

## RAILWAYMEN

TO DEFEND CLERK

From Wanton Victimisation

From Our Special Correspondent.

The second lunch hour meeting held at Roma Street railway yards to-day to consider rank and file action to lift the suspension of Junior Clerk Kernovsky took a dramatic turn.

Mr. Charlie Knight, Brisbane branch president of the Traffic Union, announced that the Commissioner had ordered an enquiry into the case at 10 a.m. on Monday, 7th.

Addressing a very well attended meeting, which included a large number of clerks, some from other sections of the Civil Service, Knight stated that the suspension of Kernovsky could be linked to a previous occurrence when a criminal charge was hung over this clerk's head, but which was in no way substantiated.

However, the Department attempted to transfer him to Whangarua. This transfer in its turn, was defied by action of the rank and file of the railways.

"The case against Kernovsky," he said, "is ridiculous and frivolous, and since appearing in the local press has made the Railway Department the laughing stock of the general public. We cannot allow one of our members to be the butt of this ridicule. If the railway men don't stick together on these issues then the Department will continue these pin-pricking tactics."

A motion, "Considering the frivolous charges levelled at Kernovsky," this meeting considers the holding of an enquiry unjustified and unnecessary. The suspension should have been withdrawn. We view the proceeding as around work for a reputation of the previous lactic whereby, though no good was sustained, the Department sought to punish Kernovsky," was moved by Mrs. R. McGroarty (A.R.U.), seconded by Frank Nolan, President Brisbane branch A.R.U., who remarked that the motion did not go far enough. "We must put these lactic minded officials in their place; if necessary, we must rally the whole Traffic Union Movement of the State behind Kernovsky and force the Department to re-instate him." This was carried unanimously.

Mr. Nolan then moved "That a deputation from this meeting wait on the Commissioner for Railways and request the withdrawal of the suspension; and the Combined Railway Unions be asked to organise a series of stop-work meetings throughout the Brisbane district."

Mr. Nolan delivered an excellent fighting speech which enlisted applause from the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Walbank of Mayne Junction and was carried unanimously. The meeting decided that Charlie Knight and Frank Nolan present the resolution and the case to the Commissioner, immediately and report back on the job to the men and that another meeting be held on the job to further consider the case.

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DAIRYING INDUSTRY  
Impoverished Farmers  
Milk Needed For Children

The financial and commercial aspects of the dairying industry have been given some prominence in the dairying industry in Australia, and particularly to the production of butter and cheese. Writers in these supplements tend to give the impression that apart from the hampering effects of the drought, the dairying industry is in quite a prosperous condition, but their statements are evidently based on the amount of butter and cheese which is exported and not by the amount which is consumed by the Australian people. Reference to the impoverished dairy farmers and to their heart-breaking struggle for an existence is very carefully avoided. The figures quoted giving the amounts received in the dairying industry and to the amount of produce exported is an attempt to paint a rosy picture of the industry and to have us believe that Australia is really a land overflowing with the proverbial milk and honey.

## IMPOVERISHED FARMERS.

In our issue of January 8, we published a letter from the Eldersville L.P.A. in which they registered a bitter complaint against their pitifully low incomes and their deplorable standard of living. One case quoted was that of a "Digger" who had battled along for six years on an average income of £1 per week, but was finally ejected by a Government Department. Evictions in this district have been frequent while quite a number of farmers have surrendered their property rather than suffer the humiliation of being evicted.

The shocking treatment received by Mrs. Oite, a Tableland farmer, as outlined in these columns a fortnight ago, is another instance of the terrible poverty which is being experienced by the unfortunate dairy farmers. There were times when Mrs. Oite was unable to feed her children, and after struggling bravely for a number of years, the A.G.S. Bank foreclosed on her and obtained an ejectment order from the Supreme Court. The State Government now boasts about the size of the dairying cheque and of our great output of butter and cheese.

Another young man with his wife and baby, who sold their savings into a dairy in the Kuranda district, and spent a considerable amount of labor in improving the property, but after months of heart-breaking struggle, was compelled to give up the farm and was driven back to the labor market. He had worked hard for three years to obtain the money to start with but finished up losing practically everything.

## BUTTER AND CHEESE.

The dairying cheque for 1937 was £8,250,000. The dairy herds of Queensland last financial year produced 81,500,000 lbs. of butter and 7,750,000 lbs. of cheese, 78 per cent of which was exported.

Why 78 per cent for export? Are the Queensland people able to consume only 22 per cent of this butter and cheese? Is every man, woman, and child in this State receiving an adequate supply of these nutritious and very essential foods? Are the thousands of people who are existing on relief work or rationing receiving sufficient of these products? The answer to these questions is very definitely "No."

Why is over three-quarters of these products sent out of the State and overseas, when we are not receiving nearly sufficient ourselves? Why should struggling dairy farmers and poorly paid farm hands work from daylight till dark to produce Australia's dairying cheque and then have to eke out a starvation existence themselves.

## ENGLISH LABOR

URGES ACTION

End War In East.

A deputation from the National Council of Labor laid before the Prime Minister (Mr. Chamberlain) the Council's views upon the situation in the Far East. The speakers, who included Mr. Attlee (the Leader of the Opposition), Sir Walter Gilchrist, Messrs. George Dallas and Noel Baker, urged that Britain should give a lead in effective concerted action to bring the conflict to an end. The referred in this connection to the possibilities of peace and

## CITY COUNCIL

SHARP DIVISION

Contract v. Day Labor

A recurring feature of the Townsville City Council meetings is the division on the contract v. day-labor question. This applies not only to the sewerage works but also to many other undertakings. The usual procedure at the meetings is for the tenders for the job to be read, but before any are accepted one of the labor men will move that none be accepted and that the work be done by day-labor instead.

## BIRTHRATE BOTHER

WHAT TO DO

To Get Over It

The Australian Natives' Association held an anniversary dinner recently in Brisbane.

The chief president (Mr. P. T. Cross) in his address, having said "Birth rate of the species were such that the House of Commons could have been proud of them."

"THE TONE" AND BIRTHRATE. Unfortunately "high tone" speeches do not show in the way out of our difficulties, and some of our difficulties were referred to in the above dinner. For instance the low birthrate came in for a deal of discussion.

"PARTIAL STATEMENT." Mr. M. J. Kirwin was greatly concerned with the fact that within a year or so the deathrate would equal the birthrate. Experts had estimated that within the next five years the schools of Australia would decrease in attendance from 500,000 to 200,000. This is indeed a startling announcement and one which should give every Australian cause for concern. Particularly, should it make the "prosperity" builders think. If everything in the garden is lovely, and the land is flowing with milk and honey, why is the birthrate so low?

Are the majority of the people too well off to have children? Or is it because they think they are too good? We are inclined to favor the latter, as the chief reason.

"MOTHERS FIRST." Mr. Jolly, M.H.L., said "Mothers First" was the slogan for the Commonwealth. The women who brought up families lived life to the full.

"NAZI TOUCH." Not all, Mr. Jolly. That statement has a Nazi touch about it. Breeding and rearing children is surely not all women were intended for, even though Hitler and Mussolini do say so.

"WORKING CLASS MOTHERS." Are the working class mothers who practically spend their lives slaving and worrying, to rear her family, living life to the full? Does the unfortunate woman, whose husband is on relief work, live life to the full because she has a large family around her? And the farmers wives, toiling and struggling day and night, to make ends meet, and rear a family, are they living life to the full?

"DOES DRUGGERY OFFER FULL LIFE." The life of the average mother whose bread winner is on the basic wage, less, is little short of druggerly. Surely being a drugger is not living life to the full. Some people perhaps think so. They should try to make sure.

How many young men would not give up their one day's relief work for a wife, a decent home, and a job for life, at decent wages?

"MARRIED SECURITY v. SINGLE INSECURITY." How many single girls, slaving away in factories, or in domestic service for a few shillings a week, would remain a single drugger, if her boy friend was in good constant work and could thus provide a decent home?

Give them an opportunity to show which they prefer, and the trade in wedding rings will be the brightest for years.

Give to every young man and woman in Australia the chance to earn a decent livelihood, and thus be in a position to live a healthy normal life, and the birthrate will be alright.

"WHAT TO DO." Russia has proved that. People in Russia marry young, because they can afford to. Girls, being assured of work at the same pay as men, can wait till the "right man" comes along. When he does he marries him. In capitalist countries, when the "right man" comes along, he is often too poor to marry, and a "better match" has to be sought. Just fancy, too poor to marry. Too poor to live a natural life. It is no fancy, it is a bitter fact. It is a disgrace to our rulers, and Mr. Kirwin, when proposing the toast of "Our Rulers—National and Civic," could have told them so.

Give the boy a chance to earn decent wages; to have a decent home; to marry and live a natural life; and there will be no need to wait about the falling birth-rate.

## PAUL ROBESON

IN SPAIN

Paul Robeson, the famous negro singer, film star, and member of the League of Women Shoppers, is sponsoring the parade. Each debutante will be a "Boycott Bell of 1938." Hearty they will be displayed and they will parade with and cotton dainties, ranging from office apparel to evening gowns. The idea is to show how smart a girl can look if she does not wear clothes made from Japanese silk.

BALDWIN GOVERNMENT  
In Peculiar Position  
Japanese Invasion of China

The territory of the so-called portion of China includes the watershed and tributaries of the great Yangtze River, which is navigable by ocean-going ships for about one thousand miles from its mouth.

This region contains the richest natural resources of the whole Chinese territory. There are mighty forests, there, large stretches of wheat and pasture lands, and mineral deposits of all descriptions.

The present British Government is in a very peculiar position over the Japanese invasion of China.

For years past the British Fascists have been endeavoring to arrange for Italy and Germany to attack the Soviet Union in the West, and for Japan to do the same thing in the East.

Soviet China has discarded the ancient picture-writing symbols, and adopted a phonetic alphabet and the metric system of weights and measures. Daily newspapers are printed, using the phonetic alphabet, and these journals are read by millions of subscribers.

Broadcasting stations send out information at regular intervals to the inhabitants of this territory. It is quite within the mark to say that the so-called section of China has made more progress within the last five years than was accomplished in the preceding five centuries.

"WAR LORDS DREAM." Unless Japan can conquer and occupy this so-called territory her warlord's vision of "Sovereignty over China" will remain as a vague dream. The latest official news concerning the great Yangtze River water is of a very peculiar character. Japan is said to have delivered ultimatum to the effect that none of Japanese vessels will be permitted to pass this river.

"BRITAIN'S ATTITUDE." Britain is reported to have said that Japan has no right to prevent foreign vessels navigating the Yangtze River, and therefore Japan's edict could be ignored.

In the very next paragraph of the official news we are told that the British authorities have warned ship owners not to attempt to go up the Yangtze River, because it would be impossible to protect them from Japanese attack.

"POCKET SUBS." At the same time we know that Japanese gunboats are not likely to go far enough up the Yangtze River to meet the fleet of "pocket submarines," which are quite able to deal with invading gunboats intending to reach the Socialist territory by water.

"TOUGH PROPOSITION." To attempt to conquer and perma-

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