

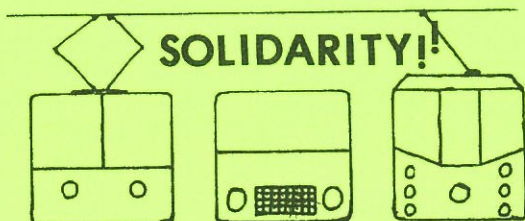
SPARKS

The Paper of the Public Transport Workers
Association

№ 8. Aug-Sept '87.

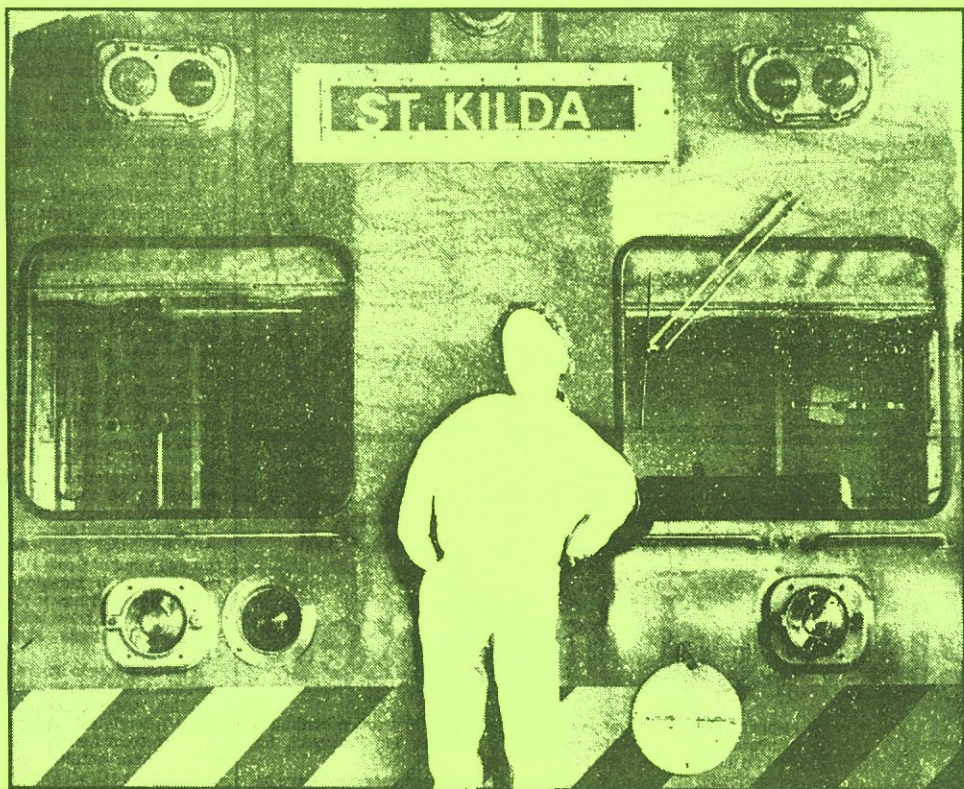


INSIDE: Latest Dispute, Met Plan;
Essendon Riot, Melb. Yard, Interstate & O/S
News; and more!



FRONT COVER: Railway workers in 1979 take direct action against cuts. The threat is back. What do WE do?

GONE:

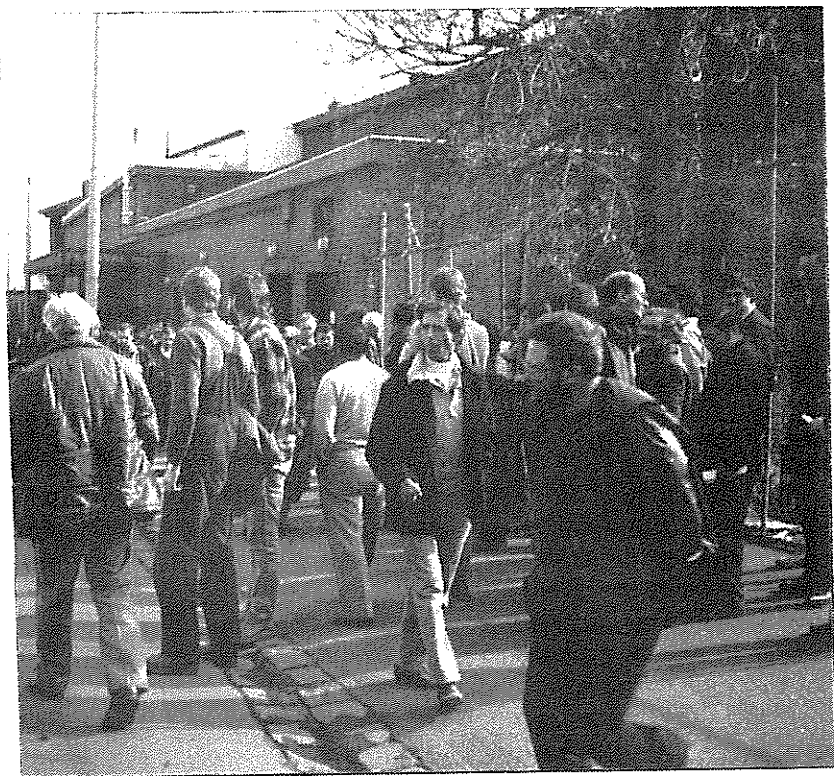


BUT NOT FORGOTTEN..

SPARKS is produced by:
the Public Transport Workers Association,
a federated member group of the Anarcho-Syndicalist
Federation. Contact us at,

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

INDUSTRIAL ACTION HALTED



(FOR THE MOMENT)

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

The recent strike by maintenance workers at Preston Workshops and the various bans and limitation actions throughout the industry resulted, after frantic negotiations between the government, MET managers and union leaderships, in a mass meeting of workers from the ARU, ETU, AMMU, VBU and ATMDEA at Festival Hall on August 5 to gain the seal of approval on a return to work and a lifting of bans.

The proposal put before the rank and file indicated an apparent backdown by the government on its proposal to axe 1400 jobs for the time being. They'd also agreed to give the 4% second tier wage increase along with the 3% superannuation payout with full vesting. On the surface those figures appear o.k. (but hardly adequate considering how much we've all lost under the Accord). However, in the case of the 4%, the government wants certain 'trade-offs' in what its terms are 'restrictive work practises'. Many of these 'restrictive' conditions apply to safety practises.

The attitude of the meeting to the star-studded cast of union leaders on the stage was not always cordial. This wasn't surprising considering the sell-out deals done with management by some of those leaders: 2000 redundancies last year in V/Line, shunters no's heavily reduced, station staff reductions, bus conductors, the Light Rail backdown, etc.

Joe Sibberas from the ARU and Jack Shirley from the ATMDEA in particular came in for their fair share of abuse. The SPARKS boo-a-meter confirmed Joe winner of "most unpopular union leader", just edging out Jack in a recount on both their last speeches.

Questions were asked about what exactly were these trade-offs for the 4%? Are we going to give away hard fought for conditions for a pitiful 4%? What kind of consultation with workers on the job was going to occur? (a very pertinent question given the lack of concrete info. coming back to those on the job). Are workers expected to accept such a proposal without prior careful discussion in their respective workplaces?

There were more than a few calls for increased action to place more heat on the government over job security, wage rises, better conditions and a commitment to industry expansion. At least an amendment got up that a 24 hr stoppage be called in the event of the government continuing with the job cuts.

The proposal was eventually passed. Never the less a significant number of workers expressed their cynicism about the success of the agreement without the continued enforcing of militant industrial action. After all it was action that forced the government to agree to cool it for the time being. Another thing that became clear is that many workers are demanding of their officials more hard info. They are becoming increasingly reluctant to accept the 'bullshit baffles brains' attitude of union leaders towards the rank and file.

TRAMMIE RIOT AT ESSENDON

A dispute between an inspector and Essendon Depot culminated in an occupation of the DM's office and the revenue room being barricaded by about 60 trammies.

Essendon Depot had blacked the inspector because he had stood by and did nothing while a tram crew were assaulted by single brain-celled yobbos. The MOA responded by blacking the pay packets of Essendon.

This action incurred the wrath of Essendon trammies who burst into Revenue and the DM's office, disconnected the phones, and barricaded themselves inside saying they wouldn't leave until paid.

The pay arrived soon after proving once again that direct action gets the goods!



This was in the July

'V/Line Update'...Is Tom doing his desperate best to flog the system off before moving to another ministry???????

Near perfect railway set, includes track, engines, carriages and lots more. Will consider selling in bits and pieces or as whole set. Reason for sale — taking up a new hobby. Contact Tom on 1 1027 before 11 July.

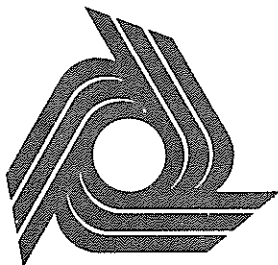
SOUTH STOPS WORK TO SHOW SOLIDARITY

Last month an article by a scumbag named Lawrence Money appeared in the Herald about two transsexuals who work at South Melbourne depot.

The article was a cheap attempt at sensationalism and not only offended the two trammies it was about, but most of the trammies at South, so much so that a stop-work meeting was held to consider a response.

It was good to see South standing behind their fellow workmates in solidarity with them.

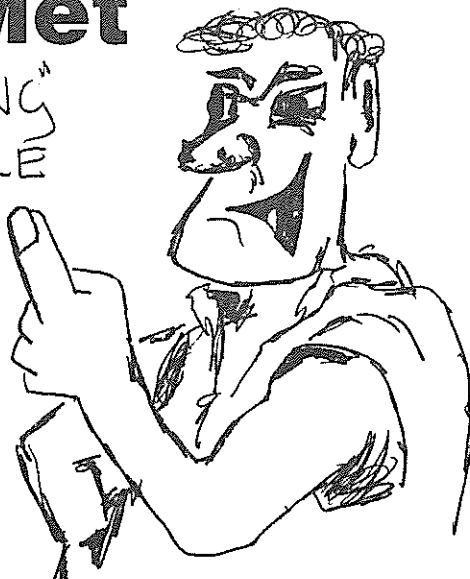
We should never let differences of race, sex, nationality, or lifestyle be used by the media or the bosses to divide us - we all do the same work.



The Met

"THE FLYING"
ARSE HOLE

SYMBOL
OF THE
MET





MET PLAN

MET PLAN - LABOR'S LONIE REPORT

This issue of Sparks brings you the information that the Unions don't want you to know about. Unfortunately it is bad news and due to space constraints we can only tell you how to find out about it.

Here it is: the union bosses, Met management, and Govt' officials are engaged in a think-tank called "Met Plan".

This think-tank is responsible for drawing up a master plan to reshape the public transport industry over the next 15 years according to ALP policy. The final Met Plan is due for release in late 1987 and will contain some unpleasant shocks for public transport workers.

These shocks are already contained in a document released in May this year and only recently obtained by the PTWA, titled "Change Projects..MTA..May 1987". There are 58 changes proposed by Met bosses to the Union bosses which cover almost every area of the Met including trains, trams, busses, maintenance, office work and so on.

As we can't print all the details due to space constraints, we strongly urge every worker to hassle the ir union and Met bosses for these documents. The fact is that the union bosses are not telling their members the truth of what is going on. Four days before the election of the Hawke government ARU state secretary, Joe Sibberass, pleaded with over 100 suburban guards to believe his story that no new plans had been revealed to the union regarding changes to the guards jobs.

Now this can only be seen as a ploy designed to save his bloody friends in the ALP government and the possibility of an election day strike against them by suburban guards.

As early as May this year the ARU was informed that a project team, including ARU delegates, was to be set up with the objective of developing and implementing plans for the transition to "Driver only operation of suburban trains."

According to the documents that we have the ATMDEA has already held discussions on driver only operation of trams. New ticket selling arrangements are planned to eliminate station assistants and tram conductors. Injured workers are under review, computerisation is being introduced, cutting out office jobs, the maintenance of trains and trams are being altered and much more.

All this is going on with full union participation behind the backs of workers. These plans are available and we urge every concerned worker to obtain and read a copy. **Below is a list of documents available and where to get them.** (As with all business plans they read like sugar coated bullshit, but read them anyway as they contain the key to our future.)

State Transport Industry Plan (STAP)

STAP is the V/Line equivalent to Met Plan. We don't know what horrors are in it but feel sure that the ARU does so hassle them for it. Available MTA Corporate Planning, Level 9, 50 Queen St.

Change Projects. MTA. May 1987.

Planning a new extension to the house? Hold off the bank loan until you've read this. This document provides proof that the unions are selling us down the river. Available from all Public Transport Unions.

Metropolitan Public Transport Industry PLAN. Terms of Reference. 15/10/86. Attachment B.

This one shows the who is ripping off our jobs and conditions, and how. Forget the flowery terms about improving our jobs, this crowd are providing the basis for job cuts.

MET PLAN

Met Plan Study Approach

The "Study Approach" comes with the Met Plan terms of reference and is also available from 9/50 queen Street.

The Study Approach makes sense out of the met Plan.

The MTA Business Planning Report

Is also available at corporate planning and is a must to read. Full of facts and information about our industry. It is something every unionist or rail enthusiast would find fascinating. This is a look inside the heads of our enemies, the Met bosses, and gives an indication of where our industry is going.

So put on your Dick Tracey caps and get ready to do some spying on your boss. Don't let them put you off - you are entitled to this information, the unions and bosses must give it to you and kick up a stink if they don't. Stay tuned to this space as Sparks continues the battle to provide you useful information in our struggle against the bosses.

KARL



zed seats

UPDATE:

As reported in the last issue of Sparks, Met management removed conductors seats from "Z" trams without consulting those who work on them.

In July, management proposed to the union that a "renovated" tram be taken out with a roving conductor for a trial run from Preston depot. Secretary of the union, Jim Harper, brought the proposal to the Preston workers and received a resounding "NO!" to the proposal.

The "Z" trams are not designed to have roving connies. In the discussion on the motion against taking the trams out, it was recognised that it would be unsafe for connies to rove on the Zeds, as well as impossible for them to do their jobs. The removal of the seats was also seen as a step towards getting rid of connies altogether.

weeks after the Preston depot meeting, a tram was taken out for the trial run. A "Friends of Management" committee decided that they would take out the tram against the wishes of the majority of the Preston workers. A question we could ask of these people: Jim Harper, Rowan -delegate from Nth Fitzroy, and John, the delegate for Preston, who took the tram out, is "What union are you in?"

All of the abovenamed people were at the Preston meeting where workers were asked if we wanted to co-operate with the trial.

All of them heard the answer: "NO!"

Preston workers don't know of the results of this trial run. One thing is clear, however, and that is that depot meetings and rank and file decision making is a **farce** in our union.

In a pretense of democracy the union bosses come to us with a proposal, and we make a decision based on our experience and our interests. If the union bosses disagree with our decision, as in this case, then it is totally ignored and they go off and do what they have decided is best for us.

This behaviour of our union officials is unacceptable. Our decisions must be respected, and we should piss off the scabby bastards who only work for the bosses. Here lies another example of the need for an accountable, recallable depot committee, so that we can control the fate of our decisions and wishes.

G.F.

P.S. When we say **accountable**, we mean that our elected representatives must be answerable to us, not union head office or the management. When we say **recallable**, we mean that our representatives must stand down immediately if we think they've stuffed up.



BOBS 20 FOOLPROOF EXCUSES FOR NOT HANDING IN BLISTERS,
SPECIAL DAY REPORTS, MEMOS, ETC,

- 1) What Memo?
- 2) I filled it out but I accidentally lost it.
- 3) I haven't got any hands.
- 4) A burglar took it.
- 5) 'The Age' Literary Supplement wanted to see it.
- 6) Up Yours Fuckface!
- 7) We're too poor to afford toilet paper and my dad has dysentery.
- 8) We're too poor to afford wallpaper and there's too much of a draft blowing through the house.
- 9) We got stuck in a lift and had to eat each others memos
- 10) the police confiscated it.
- 11) I already know what happened-what's the use in writing it all down?
- 12) My locker caught fire.
- 13) I'm undergoing a personality crisis.
- 14) I posted it to you-didn't you get it?
(huh..the postal service these days, I don't know)
- 15) Do you like my new bookmark?
- 16) I was told you we're having a baby so I didn't think you'd be in today.
- 17) You're going crazy-You've already seen it and absolved me remember?
- 18) I spent time in an asylum for axing my last boss. Hey want to go to the park with me and chop some wood?
- 19) My cat pissed on it.
- 20) Fred was really upset about misplacing his memo so I gave him mine.

THE CLAYTONS DELEGATE

For the past year, South Melbourne tram depot has been lumbered with a very unpopular delegate. A delegate who is dictatorial, divisive, meddling, and worse.

Workers have been advised to break basic work rules. One connie/driver told me he was asked to do a shift beyond 4 and 3/4 hours. He complained to our delegate. After speaking to the starter, the delegate said to the connie/driver, "Well, sometimes you just have to go along with these things".

New conductors have been told by the delegate to be careful of who they talk to and associate with, because the depot is full of "sexual deviants" and "radical troublemakers".

Our delegate conducted a time and motion study on shed staff for management!!

In a personal dispute with a driver, the delegate threatened to use her position to "get rid of him".

On one occasion, the delegate proudly announced to a depot meeting that she had "examined six work records" and found that "the troublemakers are the ones who take the most days off".

Lockers have opened without the occupiers permission; workers have been harassed; depot resolutions subverted; meeting procedure is a shambles; ... the list goes on.

The depot recently passed a no-confidence motion (the most recent of several). However, our delegate will not resign. She insists that she will be delegate for 2 years wether we like it or not!

All of this is extraordinary of course, but it highlights the issue of union accountability to its membership.

The issue has arisen at South Melbourne depot before. Last year we passed a resolution calling for an elected, recallable depot committee. The resolution was re-affirmed later.

Every effort was made to overturn, ignore, or avoid the whole issue over the next six months, until our Union Secretary, Jim Harper, finally appeared waving some ancient rule none of us had ever heard of before.

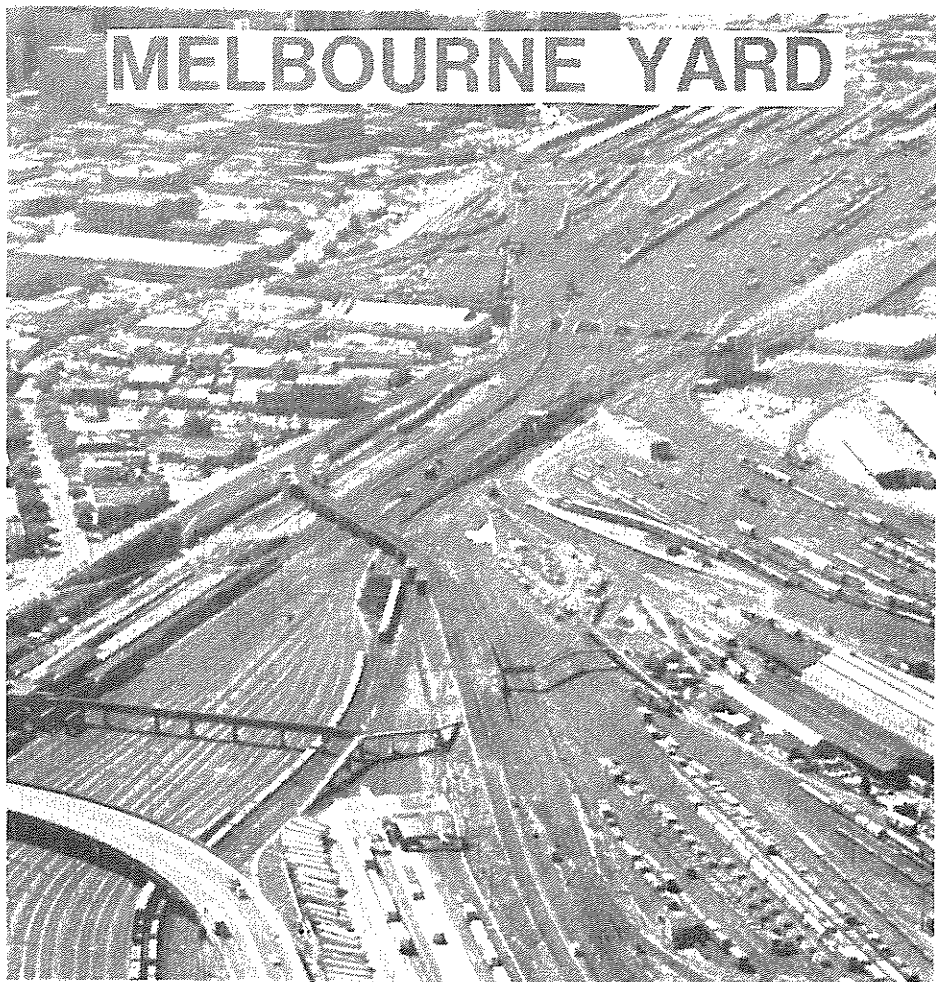
The issue of accountable leadership and representatives is an important one and will not go away. No Union can function in the best interests of the membership without leaders and representatives that are responsive to the needs and demands of the members. This is only possible when those leaders and representatives are fully accountable to the members.

It needs to be discussed and talked about amongst the membership with the aim of creating union structures that allow for the recall of delegates and officials at the wish of the rank and file workers.

PATRICK COOK
Driver, South Melbourne.

SHOP COMMITTEE FOR

MELBOURNE YARD



The Melbourne Yard area, that is the shunting yards, goods sheds, Spencer Street Station, the Pass. Yard, the Carriage Workshops, Sth. Dynon Loco, is a vital cog in this city's transport system. Passenger & goods traffic, locos and maintenance works are based here or move through the place. One of this industry's most militant group of workers are the Melb. Yard shunters. And the drivers based in Sth. Dynon are potentially the most militant body in the system.

Given the importance of the Melb. Yard, it would seem to me to be a progressive step in the right direction for the various grades in this area to forget 'grade' or 'craft' differences and link up to form a Melb. Yard Combined Unions Shop Committee. After all, just 'cause one grade is under attack doesn't mean other grades aren't going to be affected. Solidarity is something we must put into practise now. Those running the industry down are organised; it's only common sense for us to be organised too. It certainly isn't enough to allow just our union affiliation or section affiliation to decide when and where to take action. Surely in an area so inter-related as the Melb. Yard, it's absurd to think of the shunters fight as somehow separate from the goods shed workers struggle.

An obvious benefit of an inter-union shop committee would be to shore up those weaker sections where worker organisation has, for whatever reason, fallen apart. Workers anywhere are capable of organising themselves but sometimes direct support is needed from stronger sections before confidence inspires organisation. Eventually support will become mutual. And anyway, weaker sections are usually the way in for the bosses to eat away at the heart of the industry. It's essential to protect our less organised sections.

While union membership in the Yard is predominantly ARU, other unions in the area are the AFUE, ATOF & ETU. ARU grades include shunters, maintenance workers, labourers, station assistants, cleaners and signalmen. Within these ARU grades communication is often lousy thus leading to ineffectual actions. One example: whenever shunters take action that prevents trains moving, buses are used at Spencer Street to move passengers. Virtually no attempt has been made to prevent busses moving - if that was what shunters required. ARU grades could lead the way in linking up. As things stand union structures often hinder swift, combined action. A shop committee would break down the distances between grades.

Jolimont Workshops has a highly effective combined unions shop committee because it is centralised. The Melb. Yard is extremely decentralised and it's for that reason it needs a shop committee to bring the sections together.

Two other areas that need to sprout shop committees are Totty Yard and the Flinders Street-Jolimont Yard area. And drivers and guards at the Electric Running Depot could, if they chose to, form a shop-committee tomorrow. In the tramways, Depot Committees could be formed consisting of traffic grades and maintenance grades.

While shop committees are not the ultimate form of industrial organisation, they would assist greatly in breaking down barriers. We have little choice but to drop the "it's their problem" attitudes.

Some of the first questions new women are asked by their male workmates:

"Got a boyfriend, luv?"

"Married?"

"When are you gonna let me take you out?"

This type of questioning usually makes women feel defensive and annoyed. Friendly gestures are taken by guys as come-ons, and if you try to piss guys off that are bothering you, you are called a snob or a bitch! You can't really win even if you let them into your pants, (which is all they really want) because then you're called a slut and treated like a lump of shit. (Everyone knows how fast news travels around the depot.)

The women who seem to cop most of the shit at work are new on the job or unmarried women workers. They are seen as fair game for the wolves. Just started on the job women are new and unsure of themselves, unmarried women must 'need' a man! Married women also get harassed and heavied for sex.

As well as copping it from our "workmates", some

MACI AREN"

SHE'S MY CONNIE
FOR THE WEEK
I can't get Lucky



O MEN MUCHO

inspectors and depot starters give us a hard time. They have a position of authority so it is easy for them to stand over us.

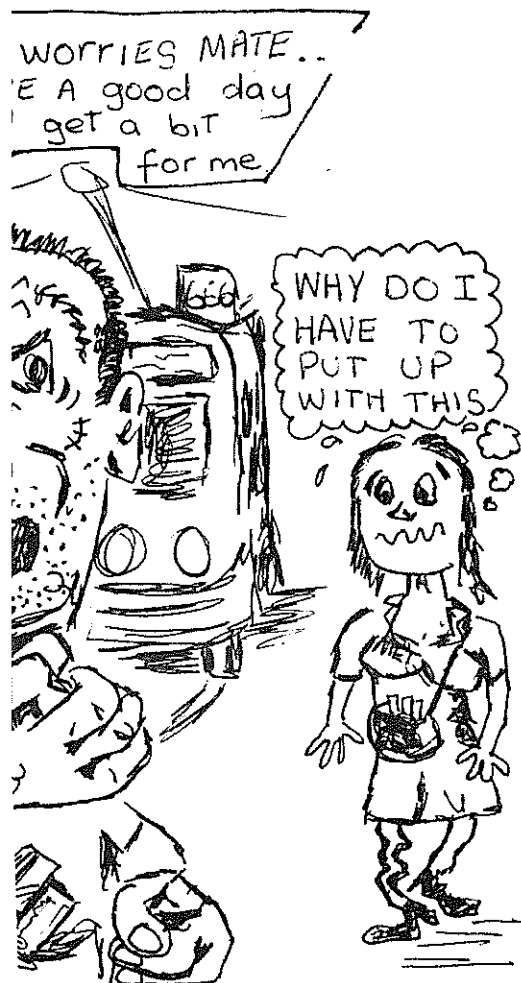
Then there's the passengers. As connies, we often get male passengers who go for the grope or make advances to us.

Sexual harassment is a term used to cover this type of behaviour. Sexual harassment generally means unwelcome, uninvited behaviour which causes a direct affront to another person, which is dishd out based on that person's sex. Sexual harassment may include:

- *sexist jokes
- *verbal or physical abuse or intimidation
- *leers, gestures or comments of a sexist nature
- *physical contact such as pinching, patting, etc
- *demands for sexual activities, and
- *actual molesting.

Our "workmates" who sexually harass us often do this to impress each other. It makes a "man" of them. Really, it is immature and indicates a real inadequacy of men in being able to relate to women workmates as equal people.

PTO



macho men cont'

Sexual harassment is wrong and must be stopped. Like racism, sexism divides workers and this is the last thing that we need. Really, all it takes is a bit of respect for people as people and a bit of maturity in our relationships with each other.

There are effective ways to deal with sexual harassment. At one depot recently a woman was being worn down by the constant harassment from a male "workmate". It got to the point where she was changing shifts to avoid the creep, and it was a miserable situation for her. She began to tell a few workmates what was upsetting her, and word got around. A number of fellow workers took the initiative to tell the creep in no uncertain terms that he better lay off, or things could get quite difficult for him. The harassment stopped because other workers made it unacceptable.

That is a good example of how to deal with the problem. Men should be prepared to take a stand against sexual harassment, alongside women. We work together so we should stick together.

Also, when new women start at work, those of us who are not chauvenistic pigs should be friendly and helpful to them, so that they feel they have some people to turn to when the wolves start sniffing around. o o

THE PRISONERS

We are the breath
on the glass of electric trains,
Our faces still as photos

We are the prisoners
Where we are going we are not sure
We step over each other
Push and rush

Our heads stare at open newspapers
Like doctors staring at bacteria

Our breath is mist on the windows

Signal-lights, red roses in the fog,

We open newspapers like lawyers
Opening secret documents

It doesn't appear to be there

We are the breath on the windows,
Our faces still as photos,
Trains bring us together,

We touch without words
We separate without farewells.

Dennis Kevans



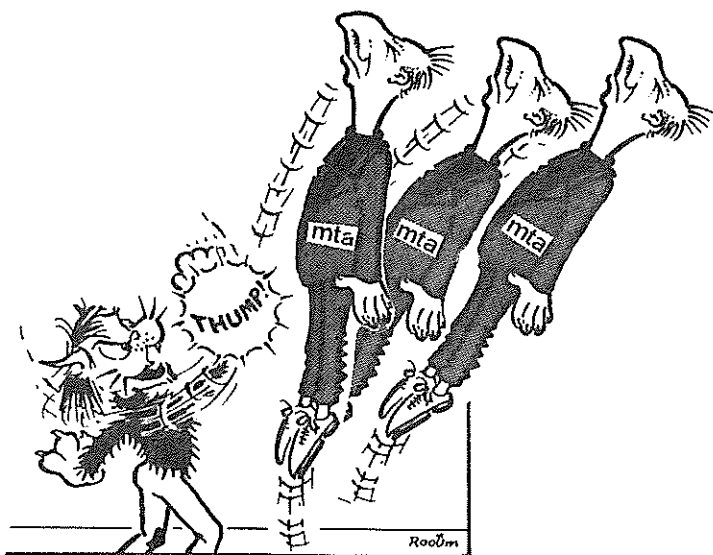
Guards Walk~Off

On July 17, Reg Lewis, a sub.guards union rep retired after 40 years in the industry. In his youth he was given the nickname of teabag because he was always getting into hot water. Now as a result of the efforts of the Metrail bosses, two sub.guards roster supervisors are left to jiggle and dangle in the boiling brew. Here's our report on the events as we understand them—hopefully this will sort out some of the rubbish that was in the papers.

The usual practice for any worker who retires after a long period of service, is to hold a send off party. On the 17th July, Reg was to have a few drinks with mates at the Duke of Wellington Hotel. A presentation was to be made by local management and several workers had sort and obtained permission to knock off and attend.

Among those attending were two roster supervisors. They had made verbal arrangements to attend through local management. At about 5pm in walk two blokes from Metrol, who ordered the roster supervisors back to work where they were stood down for "drinking on the job".

From that moment on things built up a momentum of their own. One of the supervisors stood down for allegedly being pissed was also a somewhat troublesome union delegate and it became clear he had been set up. After all, he had obtained permission to attend Regs do, therefore he was off duty.



GUARDS CONT'

The roster supervisors walked off in protest at the stand-downs. The guards union delegates instructed that according to union policy, "trains don't run without supervision". From about 5.45 word reached the platforms—no trains were to depart until the supervisors had resolved their dispute. Guards were not on strike but refusing to carry out duties without supervision.

Chaos followed the wildcat stoppage. Metrol sent down their goon squad to intimidate guards into running trains. One guard was verbally stood-down by two Met bosses who were told to go away and learn their job properly as they had carried out stand-down procedures incorrectly. That same guard was assaulted and verbally abused by new guards superintendent Smiles when he tried to phone the union reps to tell them what was going on. In front of several witness' Smiles ripped the telephone out of the hands of this guard and threatened to send the bully boys down to eject him from the platform if he did not leave.

Meanwhile down at the depot it was a mess. No one seemed to know what was going on. We guards could hear quite clearly the shouting going on in the next block as negotiations took place between the union and management. At about 9pm a meeting of guards took place. The trains started running again after management agreed to hold an immediate inquiry into the raid.

The result of that inquiry was outrageous. One of the supervisors Vern Ryan copped a two year reduction in position which he estimates will cost him over \$20,000. This is an unjustifiable price to pay for a few pots when he wasn't even on duty!! (As we go to print an appeal against the sentence has been lodged). Guards were docked 3hrs pay, even guards not on duty that night copped the docking.

We reckon the guards union reps did the right thing in stopping the trains. Running trains without the lifeline of clerks is dangerous and not a very smart precedent to implement.

If a bloke of 40 years service can't have a send off without the bosses arriving to bust people, then we've moved one step closer to the type of rubbish people put up with in Chile, China or Eastern Europe. Management get pissed as parrots at our expense while deciding on our futures; parliamentarians have all night trading at the parliamentary bar financed by us. And remember the fuss over the fringe benefits tax when the bosses lost their free soggy lunches?

Finally, if workers are victimised, then it's up to all of us to support those feeling the heat of the bosses.

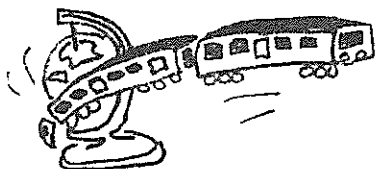
ADELAIDE

ARU & AFULE members in Adelaide have shown what is possible when 'trade' unionism is put aside and workers from different unions join together in common struggle. The STA closed down the Belair--Bridgewater line in early July. Fifteen AFULE drivers went on strike in protest. The dispute rapidly flared at the end of the month when the STA ordered ARU & other AFULE members to perform the duties of those on strike. Every worker refused and was immediately stood-down. Having gone through all crews, Adelaide soon had no one left to run trains. Despite the tough talk, on August 5 the Bannan Labor Government backed down to the union demands. After six days without trains, all suburban services were resumed. The government has agreed to re-open the line for a three month trial period during which an independent viability study is carried out on the service.

COUNTRY N.S.W.

Rail maintenance workshops in country NSW face the chop if the Unsworth Labor Government has its way. 48 jobs in Bathurst and 105 jobs in Goulburn are to go under government plans to centralise maintenance work to 'save money'. Bathurst workshops is only 5 years old while Goulburn is, after refurbishments, one of the states most modern workshops. At Goulburn unions are fighting to keep the shops there. At Bathurst, the workers are faced with the union leadership of the Metal Workers Union wanting to close the shop down. This has created real animosity towards the union from those facing the dole at Bathurst. One worker, Ray Bent said: "I'm fighting the union exactly the same way as I am the State Rail Authority. The Bathurst workshops was a decentralised project. Now we have a threat of not knowing whether our workers are going to be in Bathurst in six months time".

INTERNATIONAL



News

SOUTH AFRICA: In **SPARKS No.8**, we reported on the strike actions by 16,000 black Sth.African railworkers for the recognition of the Sth.African Railways & Harbour Workers Union. The Sth.African regime sacked the entire workforce on April 23 but in late June had to back down and re-instate all workers. The government agreed to grant permanent status to all employees after two years service regardless of colour, something previously available only to whites. The government also agreed to spend \$5 million improving workers accommodation. We are yet to find out whether SARHWU has been 'granted' recognition, nor do we know what is the fate of the 200 strikers arrested during the 3 month dispute.



USA: Air safety standards have declined to the point where most US air travellers regard the air system as an accident waiting to happen. According to the FAA there are two or three near-collisions over American skies everyday. Poor service infuriates passengers. More dangerous, however, is the fact that the airlines have cut back on their safety inspections and maintenance - they employed more mechanics in 1975 than they do now. When air traffic controllers went on strike in 1981 President Reagan responded by sacking all 11,000 of them. Six years later, there's been a big increase in the number of flights - yet there are now only 9,000 controllers. In the transport industry, job cuts means a poor standard of service and safety.

--- JAPAN ---

Try and imagine the extent of Japan's rail system and the number of people who use the service. When you realise the entire population of Tokyo alone is more than Australia's entire pop., the fact that distances aren't so great pales into insignificance. In 1986 Japan National Railways employed 235,605 workers and ran trains to most remote areas of the country. Of course some of the smaller lines were not profitable but they provided in some cases the only transport link with the major towns. On April 1st, JNR ceased to exist.

In a deal which shocked JNR workers, the national system was sold off to a consortium of Japanese companies whose first announcement of how the new company, Japan Railways, would now function was to sack 30,000 workers. And in doing this it was noted by the new bosses that this was just the first step in the 're-organisation' of the industry.

The new company has been shrewd in its tactics. Most of the sackings accompany the closure or cutting back in services on small lines to remote areas. And in the cities they've picked out the most militant workers for the chop. In one incident they sacked workers with beards; beards aren't good for the new corporate image. The bosses were made to look ridiculous when during the trial of those arrested for picketing, a 1000 Yen note was produced which has on it the face of a man with a beard. In another incident a leader of the communist dominated union Kokura (with 60,000 members and most affected by the sackings), suicided after being accused by members of being a traitor.

Despite massive protests over the privatisation, the deals gone ahead. It seems that the deal behind the deal is land speculation. Land, especially in a city like Tokyo, is virtually impossible to attain. Of course the railway workshops, offices, stations etc, if they could be removed from their prime locations, would provide valuable land for the JR owners to speculate with. The Japanese media, also privately owned, has supported the privatising of JNR enthusiastically. At this point it wouldn't be amiss to ask perchance if the new directors of JR and the directors of the media companies, have any connections with land speculation and so called re-development?? Of course they do!! Recently one piece of land in Tokyo changed hands ten times in the space of a few months. It was first sold for 650 million Yen and was last bought for 3700 million.

All the unions, from the communists to the far right ones, have been very reluctant to take any action over the sell off—the leaderships all have a stake in the system. Obviously protests within the system aren't going to be terribly effective. The question we all have to answer is: what sort of actions are an effective means of defence against the continuous attacks of the capitalists in their war for ever greater profits???



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is sending the Class Traitors CRAZY!

Fill in
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PLEASE HELP ME CONTRIBUTE
TO MY BOSSES NERVOUS STATE

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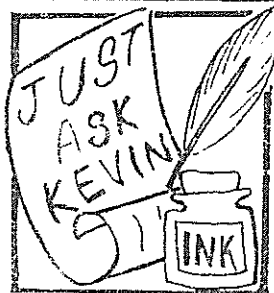
RADIOACTIVITY

Some time ago, railway guards went on strike demanding two-way radios for train crews after a guard was badly assaulted. They won their case and radios began to be issued.

Tram crews have benefited from this ~~too~~ (sort of!) We are also being issued with radios, but only if you are last tram on any line.

Given that radios are proving to be very useful in solving problems quickly, would it not be logical to issue two-way radios to all tram crews?

Who decided that breakdowns, delays, and assaults only happen to the last trams?



IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM AND NEED ADVICE,
WRITE TO "JUST ASK KEVIN",

C/O SPARKS,
P.O. BOX 1066
NORTH RICHMOND 3121.

JUST ASK KEV

Strike a light, me mail bag has been full to overflowin' this time. Abuse, congratulations, questions; copped the lot this time. One bludger even had the hide to accuse me of not being outrageous enough. Never mind, I can live with it. Keep sending those letters in, ladies and gentlemen. Must run, my coffee just boiled and the budgies are after some seed.

Cheers

Your Pal Kevin.

Dear Kevin,

I enjoy reading **SPARKS** and agree with a lot of what you say. I have one worry though, where do your funds come from? Are you part of an outside organization? Keep up the good work, I agree the unions aren't anywhere near perfect and the bosses are hopeless.

Kate

Dear Kate,

Where do our funds come from? Our back pockets, Kate. PTWA members pay dues of \$15 per month and that funds our various activities. The production of **SPARKS**, stickers, information leaflets, and donations to agreeable causes have been financed this way and through donations made by workers on the job and individuals impressed by our work.

Are we part of an outside organization? Membership of the PTWA is open to public transport workers and we are self-determining in our activities. The PTWA is a federated member group of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation which has applied to join the International Workers Association.

We in the PTWA are serious in our attempt to build an anarcho-syndicalist union and are getting our act together. Why don't you think about joining, Kate?

Cheers

Your Pal Kevin

Dear Kev,

How come the union head office men come to our depot meetings all the time? At my depot we got all tram crews off the road for a stopwork and then we waited a whole hour for the bloody union men to come - another hour's pay wasted that we could have saved by having the meeting straight away whether they're there or not. They only talk bullshit anyway and confuse everything with their dumb rules.

Pissed Off from Preston.

Dear Pissed Off,

I know why they come to our stopwork meetings - to lie to us, abuse us, and con us....just in case we take an industrial action that hurts the ALP. Stuff the union bosses we are better off with out them. Next time have a meeting and don't bother telling them until it's over. That should make'em shit themselves.

Good Luck

Your Pal Kevin

SOME GENTLEMEN FROM THE GOVERNMENT HAVE COME TO SEE US, DEAR

AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW, THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE TREASURER HAVE INDICATED THAT ALL AUSTRALIANS HAVE TO SUFFER A CUT IN LIVING STANDARDS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ECONOMY

AND WE'RE HERE TO PERSONALLY ADMINISTER YOUR CUTS

BUT THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE - WE'RE POOR ALREADY

NO MISTAKE, MADAM. THE DIRECTIVE EXPLICITLY STATES THAT ALL AUSTRALIANS HAVE TO UNDERGO THE CUTS - SO WE'LL JUST EXCHANGE YOUR RATHER RITZY COLOUR TV FOR THIS CHEAP PORTABLE BLACK AND WHITE ONE, WHICH DOESN'T WORK PROPERLY

HMM - THIS LEG OF LAMB IS DEFINITELY OUT - HERE'S SOME CHEAP MINCE

AND, HO-HO, A BOTTLE OF BEER! MY, WE HAVE BEEN LIVING IT UP, HAVEN'T WE? WE'LL EXCHANGE IT FOR SOME ORANGE CORDIAL

AND YOUR CHAIRS WILL HAVE TO GO - YOU'LL HAVE TO PUT UP WITH THESE GOVERNMENT APPROVED CRUDDY CHAIRS FOR A WHILE - AT LEAST UNTIL THE ECONOMY RECOVERS

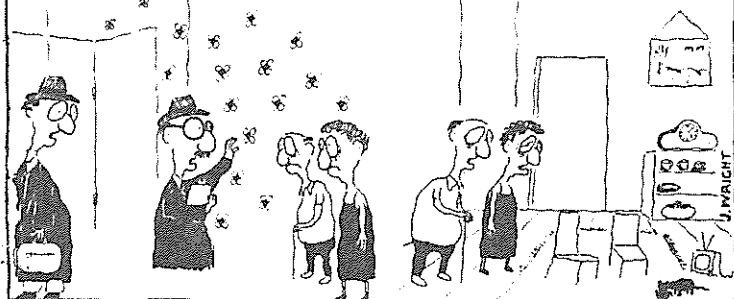


WELL THAT SHOULD JUST ABOUT DO IT FOR THIS WEEK. WE'LL BE BACK NEXT MONDAY TO REVIEW YOUR SITUATION

WELL IT'S NICE TO KNOW WE'RE DOING OUR BIT FOR THE ECONOMY

HMM - NICE WALLPAPER - WE MAY HAVE TO SCRAPE THAT OFF NEXT TIME - YOU KNOW, TO GIVE THE PLACE A DINGIER FEEL

YES, I SUPPOSE WE ALL HAVE TO PULL OUR WEIGHT. I WONDER IF WE SHOULD HAVE DECLARED THE CAT...



Casey Jones

the Union Scab

(Tune: Casey Jones)

The workers on the S.P.Line,
To strike sent out a call;
But Casey Jones, the engineer,
He wouldn't strike at all;
His boiler it was leaking,
And it's drivers on the bum,
And his cylinders and pistons,
They were all out of plumb.

Casey Jones keep his junk pile running,
Casey Jones was working double time,
Casey Jones got a wooden medal,

For being good and faithful on the S.P.Line.

The workers said to Casey,
"Won't you help us win the strike?"

But Casey said, "Let me alone,
You'd better take a hike".

Then someone put a bunch
Of railway ties across the track,
And Casey hit the river with an awful crack.

Casey Jones hit the river bottom,
Casey Jones broke his blooming spine;
Casey Jones took a trip to heaven,
That's what he got for scabbing on the S.P.Line.

When Casey Jones got up to heaven,
To the pearly gate;

He said, "I'm Casey Jones, the guy
That pulled the S.P.freight".

"You're just the man", said Peter,
Our musicians are on strike;

You can get a job a-scabbing,

Any time you like". Casey Jones got a job in heaven,

Casey Jones was doing mighty fine;

Casey Jones went scabbing on the angels,

Just like he did to workers on the S.P.Line.

The angels got together,

And they said it wasn't fair;

For Casey Jones to go around,

A-scabbing everywhere.

They voted direct action,

And they took it then and there;

And Casey went a-flying down the Golden Stair.

Casey Jones went to hell a-flying,

"Casey Jones", the Devil said, "Oh fine!!

Casey Jones, get busy shovelling sulphur,

That's what you get for scabbing on the S.P.Line".

The Public Transport Workers Association

Since it's formation at the beginning of 1987, the Public Transport Workers Association (PTWA), has had quite an impact in the public transport industry. Members have been active wherever our industry has come under attack be it service cuts, job losses, light rail, etc. Our end aim is workers control of the industry.

Many t'port workers regard our paper **SPARKS** as the best sheet in the industry, leaving for dead the Tramway Record, ARU Gazette, and of course V/Line Update and Metlines. Maybe it's because we tell it like it is, never hesitating to sabotage the bosses lies. Now we want your help—and you'll benefit out of it too. We want to make **SPARKS** more informative, interesting and entertaining. We try our best but with your involvement it can be even better. We want your contributions. If your workplace is having problems, if it's under attack, send us the details and we'll print them up. Just about every issue of **SPARKS** has carried pieces done by workers not in the PTWA. Perhaps you've a poem or drawing you reckon others may get a laugh out of seeing. What about nominating your boss for 'Scumbag of the Month'? Got a problem? Then write to our own resident psychologist Kev. Better still, get involved with the PTWA and help put the paper together.

Maybe you want to distribute **SPARKS** where you work: at your depot, along your line, at your workshop. If you're unsure about handing it out but still want to get each copy, then subscribe. The \$5 helps cover costs and assists in spreading the info further. Certainly better value than most union dues.

If you're curious about what we do then why not come along to one of our meetings? We don't eat babies, are not a weird religious cult, we ain't after your hard earned \$\$ and you don't have to have a funny haircut to join. The PTWA is for transport workers who are serious about changing the system. If you are interested in a REAL union of workers we invite you to come along.

The PTWA has no hierarchy—we all have an equal say in decision making. We believe the bosses have declared war on our wages and conditions and that the union bosses are assisting them. We reckon the best tactics to defeat them are those of **militant direct action**. We are not strike happy—strikes are just one tactic amongst many: go-slows, sabotage, work to rules, mass sickies, black bans, non co-operation, etc. We want a REAL union of workers, one that looks after the interests of members and the public, where decisions are made by those that are affected by them. We reject outright power to trade union officials. Power must belong at the base of any organisation.

ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM means anarchist unionism. This is as opposed to trade unionism. We advocate all workers in one industry to be in one union so as to remove artificial divisions amongst workers. Such a union must be fully organised and controlled by the membership.

To achieve this we want a union organised along the following lines:-

1. That no person employed by the union earn more than the average income of the membership;
2. That spokespeople have no executive power - all decisions are made by the membership affected;
3. Spokespeople are only to act as delegates elected by the membership to carry out decisions made by the membership;
4. That a mechanism be instituted for the instant recall of spokespeople/delegates who break the above rules;
5. That all positions within the union be held as a limited tenure,

i.e., two years (unless no one else stands).

6. There is to be no body of full time paid union officials. All loss of earnings are to be paid by the union only to the extent of lost wages.

7. That a programme of decentralised decision making be implemented within the union structure, so that we won't need full time paid positions.

Only in this way can we see a democratic, united, fighting organisation created which will stand up for the rights of workers and their families against all governments, political parties and all bosses.

Any questions please ask.

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

The PTWA are not marxists or communists. We are **anarcho-syndicalists**...bit of a funny sounding name and you shouldn't try saying it if you're pissed. Anarcho-syndicalism is not well understood today in Australia but it does have quite a history. 'Anarcho' is short for anarchist which in it's simplest definition means **no bosses**. 'Syndicalism' is a French term meaning a method of workplace organisation under which a boss-free society could be attained.

If you want to contact us our address is P.O. Box 1066,
NTH.RICHMOND, 3121.

PS.....if you enjoy reading **SPARKS** don't chuck it away when you've finished with it. Leave it in the canteen, give it to a mate or, better still, shove it down the boss' throat.

ΑΝΑΡΧΟ - ΣΥΝΔΙΚΑΛΙΣΜΟΣ - Η ΘΕΣΗ ΜΑΣ

1. Ο βεβίος μας είναι να δημιουργήσουμε και να υπερασπίσουμε μία ελεύθερη και ισότιμη κοινωνία.
2. Είμαστε ένα εθνοκλασικό, εργατικό υνιημα που χρησιμοποιεί ως το μόνο μέσο αγώνα, άμεση δράση σε όλες τις μορφές της - αυτεργίες, αυτουδεισμό, εκμετάλλ. γενική αυεργία, κ.τ.λ. Έμαστε ανεξάρτητοι από όλα τα αντισορφικά και ιεραρχικά συνδικάτα και ισοεργικά υόρματα, και ενεργούμε συζητά σε να δημιουργήσουμε και διαφορετικό από αυτά και την εγγύηση κοινωνία. Ο υιοσός μας δεν είναι να αυτοεργούμε ισοεργική υπεργρεία, αλλά να την δώμε μοιρασμένη μεταξύ όλων μας.
3. Έμαστε μία ομοεργονδία αυτόνομων αναρχο-συνδικαλιστικών ομάδων, και υαυούμε ενεργασία και αμοιβαία βοήθεια. Δεν έχουμε ηγέτες. Όλα τα μέλη υέρνουν ισοεργική θέση στην εφαρμογή των αποφάσεων. Οι αποφάσεις της ομοεργονδίας υταρτούν σε την συμφωνία, όλων των αυτόνομων ομάδων.
4. Αγνοίγουμε, όλου δουδεύουμε και γούμε να δημιουργήσουμε αυτο-διευθυντική υαργαγή, εγγύηση και υυηργεία σε τις υοινωνίες του υόμου, για να υαγύουμε ανδρώυινες ανήμερες ανςί για το υέρδος. Δίνουμε αγγεργή σε όλους ααχοδύνει με αυτούς τους αμύνες.
5. Αγνοίγουμε να ρίζουμε όλα τα διοιγετικά υδρύματα, αν το υράτος, καυεαυγισμό, υαεργαρία και όλες τις ιεραρχίες και υαεαυεργικές διαυαρίσεις μεταξύ ανδρώων.
6. Δεν έχουμε υαεργεία, και είμαστε οργανυμένοι σε διεργή βάση, ενανςίον την υαεαυεργική υαυαυό.