

REBEL WORKER

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

Sydney, Australia

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Paper of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Network 50c

Grassroots activists defeat Driver Only Operation (DOO) push with NIF (New Intercity Fleet) trains as a major step toward Privatisation! However Minns ALP NSW Govt. continues with Privatisation Hidden Agenda with New Regional Trains Entity!



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Rebel Worker is the bimonthly Paper of the A.S.N. for the propagation of anarcho-syndicalism in Australia.

Unless otherwise stated, signed Articles do not necessarily represent the position of the A.S.N. As a whole. Any contributions, criticisms, letters or

Comments are welcome.

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Gaza & West Bank Crisis

This interview was conducted with several members of the Israeli anarchist group anarchyin48. You can find the group on Instagram.

Q: Tell us about anarchyin48 and how your group started?

A: We are still not an official kind of group. For now, we are just a few anarchists with hopes and dreams of creating something like the [anarchist communist group] "Ahdut" that was in Israel/Palestine a few years ago. One of our comrades created this page on Instagram along with another page of anarchist memes. They started uploading photos of them from the demo waving anarcho-communist flags. We also participate in other left-wing groups such as Food not bombs, Standing Together and the Fauda movement in Palestine.

We met with some friends, some of whom were or are in radical movements, and we decided that anarchists in Israel should unite and

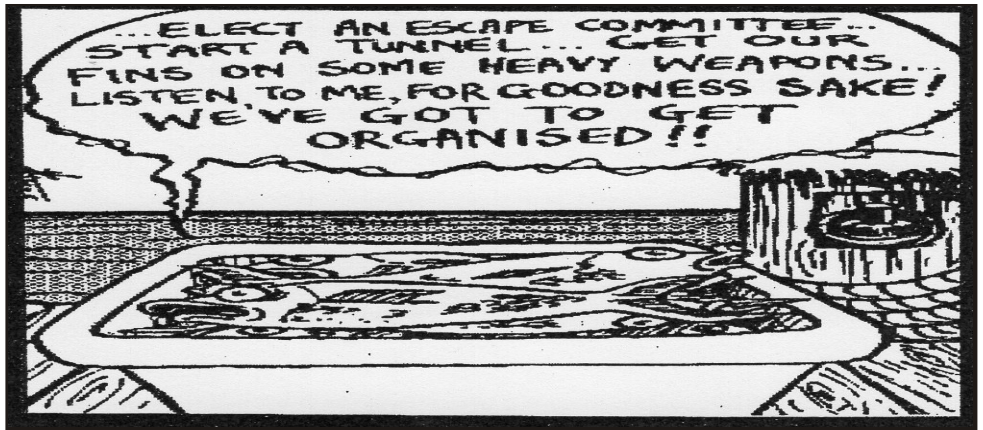
work together. That's why we decided to start publishing anarchist content in the media and come to demonstrations with flags. Gradually, other small groups of activists are formed.

Q: How do you feel about the calls to boycott Standing Together as an organization that supports the "normalization" of Israel?

A: It is really a problem that Standing Together does not have a clear position on Zionism. It is part of their desire to

Q: How would you describe the ethnic and religious backgrounds of the people who make up anarchyin48? How do these backgrounds influence your activism?

A: We are mostly atheists; we have Mizrahi and Ashkenazi. Many of us are Jews from the countries of the former USSR, so they know communism and anarchism. We also have some Palestinian members who are against Zionism and authoritarianism and



be a popular organization. Shamefully, this has led to the "normalization" of Zionism. People abroad don't know that there is also post-Zionism and not just Zionism or anti-Zionism, many on the Israeli left are post-Zionists, meaning they want Israel to exist, but not as a Jewish state. In my opinion, post-Zionism tries to eat the cake and leave it untouched, because being "another Israel" it cannot be Israel, because the essence of Israel is Zionism.

think that this region must have something new that is not fundamentalist or statist. One of the members adds: I grew up in a religious Jewish home and left the religion after a while. I grew up in a religiously conservative and fascist environment and this influenced and shaped my views, which are very much against this way.

Q: What does daily organizing look like? What are your priorities?
See Page 11

ASN APPEAL

The Anarcho-Syndicalist Network requires suitable cost effective permanent premises. A\$750,000 is urgently sought to buy premises for the proposed Rebel Worker-Anarcho-Syndicalist Network Media Centre.

Please make out Cheques to Black Cat Media & send to P.O. Box 92 Broadway 2007 NSW.

Labor Party functionary, having once stood as an ALP candidate for the NSW seat of Ballina, Toby has brought a youthful and more progressive outlook into the union, wanting to extend public transport services at a time

when the privatisation push is in full swing in the NSW Government. In some aspects this has seen his vision be at loggerheads with the NSW Minns Government agenda. Armed with a law degree and some experience in the



Trade Union bureaucracy Warnes has been hurled head first into Enterprise Negotiations with Sydney/NSW
T r a i n s .

Despite this progressive outlook, Warnes has taken a legalistic approach to the industrial struggle. While many of the points in the Log of Claim, such as the 32% wage rise over 4 years, new leave provisions and penalty rate rises are welcomed, can they be achieved by legal means? Once again it's a very top down process that does not involve those at the shop floor level, except when they are called to take part in industrial action. We believe that more involvement, discussion and decision making at that level is something which could help the process. In the past union leadership's acquiescence to the Fair Work Commission's rulings took industrial action off the table. It was welcomed in some instances with a sigh of relief by the union bureaucrats who didn't have to organise in any way.

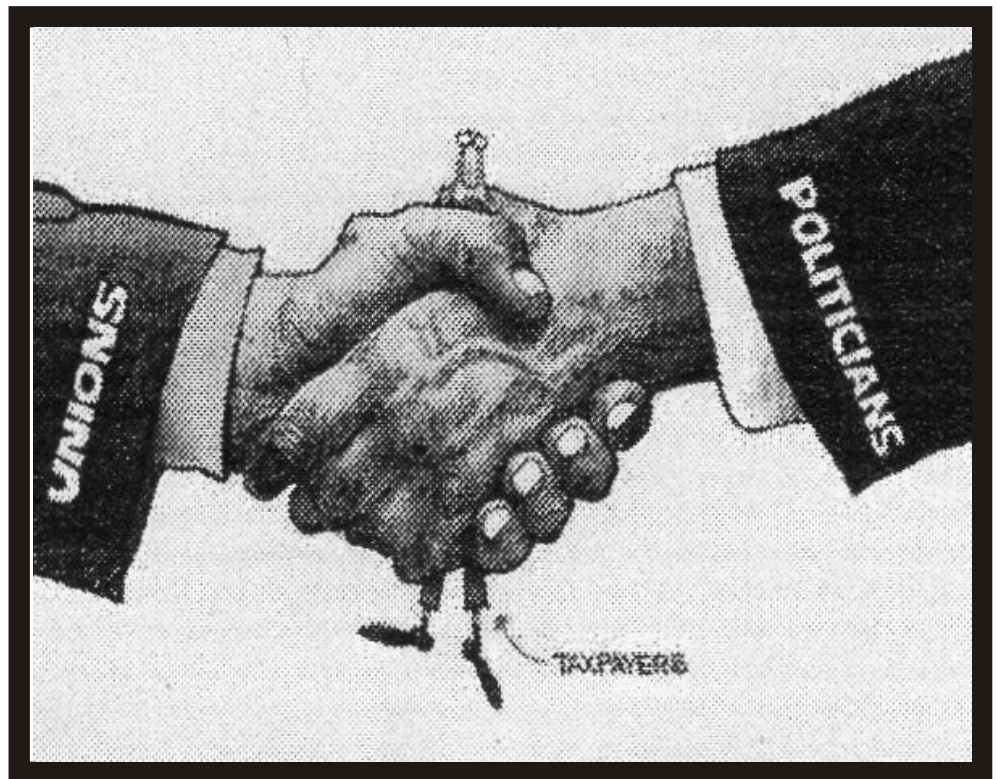
NSW President of the RTBU, Craig Turner, talking on a 2GB radio interview says that the union has delivered \$650 million in savings to the NSW Government, yet those savings had not been passed on to workers in the form of increased wages. I can also remember previous EBA's where there was a clause promising to share the spoils of costs savings and efficiencies. Over the decades of Enterprise Bargaining these benefits have never flowed onto workers in the industry. This is an indictment of the union position. A position that sometimes paid lip service to the agreement, however it was never pursued. In the workplace we have opposed these trade-offs because they always left us worse off. But they went ahead anyway. Despite the loss of over half the workforce, the privatisation and outsourcing of services such as ticketing, cleaning, information, maintenance etc union members were subjected to a salary cap and a more
i n t e n s i v e w o r k l o a d .

Meanwhile large parts of the suburban rail network are being privatised by Metro, the multinational overseas company. The leadership of the union movement has failed to mount an

effective campaign against this privatisation which has caused massive job losses on the affected lines. There was also an ineffective campaign against bus privatisation which has now led to substandard services.

So what has really changed in the RTBU NSW Branch Office? The union calling for 24hr round the clock train services might sound progressive on the face of it. In reality it would mean members working out of normal hours, affecting their health, disrupting circadian rhythms and putting them at greater risk of assault. Speaking publicly Toby Warnes said that the

and Sydney Trains. The agreement also recognises the job losses that will follow from this efficiency drive. These two corporate entities have been separated and amalgamated several times over the last few decades. The Government should have realised by now that railways will never run at a profit in NSW. It is both a service to the people of NSW and a massive boost to retail businesses, conveying workers and customers to their shopfronts. The utilisation of train services are at record levels. Intercity and country trains are overflowing, often being booked out some days. They provide a valuable mode of transport for those on concession cards or those that are sick



Business Community and the Union had proposed this extension of services around the clock. Do the people of NSW really want 24hr workplaces, 24 hr shopping and dining. I can't think of any rail network around the world that operates around the clock. Even China with its never closing cities uses the 11pm shutdown to maintain networks and trains. For obvious reasons, namely cost, the NSW Government torpedoed it anyway. Maybe in the future with decent investment in rail it may be possible.

The RTBU has also agreed in principle to the re-amalgamation of NSW Trains

or too old to drive long distances. Improving these services with better infrastructure, more frequent services and faster trains should be an urgent task which would attract full fare paying passengers. Merging these train services into the Sydney Trains again might save the Government some budget money but will it be more efficient? The loss of jobs as a result of this decision is forecast in the current
E B A .

During this EBA Bargaining Period the intransigence of the NSW Government which is declining to meet or to make

calls to the union is despotic. The last Enterprise Agreement expired in May of 2024. Pleas to the Fair Work Court in order to take Industrial Action has led to off-again, on-again stop-start action. This has frustrated and confused union members. It's still a top-down process with the union bureaucrats taking sporadic and haphazard actions which have had minimal effect on the NSW Government so far. Every day that goes by without an agreement saves the Government money and the workers holding out for a pay rise are falling further behind in the cost of living battle.

On social media, in the press and workplace the rank and file of the RTBU have expressed outrage over the stubbornness of the NSW Government to agree to negotiate. The Minns Government has turned to the money barons to try and rewrite industrial legislation that would thwart the union and halt decent pay rises. This will have implications for all unions as the government could veto agreements and simultaneously stymie industrial action. Millions have been saved in the public sector while there seems to be no end in sight to their generous handouts to the private sector.

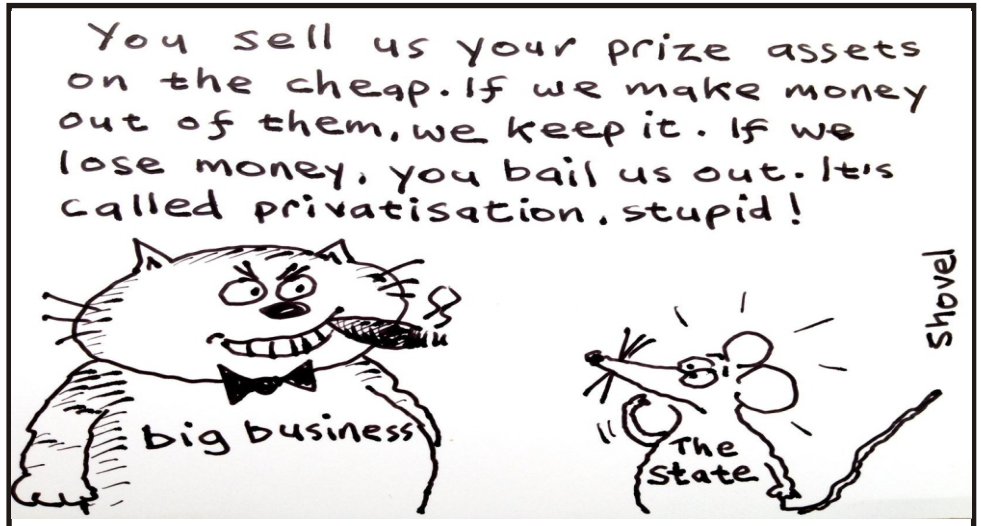
The huge break with the usual protocols of union leaders condemning a Labor Government in power has been broken by Toby Warnes as he threatened in a public interview to withdraw funding for Labor in NSW. Forget the fact that most funding for affiliation and the ALP is allocated from the National Office. The condemnation by the union rank and file of the ALP in NSW, an ALP which appears both anti-worker and reactionary at best, has possibly prompted the Secretary to make this statement. Something that previous

Secretaries dare not do.

Only a few weeks ago pictures appeared on social media of RTBU President Craig Turner shaking hands and being congratulated by a senior figure of the Masons in Sydney for the RTBU's "keeping the trains running in Sydney" and not striking. Basically keeping businesses open. How times have changed since then.

holds. Only time will tell whether the job losses and further privatisation in the pipeline will hurt him.

One thing for certain is that he can't win the battle for hearts and minds through the courts. The membership must be better informed and organised and be part of the solution. Only through a mobilisation of the general membership will pressure be applied. Let's hope he and the other union



What happens now is anyone's guess. Delays in getting an EBA settlement are hurting low paid members holding back decent pay rises. They are angry at the Government in NSW and will not take kindly to any retreat by the RTBU Leadership.

Toby Warnes, while previously serving as an ALP apparatchik, is either totally disillusioned with the ALP in NSW or there is another agenda playing out which will be hard to sell to the members. He is definitely an ambitious type. Some of the moves could be about shoring up his place in the line up to a power position in NSW. After all he would have had to get the nod from NSW Unions for the position he now

executives do that. We will have to wait and see which way the leadership

Important Victory in the NSW Railways: The Defeat of Driver Only Operation on the NIF (New Inter City Fleet)

On Tuesday 3rd December, only 2 sets of the new South Korean built New Intercity Fleet (NIF) trains were introduced into service on the Central Coast line, with a functioning guard's compartment. Effectively defeating a

DOO (Driver Only Operation) push with the NIF setting precedents for other new train types to be put into service. The generalisation of DOO to these other types would be an important prerequisite for the

privatisation of passenger train services. As wages costs for a private operator would be considerably reduced. (1)

Corporate Media Cover-Up of Union Hierarchy, NSW Government & NSW Railway Management Privatisation Conspiracy

Corporate media outlets such as the SMH (Sydney Morning Herald) have falsely proclaimed the RTBU officials being the major force pushing for a key renovation such as a functioning guard's compartment on the new trains for safety reasons. However in reality the new trains had been designed in secret to have no functioning guard's compartment with the complicity of the union bosses, the NSW Government and railway management. The details of the plot would have been provided to the RTBU and Unions NSW officials via secret weekly meetings between the NSW Transport Minister and the RTBU NSW Secretary. The ASN has assisted militants to out manoeuvre various moves by the RTBU officials to have the NIF put into service without a functioning guard's compartment. (2)

In late 2016 an edition of Sparks published a draft log of claims for an upcoming Rail EBA (Enterprise Bargain Agreement) campaign/negotiations. It raised the expectations of train drivers for a pay rise and so foiled moves by the RTBU officials to entice drivers into accepting DOO on the NIF in exchange for a special DOO allowance to bump up their pay. It particularly involved secret meetings of the Loco Division run by the officials and an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) which would over ride the existing EBA clauses to allow DOO and the payment of this allowance. Despite the MOU being an official RTBU document, the union officials have refused to put it on the union web site/social media due to its explosive contents. Some years later railway workers secured a copy of the document and supplied it to the ASN. It was placed on the Sparks web site. Meanwhile the ASN produced and distributed a flyer by rail workers criticising the dirty sell out moves of the RTBU officials associated with the MOU. As a result of agitation in Sparks the RTBU officials backed off

approval of a so called "trial" of the NIF under DOO in 16/12/2019 and sparked wildcat action by interurban train drivers over the next attempt to run the trains on the timetable on 27/11/20 also foiling the move. (3) In early December 2022, the ASN was

privatisation via its carve up for franchises Militants were assisted to win a RTBU mass meeting at the Sydney Trades Hall to wage a grass roots controlled campaign over the privatisation push and associated job losses. To regain control of the



again able to head off a new move by the Rail Bosses and RTBU officials to introduce the NIF under DOO following the rapid issuing of a Special Sparks Bulletin. It provided details of leaks about bribing interurban guards with a \$14,000 gross bonus and their jobs guaranteed for only four years to cave-in to DOO on the NIF and a non functioning guard's compartment. (4)

The Defeat of Previous DOO & Privatisation Pushes in the NSW Railways

An important back drop to this important victory with the NIF, was the defeat of a DOO push with another new train, the Waratah in mid 2011. An edition of Sparks exposed the DOO move with the new train being designed for the guard's compartment to be at the end of the train and the threatened resignation of a key guards union official over the DOO push, led to the foiling of the new DOO push. In Sept. 1999 the ASN assisted militants to defeat the restructuring of the CityRail station network for

campaign, the RTBU NSW Secretary called a snap 24 hour NSW wide "illegal" strike next day. At a mass meeting held in Parramatta, the union officials regained control of the campaign and headed off a push to disaffiliate the NSW Branch of the RTBU from the ALP. (5)

Despite the defeat of the latest NSW railways privatisation push associated with DOO on the NIF, the Minns NSW Government and the RTBU officials have not given up on privatisation. They seem now to be adopting a new strategy involving folding NSW Train Link into a new NSW Regional Train Operator and then selling it off to a private company. Bizarrely the RTBU are claiming the obvious likely new privatisation restructuring as a victory with the current enterprise bargain agreement campaign!

By Casey Jones

Notes

1 . *See* <https://coastcommunitynews.com.au/central-coast/news/2024/12/new-train-fleet-set-to-roll-out-on-central-coast-line/> & SMH 3/12/24 "Five years and \$4 Billion later the verdict

on our new intercity trains.”

2. See Sparks No.139 June - July 2011 on archive section www.sparksworld.org

3. See “NSW Railway News” RW Vol.38 Dec. 2020- Jan. 2021 No.3

(227) on archive section www.rebelworker.org

4. See “NSW Railway News” RW Vol.40 No.3 (232) Dec.2022 - Jan.2023

5. See “From Corporate Bureaucratic

Unionism to Grass Roots Controlled Direct Action Unionism: Perspective for Strategy and Action for Australia Today” on libcom.org

6. See SMH 23/11/24 “Concessions made to avert Rail Shut Down.”

The ALP has Abandoned the Working Class!

The Minns NSW government legal action to stop industrial action by unions, due to ongoing disputes over pay and conditions seem out of character for the ALP.

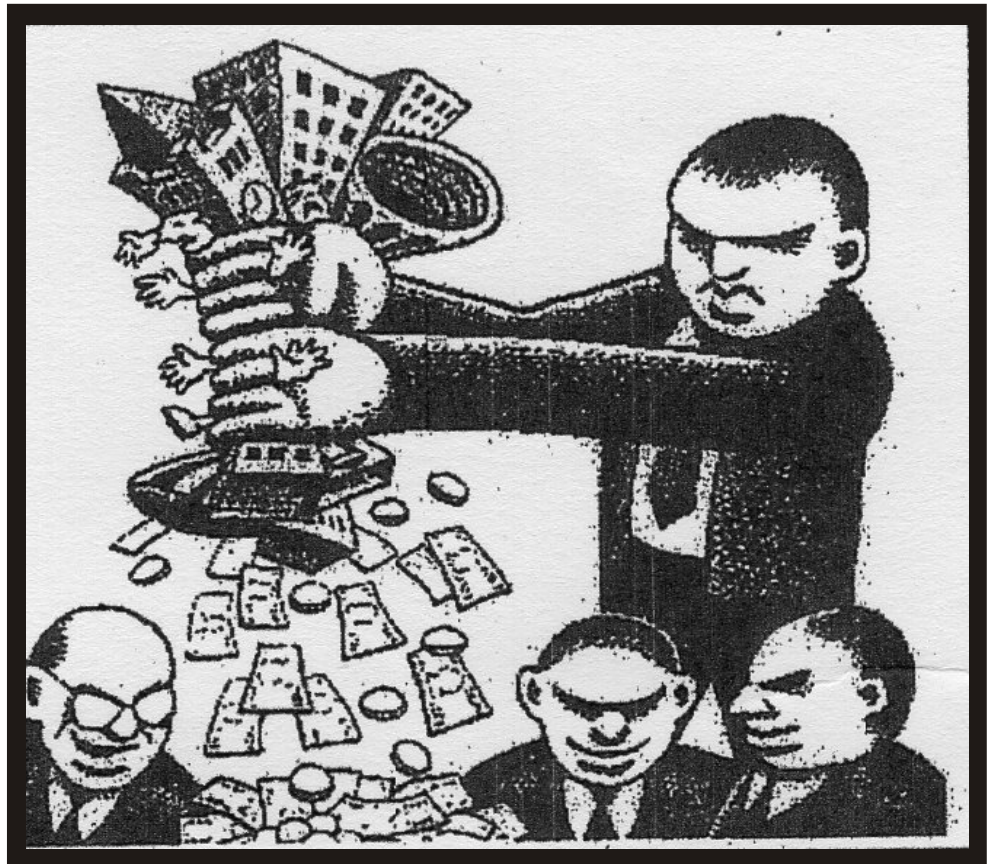
And so it would seem that the ALP has abandoned the working class. Why?

The relationship between the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and trade unions has experienced some turbulence in recent years. Historically, the ALP has been closely aligned with unions, which have played a significant role in shaping the party's policies and providing support during elections. However, this relationship has faced challenges due to various factors.

One notable incident was the ALP's decision to cut ties with the CFMEU's construction wing due to allegations of corruption. This move highlighted the party's efforts to distance itself from unions that could potentially damage its reputation. Additionally, the decline in union membership has weakened the influence of unions within the party, leading to a shift in the dynamics of their relationship.

Despite these challenges, unions continue to play a crucial role in the ALP's decision-making processes. The party relies on union support for mobilizing voters and advocating for workers' rights. However, the evolving political landscape and changing priorities have created a rift between the ALP and some unions, leading to tensions and disagreements.

Overall, while the ALP and unions remain interconnected, their relationship is marked by ongoing



challenges and adjustments as both entities navigate the complexities of modern politics.

And what are these modern politics? And the answer seems obvious!

The Australian Labor Party (ALP) has increasingly embraced environmental issues, partly due to the influence of the Labor Environment Action Network (LEAN). LEAN is a grass roots network within the ALP that advocates for strong action on climate change and environmental protection. This shift has sometimes created tension with the

party's traditional working-class base, particularly in industries like mining and manufacturing, which may feel threatened by environmental policies.

And it looks like it's the turn of transport workers to become threatened!

The ALP doesn't support working people any more and hasn't for a while! The time has come for us to no longer support the ALP!

By Railway Jeffrey

LETTER

Dear RW

We are all waiting on the outcome of the RTBU's EBA campaign fiasco.

Other news is that Sydney Trains customer service is now joining train crewing. It's now called Suburban services.

Regards,
Railway Johnny

SYDNEY BUSES NEWS

Leichhardt Depot News

Rabid Behaviour

In 2024, one of our drivers has taken it on themselves to regularly report self observed traffic infringements by other drivers to management. These are then followed up by checking bus cameras. Whatever is motivating this person is beyond us. BUT IT IS A MASSIVE DOGACT!

Pay Problems

Pays at Leichhardt are regularly topics in the (depot) lunch room. Recently long service non accrual was discovered. Then eventually fixed. Also some drivers weren't being paid their bendy (Artic) allowance. One driver was told to get his old pay slips and go through them on his own time. Really?! He objected and all drivers pay have to be looked at.

Rotten Food Episode

The great rotten food saga of 2024 (out of depot meal rooms and no cold storage in the bus) has finally been solved by management (9 months late). We all got a cold storage bag and cooler brick under our Christmas trees from Santa (aka management).
By Mr "On the Buses"

Burwood Depot News

RW: What has been the situation with the merged rosters associated with the RTBU/TWU "parity agreement" associated with EBA 2023 at the depot?
Burwood Driver: In late November, everything here with the rosters is up in the air. Drivers have generally been kept in the dark. The introduction of the new rosters seems connected with a replacement to the current HASTUS computer system which was introduced in State Transit many years

ago. The bosses seem to be constantly putting back and putting back the implementation of the new rosters and the new computer system. Drivers have been told by management that with the new set up they won't be issued with daily journals with their roster. They may have in mind putting up the rosters in the depot like was done for many years when we were under State Transit. Today, I don't think such an approach will work due to many sudden adjustments to drivers' rosters. I have heard the duty officers are unhappy with the new rosters/set up. Many drivers are hoping the new system/rosters is never implemented. Part timers won't be affected with the

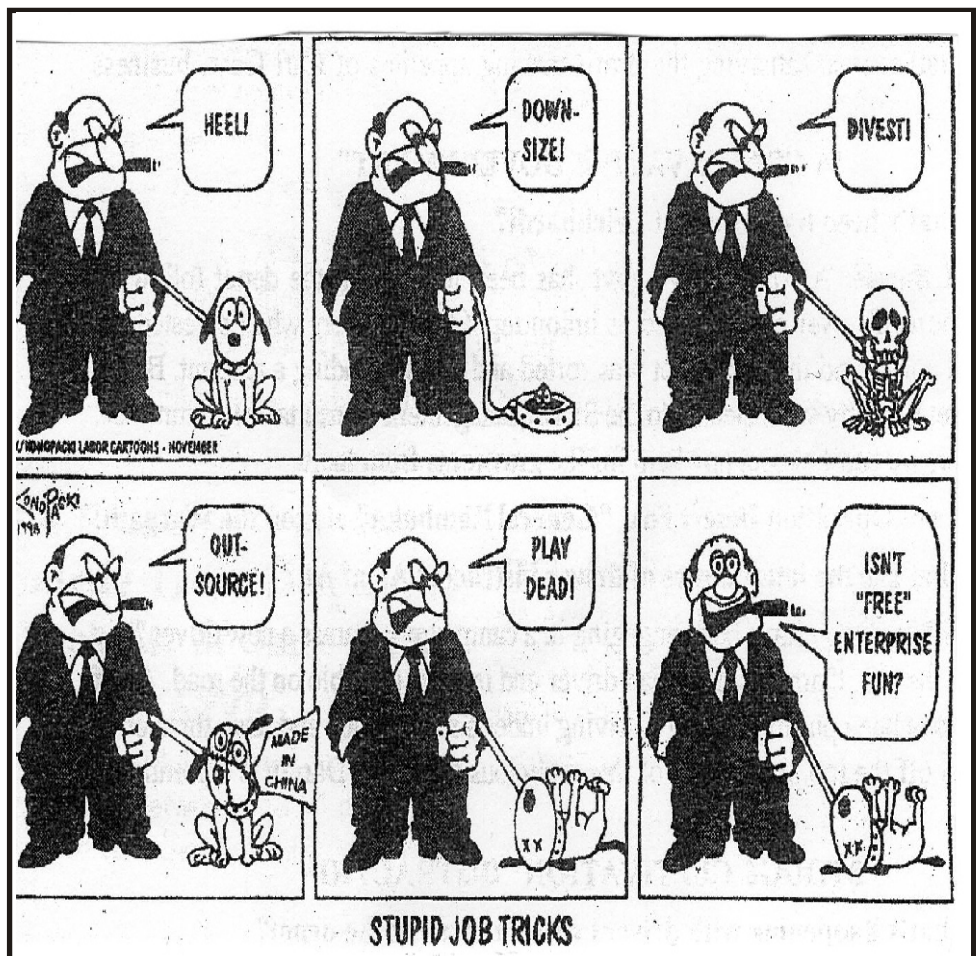
intend to standardise conditions/rosters through out Sydney Buses.

RW: What are your thoughts on the MinnsALPNSW Government?

BD: I have been impressed in one area, Minns promised as part of his party's election campaign to maintain our "home and duty" Opal which was under threat. Since being elected, his government has not welched on this electoral promise.

Kingsgrove Depot News

RW: What's the situation at the



new rosters system. The plan of the Government/Transport for NSW is to set precedents with the new merged rosters in Region 6, then generalise it to other regions. They

depot since the implementation of the Merged Rosters associated with the RTBU/TWU "Parity Agreement" and EBA 2023?

Kingsgrove Driver: Since the

implementation of the new type of rosters, many at the depot have been extremely angry over them, particularly in regard to the time frames of their rosters and being compelled to work longer shifts. As a result of many unable to cope with adverse affects of the new rosters, we have been seeing many leaving and an influx of new drivers. A constant passing parade of new faces.

RW: What are your impressions of the situation with the lay over breaks since the implementation of the new merged rosters?

KD: Its an absolutely terrible situation we are facing with the layover breaks now. Prior to the new rosters, for the run to Drummoyne we had a 20 minutes layover break at the terminus. Now we only get 8 minutes. In the case of the run to Bankstown, we now only 5 minutes at the terminus for our layover break.

Tempe Depot News

RW: What is the situation at the

depot?

Tempe Driver: We are continuing to be hard hit by the new rosters and changes to runs. Particularly inadequate running times and layover breaks for routes and the unevenness of run lengths. I've noticed more short tuns. Particularly, this situation is manifest with the 430. It previously went from Sydenham to Martin Place, now its just goes to Railway Square. Its a round trip with out provision of adequate layover breaks.

445 Bus Route to Balmain East Wharf & Balmain West Ferry

Since the former government cut the 445 bus route to Balmain East in 2019, peninsula residents have been left with unreliable services and poor public transport connections.

Thanks to pressure from our community, the NSW Labor Government has committed to reinstating the 445 bus to Balmain

East. They have opened public consultation on four options to help make this happen. Option A is to restore the 445 route to operate to and from Balmain East Wharf together with route 442.

This is a huge step in the right direction. Community pressure has moved them this far, now we need to see this through.

Balmain West Ferry will return to service in mid-2025. This is a huge win for our community and it wouldn't have been possible without your support. I've been working closely with residents to push the NSW Labor Government to keep their promise and return this ferry for our community, so it's fantastic to make this long overdue announcement.

When this ferry is up and running again next year it will help relieve congestion from the Rozelle Interchange and ease local traffic.

K.Shetty

VICTORIAN RAILWAY NEWS

In this issue of RW we conclude our story of West Coast Railway. As in previous issues of RW names have been changed.

RW: What was the situation regarding West Coast Railway in 2014?

Rastus: By April 2014 with new trains being built for V/Line, local committees on the Warrnambool line were asking when West Coast were going to build new trains. The answer was NO. West Coast would have to obtain a Government Grant or obtain finance to build new rolling stock. In 2009 it was planned to have one operator operate all Country trains in Victoria.

Ichabod: V/Line had returned to Government ownership and the main lines in South Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Traralgon were being upgraded for new services which were to commence in 2006.

Roscoe: In May 2006 the Victorian Railway Regulator grounded West

Coast Mainline Locomotives.

Rastus: Their mainline locomotives were former Victorian Railways S and B class locomotives which West Coast purchased in May 1993. Cracks had been discovered in the locomotives which had to be repaired. V/Line had A class locomotives as well as Freight Australia of a similar design. These locomotives in V/Line and Freight Australia were examined and were fit to operate.

Clarence: As regards West Coast Railway, with one exception it replaced the passenger trains with Buses.

Ichabod: The one train which operated was the evening train to Warrnambool and morning train from Warrnambool to Melbourne. This train operated using V/Line equipment with V/Line staff. Later this service was changed to the morning train from Melbourne with the locomotive return.

Ichabod: It was rumoured the West Coast approached the Government to see if the Government would finance

repairs to their locomotives. The Government refused. West Coast told the Government, they would hand back the contract at the end of August 2004.

Clarence: The Government announced that V/Line would assume operations of the service from September 1. The Government also announces the operating staff would be offered positions (subject to suitability) at V/Line. Length of service would be from commencement of service at West Coast.

RW: What were the issues with Head Office Staff and Drivers?

Ichabod: Problems arose as it was discovered that some Head Office Staff used to be Conductors during busy periods. These people were also taken over by V/Line.

Roscoe: The Drivers employed by West Coast were employed by Freight Australia who was acquired by Pacific National. Some of these Drivers have since been employed by V/Line.

Clarence: Maintenance Staff at Warrnambool and Ballarat were absorbed into EDI. Warrnambool staff had to transfer to Ballarat or Melbourne.

Rastus: New Zealand operations were absorbed by Toll Rail who resumed operation of Inter City Trains. In 2024, these trains are operated by Kiwi Rail which is a Government Operation.

RW: What was the situation with Hoys?

Clarence: Hoys announced they would hand the Shepparton operation back to V/Line in July 2004. Hoys staff who were trained by V/Line had to do a half day course where they were issued with V/Line uniforms and from July 1 were V/Line employees. Same seniority from when they commenced employment with Hoys.

Ichabod: All West Coast staff who operated trains had to return to Conductors class, for a four week training course to be brought up to V/Line standards. West Coast Conductor Training was four days.

Clarence: The result was V/Line took over the remaining trains for one month before the official handover date.

Roscoe: Due to shortages of rolling stock, the evening service to Warrnambool with the return morning service was combined with a Geelong service. This arrangement was to continue until August 2006. The mid afternoon train resumed the second week of September 2006.

Rastus: One locomotive was handed over to V/Line in June 2006. Given an overhaul and resumed service on the line.

Ichabod: Five carriages including the carriages modified for mobility aides were handed over to V/Line.

Roscoe: All remaining rolling stock were sold to various Railways with carriages acquired by some Vintage Railways and Freight Railways to be used as crew relay vans. Locomotives went to various leasing companies and can be seen today running around on freight trains

RW: What is the situation with the Warrnambool line in 2024?

Ichabod: Warrnambool yard has been remodelled due to Velocity trains taking over the service in the next twelve months. There are four trains a

day in workshops with three on weekends.

Rastus: Beyond Geelong a number of level crossings have been eliminated. The track has been upgraded with two automated crossing devices installed. The West Coast carriage workshops have been demolished. They didn't last ten years. Freight trains operate there weekly.

due to drinking water problems occurred.

Rastus: This report appeared on 3 AW news a few weeks ago. I heard the report on the 5pm news one evening, but it was quickly removed.

Clarence: No other details were reported, but pictures of Velocity trains operating around the system were



Clarence: West Coast Railway was used by the Liberal Party when in office to promote privatisation. West Coast were excellent with promotion and marketing of the service. V/Line has since copied some of West Coast marketing. Finally V/Line supervises the accreditation and operation of Heritage trains.

In this issue of RW Drivers, Conductors, Station Staff will discuss current events at V/Line. As in previous issues of RW, names have been changed.

RW: Can you explain to members V/Line policy regarding Social Media?

Fergus: One word, no discussion on Social Media about V/Line or talking to fellow employees and contacting Radio Stations.

Florence: V/Line was embarrassed when a report about twelve Velocity trains being withdrawn from service

circulating on Local Media with masking tape covering the drinking fountains. A report on these trains will be reported in a future issue.

RW: What is the situation regarding trains on the Shepparton line?

Roscoe: Given the last four years a fair amount of upgrade works are being carried out on the line. A new bridge has been constructed at Stratford and there have been a number of level crossings removed in the Metropolitan Area, as well as a new station at Pakenham East.

Rastus: Velocity trains are now operating all trains to Bairnsdale. Locomotive hauled trains no longer operate. The Velocity trains do not have Buffet service. The only Velocity trains with Buffet facilities operate on the Albury line.

Florence: Recently the matter of Rail Shut Downs was raised in State Parliament by the local Member of Parliament for Gippsland who is a member of the National Party.

Fergus: The National Party member said because of the various occupations Gippsland line passengers are raising a fair amount of objections.

RW: Where was the National Party in 1993 when the service was cut back to Sale?

Roscoe: They were no where to be seen. In 1993 you did not have a word from the local National Party Member for East Gippsland over the closure. Despite objections from Branch Members at the time, this Member did nothing. In 1999 local branch members tried to remove this person from Parliament. It failed.

Archie: At the 1999 State Election an independent member defeated him. The other issue that removed him was "compulsory competitive tendering in Local Government." You see Local Government employees did not like their jobs being tendered every four years.

Florence: As a result of Independent Members of Parliament holding the balance of power in State Parliament in 2001, it was rumoured that Passenger Trains to Bairnsdale would return. This was achieved in 2004.

RW.: What is the other issue regarding these occupations?

Rastus: This the issue of closures on weekends due to the running of test trains for the new Metro Tunnel.

Roscoe: The tunnel will be open in 2025 and it runs from South Yarra to South Kensington. There have been a number of weekend occupations over the last twelve months resulting in the

closures which affect Gippsland services.

Archie: The lines affected are the Sunbury line from North Melbourne to Sunshine and the Dandenong line from Caulfield to Melbourne. When testing occurs buses replace trains from North Melbourne to Sunshine. V/Line trains to Bendigo can still operate as V/Line has its own line to Sunshine. With V/Line Gippsland Service trains terminate at Pakenham East with Buses to Melbourne. This is what's making passengers upset. Due to the removal of point work on Caulfield V/Line, services cannot operate. They used to operate over the Frankston line if occupations were on the Dandenong line to Caulfield as well as Pakenham Cranbourne trains.

Florence: Suburban passengers are able to travel to Caulfield where they change to a Frankston train to continue their journeys. Some of our V/Line employees who live on the line when traveling from Caulfield to South Yarra have noticed no test train operating. Another complaint from these employees is no notices are placed at stations on the Cranbourne Pakenham line.

Archie: The notice maybe over their mobile phones but there are passengers who do not use a mobile phone and are not on Social Media. Because there is no bus replacement it is not deemed as an occupation. You only find out on the day of travel.

Fergus: There are fourteen trains each way on both Saturday and Sunday so

events. We also work on a telegram channel called mash'hirot, through which we spread radical content and expose the public to anarchist views.

Q: What is the landscape of anarchist groups around Israel? Are you networked with anarchist groups like Radical Haifa?

A: We are not affiliated with Radical Haifa, but one of us knows a founder who says he is no longer active (although as individuals they are still doing what they can). For now, we just bring flags and come to protests organized by the radical bloc. To look the occupation in the eye and stand together. We are also in contact with Kompas.

Unfortunately, most of the anarchists

why doesn't V/Line Management negotiate with Metro Trains by arranging for V/Line trains to operate over the lines between tests? This could be worked out as it is an hour between trains. A path could be arranged.

Florence: This solution may work. We do not know of signaling issues. With the tunnel due to open next year, there will be future closures before the opening. Why doesn't V/Line do a leaflet drop on the Gippsland trains explaining these occupations? We wonder?

RW: What about Retired Employees Paid Travel?

Fergus: As a result of the EBA being signed off, any employee who started after August 28, 1999 is now entitled to a Retirement Pass as well as their spouse or partner, after completing 20 years service.

Florence: If an employee started at Metro Trains or Yarra Trams after 1999 and transferred to V/Line after a few years is entitled to a pass after 20 years service.

RW: Once again we have run out of space.

Rastus and Roscoe: In having the final say. The restoration of the Retirement Pass corrects an injustice to employees who commenced service after 1999. If you want to comment about V/Line management and their injustices just send a letter to RW.

Gaza & West Bank Crisis Continued from page 2

A: For now, we just go to protests against the genocide in Gaza, wave anarchist flags together and take pictures with censored faces. But we have plans when we have more people, like creating our own block at the protests and communicating with more anarchists and anti-authoritarian leftists in the country.

For now, it is about reaching as many organizations/individuals as possible and cooperating with them, inviting them to demonstrations against occupation and war, establishing contact with them and organizing

here are not activists because they are very tired and usually have their own personal problems, but there are still some anarchist activists among the radical left here, which are also very sparse. I would say that 1% of Israelis are non-Zionists, and that is very bad, although there are organizations like the Communist Party and some NGOs like Zochrot. There is also a local punk scene that is associated with anarchism and anti-fascism.

Q: Are you in contact with any Palestinian groups, anarchist or otherwise?

A: Yes, we have many Palestinian comrades and friends. Some of us are even members of Palestinian organizations that welcome anti-

Zionist Jews, such as Fauda.[Fauda is an anarchist movement in Palestine that is more insurgent than communist.]

We establish connections with other organizations and groups. Currently, due to the situation, there is not much anarchist activity in Israel, and especially not among the Palestinians. The state is silent and persecutes them. That is why they are not so active these days. We make connections with those we do, we try to unify them all.

Q: How did October 7 affect the conversations going on in radical circles around Israel? Did it strengthen or weaken the movement?

A: The Hamas attack made it so terrible. The general political opinion of the country shifted a lot to the right and it broke the "resistance" that was there against the government. (They were mostly liberals, so I don't know if that really counts). Yet the real ones are still as anti-Zionist and anti-war as ever.

The Gaza uprising could be so good if it didn't involve such war crimes. Today, it is harder than ever to convince Israelis to stop believing in Zionism. We lost people who died in this attack and we also lost people ideologically. Once they were all so radical and revolutionary and now many of them have become average Zionist rightists. Of course, those of us who haven't changed our minds blame it all on the Israeli entity and have decided that we as anarchists should be united today more than ever.

It's hard for anyone who doesn't support the war, but for us it was just the beginning. Because of this situation, we have decided that it is time to act and unite. So we started initiating meetings and events and that's how the group started.

Q: How widespread do you think non-Zionist or anti-Zionist sentiment is in Israel and how are these views suppressed by the government?

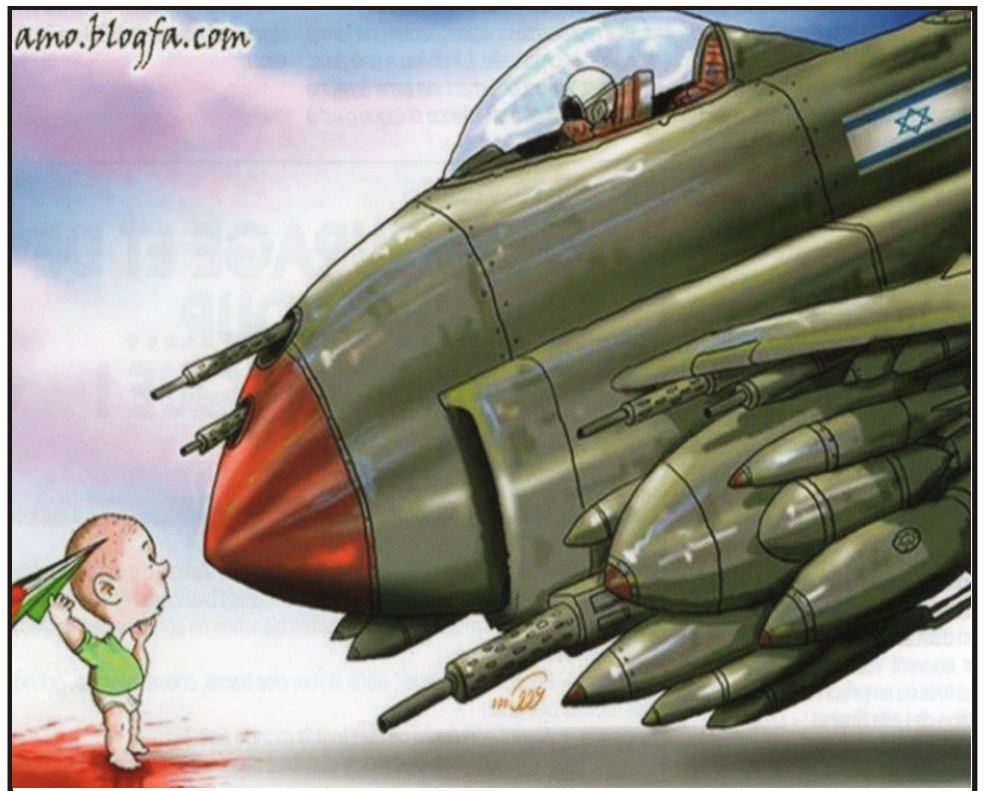
A: Anti-Zionism is really, really unpopular. We are literally a minority of minorities. There are barely a thousand of us and we are very, very weak. The Zionist regime is so dictatorial that it always sanctions us. I do not think that in the next few years the Israeli police will tolerate any outright anti-Zionist demonstration.

People who publicly speak out against Zionism face problems when trying to find work.

The government is stalking Facebook or Instagram accounts and even firing Palestinians who express grief over the killings in Gaza. Of course, they also try to silence and deplatform anti-Zionist Jews. This has become an illegitimate view for most people in Israel.

Q: What do you think of those like Tal Mitnich who refuse to fight in the Israel Defence Forces?

A: We have a lot of respect for him and



other rejects. Some of our members may not agree with their pacifist leanings, but we still really respect them, especially these days because there is a consensus on "defence of the fatherland". At least the naysayers have a conscience, while most Israelis support the genocide.

Q: How do you hope the conflict will be resolved in the short and long term?

A: Members have different opinions. Some believe in a short-term truce and a long-term joint anarchist revolution in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. One commented that he thinks we need to create a joint people's militia for both nations to protect them from the Zionists and Hamas instead of continued bloodshed.

Q: As anarchists, what is your vision for the future of the region for both Palestinians and Israelis?

A: We wish for a multicultural, decentralized space in Palestine like Rojava (Syrian Kurdistan/Northeastern Syria).

We want Arabs and Jews to live here in solidarity, but because the Palestinians live under an oppressive regime that takes everything from them and expels them, the struggle becomes more difficult.

Some members might say that we must allow the Palestinians to establish

their own state or live in a binational state. It's complicated because as anarchists we have an overall vision of a shared society based on solidarity that exists without the need for government. But right now the Israeli regime is committing so many injustices and murders that we have no choice but to cooperate with the Palestinian struggle as it exists and hope to create other Jewish-Arab anarchist movements later.

Q: How can anarchists abroad support your cause and those suffering in Gaza and the West Bank? Are there organizations that you think people should donate funds to?

A: Anarchists around the world can

help us by spreading our message and the struggles we are participating in. Share about the anti-war protests in Israel (specifically organized by The Radical Bloc) and follow our account, like and share our posts. Anti-war protests in Israel are barely known internationally, while literally no one knows about the existence of

anarchists here.

It's really important for us that people abroad see our struggle against colonialism, just like the white South Africans who stood up against apartheid even though they were settlers. There are many white American leftists who oppose colonialism while they are real settlers

just like us, but many of them really hate us [because some of us are Israelis] and we just don't understand them because there is no difference between them. [settlers here and in the US].

UKRAINE: CRISIS & WAR

A report from the Ukrainian anarchist group Assembly.

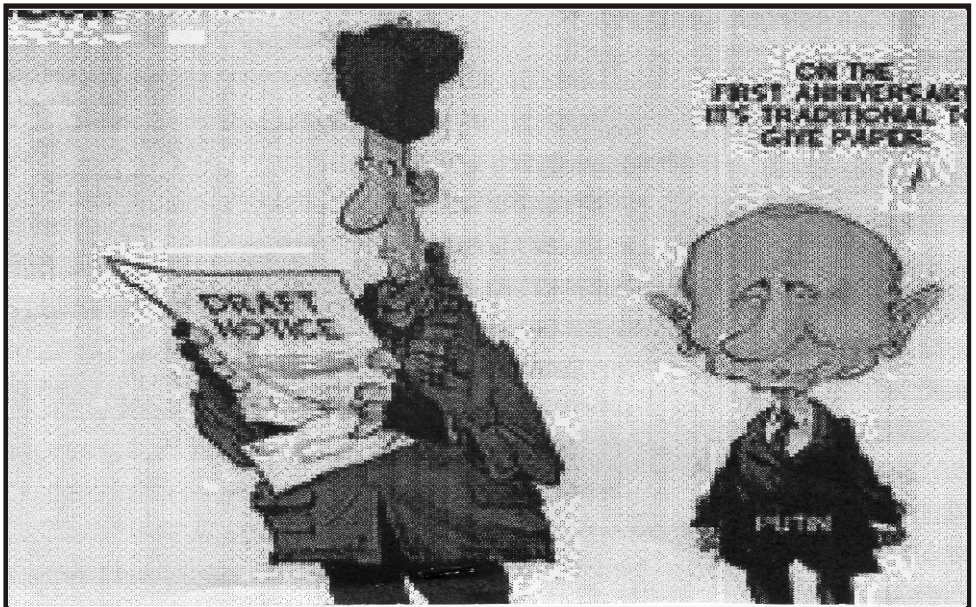
Trouble in the Ukrainian & Russian Armies

In the lead-up to the US elections, the flight of personnel from the Ukrainian Armed Forces since the middle of 2024 took on the character of an avalanche, threatening to leave the regime without an army in the near future. According to Ukraine's Office of the Prosecutor General, from January 2022 to September 2024, almost 90 thousand criminal proceedings were opened because of such facts, and the majority were initiated since the beginning of the current year: 35,307 out of 59,606 cases of unauthorised leaving of a unit (Article 407 of the Criminal Code) and 18,196 out of 29,521 cases of desertion (Article 408 of the Criminal Code). The largest number of desertions was registered in the regions of Zaporozhye (6,144), Kharkov (5,771) and Donetsk (5,318), while the regions of Donetsk (8,574), Dnepropetrovsk (3,308), Zhytomyr (2,433) and Lviv (2,170) are leading in terms of cases of unauthorised leaving of units (SZCh in Ukrainian). These are only the cases to which the authorities reacted. However, even of these, only 4,698 cases of unauthorised leaving and 442 cases of desertion reached the court. 2,592 and 414 cases were closed, respectively (during the same period).

9,487 criminal proceedings were registered in Ukraine under the mentioned two articles in October

2024. For comparison, in January 2024, there were initiated only 3,448 criminal proceedings. And in total, from February 2022 to November 1, 2024, already 95,296 criminal cases were opened. (The composition of one brigade in the Armed Forces of Ukraine is from 3 to 5 thousand persons.) Although both these articles may apply not only in the AFU, much less is heard about escapes from other

I found out that my acquaintance is in SZCh. They had to go to the Kursk [region], he says that more than 40 people left everything and went home. He says: "they gave me some dispatch letter, I looked at it and realised that it's a one-way ticket." He doesn't live in the place [where he is officially registered], got a job, I don't know exactly how he got out, he doesn't really want to talk about it. He



Ukrainian armed structures, as, in particular, our interlocutor did, who deserted from the State Border Guard Service.

Since August, information has been leaking out from time to time about people who escaped their units before being sent to the Kursk operation.

For example, the following was reported about the 82nd Airborne Assault Brigade, which took part in last year's southern counteroffensive and is considered an elite and one of the best equipped units. "On August 10,

has a normal medical form, he was a sergeant in the army, by conscription. He was taken near the house, but he wouldn't budge, and then I learned that he's at home. [At first] Every day 1-2 people, and then, after they found out that they were going to Kurshchyna, many fled [...]. It's not so far from me, although he's not very visible now. But judging by everything, literally only a few stand trial, it's just that their number is very large. I'm sorry but I can't provide more information. I don't think he will want to either. Such are the times," a resident of the

Khmelnytsky region told us on October 9.

“Greetings to Ukrainian and Russian deserters from the streets of Turin”. Sent us by our local reader. “Zelensky is an executioner reportedly on the streets of Zaporozhye.” From our reader, also a month ago:

Those sent to NATO training grounds are massively deserting too. "The main thing is to have a foreign passport with you; 29 people left our battalion in Poland. Everything depends on the situation, at the first opportunity, they are there for a month, there will be many chances. Civilian clothes so that they don't take them. Most likely, they will soon tighten the screws in training centers abroad, or will stop transporting the caught elite storm troopers there altogether... too many want to get out of a foreign training center) Now they are already transporting many times less for training abroad than at the beginning.

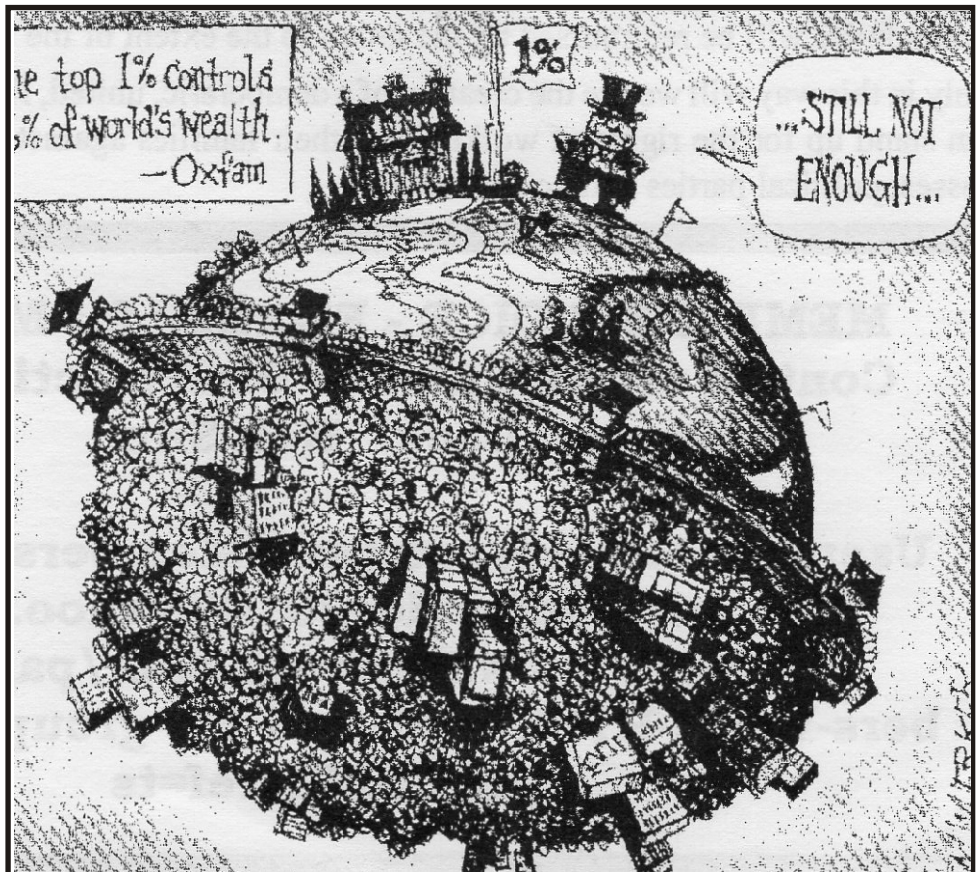
And soon they will probably shut this down all together or will make some kind of bail, like in North Korea. These ***** earn money that Europe allocates, our battalion took everyone who wanted to go, after Poland they went to Germany for a week exactly now. Recently, a law was Passed [in Ukraine] that after the first SZCh you can return with a transfer to another unit, but they will immediately send you to slaughter, such laws don't attract". This is what a user named Ruslan wrote on September 13 in the open Telegram chat UFM for mutual aid in crossing the border. Our recent material "Run away, guys, I'll be back!" also tells the dizzying story of a Ukrainian who was captured as he was trying to cross the border, forcibly drafted, and then escaped from the training unit with the one he acquainted in captivity of border guards, managed to finally go out through the Carpathian Mountains and has received protection in Europe. Migrant smugglers also admit that, if deserters were rare among their clients before, since about May, at least one fugitive military man has appeared in almost every group.

The early October loss of Ugledar (Vuhledar in Ukrainian), the "steppe

Monte Cassino" in the south of Donbass, was another link in the chain of declining controllability of troops after Ukrainian units north of Kharkov could not withstand the barrage of fire on May 10 and unauthorisedly retreated from the border 10 km closer to the city. The first case of collective disobedience of fighters in the Ugledar direction became known in the winter, and from the Russian side: 21 Storm troopers of the 155th Marine Brigade of the Pacific Fleet locked themselves in a room, refused to follow orders from the command and recorded a video statement about heavy losses during the assault on Novomikhaylovka, then taken in April. They were threatened with execution.

In the fall, the disintegration of the Ukrainian defense of Ugledar became

"What has been happening in Vuhledar over the past few days, in general, is called a local collapse of the front. The chaotic retreat of the remnants of the 72nd Separate Mechanised Brigade, which still has not received an order to withdraw, and then leaving the town within three days after months of successful defense, is something I have warned about many times since January 2024. It will only get worse.[...]Here, for example, is information about the last, before the surrender of Vuhledar, replenishment of personnel of the 72nd Brigade. 50 new recruits, mostly aged 52-56, arrived in the brigade. 30 of them were immediately sent to rear units and hospitals, as they were not fit for front-line service due to their health (because the enlistment office was implementing a draft plan and



one of the key reasons for the retreat from it. Volodymyr Boiko, a Kiev journalist serving in the 241st Territorial Defense Brigade of the AFU, accuses the regime of preparing a capitulation and insufficient repressiveness towards the military. In particular, on October 3, he wrote in his blog:

mobilising the sick). Of the remaining 20, 16 servicemen deserted on the

DEBATE ON INDUSTRIAL & COMMUNITY ORGANISING & STRATEGY

Anarchist Organising & Failure

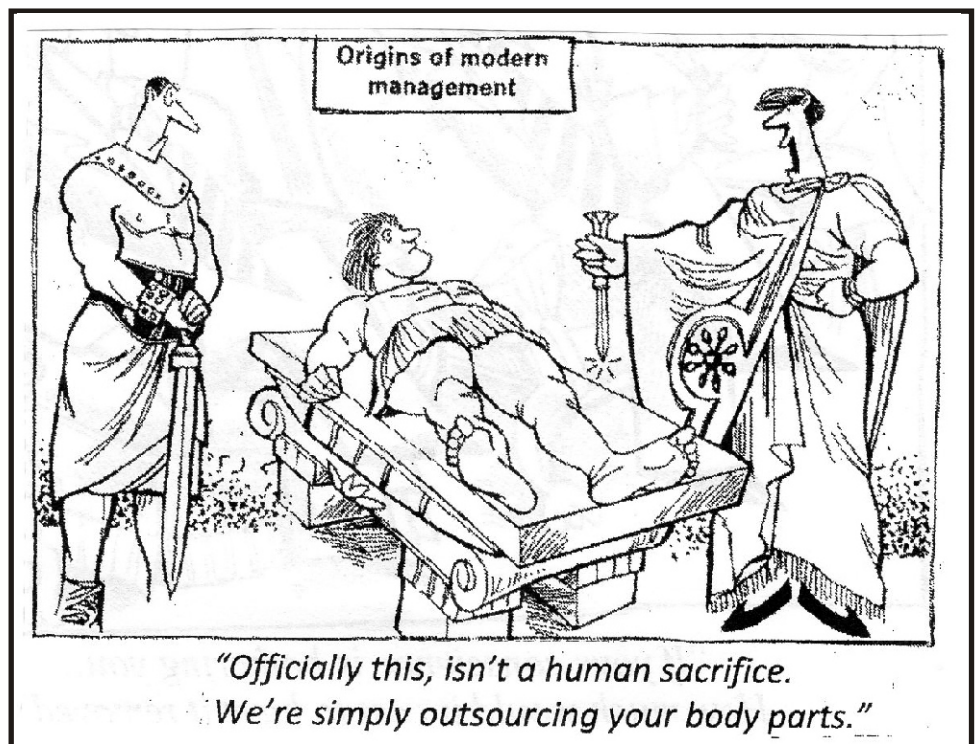
A loss through Anarchist organising is worth more in terms of experience gained than winning through methods that take power out of your hands. For example, organising as equals in a housing block/workplace, forming an open assembly or network that then takes action to win a demand and which creates ongoing dialogue, counter-culture and relationships of solidarity, is worth much more -even if it fails- than calling up the Residential Tenancy Authority or tackling things as individuals through lawyers or appealing to an Ombudsman. I'm not saying that people shouldn't do the latter (even if in our experience they don't often get results anyway and in a lot of cases backfire) but rather that even these things should be done collectively as much as possible.

Reflecting on an example of my own is an organising drive I was involved in kick-starting through Brisbane Solidarity Network back in 2012. Basically there was a 2 month process of meeting with a tenant who had made contact with BSN over a slumlord's antics. To set the scene, this place was a boarding house that marketed to people in vulnerable situations (eg: homelessness, sickness etc). They charged an insane \$180 per week for a single room with no windows, the shared bathroom and kitchen were decrepit and tenants were monitored via a surprisingly advanced camera surveillance system. There was a rule board full of ridiculous rules, for example you were not allowed to openly discuss sex, gates were locked at 9pm so if you came home late you had to climb a fence (a previous tenant had told us he was given the boot for this reason) etc.

This particular tenant that contacted us had left the tenancy but the slumlord kept the bond, stating that because the

tenant had raised the bond money through a charity she shouldn't be able to have it back. Upon meeting with her a couple of times over coffee and sharing landlord stories (a discussion which became political very quickly) we arranged to go suss the place out. Three BSN'ers met with her at the boarding house and straight off the bat the slumlord barked at the tenant about not really being happy with visitors coming and started questioning what we were doing there. We talked with a

Anyway, we gradually got more tenants on side with the idea of supporting the tenant in question to do a delivery demand to get the bond money back (basically this involves getting as many people as possible as a show of strength & solidarity to support the tenant in collectively delivering to the landlord a letter listing the grievance, the demand and when action will be escalated if not resolved). The process of writing & refining the letter collectively in itself



few other tenants at the back about what we were about and suddenly 6 people had surrounded us and were eager to share stories of how the landlord was continually screwing them over. This was in itself a really good experience and BSN still has connection with one of these tenants, who was to some extent politicised by the process. Also worth noting BSN had a discussion day about this issue in Queen's Park, and we met someone who overheard us walking past that used to live in the boarding house - he was stoked and started chatting about his experience there.

was a useful process, and a politicizing one at that, as through the process we discussed the nature of the landlord/tenant relationship, moving to the idea that even though this landlord in particular happened to be someone with an abusive personality and enjoyed dominating the tenants and overtly breaking tenancy law, the issue isn't the landlords personality - it's their existence as a class. Bigger political questions like private property, the development of landlordism, hierarchy, State power etc also inevitably came up, and I feel the discussion added further clarity to everyone's ideas. Also useful

politically was the idea that law and rights don't exist just because they are decreed from above on a piece of paper of they were won through struggle and have to be maintained through struggle and a nourishing, resistant culture that doesn't let authority take an inch back. "Laws are iron chains for the poor but cobwebs for the rich."

We agreed that it was time to strike the iron, the day came for action, we had heaps of supporters show up and.. the tenant didn't show up. We heard later that she had a hectic personal situation come up (which happens all the time when you're already marginalized, living in poverty and in crisis mode). Because of this she bailed interstate and moved into a friend's place and the organising drive ended. Now from one angle this organising drive was a loss; the demand wasn't ceded, but on the other hand the organising process led by the tenant was an empowering one, a form of collective education where people learnt a new way to deal with grievances rather than roll over and take it. Most importantly the tenant herself was thankful and reduced to tears that people would take the time and extend themselves to make her issue their own (solidarity).

Obviously this could have gone further if the demand had been won, as the aim is to show people that direct action and solidarity, organising together collectively through assemblies rather than top down hierarchies, unaccountable representatives and bureaucracy not only can win demands, but facilitates a process that has the potential to grow into a culture of working class resistance and forms of self-organisation that can't be demobilised from above (and ultimately which can assert itself to take more and more control back over life).

On the other hand I was once involved in an organising drive where the tenant decided to go through the RTA to try and resolve an issue where the boarding-house landlord had out of the blue claimed that she owed a whole bunch of money (which she didn't) simply because the landlord wanted to kick her out and move a close friend of his in. The RTA was automatically on the side

of the landlord and signed the tenant up to an unsustainable payment plan which eventually made her homeless—basically these organisations turn social-justice issues into business as usual, prescriptive solutions, ignoring the huge differences in power in the landlord-tenant relationship.

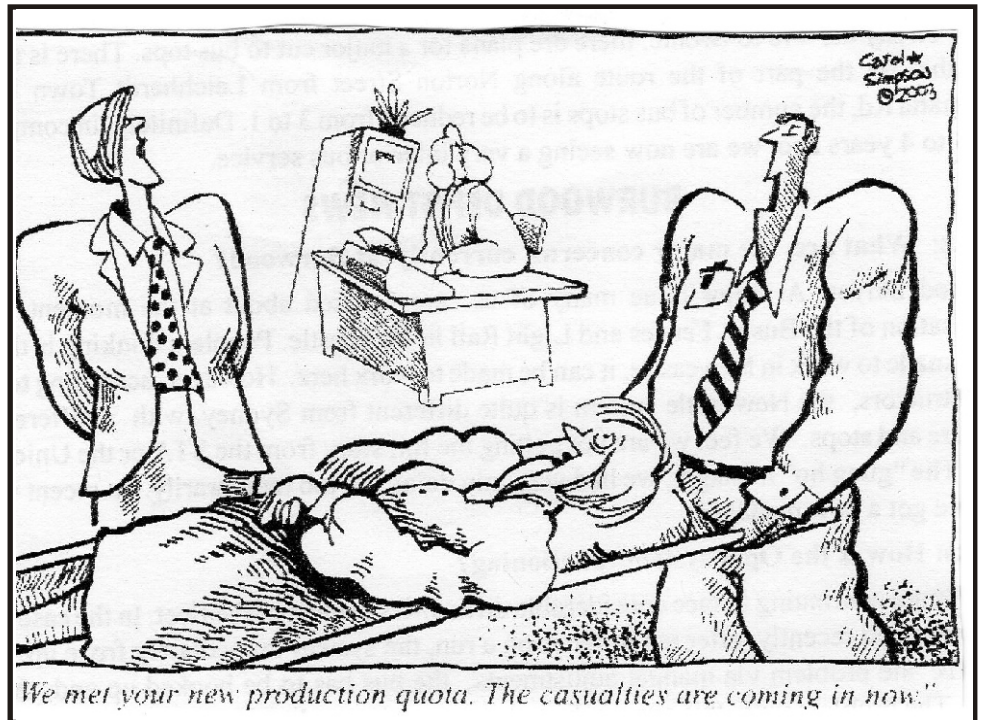
I'll give one more example where the struggle was won, but at the expense of the experience of ongoing collective organising (just because it's a good story).

BSN were involved in organising a restaurant in the Brisbane CBD. The owner of this restaurant hired foreigners without working visas, knowing full well that their situation meant that it would be easier to control and exploit them. There were many

sorting it out" it said. I wrote back that we hadn't done anything and asked what happened. "We got the money back. Someone put on a high pitched voice and threatened to hurt him (the boss) if he didn't give back the wages".

I think it's important to share stories like this, because despite how small they are, successful organising counters the social memory of defeat so many of us have. It also shows basic nuts and bolts class-based organising in practice, something that doesn't come natural to many people that do want to change the world.

We aren't trying to build victories per say, though our methods should lead to victories, we are ultimately trying to build a culture of resistance and dual power, a culture where people are empowered to run society and take



issues, but things reached boiling point when some money went missing from the till and the boss made every worker pay back the same equal amount of money from their wages. We were contacted by two workers, who after discussing options and strategy said that they would meet with other workmates and get back to us on their decision. A week passed and I contacted one of the workers via txt to get an update and see if their was still an organising drive. The reply I got back was unexpected "Thanks for

control of their lives, a culture where top-down organisations that take power out of the peoples hands cannot use grassroots struggles as springboards into political careers, electioneering and party politics that demobilise/disempower people from above and sell them out down the river due to the necessity of compromise and mediation that it creates.

By Kuro Thanks to Libcom

Reply:

Your organising drives illustrate a

classic case of a leftist grouping squandering limited resources and personnel in strategically irrelevant and peripheral sectors. While you are oblivious of the need to focus on one sector of strategic importance which can change the situation on a major scale re tackling the employer offensive, neo liberal push, environmental crisis and war drive. This action would take the form of facilitating the launching of a strike/direct action wave movement across industry. Changing radically the climate in the workers' movement toward adoption of direct action. In this context major syndicalist oriented splits from the corporate unions could occur leading to transitional steps toward a syndicalist oriented mass syndicalist union confederation. The NSW Sparks and associated networks played a significant role in helping get the early phases of such a movement going in March 2004 associated with Drivers for Affirmative Action Group involving 600 drivers waging a "work to rule" campaign in the NSW railways. While in such contexts, major potential syndicalist oriented splits have occurred in the Corporate unions and massive growth in anarcho-syndicalist unions, such as the 1947 and 1968 strike waves in France and the strike wave in Spain following the collapse of the Franco Regime in the late 1970's. (1)

The Corporate Unionism Phenomena

In your account, you totally ignore the role of these "corporate unions" aligned with the ALP octopus and interwoven with the corporate sector by innumerable threads. These corporate unions via their entanglement with "enterprise bargaining" and the industrial relations racket and their associated role in "smoke and mirrors" performances, often involving industrial campaigns set to up to fail and fake community picket lines involving various leftist groups particularly from the Trotskyist heritage but also those who wave red and black flags. This manipulation and sleight of hand

of the corporate union officials with the aid of the corporate media play a crucial role in undermining the morale of workers in strategic sectors and elite groups which could assist via direct action workers in peripheral sectors and small workplaces and those in the community facing spiraling rents, consumer goods costs, environmental havoc, etc.

An important example of this type of direct action and collaboration of a syndicalist influenced union and workers in peripheral areas and community groups was the NSW BLF (Builders' Labourers' Federation) in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Particularly with the BLF's famous "Green Bans."(2)

Another interesting historical example involving an explicit anarcho-syndicalist union the Spanish CNT (National Confederation of Labour) was during the Barcelona mass rent strike of 1931 involving 100,000's. A key factor of the CNT's growth in the 20's and 30's was the role of its transport union in taking direct action where necessary to help organise innumerable small and large workplaces in the Barcelona entertainment and retail industries which became the union's key strongholds. In regard to the Rent strike, the local CNT organisation worked with local anarchist influenced community associations to wage successful rent strikes on a massive scale to fight spiraling rents and prices. (3)

Industrial Court Monkey Business

Let's assume if you had been more successful in your organising drives. You may be seen by workers in small workplaces and the community acting as activoids and on a micro scale like the corporate union officials. They occasionally do help a few of their members out with issues via lobbying and community pickets. Certainly getting grass roots discussion and breaking through atomisation is positive, but not sufficient. If your work did lead to something big on the work place or community levels you would likely face the full weight of the

State in the shape of police and Court attacks and isolation on the industrial front by the corporate union bosses. Heading off industrial solidarity critical to winning the struggle. Leading inevitably to disaster. Particularly on the industrial front the workers' industrial action you helped get going, would likely to be determined by the un-Fair Work Court as "illegal" in breach of enterprise bargaining or something.

The workers you were assisting could face large fines. The Court, the Govt. and the Corporate union bosses may decide to make an example of these workers to deter others. A case like that occurred with some 100 or so construction workers who were CFMEU members in WA some years back. The imposing of fines by the Industrial Court is not automatic and is based on the balance of class forces and the machinations of the ALP Octopus which many of the Judges, the legal fraternity and union bosses are entangled.

An interesting example of how the set up works in practice is in Sept. 1999 when the NSW State Secretary of the now RTBU called an "illegal" NSW wide one day lightning rail strike to out manoeuvre militants assisted by the ASN who were initially successful in getting moves for a grass roots controlled campaign going to fight privatisation. In this case, the industrial court imposed no fines on the union despite the massive disruption caused by the strike and its "illegality". The sabotage and isolation tactics of the corporate union bosses have played a key role in the defeat of key workers' struggles such as the SEQEB strike of 1995 in Qld, the Patrick's Lockout of 1998, the Melbourne Tramways lockout of 1990, etc.

In previous years BSN had been approached to get involved in the NSW based Sparks ASN transport workers paper and work to develop a Qld section, but you were not interested. This work would have made tremendous strategic sense and a much more appropriate focus with your limited resources and personnel. Particularly your members and periphery could have played an invaluable and long term sustainable

role in the paper's distribution and doing interviews with workers. As such activity could have been conducted during people's daily routines. Avoiding the mistake made by the Angry Workers World group in its organising drive in factories and warehouses in West London, some years back. They burnt out their periphery of helpers/supporters in unsustainable distribution of their magazine and flyers at factory gates early in the mornings.

In conclusion, this strategic industrial organising proposed, using the available tools such as the NSW based

Sparks would be a much more appropriate way forward for groups like yourselves to tackle the corporate set up. It would play an important role in helping catalyse the processes leading to the establishment of self managed workers economic combative organisations necessary to facilitate the over throw of the capitalist set up and realise an anarchist society. M.

Notes

1. See *"From Corporate Bureaucratic Unionism to Grass Roots controlled Direct Action"*

Unionism: Activity & Perspectives for Australia Today" From RW Vol.41 No.3 (235) Dec. 2023 - Jan. 2024 www.rebelworker.org and Libcom.org

2. See *"Debate on the BLF " in RW Sept.-Oct. 2023 Vol.41.No.2(234) & "Green Bans, Red Union" by Meredith & Verity Burgmann.*

3. See *"The Barcelona Rent Strike of 1931" in "For Anarchism" Edited by David Goodway.*

ALBERT GRACE 1912 - 1968

Albert Grace was born on the south side of the Thames in London and at an early age became a docker, working mainly in and around the cold stores. He entered the anarchist movement in the late 1920s working with Mat Kavanagh and with Wilf McCartney in the unemployed movement. Later on he worked with the young Albert Meltzer in support of the Spanish anarchist movement from 1936.

He left the docks in the mid-1950s, and took up a second trade as a skilled electrician, first working in London then as a result of constant victimisation, in the West Country where he worked in Bristol for a time., subsequently working in various other parts of west and southern England in various large contracting jobs.

For a time he lived at Farnborough, near Bath, and then finally moving to Swindon. In 1952-3 he was active in the production and distribution of *The Syndicalist*, an anarchist monthly aimed at industry which was edited by Philip Sansom and Albert Meltzer and others. He was a regular supporter of the anarchist platform at Hyde Park every Sunday and he was always ready to support any propaganda activities , particularly in the docks and other industries, where he felt that anarchist propaganda should be concentrated.

He was extremely active in the unofficial dockers' committees involved in the dock strikes between 1945-1961. He was close friends with

docker militants like Bert Aylward, Fred Morel, Harry Constable and probably knew Ernst Schneider. During this period he was a member of the Transport and General Workers Union. In an article written by Charlie Pottins on Communist Party surveillance of Trotskyist and anarchist militants there is mention of Dennis Goodwin, a CP organiser in the docks to Betty Matthews of the Party's

criticism of the Party" (letter 18th June 1954).

With the arrest of seven Liverpool and London dockers on conspiracy to strike charges in 1951, Albert was heavily involved in the strike of 8,000 dockers in protest. He brought a contingent of dockers to demonstrations outside the Old Bailey on a daily basis. Eventually the seven were released . In 1967 he was



London District Committee in 1954 on one Brace (sic) " associated for a considerable period with the Anarchists" and a member of Central No1 Branch of the ETU (Electrical Trades Union) . " He is now said to be working in the docks having left the electrical industry and is in touch and probably working with Constable. He is said to have contact with our lads on the various contracting jobs when he was in the electrical work and was always prepared to have a go with us but always expressed a narking

involved in the short lived anarchist paper *Ludd1* produced by Mike "Digger" Walsh with a run of several thousand during the dockers' strike distributing it outside the docks in the early morning with Walsh and others. He was greatly respected by other dockers in London and was probably the lone anarchist docker.

Walsh worked closely with Albert in the electrical industry in Bristol and the West Country and warmly

NEWS & NOTES

Some of the most important news in the NSW Railways covered up by the Corporate Media is an important victory won by grass roots activists assisted by the ASN involving the installing of a functional guard's compartment on the newly introduced N.I.F. (New Intercity Fleet) trains. Corporate Media outlets have falsely credited this victory to the ALP aligned union hierarchy. It followed an intense campaign going back to 2016. The introduction of D.O.O. (Driver Only Operation) on the new trains would be an important step toward privatisation, with the removal of the guard job on these trains and others significantly reducing a private operator's costs. However, the Minns ALP NSW Government has not given up on its privatisation hidden agenda, as it is likely to be pursuing a new privatisation strategy with the creation of the new regional trains entity. (See article page 5.)

Other important news in the NSW Railways, is the continuing "set up to fail" Enterprise Bargain Agreement Campaign waged by the RTBU officials. The campaign has been characterised by its legalistic and "On Again and Off Again" aspects together with the pursuit of a bizarre demand such as the 24 hours running of trains. (See article page 3.)

In Sydney Buses we focus on many on-the-job problems, particularly the continuing havoc wreaked by the new merged rosters introduced in Region 6 associated with the TWU/RtBU & Transit Systems EBA 2023. We also look at other problems facing bus drivers. (See article page 8.)

In this edition we note the passing away of John Lee, who helped us considerably over many years with the technical aspects of our operations.

Help Build RW. Your help is sought with its distro. Why not order bulk copies to sell at your local shopping center on Saturday mornings, leave at the lunch room at work and at you local café, library or Cinema? Your help on the financial plane is also welcome.

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Where we stand:

1. Our aim is to create a free and equal society.
2. We are a revolutionary labour movement that uses as its only means of struggle, direct action in all its forms: occupations. Strikes, boycotts, sabotage, etc. We are independent from all reformist and hierarchical unions and political parties, and we are creating an alternative to these and existing society. We do not seek to gain political power, but rather to see it distributed amongst all.
3. We are a network of anarcho-syndicalists practicing co-operation and mutual aid. We have an equal part in making decisions. Responsibilities within the network are subject to agreement by the members.
4. We are engaged in struggle where we work and where we live, to develop self managed production, distribution and servicing for the world community to meet human needs rather than profit. We give solidarity to others in their struggles.
5. We are fighting to abolish all authoritarian institutions such as the State (including its communist variety), capitalism, all hierarchical and oppressive divisions between people.
6. We have no country and are organised on an international basis in opposition to oppression everywhere. The ASN is striving to build a viable revolutionary syndicalist movement in Australia as part of a world wide movement able to meet the challenge of the global employer offensive.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
I would like more information about the Anarcho-Syndicalist Network. Please send me information.
Name.....
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General Secretary
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**REBEL WORKER
Web Site:**

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recollected "the help and advice that he gave the up-and-coming generation of "sparks"". He particularly recalled when he was sparks job steward when a contracting company was installing electrical work in the reactor core at Hinckley Point around 1960. During long battles and bitter negotiations some of the highest pay and best working conditions on a major construction job were won. He often worked and engaged in militant activities whilst in ill-health. Like many working class militants of the period he was shy of writing or

speaking on general propaganda platforms, whilst being keen to distribute and support propaganda. He had many friends in the working class movement outside of the anarchist movement, and introduced many for the first time to anarchist papers and other publications.

A family man, he was the father of several sons, two of them, Peter and Michael, named after Kropotkin and Bakunin. He died on April 14th 1968 at the age of 56 in Swindon following an unsuccessful operation on December 20th, 1967. His cremation was attended by a large number of activists

among electricians and other building workers.

Nick Heath

Sources:

Obituary by Joe Thomas in Freedom, May 25th 1968.

Lobster 96:

<http://www.8bitmode.com/rogerdog/lobster/lobster31.pdf>

<https://libcom.org/article/ludd-newsletter-1966-seamens-strike>

Samsung workers' strike in India

2/1/25 Samsung Electronics was established in India in 2007. It has two factories: one in Chennai (formerly Madras) which manufactures televisions, refrigerators and washing machines; the other in Noida, in the suburbs of New Delhi, which has been the largest smart phone manufacturing plant in the world since July 2018.

The Chennai factory has 1,700 permanent employees. It officially has two shifts working nine hours, the first from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the second from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. In reality, all employees work at least eleven hours a day, four days a week, and earn on average the equivalent in rupees of 300 dollars (or 270 euros). In 2023, the

annual increase was the equivalent of 41.76 dollars. The 2024 wage, announced in May, is worth \$29.83, and only a small number of permanent workers have received it in full. The highest annual wages for employees range from \$596.58 to \$656.23.

A total of 1,500 permanent employees at the plant have been on strike since September 9, 2024. They have been demanding that their newly formed union, the Samsung India Labour Welfare Union (Silwu), a member of the powerful CITU union, be officially recognized by the company.

They have also demanded higher wages and improved working hours. Samsung sued Silwu in a district court, seeking a temporary injunction to prevent union

slogans and speeches in and around the plant. The judge only called for a speedy resolution of the dispute. Samsung Electronics warned the strikers that they would not receive any wages if they continued to protest and that they would be fired, escalating the dispute. The management email said: "You will not be entitled to any wages from 09/09/2024 until the date you report to work again on the basis of 'No work no pay'." The strike was the first by Samsung Electronics in India, but since July, more than 30,000 Samsung group workers have been on strike in South Korea.

Samsung Electronics workers in India ended their strike after a month after reaching an agreement. The management "announced several welfare measures in the interest of the workers," according to a statement from T.R.B. Rajaa, the state minister of Tamil Nadu.