Stop uranium mining now!

Fighting the Right
Victorian Branch

Hawke/Keating economic strategy
Restructuring capitalism

Independent unions in South Africa
Black workers organise

Yellowcake Bob.
Leave it in the ground, have it delivered?

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Fabian Society

Dear Editors,

In the April edition of Labour, the nuclear debate was presented in a way that did not reflect the complexity and nuances of the issues. The suggestion that the Labour Party should adopt a policy of nuclear disarmament was discussed, but the deeper implications and consequences for our society were not sufficiently explored. This was a missed opportunity to engage with the wider public on this critical issue.

Best regards,

[Signature]

Paul White
Secretary, Fremantle (Vic) ALP Branch, Sub-branch secretary, ACOA

Repression in Sri Lanka

In late March Sri Lankan air force personnel were responsible for the murder of nine Tamil citizens in the northern town of Jaffna. The Sri Lankan government has been accused of human rights abuses, particularly against the Tamil minority. The government has denied these allegations, insisting that the Tamil LLV is a terrorist organization.

Paul White

Social Rights Conference

I read with interest the coverage of the Social Rights Conference in the 1984 edition of Labour. The conference was an important opportunity for scholars and activists to discuss the issues facing our society. It is unfortunate that the coverage did not do justice to the depth of the discussions and the range of perspectives presented.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Lucy Goldstein
Executive Member, Australian Fabian Society

Nuclear Power

Uranium debate: Left's compromise helps Right

A national Left position paper on uranium policy is being circulated among ALP branches. The paper advocates for a compromise on uranium policy initially adopted in 1977.

Paul White

Letters to L.M.

Bob Hogg moving his infamous amendments to uranium policy at the 1982 conference. Is the Left doing a Hogg with its compromised position?
Party ranks demand anti-uranium stand

Tony Mulcahy
Member of Balclutha (WA) ALP Branch and State President of Rubber and Allied Workers Union

At its April meeting, the WA Left faction, Social Credit, returned to the fullness of a special State Conference to clarify the State Branch's position on uranium.

Such a conference has been made necessary by the fact that there have been widely different interpretations of a policy adopted at a State Conference.

State Premier Brian Burke, leaders of the National Centre Left faction and the Socialists have insisted that the policy specifically allows for the continuation of uranium mining in South Australia. However, the clear intention of the policy was to insist on the phasing out of all mining.

The WA Branch has maintained a strong anti-uranium policy for many years. A motion from the Administrative Committee to the April conference was defeated. Burke went on to make this position, but those who supported a stand in opposition argued that such a change was not necessary.

The pro-uranium interpretation of the miners' vote was rejected by the ALP National Conference and many Party members and activists. The Fremantle Electorate Council and the Maritime Workers Union have passed motions calling for a review of the behaviour of the Left.

Labor Militant supporters initiated a petition in May to back Burke. And, although it was only in circulation for a short time, it attracted many signatures - including those of seven politicians, members of the Administrative Committee and over 1000 delegates to Conference. The fact that that petition was sent in from all parts of the state indicates how widespread was the anger at the cynical moves to misrepresent the Branch's position.

In view of this support, it was reasonable to assume that the WA Branch would be able to back the campaign. But no, the Midwinter - convener of SC and an Amalgamated Metallurgists and Shipwrights Union official - adopted a different attitude towards the petition. He was the only member of the WA Labor Left at the April conference who did not sign the petition. And, in contrast, he put pressure on National Conference delegates to vote against the motion.

Just two months before the conference, a weak anti-uranium policy is dropped on the table and that policy is expected to be adopted.

Some of the Left parliamentarians and branch offices have run the risk of becoming voteless and found out that what is going on in the state conference, the Left may discover that some of the Left members of parliament have turned against them.

The motion for the Real and Left motion on the Victorian Branch is made possible.

The national Left has not been able to stop the vote. There is still time to organise a lobby of National Conference delegates to support the motion's stand. This stand should be a victory for the Left.

1. Immediate approval of all ex-parte contracts immediately.
2. Rejection of any proposal that embodies backsliding on the policy.
3. Immediate compensation for managerial breakdown.
4. Payment of all outstanding payments.
5. Full implementation of the policy.

The Socialist Caucus's failure to follow through on the uranium campaign calls for a strong and united performance by that faction at the next Labor conference.

The issue of uranium must be taken seriously. If not, we will face the consequences of a strong and united performance by that faction at the next Labor conference.

Liberation, June 1984
Accord under review

It is possible the second Accord could be sprung on the union movement in the wake of Federal elections. The approach of the elections would be used to insist that the unions accept any conditions that the government feels are necessary. The prospect of a second Accord is worrying and it is unlikely the free movement would be allowed the first Accord must be defended. The First Accord has already led to an increase in the Federal Labour National Wage rates which will continue to have an effect for the rest of the year.

A joint press statement released by the Government and ACTU after negotiations on May 14, it was clear that the ACTU is prepared to accept a minimum wage rise at the Federal Labour National Wage case (when the CPI will be discounted for December 1980) and abandon its call for a 9.1 per cent catch up for the loss in real wage rates resulting from the wage freezes initiated by the Fraser Government.

This means, in effect, that the ACTU is prepared to accept two large reductions in real wages in return for a tax cut of around $15. The tax cut is part of ALP policy and should not be used to secure a wage cut.

The implementation of the first Accord is preparing the way for a worse version. Rejection of the first would automatically destroy the second.

Campaign needed to defeat Right

The Victorian State ALP Conference on June 5 to 11 will consider the report of a 15-member committee set up to examine the application of sufficient support to the wage-earner's campaign.

The unions - the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association (SDA), Federated Clerks Union (FCU), Amalgamated Association of Automotive Engineers and Plumbers and, Federated Ironworkers Association - are dominated by a tiny handful of bosses and splinter groups. At the same time, the state industrial Action Fund and the Victorian branch of the Australian Union of Metalworkers and Clerical Workers are now effectively controlled by the major ALP unions.

Over 40 submissions have been made to the committee and about 20 branches have sent in motions opposing the settlement. Some branches have suggested that if the new left comes to power, it is likely that the issue of Federal intervention and the movement against right-wing forces would be placed on the agenda of the 1985 ALP conference.

But the left has no money to be given by this threat. Such a threat would not be supported by right-wing forces and would probably encourage the movement of national militant forces, which would encourage the influence of both left and right-wing forces. The left faces the choice of the movement left behind, or the move to the center for a more moderate policy.

The AFL-CIO is divided on the question of the left and right in the movement. Their aim is to unite the left and left-wing forces in a broader movement, but the leadership of the left has made it impossible for the left to organize effectively.

The Socialist left is not in a position to decide the outcome of the election, but it is likely that the left will be a decisive factor in the election. The left has already shown that it can unite with the right-wing forces to secure their victory. The left has no money to be given by this threat. Such a threat would not be supported by right-wing forces and would probably encourage the movement of left-wing forces to unite behind the left.

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conference round-up

Queensland Senate ticket row

Federal intervention in the Queensland Senate ticket row was special State Council meeting on May 31 determined ticket row — the matter for which it was convoked.

Bolke Russell
Member Banyo/Northgate East (Qld) ALP Branch

A resolution adopted by a vote of 35 to 18 that the State Administrative Committee meeting on May 3 called on the National Executive to endorse current Senators Gerry Jones and Margaret Reynolds at the number 1 and 2 candidates respectively. Jones is part of the Old Guard faction while Reynolds, from Toowong, is not aligned.

The motion also urged that Senate candidates be elected by preference of sectional representation, under the Proportional System (PSR) rule 37.8(a). As amendment to that motion, calling on the National Executive to endorse John Black and Bryan Burns in the number 3 and 4 positions respectively for the Banyo/Northgate East (Qld) ALP Branch.

The National Executive noted the resolution of the National Council and directed the National Committee to consider the matter.

A heated debate was engaged at State Council over the Senate ticket row. State Administrative Committee and National Executive member Ian Mclean, strongly rejected it, saying it was factionally motivated and raised serious implications for the future of the National Executive and had set itself up as a sectional policy.

The motion was tabled, Speaker Peter Beattie had not presented the ticket row position fairly at the National Council, and had failed to address the discussion and in the National ticket row the majority on the executive does not agree with without regard to rank-and-file opinion. Victoria would probably need if its Conference rejects the affiliation of the ticket row. Peter Beattie

A unanimous Administrative Committee meeting supported the National Executive decision, and called for the implementation of campaign strategies as directed by Council.

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Louise Park
Member Emu Bay (Qld) ALP Branch

But the conference was row with factionalism and much of it. If for example, a great deal of time was taken up in discussing whether 53-year-old Senator John Hearn should be eligible as a candidate at the next elections. The Left supported the replacement of Senator Hearn and claimed that the right-wing faction was not entitled to pick him with one of their own. The Right failed to address the problem of how policies and strategy Labor need for an improved debate to produce.

Such a discussion is certainly called for in the future, as candidates are being selected. There were, however, some progressive decisions taken by the conference, such as the support of miners and recognition of the need for new mines and a calling for the phasing out of existing ones.

Council also condemned the arrest of miners and called for a reformation of present ALP policy on uranium. It was further suggested that the time to keep this issue alive might be now.

Practice for future parliamentarians

Any new members of the Young Labor Association who attended the practice for future parliamentarians on May 20 last had been disappointed with the meeting.

Neil Buddnadasa
Member Livingstone (NSW) ALP Branch and Sydney YLA

Right factional control ensured that most of the sessions were for the benefit of the leaders of the Left. Although all members of the branch present took part in discussion, there was no real discussion about the future of the ALP. The discussion was about how to win the next election and how to control the Left.

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The Hawke/Keating economic strategy

This is the fourth in a series of articles leading up to the July National Conference. Each article in the series examines a major area to be debated at conference.

It is obvious that the Hawke Government intends to launch a major assault on ALP economic policy at the forthcoming conference. Treasurer Paul Keating has had the draft of an alternative program for some months. This week the ALP will bring the Party platform into line with the Government's program. It will probably use its platform to state its opposition to all of the Hawke's proposals.

There is nothing new in this approach. It has been clear for months that the Hawke Government is determined to consolidate and extend the economic policies that have benefited Australia over the last two years. It has been clear that the Hawke Government intends to continue the policies that have made the Australian economy strong and successful.

Keating's draft program is a response to what he sees as the need for a new economic strategy. He believes that the current economic model is not sustainable in the long term and that it is necessary to make changes in order to ensure the continued prosperity of Australia.

Keating's program is based on the principles of reducing government expenditure, improving the efficiency of the public sector, and increasing competition in the private sector. It also includes a commitment to reducing the budget deficit and increasing taxes on the wealthy.

The Hawke Government has already made significant progress in these areas. The budget deficit has been reduced, and the tax system has been reformed. However, Keating believes that more needs to be done to ensure the continued prosperity of Australia.

Keating's program is also intended to ensure that the benefits of the strong economy are shared more widely. The Government intends to increase spending on education and training, and to provide more support for small business. These measures are intended to ensure that all Australians can benefit from the strong economy.

Keating's program is a response to the challenges facing Australia today. It is a plan for the future, and it is one that the ALP believes will ensure the continued prosperity of Australia for generations to come.
Black workers organise in South Africa

As a congress held in Mamelodi in April 1981, the UFWA lavished its attention on the problems of black workers in South Africa. The union is active in organizing and providing support for workers in the mining, manufacturing, and clothing industries. The UFWA's general secretary, Joe Foster, outlined a strategy to build a workers' movement. He argued that the conditions in South Africa have provided an environment in which the possibility of establishing an independent workers' movement is realistic. The task of building up the union is to see Foster, a "fundamental political task" and part of the wider struggle.

The UFWA's general secretary also highlighted the role of a variety of political groups including the African National Congress (ANC), which were fighting to defeat apartheid. However, Foster warned that the ANC should not be the only focus of the struggle, and that other political groups and organizations should also be given equal attention.

The UFWA's main strategy is to organize and provide support for workers in order to build a workers' movement. The union's leaders recognize that the struggle against apartheid is a long and difficult one, but they remain committed to the task.

The UFWA is a member of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), which represents a wide range of workers in South Africa. The union is committed to fighting for the rights of black workers and to providing support to those who are fighting against apartheid.

The UFWA's success in organizing and providing support for workers is a testament to the determination and dedication of its leaders and members. The union continues to fight against the injustices of apartheid and to work towards a better future for all workers in South Africa.
Around the Branches

Australian Capital Territory

The ACT Conference on June 18 and 19 was further moved towards the establishment of a national ACT branch. The current membership, with the support of Centre Left forces and the Maureen Horser, leader of the ACT Socialist Left Parliamentarian, and the ACT Branch of the Australian Capital Territory Socialist Left, have suggested that the controlling Left grouping in the ACT may be challenged at the conference. Horser has been prominent in promoting the party against the Left. Historically, if any group tries to dominate there is a reaction against it, she said the Canberra Times recently. "It takes away from NSW about 10 years because of the dominance of NSW by the right wing." The opening for this challenge to the Left dominance came when its candidate for preselection for the federal seat of Moncrieff, Maree Robinson, was defeated.

Queensland

The stalemate in Queensland over the selection of the Senate ticket indicates that no faction has managed to establish dominance in the Branch (see article page 16). Three factions have emerged since Federal intervention in 1976 last year by an alliance of the Centre Left and the powerful Australian Workers Union, the largest union in Queensland. In an attempt to prevent the party from winning control of the party, the Centre Left and the Socialist Left, bitter enemies in pre-intervention days, have made something of a marriage of convenience.

The Old Guard hails the Centre Left for defying it through Federal intervention, which was organized when Hayden was ALP leader. Hayden has close ties with Centre Unions in NSW and Labor Unions in Victoria and is intent on blocking Hayden's power base in Queensland. Gabriel Richardson, the NSW member, is the former NSW ALP leader. The Queensland Socialist Left, bitter enemies in pre-intervention days, have made something of a marriage of convenience.

Wollongong

Wollongong Branches have the scene of a heavy lobbying this year by Labor for preselection. Among the recent Preselection Convention, the son of the late Rex Cook (Member for Minerals and Energy in the Whitlam Government), has been defeated by the Liberal's candidate for the seat of Wollongong in the recent State elections. It is being encouraged by the Right to oppose Labor for the seat of Wollongong in New South Wales for the seat of Wollongong in the State elections. A record number of nominations were received for the 35 available positions on the membership of Wollongong City Council. A group of 10 or more ALP members will be given the opportunity to vote in the meeting.

Northern Territory

A review of the Northern Territory Branches has given Labor's big defeat at the December 1975 elections. The ALP won only 2 of 12 seats and suffered significant setbacks. It lost all but one of the urban seats. The review will be conducted by Jack Moore, President of the National Secretariat; John Roe, Treasurer, Member for Stuart in the NT Legislative Assembly; and Alan Robertson, Secretary of the Territory Trades and Labor Council. Both Moore and Robertson have been supporters of existing ALP policy on socialism as a "red-wing fascists," has said that the review should look at the current rule which stipulated that members of the branch had to support the Labor candidate for the seat of Wollongong in the recent State elections. The move to dump both the ALP and Centre Left support in the state of the Northern Territory, probably home town, is difficult, he said, because of Labor's Labor stronghold. It will be interesting to see what attitude the delegates take to the question of preselection for the Northern Territory State Conference in June.

Central America

What policy for ALP on Central America?

Submitted by the Committee in Solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean

American foreign policy on Central America is one that deserves reform. Central America is one of the most important issues facing the world today, as is evident by the recent developments in Nicaragua.

This year the government took the initiative to open dialogue with the Sandinista government. However, parallel relations were opened with the military dictatorship in El Salvador, which Amnesty International now confirms is responsible for murdering 60,000 civilians in the last four years.

This highlights a contradiction in government policy that the conference can take steps towards overcoming. Already it is government policy to support the process which has led to the election of the Sandinista government. It has put forward motions which call for the demilitarization of the U.S. role in the region.

Nicaragua has worked to implement these proposals, as has the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador. The Reagan Administration has ignored these proposals in favour of a military solution.

In June and July last year both Hawke and Hayden expressed their support for the "legitimate" government of the U.S. to intervene in Central America. In November the government in Chile submitted an offer to the United States and the Soviet Union in the United Nations to condemn the U.S. invasion of Grenada. But these actions are in contradiction to the Sandinista peace process. There is, therefore, a need for the Sandinista government to join the peace process.

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Inquiry 'not a very good move'

The following is the text of a talk given in the Labor Council conference in Melbourne by Ralph Edwards, a former State secretary of the Victorian Workers Union and now the leader of the Socialist Left Party. It has been abbreviated for space reasons.

The Victorian Branch of the Labor Party, compared to most Branches, is still radical. So it's possible to use the Victorian Branch of the Labor Party as a launching place for a whole lot of political initiatives. Now we find ourselves in a situation where Hawke's faction of the Labor movement feels a complete allegiance to him. Never let it be said that he was ever within the Party, but he feels the allegiance from his backers and they're pretty good about what they do to get their objectives.

Now Hawke gave his people in Labor Unity very specific membranes of how to present facetious balance and, because we have proportionate representation in the Party, there's a fairly consistent balance. But the Left has improved a position over the years but it's not in the real sense. That's not there and you have the Left that the Right has improved a position within the Labor Party and the Right has improved a position within the Labor Party and the Right has improved a position within the Labor Party.

So there was the potential for the Left, if it was competitive enough in its understanding, to in fact get together at a Conference level in a meaningful way and to create some of their own more rightist colleagues and create what has been done within the parliamentary Party, of a more left wing type. Many of those coming together in the Left within the Socialist Left have done considerable pressure on the Left in Victoria. I think this factor has been more often noted very widely within the movement and the development of the Centre Left in the parliamentary Party. I personally don't believe that the Centre Left faction is anything other than a palace politics influence in a very largely concerned, getting people into cabinet and so on. However it does, I think, display a possibility for a number of points.

The first, and primary concern, is that the person in Labor Unity or in the Hawke kitchen cabinet would be to ensure that the Left is not simply outwitted in relation to the NCC arrangements but also permanently destroyed. Now there's a very simple way of doing that and that is to ensure everyone in the Party, these, these days it's a lot more difficult, far more difficult than it was.

For more effective a method, in my opinion, would be the reordering of Labor Unity to a level of creating a left wing opposition within that parliamentary Party and the Right wing opposition within the Left and in the Centre Left. In fact there's the possibility of the Socialist Left being reduced to a small left wing opposition. The result might be a right wing group and a left wing group and a great big mass in the centre.

Our concerns from the Left must be to ensure that we take up a position which will stop the affiliation of those right wing unions. (But) what we have done, believe it or not, is to create an inquiry. Now inquiries are very good things. If you've got no muscles, if you've got no bargaining position whatsoever, then you have an inquiry and you work like beggars and you hope you'll get something even if it's a few scraps.

But when you're in a senior position, where you've got over 45 percent at the State Conference and when you've got the capability to show that there's a demand for units that are in line with you, to have an inquiry is not a very good move. Instead of the Party (majority) taking it upon themselves to run with the inquiry, it would have been much better to have some kind of campaign, some kind of organised campaign, a mass campaign which involves the members, a campaign to politicise the Party around this issue and educate and agitate and do all the other things we are fairly good at doing in other areas.

Instead of doing that we have come to rely quite heavily on the inquiry. And when you help create the inquiry and when you're doing nothing else to offer, you provide all the other things you're supposed to be good at and you end up getting an inquiry which is uncertain.

It's very difficult for people in any section of the Left to look outside and get support from outside. (Now) we are going to get an inquiry which is going to come up with a result which is going to have to accept it because it's going to be said that it's our inquiry, that we have participated in it, that the Left have been involved in it, and at the end, whatever that inquiry comes up with, we're going to have to accept it.

The recent dissolution of the Communist Party of this State was another direction that the Left in the Labor Party is going to have to accept. They've been done left wing opposition.

The concerns from the Left must be to ensure that we take up a position which will stop the affiliation of those right wing unions. (But) what we have done, believe it or not, is to create an inquiry. Now inquiries are very good things. If you've got no muscles, if you've got no bargaining position whatsoever, then you have an inquiry and you work like beggars and you hope you'll get something even if it's a few scraps.

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Let Faris Glubb be heard!

The following is a letter to Barnett, Minister for Immigration and Minister for Defence, from a group of Australian Human Rights Campaigners. It has been abbreviated for space reasons.

To Minister Barnett,

I write about an altercation that occurred at Parliament House on 25 November. The altercation involved a member of the Australian Parliament and a group of Australian human rights activists. The member of Parliament was the Hon. Joe McEwen, and the group consisted of several individuals from the Australian Human Rights Campaign, including myself.

The altercation began when the member of Parliament walked into the area where the group was assembled, apparently in search of some other individuals who had been invited to meet with him. The group members, who were gathered near the entrance to the Parliament House, were attempting to prevent the member of Parliament from entering the building.

The member of Parliament attempted to force his way past the group members, who were blocking the entrance. The situation quickly escalated into a physical altercation, with the member of Parliament pushing and shoving several of the group members.

The altercation continued for several minutes, with the member of Parliament eventually being forced to retreat. The group members then dispersed, with some remaining behind to monitor the situation and others leaving to attend to other matters.

The altercation was captured on video and has since been widely publicized. The incident has raised concerns about the role of Parliament House as a public space and the need for greater regulation of such events.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Australian Human Rights Campaign
The thoughts of Laurie Carmichael

To most people, Laurie Carmichael is an enigma. His reputation as a fiery and articulate militant lingers on, and yet he is skilled and influential in the trade union movement. He is the General Secretary of the Hawke Labor Government. He has not renounced his membership of the Communist party, alongside his commitment to the workers' interests as they are represented by the trade union movement.

Andrew Money
Member Fremantle (WA) ALP Branch; Treasurer Federated Australian Workers Union; Delegate to WA ALP State Executive

When he spoke at a meeting of the Labor Party's Social Committee in Perth on 26 March, 1984, of people turned out to listen, but most enlivened by a union meeting where militant rhetoric and enthusiastic endorsement for many aspects of the Hawke Government's policies were common.

He began timidly enough by saying that the Prices and Incomes Accord is an agreed framework in relation to economic, industrial, and social wage matters. It does not need to be over and under the same matters.

But he soon shifted to a second pair by saying that the 'agreed framework' is in fact a 'strategy' that is highly significant because it is the first time, in effect, that we can say that there is a 'strategy' that the labour movement.

And by the time he got to the discussion period he had reached overdrive and was saying: "We are working for real power. We have not had our wages fixed and increased rights. In particular, we have a unique opportunity to outline other international developments that he considered made the rational wage policy strategy.

I believe the technological revolution, the growth of multinationals, the "democratic" struggles of the world's developing countries, and the reduction of non-wage unemployment in the advanced industrialised countries.

From this he drew the conclusion that "the government movement must understand that the policy of the Wilson Labour Government in Britain was unacceptably different from that we have in 1965 and 1980s."

Essentially Carmichael's approach boils down to the view that for that reason the government must move much more quickly, and without a complete change in the economic status quo.

But he bemoans the analysis of historic conditions he thinks the most important factor of all the history of the capitalist economy.

I might say, "We have a unique opportunity to outline other international developments that we need to understand.

Unfortunately, this is not the approach to government. Debates should be without the question of the present and past. But, it is a question of time, and it is a question of discipline and respect. And this is what the government has not done."

This is why, whatever the Hawke Government's policy, we need to review the situation and work with its policies, while this is a question of working with the government and the government.

Now children...

In his contribution to the National Conference registration pamphlet, Party Secretary Bob McMillan, has told delegates to behave themselves.

In the fact that the Hawke Government is popular and demands that delegates to conference must join discipline and respect. And this is what the government has not done.

This is not to say the approach to conference is without the question of the present and past. But, it is a question of time, and it is a question of discipline and respect. And this is what the government has not done.

For example, the government's policy for the Hawke Government is popular and demands that delegates to conference must join discipline and respect. And this is what the government has not done.

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Victorian Branch
Activist's guide to ALP

Two papers in the Victorian Branch: Labor Star, the official publication and Socialist Objective

AWU Rank-and-File
Campaigning for union democracy

Jim Rule is a member of the Australian Workers Union, working as a rank-and-file member. He is active in the Labor Party and in the fight for democratic unionism.

Question: What sort of rank-and-file struggles do you see in your union?
Answer: We are now fighting a big movement in the 70s around the Committee for Union Democracy. This committee was formed as a result of the election of a new Federal Union President, who is now dean of the FBU. The campaign for union democracy must be fought with the assistance of the Party and Labor government practices.

After the demise of their own union, things were quiet for a while. Then, the AWU rank-and-file got together and started to fight. They created a new union and called it the "Friends of the FBU." They were not interested in the old union's practices and policies. They decided to start a new union and call it the "Friends of the FBU."

Bob helped the people who had worked for the old union and had lost their positions, but not for the new union. He also helped them to fight for their rights. They created a new union and called it the "Friends of the FBU." They were not interested in the old union's practices and policies. They decided to start a new union and call it the "Friends of the FBU."

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The unions have responded with police power, but a few have now been arrested and charged with things like assault. Some of the local authorities have been fine, but the FBU and the Rank-and-File have been combative and unpleasant. They have run a raffle in the city which was supported by the sewerage workers, but there were also protests. We need to find a way to deal with these unionists.

We are continuing to educate workers in the city to tell them the struggle is not really over. The unions are back and the Rank-and-File is still there. It is unfair to try to keep them out of the union.

We believe the present situation could be decided in a rank-and-file primary election.

Question: Do the ALP and the Labor Party support the union democracy movement?
Answer: The ALP is not interested in the union democracy movement. The Labor Party has been fine, but the Rank-and-File unions have been combative and unpleasant. They have run a raffle in the city which was supported by the sewerage workers, but there were also protests. We need to find a way to deal with these unionists.

We are continuing to educate workers in the city to tell them the struggle is not really over. The unions are back and the Rank-and-File is still there. It is unfair to try to keep them out of the union.

We believe the present situation could be decided in a rank-and-file primary election.

Question: Do you believe the ALP should be affiliated with the BLF?
Answer: Yes. It would be unfair to try to keep the unionists out of the union.

We are continuing to educate workers in the city to tell them the struggle is not really over. The unions are back and the Rank-and-File is still there. It is unfair to try to keep them out of the union.

We believe the present situation could be decided in a rank-and-file primary election.

Question: How has the union been run and what has the BLF done?
Answer: The union has been run by a small group of unionists who are not interested in the union democracy movement. The BLF has been fine, but the Rank-and-File unions have been combative and unpleasant. They have run a raffle in the city which was supported by the sewerage workers, but there were also protests. We need to find a way to deal with these unionists.

We are continuing to educate workers in the city to tell them the struggle is not really over. The unions are back and the Rank-and-File is still there. It is unfair to try to keep them out of the union.

We believe the present situation could be decided in a rank-and-file primary election.

Question: What are the main aims of the movement?
Answer: The main aim is to defend the democratic rights of the workers, to support the union democracy movement and to fight for the rights of the workers.

We are continuing to educate workers in the city to tell them the struggle is not really over. The unions are back and the Rank-and-File is still there. It is unfair to try to keep them out of the union.

We believe the present situation could be decided in a rank-and-file primary election.
NSW ‘egg war’ raises serious questions

When the NSW Egg Corporation cracked down on ‘rebel’ egg producers in Sydney recently it sparked an ‘egg war’ that was given extensive coverage in the media. The war was fought between the producers and police and took up the cruelty to animals. And it apparently produced a round of terrible puns about coops and eggs.

Debra Stewart
Member Marrickville East (NSW) ALP Branch, Member Australian Railways Union

In this way, the seriousness of the issue was somewhat clouded. But the events themselves raise a number of questions that need to be addressed by the Labor Party for maintaining its rural policy.

Government intervention in the agricultural sector has increased markedly in Australia since World War II, although the level of intervention varies from sector to sector. The political parties have, by and large, developed the same approach. Despite the National Party’s rhetoric about the need for ‘free enterprise’ in agriculture, it too has accepted a high degree of government intervention.

It is therefore not surprising that the government has a number of purposes but two major ones are: the need to have centralised control over which to gain maximum marketing and price control to control the level of production.

Strange as it may seem when large sections of the world suffer from a lack of food, the world market for agriculture has a continuing crisis of oversupply. That is, the world production of a given commodity is a result of most of the world’s agricultural producing countries having a system of centralised marketing and price control to control the level of production.

In the U.S., for example, this means that in any one year up to 50 per cent of the country’s agricultural output is sold to the government and the rest is used in food aid programs.

In the case of Australia, with its small domestic market, the problem becomes even more critical. Hence we have bodies like the NSW Egg Corporation whose role is to return the corporation acts as a central marketing body maintaining a monopoly price for eggs.

Even at a surplus of about 3 million dozen eggs is produced in NSW yearly. A surplus which is mainly sold to the canned goods industry and used in food aid programs. The chosen price. Egg producers are forced to sell the eggs below the market price. Egg producers are forced to sell the eggs below the market price.

This is the basis of the issue and the quota system that the NSW government has introduced to the producers in order to protect them from having to sell their eggs below the market price.

The NSW government has a number of benefits: they are able to increase the number of quota holders without paying for quotas and

avoid paying the levy then they have a margin to sell their eggs cheaper than the government price.

The problem is that the ‘egg war’ largely seemed to be about the issue of cruelty to animals. In the manner in which the eggs were removed from the rebel producers’ farms and the use of force of free range versus bonded diet. This problem, however, could be tackled rationally until it is more equitable marketing and marketing systems are developed.

To the extent that the present system provides some guarantee of income to producers it has its virtues. But it is a system that perpetuates the differences between the large and small producers as well as bringing about considerable rationalisation in the industry.

The number of poultry farms in NSW has dropped from over 10,000 in the late 1970s to under 5,000 in the 1980s. The size of the average flock has increased from under 300 to over 1000. And to maintain the system, it has been estimated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics that consumers contribute up to 30 cents in price subsidy.

So the big producer remains big while the smaller producer remains small. This system is probably not going to change.

The answer to this, however, is not deregulation of the market. The rebel farmers claim. In the short term it may mean fewer prices for consumers as the producers are forced into more intense competition. But in the longer term, it would mean that the biggest egg producers remaining in the industry would be able to institute their own pricing system.

We need to look at ways that will ensure a guaranteed income for the smaller producer and a reasonable cost for consumers. In particular, we need to get away from the concept that there is a problem with oversupply. While some countries are faced with the problem of catering for human health reasons, there are plenty of others both in Australia and the world who could do with some additional protein.

It’s time we started worrying about these people and the smaller producers instead of simply quelling the system that only benefits a handful of large producers.

Continued from page 23

The NSW Teachers Federation has calculated that redistribution of the $700 million in federal government grants to private public education is at stake, and the $700 million in education that is going to private public schools in Australia would be reduced to $700 million in education that is going to private public schools in Australia.

Already unfortunately, the Hawke and Education Minister Senator Susan Ryan have been critical of the Curriculum Education Sub-Committee for consulting on the report recommendations, and the sub-committee has even denied the recommendations.

It is vital therefore that ALP branches throw themselves behind the teachers’ and parents’ campaign, and initiate action themselves, and for the government to address its election promises, only be seen as the beginning of a process of rationalisation and marketing systems that are developed.
Schools Commission report
Privatisation trend encouraged

"State aid will not be allowed to become an issue under my Government." This statement was made by Bob Hawke while opening extensions to Marist Brothers school, Rockhampton, NSW, on March 12, 1984. Unfortunately for Hawke, and for the teachers, parents and pupils dependent on Government schooling, the Commonwealth Schools Commission report has made state aid a crucial question for the future public education in Australia.

Val Edwards
Member North Auburn (NSW) ALP Branch Labor Women’s Committee.

The report, Funding Policies for Australian Schools, recommends three options for the funding of public schools and a "preferred option" that could soak a billion dollars of public money to private schools by 1990. The implications of the recommendations are disastrous for Government schooling yet they merely accentuate the "privatisation" of education that has been proceeding apace for the last decade.

The figures here speak for themselves:

- Funding to private schools increased by 16 per cent between 1976 and 1983, up from $729 million to $1.2 billion.
- By 1984 private schools catering for 24 per cent of pupils received $860 million, while state schools catering for 76 per cent of students, received a pittance $1.3 billion.
- More than twice the running costs of private schools are now borne by Government.
- As a result, the real level of private school fees has plummeted to 30 per cent of their 1966-67 levels.
- As a result, enrolments in private schools are increasing at a two per cent per annum.

This increased Government subsidising of private schooling has become a self-perpetuating process. Because funding is on a per capita basis, the drift of enrolments in private schools leads to a further infusion of public money into private school coffers.

At the same time real private expenditure on private schools is actually decreasing. Furthermore, Government subsidies have tended to be used to expand the overall private education system, rather than upgrading existing "poor" private schools, which thereby remain "poor" enough to attract further government assistance.

The Commonwealth Schools Commission has already come under fire from the Federal Government’s Caucus Education Sub-Committee for the so-called "community standard" on which the basis of the funding allocation recommendations.

According to this standard it costs $1,550 per annum to educate a primary student and $3,403 for a secondary student.

Such a standard completely ignores the special needs of public school students and variations in school sizes (especially in country areas) that affect operating costs. The Commission propose that funding for private schools would range from 45 per cent down to a minimum of 15 per cent. As a result all private schools, no matter how wealthy, will continue to be funded.

The retrograde thinking that underlies the notion of a "community standard" places the needs and costs of educating disadvantaged or isolated students in the state school system on the same plane as the cost of educating well-behaved students in larger, and long-established, private schools.

Little wonder that the Caucus Education Sub-committee has criticised the funding formula as a "black cheque to private schools at the expense of the government schools."

When the Commission was established under the Whitlam Government, the overall private education system, particularly the Disadvantaged Schools Program, the Commonwealth was providing state schools with 10 per cent of their recurrent funds (i.e. meeting running costs).

Seven years of Fraser have whittled this down to seven per cent, while State Governments escalated their funding to private schools by an average 100 per cent.

One of the Federal ALP’s major election promises in 1983 was to restore the pre-1975 level of Federal funding to state schools over three years at a (1983) cost of $220 million.

However, the best proposal from the Commission is to postpone the restoration of this funding level by another two years. The other two options put forward would lose up to $100 million off the target.

So devastating for public education are the recommendations that, for the first time in the Commission’s history, minority reports — criticising the majority recommendations — were presented by two Commission members.

These were Joan Brown, ex-president of the Australian Council of State Schools Organisations representing the parents of the two and a half million state schools’ students, and Van Davey, president of the Australian Teachers Federation representing 164,000 teachers.

Writing in the May 23 issue of the NSW Teachers Federation Journal, Education, Davey correctly pointed out that “private schools interests will use public funds to advance their private interests, not the public interest.”

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