quite confusing if not mis-leading. According to the bosses a railway gang consists of a ganger, a second ganger and a number of workers. The ganger is the boss on the track, he tells you what to do and hassles you if you're not doing it well enough. The second ganger is similar, he often takes over if the ganger is off conferring with a boss from the office or he may work in conjunction with the ganger, each one supervising a section of the gang. This is the theory, in reality though the real power may come from one or a few people from within the gang, these people will intimidate the gangers to the point that they are useless, orders will be given more by these workers than anyone else, leaving the gangers to go through with the chores of talking to various bureaucrats while the workers will work when they want to and how they want to. Don't be deceived though, this isn't an example of workers taking control, rather it's a select group of workers setting up their own power base and ordering everyone else around with the added advantage that no matter what happens, if anything goes wrong it will be the ganger that takes the rap because theoretically they are in control so are answerable to the bosses.

Because the gangs are all male and are doing hard physical work there is a real macho feel to things, they are real men out in the sun sweating and using their muscles, they identify with this macho image, they are tough and know it. Any woman that walks past who is young will be accosted, yelled at and obscene suggestions put to her, she will be treated she is nothing more than a blow up doll to be used and abused at everyones discretion. (I've heard stories of rape which most of the gang found amusing.) Because it is an all male environment there is a permanent undercurrent of sexual energy which comes out in the way women are treated, the lunchtime talk and their actions at work towards each other. Regularly they have to make believe sex with each other, backdooring each other, rubbing each other up, stuffing their dicks in each others mouth, but don't suggest that they might have homosexual tendencies or you'll get bashed. It's hard to work what brings out this sexual energy, maybe they have to prove to each other that they are sex studs or maybe its some dark analistic trait which is coming out because of their environment. There has to be something potentially dangerous there though if laughter was the only reaction one guy got for telling us about various rapes he had committed.

The gangs are are very close community, you have to prove yourself before you will be accepted. This is done by showing that you're not afraid of hard work and by letting everyone know that you will stand up for yourself, this may not mean fighting but just being loud and unafraid when someone shouts at you. New-starters get a hard time when they first start, some more than others, a big looking guy with the standard mentality will get an easier time than the thinner guy with an alternative philosophy doesn't look quite normal.

NEXT PAGE - - -

The initiation into the gang can take many forms,doing all the shit work,being constantly abused,not being talked to in a friendly way, being ignored at lunctime and on the train,in some cases being bashed and having property stolen..There is nothing you can do about this,the ganger is'nt likely to be of any help,he is more likely to be a part o; the process,more so becaues he is in a position of power.The union is'nt much help either,you could complain but the chances of being moved are slim and the gang will give you a harder time for lagging. All you can really do is cope with the games that are being played,show that you're not afraid and hope some new starters come in to relieve the pressure.Once new-starters come in the hassling will cut down,because there is someone else to hassle and because status is given according to the amount of time you've been in the gang for,once new-starters come in you will move up a rung in the ladder.



The gangers define their own relationship to the gang,they can either play the part of the boss and constantly order everone around,behaving like an army sargeant or they can be a person with alot of knowledge who shares it with the gang who will leave the gang alone as long as it does the work. There is a certain amount of power that the ganger possess,he can abuse it but also has to tread carefully because the gang is such a close knit community that if he is'nt respected and liked the gang will do nothing,the ganger has to weild his power carefully or he will cut off his own head.

The person with the real power is the road-foreman who has advanced to that position from the ranks, usually by dobbing his mates in for trivial offences. He comes out of his nice car to stumble over the ballast, sweating in his suit and tie to inspect the track, have a chat to the ganger and go. He really doesn't seem to have a useful purpose, just to inspire fear and hatred. Everyone has a healthy hatred for bosses and other such parasites. The road-foreman is the one who wields the most power and will use it indiscreetly against the workers without realising why a worker is doing what he is doing.



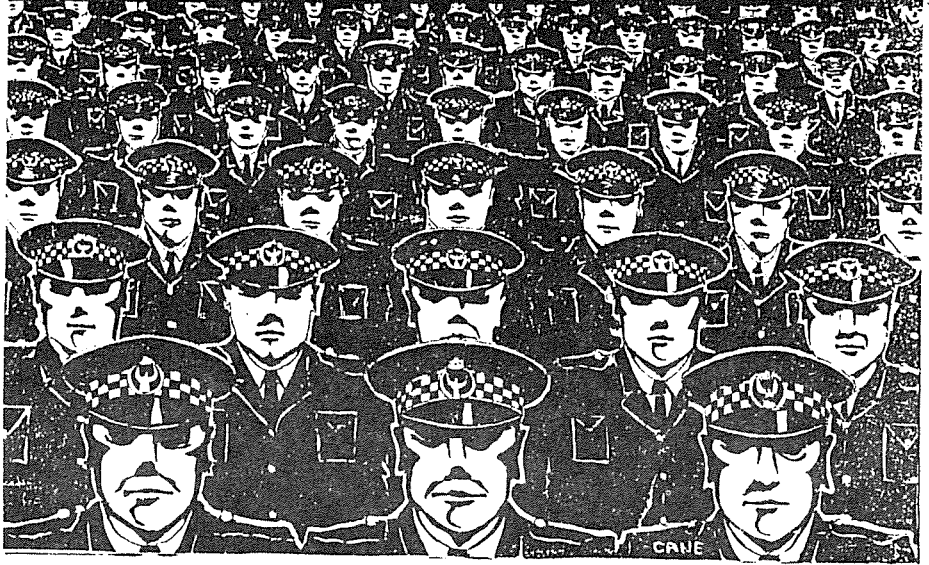
Because the job being done is quite simple, once you learn the ropes and see what has to be done to the track and why it's easy enough to go on with the job automatically. Once the knowledge of how to do the work and why is achieved there is no real need for a boss

Most of the workers know what has to be done by just looking at the track and know how to repair it.

The gang should be able to run itself because the workers work out amongst themselves what they have to do. The existence of the boss isn't really necessary as he's only telling his grandmother how to suck eggs. All it would take is an awareness of self-management and responsibility for the work to be done without any pushing. The hard part is getting the awareness there, we don't need the road-foreman and we don't need gangers. The gang is essentially a community and knows what it needs and wants and can work together to get it, we can share the power instead of giving it to a few individuals so they can psychotically maim us with it.

DEAD COPS

DON'T WORRY EVERYTHING IS UNDER
CONTROL



are no
TRAGEDY

When unemployed youth suicide because they can no longer live in the grip of extreme poverty it is a tragedy. When a relative or a loved one suffers and dies unnecessarily because of an inadequate or underfunded public health system it is a tragedy. When an aborigines have the life bashed out of them in a police cell it is a tragedy. When a worker's body is mashed to mince meat by machinery and unsafe work practices it is a tragedy. All of these events are virtually everyday occurrences in

our twisted class society yet they usually receive little or no media coverage.

Why is it then that Rupert Murdoch and the other media barons are bawling their eyes out over the deaths of two young cops shot down in Melbourne's streets in October? What makes a dead cop matter when everyday deaths of people don't rate a mention? Is it because of the role cops play in protecting rich scumbags from workers like us? To answer this question it is necessary to examine the reality of what cops do rather than passively accept media's promoted fantasies.

The motto of the Victoria Police Force is "UPHOLD THE RIGHT", and that is exactly what they do. All cops happily protect right wing politicians and bosses. They never question or rebel against orders to jack boot their way through picket lines or to club protestors around the ears. Secret police tap the telephones of dissident workers. Agent Provocateurs are used to disrupt the activities of legal opposition groups.

If we lived in a fair and just society it could be argued that "we need some-one to keep unruly elements in check", and who better than ourselves organised into community defence and peace groups? But the truth is that we don't live in a reasonable society. This political and economic system is based on exploitation and corruption. The cops choose to side with the bosses and as a result they become oppressors themselves. The laws they enforce are made by the rich and are used to keep us workers under the thumb.

A quick glance at the figures will reveal that 90% of the legal system is set up to protect property not people. Most of our prison population is made up of people who did not pay parking fines, petty shoplifters and vagrants, etcetera. Rapists and murderers are a small minority. Often prisoners are there for victimless crimes like dope smoking or homosexuality (in Queensland). Our legal system is unjust and the cops enforce it.

In any event the hypocrisy of the police force makes most of us want to throw up. Anyone who is streetwise knows that the cops run most brothels, gambling dens and drug running. Graft and corruption are a way of life for most cops. Investigations like the Fitzgerald Inquiry only reveal the tip of the iceberg. In terms of numbers the cops easily outnumber the mafia and the Chinese Triads when it comes to organised crime.



So why do our wonderful politicians and media barons continually these ratbags as heroes? The answer is simple: the politicians and media barons are just as slimey as the cops are. In reality they are all in the same sordid business - protecting the bosses. Murdoch and company print lies about workers struggles, and politicians tell the same lies. The cops are there to do the dirty work in case anyone wakes up to this scheme of things. They belong to a mutual back scratching society. Look how an army of cops was mobilised to protect Murdoch's newspaper empire in Wapping, England, from the printing workers he put on the dole. Could the Victorian ALP government destroy the B.L.F. if they were unable to rely on the cheerful assistance of Victoria's storm trooping cops? Of course not. The parasites who rule our earth today would be nobodies tomorrow if they didn't have cops armed to the teeth to prop up their corrupt empires.

The foundation stones of capitalist society are greed and hate. The rich laugh at our poverty and

suffering. They stuff their fat faces while others starve. The rich have everything and we have buggers all. The cops defend this inequality. No body twists their arms to force them to join the police. Every copper makes a free and conscious decision to become a dead shit when they sign up for the bully boys. They are our enemies.

Anarchists fight for freedom and cops enforce repression. We fight for justice and they protect exploiters. We are against racism and they kill Aborigines. A war is going on and cops are active participants in it. While the death of a human being is never a good thing, the death of oppressors is no tragedy. Those two cops who were shot down in Walsh St knew what they were doing and knew what a blue uniform represents. They are soldiers of the devil, let them burn in hell.

BOB

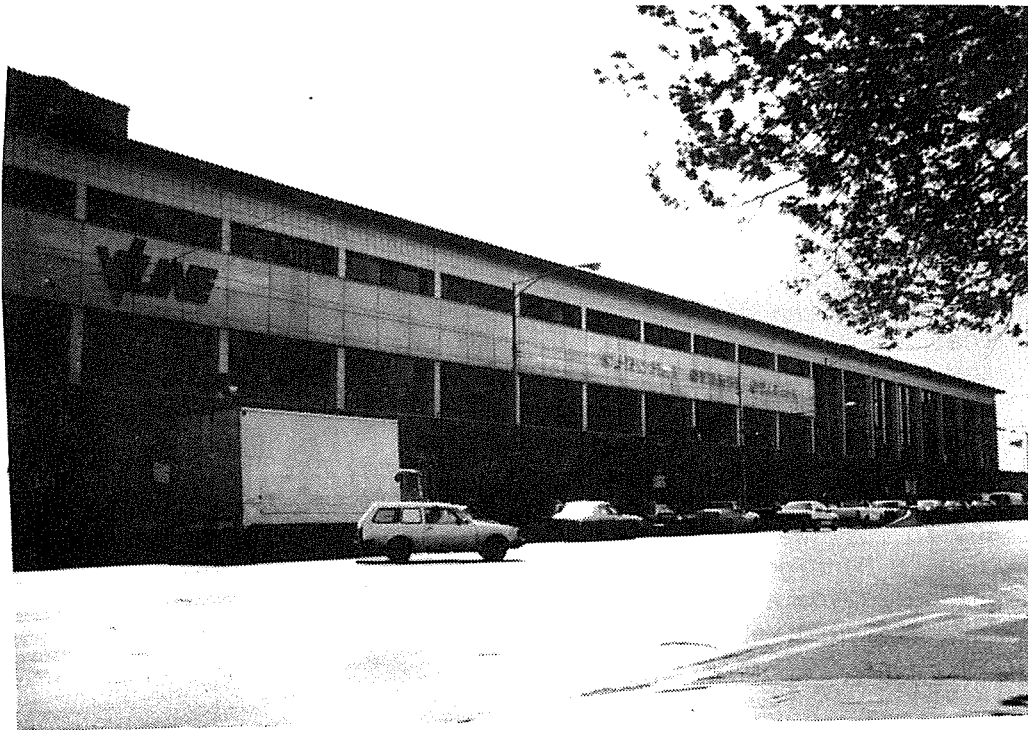


"A ticket to V-Line melbourne please"

The latest farce of the top heavy management of the rail system has just occurred at **Spencer Street Station**. The local fuhrer, a pretentious, arrogant fool named Norton, decided he'd rename the V/Line section of the station. No one in government and only a couple of middle bureaucrats at Transport House knew of the plot. No matter to Mister Norton that the name change to 'V/Line Melbourne' would be confused just about everyone, especially as the Met platforms were to keep the name Spencer Street. The info we've received indicates someone from the Passenger Services Dept—the seat of the conspiracy—blew the whistle on the name change. The first thing Kennan knew of the plan was when **The Age's** transport reporter contacted him to find out why the Spencer Street sign had disappeared. Kennan apparently wasn't too happy to find management taking such 'bold' initiatives but didn't want the press to see he couldn't control the bureaucrats so he covered his tracks by stating the government had studied the idea of changing the name of Spencer Street Station but had rejected the plan!

Thousands of dollars was spent making up new signs for 'V/Line Melbourne', thousands of dollars of our money. Makes one rather cynical towards government/management screams of "Cutbacks!" Apparently the motive behind the change was 'Corporate Identity' and the desire to encourage more 'separate development' from the Metrail boys and their empire.

SPENCER STREET MINUS ITS SIGN



The workers who actually run the system have been the exclusive target of the numerous cutbacks of the past three years. The twin bureaucracies of V/Line and Metrail have been allowed to bloat on and upwards. Throughout the rail industry, twin departments have been created to do exactly the same tasks. No wonder so much money's going into the transport budget when so many \$40,000 p.a. people are 'having' to be employed! Where once upon a time there was just the one boss per department, now there are two.

In the '70's in N.S.W., the ARU insisted on a single rail authority. It got one. It is quite unbelievable that the ARU here has failed to get stuck into the government for it's hydra-headed bureaucracies. An 80% increase in paper pushers is an easy target, yet Sibberas and Co seem more interested in telling station staff they're in a (to quote) "contracting industry". **PATHETIC!**

the QUICK ORANGE FOX.

Letters

A reply to Clyde Controller

In reply to your article in Sparks No. 16, about the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria, I would desire that your magazine print a reply to the allegations made by "Clyde Controller".

In reply to the allegation that the TMSU opposed the Ballarat & Bendigo groups in the early 1970's, this is true, but the composition of the TMSV board has since changed, and in fact were able to help Bendigo obtain the following W's: 421, 441, 456, 470, 650, and SW2 No. 1275 (sister car to 644). If it was not for the TMSV, Bendigo would have been poorer for these cars. One of the main groups who opposed Bendigo from getting these cars was a group located 10 miles south west of Ballarat Victoria, who is still beating the drum, saying that "Bendigo does not deserve any Melbourne W's."

Although the early members of the Society wrecked trams, this happened 20 years ago, and it is now society policy not to dismantle cars which can be restored.

Only W2 331 was sold to America and this was because the society already had a sister car, No 220.

In reply to cars No 399 and 522, these cars are still at Bylands, and with regards to W2 399, if Preston Workshops want the car back, it is theirs as unfortunately the society lacks the tools to fix the bent floor in the car. If the shop committee needs the car, it is theirs.

At the moment the car is under cover at Bylands, and if the shop committee have any ideas, we are welcome to receive them.

In reply to "L" class No 102, the Newcastle group did not reply to society correspondence, when the Canberra Tradesmen's club came up with the offer to purchase the car. At least the car is preserved under cover, and is still complete.

Another group located 10 miles south west of Ballarat, had "L" class no. 105, and they wrecked the tram, not offering it to anybody. One of the "Directors of this group" is a conductor at ~~XXXXX~~ depot, and he is supposed to support

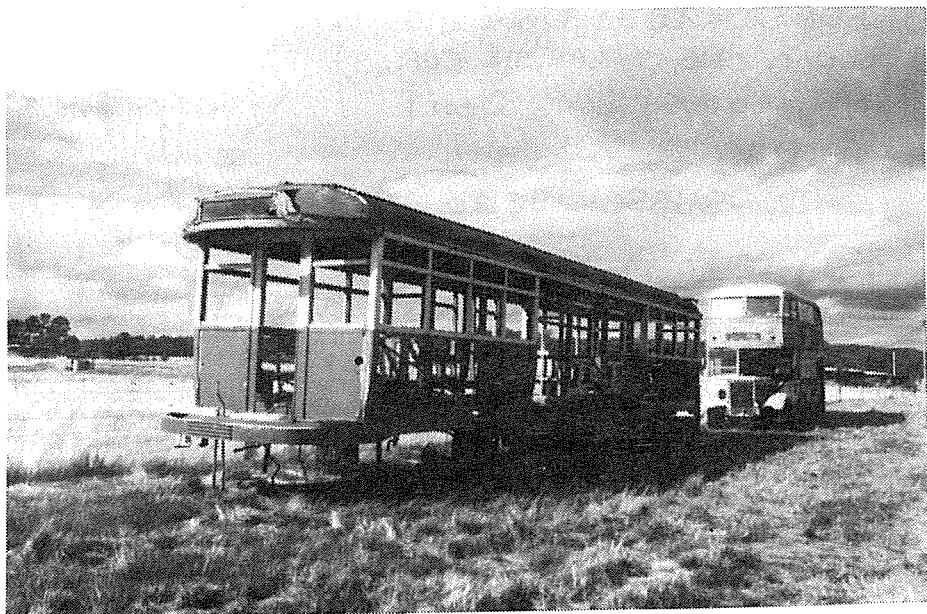
preservation of historic tramcars, yet he went ahead and destroyed this historic tram. If there is any group who doesn't deserve any trams, then it is this group near Ballarat, and not the

TMSV. I think the TMSV is owed an apology by "Clyde Controller". I enclose a photo for publication.

Yours Sincerely,
RCI Controller.

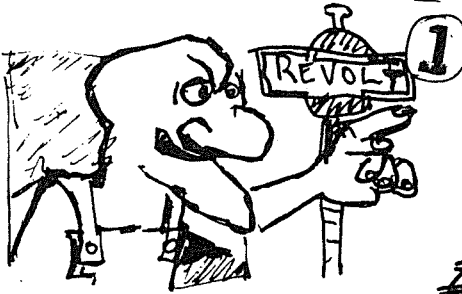
TRAM & TRAIN ENTHUSIASTS PLEASE NOTE:

The above piece is the FINAL one this paper will run on the politics of transport enthusiasts groups. While we recognise 'funny' deals go on throughout the industry, the verification of such things amongst enthusiasts groups is beyond the resources of the Public Transport Workers Association. We do not want to be drawn into the infighting between different bodies. We continue to encourage articles on any topic relating to work but see this issue as having been adequately covered by now.



CHUCKS'

3 EASY WAYS TO HELP THE PTWA



1 IF YOU ENJOY READING SPARKS, GIVE IT TO A FRIEND! AFTER YOU'VE READ IT, DON'T CHUCK IT OUT, GIVE IT TO A FRIEND!

SPARKS DOESN'T GROW ON TREES THEY COST US MONEY! The only WAY TO GET EVERY COPY IS TO SUBSCRIBE! Only \$10 PAYS FOR ONE YEARS(SIX COPIES) READING OF SPARKS. DON'T BE A DAG---

SUBSCRIBE TO SPARKS!



Send This To ----

6 ISSUES OF SPARKS \$10
 NAME -----
 Address -----

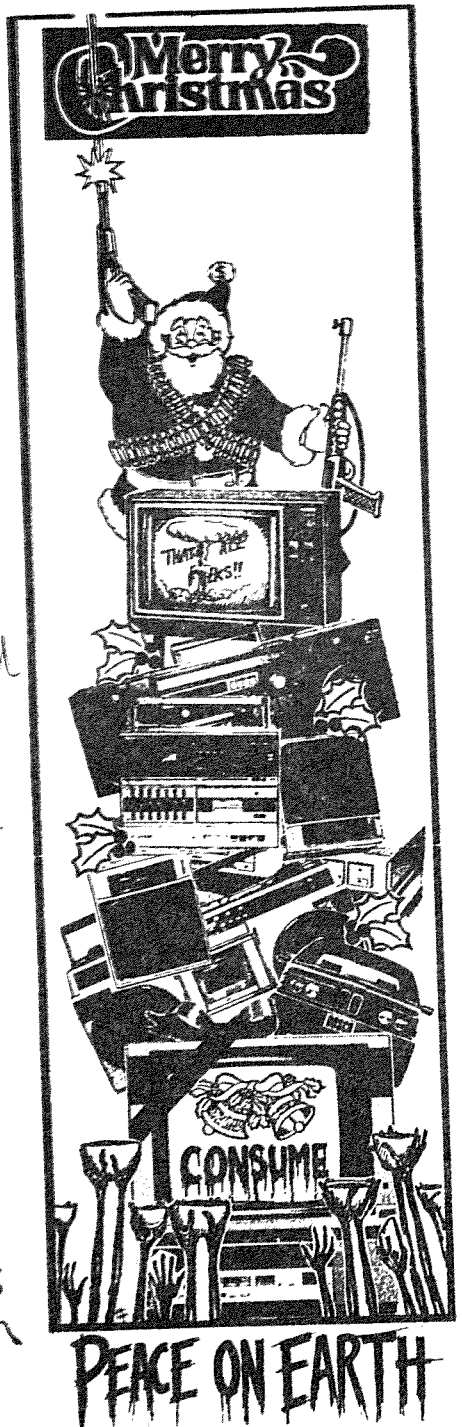
 ----- Postcode -----
 POST TO ... P.T.W.A.
 Nth Richmond Box 1066

STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS

Suburban Train Drivers
stopped work for 4 hours
on Tuesday 8th November to
discuss the \$4000 payout.
Various bans affecting
train services were
lifted and no further
industrial action is planned.
It seems drivers are
relying on the work-value
claim restoring wages to
the old level.

We'll keep you
up to date with
developments.

STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS



ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

Anarcho-syndicalism có nghĩa là nghiệp đoàn dân chủ. Đáp lời của nghiệp đoàn công nhân, chúng tôi muốn bình vức quyền lợi của tất cả mọi cộng 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 định 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 bạn không có quyền quyết định bất cứ một việc gì. Mọi quyết

định đều do sự lựa chọn của chính bạn và những công đoàn viên.

3. Người xuống ngôn đại diện cho bạn 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 bạn 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 thách thức xin liên lạc "Direct rank and file control of the struggle is the road to workers' self-management of society".

WANTED

Articles, cartoons, stories, poems, send-ups: anything related to our working situation, about your union or about the boss. Send copy to us by: 25/12/88; 25/2/89; 25/4/89. Besides the regular bi-monthly run, there maybe the occasional Special Edition. Distributers are also sort. Send us details of where you'd like to distribute and how many copies you require.

PTWA/SPARKS,
P.O. Box 1066, Nth. Richmond, 3121.