

The Queensland Journal of Labour History

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The Brisbane Labour History Association





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The Queensland Journal of Labour History

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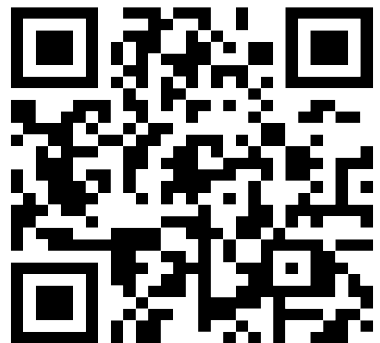
Howard Guille, Ross Gwyther, Greg Mallory, Corinne Smith and Dean Wharton
with the assistance of Craig Buckley & Allan Gardiner.

The BLHA is the Brisbane branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History. The BLHA organises seminars, lectures, meetings, conferences and publications on themes of labour history. Membership is open to all individuals and organisations who subscribe to the Association's objectives.

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Sexual harassment in the workplace is a union issue, poster. Federated Clerks Union, Queensland Branch, circa 1983

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The Queensland Journal of Labour History (QJLH) is published twice a year by the Brisbane Labour History Association (BLHA), the Queensland branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History.

The BLHA seeks to assist rather than merely to document the activities of the working class. Neither is its conception of labour history narrowly academic, spanning, rather, all social aspects of the productive process. How were class relations formed? What was the role of the state and the production process? How does labour relate to race and gender? What were the industrial and political organisations created by workers and what struggles did they fight? What are the cultural expressions of class? How have these people, those who live by their labour, recorded, remembered, and represented their own history?

Although the BLHA has a particular focus on Brisbane and Queensland, we support the study of working-class history in its local, national and transnational settings. We also encourage the study of social movements in which workers have participated or which have affected workers' social, political or economic circumstances.

Material published herein does not necessarily reflect the views of the BLHA or the editorial committee of the BLHA.

Notes for contributors

The QJLH is published in Spring and Autumn each year. Articles of any length are invited. Contributors will receive one-year membership of the BLHA.

First-person accounts of trade union, social movement and progressive political struggles and organisations are particularly welcome. We encourage oral histories.

Reports on exhibitions, seminars and research projects are sought, as are book reviews and photo essays.

Contributions can be submitted either as hardcopy (posted to the Secretary) or as an electronic file emailed to qldlabhist@gmail.com or other BLHA email addresses.

Please ensure that your name, any relevant organisational affiliation and all contact details are included in the article itself as well as in the covering email. Please also send details of any graphics, photographs, maps, drawings, cartoons etc. that might accompany your article.

The Queensland Journal of Labour History is compiled by The Brisbane Labour History Association which is a not for profit collective of volunteers.

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Editorial

Dean Wharton

The sad occasion of the passing of Susan Ryan in September last year offered an opportunity to reflect on her life's achievements. In particular the Sexual Discrimination Act and the Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act that Susan guided through Federal Parliament in 1984 and 1986. These laws were milestones in the continuing struggle for gender equality in Australia. In this issue Mary Kelly, Patricia Hovey and Constance Millar reflect on their experience as activists up to and following the Acts. Howard Guille, who co-ordinated this section, introduces the Act and details the impact of the legislation in relation to female participation in the workforce. Gender equality is of course far from being achieved.

One hundred years ago, the Australian Labor Party arguably came as close as it ever has been to being a party truly committed to a just and equal society. Following the post-World War 1 wave of left-wing revolutionary fervour, two significant conferences took place in 1921 that came close to committing the ALP to a programme of socialisation. In Melbourne in June a special trade union congress endorsed the report of a twelve-person committee, which included John Curtin, Frank Antsey and James Scullin. The report demanded revolutionary action to transform capitalism in Australia: 'long experience has proved the hopeless futility of

existing political and industrial methods, which aim at mending and rendering tolerable, and thereby perpetuating, Capitalism—instead of ending it.' The congress demanded that a special Labor Party conference should endorse as an objective 'the socialisation of industry, production, distribution and exchange.'

The Labor Party conference took place in Brisbane in October 1921. The socialisation programme was carried and amendments to water down the proposals were defeated. Only on the very last day of the conference, with many delegates having already left, did a proposal by Maurice Blackburn quash the revolutionary aspects of the proposals. According to at least one source The 'Blackburn Declaration' was not legitimately endorsed by the conference, but, nevertheless, the Party used it to commit to 'reformism' for at least the next century.

In this issue Humphrey McQueen deconstructs the 1921 socialisation programme. Why did trade union and ALP leaders decide to adopt the programme? He considers each of the objectives defined by the programme and reflects on how achievable they may have been.

Fifty years ago, Brisbane was being rocked by the anti-apartheid protests centred on the Springbok tour supported by the reactionary forces of Bjelke-Peterson's Queensland Government. Raymond

Evans writes about his experience of the protests and how the events in 1971 were a continuation of the radical movement that had sprung up in Queensland in the late 1960s.

Howard Guille will deliver the 2021 Alex Macdonald Memorial Lecture and in anticipation he has provided us with food for thought about the Queensland Heritage system. His article on the campaign to heritage-list the University of Queensland Union Complex details the problems with our current system. Although the attempt to heritage list the complex was not successful, some solace is to be gained from the fact that according to the UQ website the new 'student hub' is on hold in response to COVID-19.

In this issue Greg Mallory reviews Anne Richards book *A Book of Doors* and I review *Comrades* by Bob Broughton and his team working with The SEARCH Foundation and the ASSLH.

This issue's obituaries are of Peter Simpson, written by his friend Bob Carnegie, and of Trevor Campbell, written by his friend Lyle Barlow.

Peter's last campaign is currently being supported and pursued by the Queensland Council of Unions. His hope was that he would not die in pain from the terminal cancer that was to shorten his life. His experience inspired the Queensland Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, to bring voluntary assisted dying laws to the Queensland Parliament. His thoughts are available to view at www.facebook.com/etuqldnt/videos/745878962892019/

On an administrative note, past copies of this journal have been reformatted

and added to the branch website. In keeping with past practice, the four most recent issues of the journal posted consist of only the editorial, Presidents report and details of events. Members can obtain digital copies of these issues by contacting the BLHA. Following discussion at the last AGM, members can now opt to receive the journal in digital format only. Indicate this on your membership renewal form. There is no intention at this time to cease printing paper copies of this journal.

The BLHA has recently negotiated an agreement with EBSCO Information Services extending the availability of this journal to libraries and universities worldwide. The BLHA has a continuing separate agreement with Informit. These agreements allow us to recover some of the costs of producing this journal, allowing us to continue to fund events and create the Stella Nord Bursary. They also allow the BLHA to keep membership fees low.

The *Queensland Journal of Labour History* is not a peer-reviewed journal; for peer-reviewed academic articles see our national associations publication *Labour History*. Much of the content of the *QLH* is personal recollection and commentary, supported wherever possible by evidence. We believe the journal has a useful role to play in recording and interpreting the experience of the working class outside the currently limited opportunities within academia.

Sources:

LF Crisp, *The Australian Federal Labor Party 1901-1951*, Hale and Iremonger, (Sydney 1978)

D Day Maurice Blackburn: *Champion of the People*. Scribe. (Melbourne 2019)

President's Report

Jeff Rickertt

As this column is being written, the BLHA, in partnership with The Cloudland Collective, is finalising plans for a day of talks and discussion on the theme 'colonised labour'. The event will focus on the histories of coercion, violence, extreme exploitation, and wage theft characterising labour relations with First Nations people in Queensland since the founding acts of colonisation. Despite the testimony of survivors and their families, and an extensive body of biographical and historical writing on the topic, the truth of what happened to Indigenous people when they became workers under colonial domination continues to be dismissed by people in power, with Prime Minister Scott Morrison the most recent denialist to weigh in with a claim that slavery did not exist in Australia.

The BLHA/Cloudland Collective event will revisit the origins and patterns of colonised work in Queensland and examine its economic, social and political legacies with a view to understanding why historic injustices to First Nations people remain vital business for all workers and unions.

Of course, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islander workers were not only victims; they also resisted, both individually and collectively. These stories will also feature in the 'colonised labour' symposium. In July, one of these

struggles will be the subject of its own event. The BLHA is honoured to be collaborating with the Quandamooka people and the North Stradbroke Island Museum on Minjerribah to commemorate the nationally significant 1944 equal pay victory of the Quandamooka workers employed by the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum. After a long political and industrial struggle, these labourers were the first Indigenous employees in Australia to win the right to standard Award rates of pay. Details of the commemoration will be publicised closer to the day.

This year's Alex Macdonald Lecture will be delivered on 26 May by political economist and former Queensland Secretary of the NTEU, Dr Howard Guille. In the aftermath of the Queensland Heritage Council's rejection of an application to place the historic UQ Union Complex on the Heritage Register, Howard will discuss how we can protect 'the stories and memories of those who are structurally and socially less powerful', including workers and First Nations people.

Also, over the winter months, BLHA members can look forward to a Queensland Women's Suffrage walking tour led by historian and BLHA Committee member Dr Deborah Jordan, featuring stories and sites of significance in the struggle by labour

women to achieve universal and equal voting rights. Deborah recently spoke on this topic on the Workers' Power program on community radio station 4ZZZ. Keep an eye out for details of the walking tour.

In the second half of 2021, I will host an 'introduction to workers' history' study group, focussing on Australian labour movement history in its international context. The program will take the form of regular after-hours meetings at which introductory texts will be discussed. The program is aimed at active trade unionists who would like to learn more about the history of our movement in an encouraging and flexible environment. No background in history studies is required. Individuals or unions interested in finding out more can contact me by email at blha.exec@gmail.com.

The BLHA is also keen to encourage and promote new research in labour history. To this end, I am very pleased to announce that the Association has established an annual bursary to assist new scholarly work in our field. Named to honour the achievements of working-class activist and writer Stella Nord, the bursary will be awarded annually to assist emerging and established historians to alleviate disadvantages that would otherwise prevent them undertaking a project in Australian labour history. An amount of up to \$1000 will be available each year. People whose potential projects are impeded by financial hardship arising from economic disadvantage or gender, racial or other forms of oppression are encouraged to apply. Details are available on the BLHA's website.



Catch BLHA speakers interviewed on the first Tuesday of each month on Workers Power - 4ZZZ 102.1FM in Meanjin/Brisbane. Check our Facebook page for details

Podcasts of previous broadcasts can be found at www.workerspower4zzz.org/search/label/BLHA

Articles

The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 and the Affirmative Action Act 1986 Reflections on the passing of Susan Ryan

Susan Ryan, who died in September 2020, represented the ALP as Senator for the Australian Capital Territory from 1975 to 1988. In 1983 she became the first woman in a federal Labor cabinet as Minister for Education and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women. She was responsible for the Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) in 1984 and the Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) (AA) Act in 1986.¹

The following articles commemorate Susan's efforts. The three contributions by Patricia Hovey, Mary Kelly and Constance Millar come from people directly involved in the fight for equality before Susan Ryan's legislation. As Queensland activists, their task was extremely hard because the state in the 1970s and 80s was under the reactionary Bjelke-Petersen National Party regime.

The SDA, according to the Australian Human Rights Commission,

makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person because of their sex, gender identity, intersex status, sexual orientation, marital or relationship status, family responsibilities, because they are pregnant or might become pregnant or because they are breastfeeding.



In addition, the SDA makes sexual harassment against the law.

The SDA protects people across Australia from discrimination in a number of areas in public life, including employment, education, getting or using services, or renting or buying a house or unit.²

Discrimination was explicit in the 1980s. It was obvious, for example, in the separate columns of job ads in newspapers for “Women & Girls” and “Men and Boys”. Women's entry to various professions and occupations was controlled by a range of both explicit and surreptitious entry regimes including getting into university courses in medicine and other professional areas.

A big and contentious reform

Penny Wong spoke of the scope of the SDA reforms in her condolence speech.³

The Sex Discrimination Act encountered significant opposition both inside and outside the parliament because of the magnitude of its reform. It's hard to remember that at this time it was not unlawful to discriminate in this country on the basis of sex in employment, education, accommodation and the provision of goods and services. A woman's credit rating and earning capacity weren't enough to get a loan from a bank. She could only secure credit if her husband or her father took responsibility. Landlords refused to rent homes to single mothers. Community clubs throughout the country were able to bar women. Women were sacked because of their age, marital status or pregnancy.

There was a very strong reaction and opposition to the SDA as Margaret Thornton and Trish Luker reported at a 25-year celebration of its passage:

Not only was the shadow of the Cold War discernible in the denunciation of CEDAW [the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women] as a communist plot, but, by a convenient sleight of hand, the misogyny underpinning opposition to the Bill became imbricated with the bogeys of totalitarianism, including the suggestion that children would be confined to drab childcare centres while their mothers entered forced labour camps.⁴

Some of these attitudes were most apparent among Queensland conservatives. Senator Florence Bjelke-Petersen of the then National Party described the removal of gender stereotypes as 'social engineering.'⁵

Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen warned that the changes would mean that women had to drive bulldozers. Liberal Senator Brian Archer was equally horrified by the prospect of women performing non-traditional roles such as 'digging drains, shearing sheep, slaughtering beasts or occupied as undertakers, [and] sawmill operators'.⁶

Some context

In 1971 only 35 out of 1,210 legal professionals in Queensland were women and only ten out of 1,721 architects. There were no women train drivers or guards and only 694 out of 25,578 road transport drivers.⁷

Some changes following the SDA:

- Architecture has gone from being almost entirely male to being nearly 55% women; the number of women in the occupation increased by just under 200 times.
- Legal professions are now approaching gender equality. In occupations with an overall increase from 3,119 to 14,198, the number of women went up twenty times, making up 55% of the total increase.
- The number of women driving trains and trams increased fifty times from 0.2% of the occupation to 12.3%.
- The number of women working as earthmoving plant operators (bulldozers) increased from 41 to 1,168.

One might conclude that Joh was partly right about what the changes inspired by Susan Ryan would do to women. Clearly more are now driving trains and bulldozers. But, and it is an open question as whether this is adequate offset, more are

also solicitors and barristers.

Queensland in the 1970s: not all barren ground

Some reshaping was already underway in the 1970s. The first woman to practise as a barrister in Queensland had been admitted in 1966. Thanks to the 1965 civil disobedience action women were no longer excluded from drinking in public bars in Queensland from 1970.⁹

A Commission of Inquiry into the Status of Women in Queensland was set up in 1973.¹⁰ Its report is surprisingly progressive for the time. Although it did not recommend anti-discrimination legislation, it did advocate for education of unions and employers to promote equal opportunities within industrial awards. It also called on churches and unions to examine their structures to aim for equal participation for women.

The Women's Collective of the Brisbane Branch of the Communist Party of Australia made a pertinent and incisive submission to this Commission of Inquiry.¹¹ It is still extremely relevant and deserves to be read. Consider the statement that 'old prejudices can be translated into new practices we have already seen vis a vis women's education and employment'.¹² In other words, change might be more apparent than real. Indeed, the words, 'How old prejudices can be translated into new practices' should be recalled when we evaluate any reformist policy!

The sheer range of the analysis provided by the CPA submission impresses, for example,

In a society in the throes of accelerated technological and other changes, one area of social determinism for women has remained the more firmly entrenched

the more it loses its *raison d'être*—that of the housewife.

For what is particularly interesting about these traditional roles is that when they are examined according to the usual criteria for power—legal, economic political and sociological (e.g. the social space available, hierarchies, etc.)—those of wife and mother are nowhere guaranteed any formal rights. The full thrust of all these indices, moreover, is towards the limitation of women's lives to the point of denying many of them not only avenues for self-expression and self-direction but also avenues for involvement in any of the above spheres. The character of the media in disguising this powerlessness is therefore of immediate importance.¹³

Outcomes

Women are now much more likely to be in the workforce and the employment rate for women and men in Queensland has converged since the 1970s.¹⁴ In 1978, 38.1% of women were employed compared to 73.9% of men. By 2020, 58.4% of women were employed and 65.3% of men.

Some improvement has occurred in gender segregation at work but it is limited, especially by comparison with non-anglophone countries of the global north. As pointed out in a 2017 Senate Report,

In the mid-1980's, Australia had the most gender-segregated workforce in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Whilst Australia's ranking for gender segregation no longer exceeds that of the United States and the United Kingdom, it remains high and is a persistent trend.¹⁵

And then there is the persistent gender pay gap.¹⁶ The most recent ABS 'Gender

Indicators' (December 2020) show a key statistic that 'Women's full time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings were 86% of that of men'¹⁷

Sexual harassment is another central matter. It was defined as a form of discrimination in Susan Ryan's 1984 legislation. Thirty-six years on, the 2020 Human Rights Commission's *Respect@Work: Sexual Harassment National Inquiry* Report found that in 2018 'one in three people experienced sexual harassment at work in the past five years'.

The Commissioner's foreword opens

Australia was once at the forefront of tackling sexual harassment globally...

However, over 35 years on, the rate of change has been disappointingly slow. Australia now lags behind other countries in preventing and responding to sexual harassment.

The Commissioner concludes

The current legal and regulatory system is simply no longer fit for purpose.¹⁸

As of March 2021, the Federal Government under Prime Minister Morrison has not responded to the *Respect@Work* report.

La lutte continue!

Notes

¹The Senate has published a most informative biography of Senator Ryan at <https://biography.senate.gov.au/ryan-susan-maree/>

²Australian Human Rights Commission, Sex discrimination, <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/employers/sex-discrimination>

³Condolences: Ryan, Hon. Susan Maree, AO 8 October 2020, <https://www.openaustralia.org.au/senate/?gid=2020-10-08.159.1>

⁴Margaret Thornton and Trish Luke, 'The Sex Discrimination Act and its Rocky Rite of Passage' in Margaret Thornton (ed), *Sex Discrimination in Uncertain Times*, ANU E Press, 2010.

⁵*ibid.*

⁶*ibid.*

⁷1971 Census data.

⁸Calculated from ABS, Employed persons by Occupation unit group of main job (ANZSCO), Sex, State and Territory, August 1986 onwards Cat No 6291.0.55.003 - EQ08. Note the ANZSCO classification have either been consistent over this period or, where changes have occurred, the ABS has adjusted the entire data set.

⁹Queensland Government Achievements and milestones for Queensland women, <https://www.qld.gov.au/about/about-queensland/history/women/achievements>

¹⁰Queensland, Commission of Inquiry into the Status of Women Brisbane, Govt. Pr., 1974 (A.G. Demack Chair). The Commissioners were 'a male judge, a male magistrate (also on QIRC), a female lawyer and a mother of four children'. (<https://education.qld.gov.au/about/history/Documents/female-teachers-1940.pdf>).

¹¹Submission to the Commission of Inquiry into the Status of Women, Women's Collective, Communist Party of Australia, Brisbane, September 1974. Robyn Bardon and Shirley Englart are acknowledged for research and writing; Kath Thomas, Marie Crisp and Robyn Bardon appeared at the public hearing and Julie Bowen, Daisy Marchisotti and Ursula Southwell for design, typing and layout.

¹²*Ibid* p26.

¹³*Ibid* pp26-27.

¹⁴Source is ABS; employment rate is the proportion of the relevant population which is in the workforce.

¹⁵Finance and Public Administration References Committee, Gender segregation in the workplace and its impact on women's economic equality; Report, 2017, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Finance_and_Public_Administration/Gendersegregation/Report.

¹⁶Workplace Gender Equality Agency Australia's Gender Pay Gap Statistics 2021 <https://www.wgea.gov.au/publications/australias-gender-pay-gap-statistics>.

¹⁷Gender Indicators, Australia, ABS, Dec 2020, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/gender-indicators-australia/latest-release#data-download>.

¹⁸Australian Human Rights Commission, *Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces*, Report, 2020, https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/publications/respectwork-sexual-harassment-national-inquiry-report-2020?mc_cid=1065707e3c&mc_eid=%5bUNIQUID%5d

It was said, “There is no discrimination in Queensland schools”

Mary Kelly

For women’s rights activists in Queensland, the 1970s and 1980s was a period of dogged pursuit of change, through unions, political parties, and community groups, inspired by second-wave feminism and bolstered by international developments including the United Nations Decade for Women (1975-85).

The ratification of the United Nations conventions in 1973 and 1983 had been strongly supported by women in unions and other organisations and had been opposed by conservative political and community groups. After the Federal election of 1983, Susan Ryan wasted no time in bringing in the Sex Discrimination Act (1984), and later the Affirmative Action Act (1986), both of which were a product of that feminist wave.

Some of the loudest conservative voices were from Queensland. Senator Ron Boswell (National Party) and others made exaggerated claims in parliament about the Bill being pro-communist and leading to the demise of the nuclear family and the creation of a totalitarian regime,¹ themes which played out at the local level. Marg O’Donnell was working for the Sunshine Coast Women’s Information and Support Association at the time, and her records show groups, such as the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Women Who Want to be Women, warning through public meetings, Letters to the Editor and the like of the dire consequences: unisex

toilets, children forced into childcare, the destruction of small business.

Because workers under Queensland state awards were not covered by the Federal SDA, there was no direct access to an independent umpire to get redress on a case-by-case basis for sex discrimination.

The State and Education Sector

Reformers in the state public sector relied on the sort of DIY activism they had developed over many years of dealing with an employer who was also a hostile and conservative government in no apparent danger of losing office.

Having the state government as your employer brought you uncomfortably close to this narrow world view. Rob Borbidge, as president of the Gold Coast Young Nationals in 1980, described teachers as ‘an army of taxpayer-funded revolutionaries indoctrinating tomorrow’s leaders’ who were ‘seeking to destroy society’, and urged a ‘search and destroy’ operation against them.²

Within the education sector, female teachers had experienced discrimination in their wages and conditions for decades. Equal pay, which female teachers had campaigned for since 1887, was finally achieved in 1971, only three years before the national minimum wage was equalised for men and women. Until 1969, women were forced to resign upon marriage and to be subsequently employed as ‘temporary’ employees who were dismissed at the end of each school year. This meant no access to long service

leave, superannuation, or promotion. Even after that time, applying for permanent status was not straightforward, and well into the 1980s it was Department policy to give preference for employment to single-income earners, with second income-earners (mainly women) employed last, regardless of merit.

For some time, married women required a higher score than men from their annual assessment by an Inspector in order to remain permanent, echoing a long-standing practice of discriminatory entry into teachers' college where they required a higher Tertiary Entrance score (or equivalent) and had access to fewer scholarships. Questions at interviews about childcare and pregnancy plans were commonplace. Leadership in schools was male dominated. The first female deputy principal in a secondary school was not appointed until 1968, and there remained only a handful of female principals for many years. Many industrial conditions remained unequal.

Within the Queensland Teachers Union (QTU), women had been organising from the early 1970s through its Status of Women (later called Sexism in Education) Committee, which promoted women teachers' industrial interests and the education of girls.

Such activity was not in isolation. The ACTU Congress had adopted a Working Women's Charter in the early 1970s and each state Trades and Labour Council had a Charter Committee. The Working Women's Centre was absorbed into the ACTU in 1978; the first national union women-only leadership course was held in 1979 at the then Clyde Cameron College, which this writer attended.

Teacher unions in other states also had Women's Committees and employed Women's Coordinators—the first in 1975—and, under the umbrella of the Australian Teachers Federation (later the Australian Education Union), energetic networking and strategising took place.

People like Jennie George (first woman on the ACTU Executive in 1983 and later its first female President in 1996) and Sharan Burrow (President of the ACTU from 2000 and 2010 and General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation since 2000) emerged from this vibrant milieu. So female activists in the QTU, although struggling against an intransigent employer, had the solidarity and leverage of kindred spirits at national and international levels and they made gains through campaigning.

Campaigns

One such campaign in the early 80s focused on discrimination in the State Service Superannuation Scheme where women paid in a lower percentage contribution of their wage than men and received fewer benefits (such as no widower's or orphan's benefit). Those who resigned or took leave were refunded their own contributions (but not the employer's) with minimal interest, and if they resumed teaching, started in the fund all over again. There were no arrangements for part-timers.

Superannuation benefits were constructed around the stereotype of the full-time male breadwinner with dependants who worked continuously; relatively generous retirement payouts were available based on years of service and final average salary. Women's inadequate access to maternity leave,

Philosophical garbage

I SHOULD like to make comment upon the "Equal Rights for Women" legislation which the Federal Government intends to introduce.

Several issues are involved in the legislation about which we should be extremely alarmed, not only as a chamber of commerce but also as individual family members enjoying freedom and opportunity in our society.

Without labouring the second point, the general thrust of the legislation could not only have the effect of undermining the traditional nuclear family values, but also of usurping the individual protection that we experience under Common Law (ie innocent until proven guilty).

From a business point of view we will be in a minefield. No longer will we be able to make the commonsense choice of whether we hire a male or a female for a particular job.

If we have to retrench or terminate, unpalatable as that is, we will run the risk of being accused of doing so in a sexually discriminating way.

In the face of penalty we will have to prove our innocence to an appointed, not elected, body of anti-discrimination "experts".

The whole theme of the UN convention ignores the reality of free enterprise commerce. (Not surprising when you consider that, of the 48 countries who have already ratified the convention, Canada is the only one that could claim to be free enterprise.

We will be joining such bastions of freedom and liberty as Haiti, Poland, Nicaragua, Cuba, Russia, Vietnam, Congo, Ethiopia et al.)

Surely the whole exercise is unnecessary. Women today receive equal pay for equal work. Men and women are equal but we are still biologically and emotionally different and, with some luck, this "difference" may endure.

I will always prefer to have a female secretary, if for no other reason than I find women prettier than men.

Most bricklayers, when choosing a labourer, use a different parameter; well we hope they do, anyway.

Much of the rationalisation for this UN Convention stems from the fact that women were "unfairly" discriminated against in the past. Indeed

they were, but is it justice or is it vengeance that will be achieved by introducing discrimination in "favour" of women?.

By logical definition, if special privileges are needed to make them "equal" to men, then surely in logic the legislature has acknowledged an inferior status for them. I see no dignity in that for any woman, nor pride for any man to allow that to happen.

All the successful women I've met in business had only the privilege of their feminity. They would resent and reject any other advantage.

In short the proposed legislation is at best philosophical garbage, at worst an insidious attack on the unique and important role of women in our society.

Frankly, they deserve better; our businesses don't need more stupid rules; our family values don't need more erosion.

GRAEME HAYCROFT
President
Caloundra Chamber of
Commerce and Industry

The Sunshine Coast Daily.

Letters to the Editor 24 August 1982

forced resignations, and temporary status, meant that many were retiring into poverty after a lifetime in the teaching service. Their contributions to the Scheme were essentially subsidising the relatively generous payouts to male retirees.

The campaign about superannuation for women involved convincing the QTU to adopt a suite of reforms as policy; reaching out to other state public sector unions and their women's networks; and lobbying the Superannuation Board to conduct actuarial reviews and enact the changes. Importantly, the strategy was used as a template for mobilising and empowering female teachers to



campaign on their own behalf, by first demystifying the issues at seminars across the state and producing lobbying kits for their use. These were very successful and Judy Attwood, a leading teacher-activist in the campaign, recalls being contacted by the Scheme's manager requesting that members stop writing letters because it was taking up too much staff time to answer them.

Most but not all the reforms were achieved, with the notable exception of 'buying-back' previous years of service for those who had been disadvantaged in the past by forced resignations. Retrospective fairness was a bridge too far, and the full benefit of the reforms would take a generation.

Similar campaigns were run with the Education Department on issues such as permanent part-time work; the right of women to return to their job after family leave; and fair access to promotion, locality, travel allowances, and teacher housing.

Girls education: The personal was political; and the professional was industrial.

For women teachers, campaigning to improve schooling for girls was a seamless part of union activism. Queensland was

the only state which had no programs at Departmental level to address issues for girls, and the QTU acted as a de facto resource and training centre from the mid-1970s.

Compulsory 'Mother-craft' lessons for grade 9 girls only came to an end in 1975 which was International Women's Year! Some subjects were still segregated by gender and equal access to sport, unbiased career guidance, and safe harassment-free schooling were still issues. Even the most basic matters, such as the provision of sanitary disposal units in girls' toilets in primary schools, were the subject of negotiation between QTU officials and the Department.

Female union activists ran dozens of seminars and produced material for teachers to improve education for girls, and by the mid-80s, in collaboration with colleagues from the private school teachers union, they established a stand-alone professional body, the Association of Women Educators, to better prosecute this work. That Association continues to this day.

Obstruction to reform from the Education Department and the Government was fierce. The publication, *Studies to Encourage Non-sexist Education*, which the Director General

considered biased and unbalanced, joined the Government's long list of banned books and material. On International Women's Day in 1985, commenting on his banning of the Human Rights Commission Education Kit,³ the National Party Minister for Education, Lin Powell, said, 'As far as I am concerned, there is no discrimination in Queensland schools and anybody, whoever or wherever they are, who has the ability to do well, will do well.'⁴

Harnessing women's passion for professional issues, and treating these as union issues, was an intentional strategy to build skills and engagement among female teachers. Unequal schooling for girls, and unequal treatment of female teachers, arose from the same source, and their reform was underpinned by the same feminist conceptual framework. Susan Ryan, herself an ex-teacher, was a member of the Schools Commission group which produced the landmark 1975 report, *Girls, Schools and Society*.⁵ So, far from distracting attention away from issues of wages and conditions, the girls' education agenda was a means of cementing union activism.

And how women fared in their own union became a third inter-related area of activity.

Representation in the Union

In 1975, only four of the seventy-three members of QTU Council (the supreme governing body of the Union) were women, and none of the twelve Executive members. Ten years later, about a third of the Council and just under half the Executive were women, a figure which plateaued until rule changes mandating 'at least 50%' on the Executive were finally passed in the late 1980s.

Jenny Hughey was the first Women's Coordinator, a position made permanent in 1983. She spearheaded the strategy of empowering women through networks of Women's Contacts in each school and branch. From 1983, women-only training courses developed awareness and campaigning skills. Regular newsletters were published and helped coordinate the multiple campaigns. The training courses were particularly effective and had a transformational impact on women. As well, reaching out to retired teacher activists—such as Ruth Don who was president in the 1950s—and undertaking an Art in Working Life oral history project, provided inspiration and intelligence to activists, as they connected their experiences with those of decades beforehand.⁶

I was elected QTU Vice-President in 1984, and President two years later, a position I retained until 1994, in part on a platform of improving the material conditions and representation of women. By the second half of the 1980s, a backlash was in full swing, marked by range of epithets including aggressive, anti-family and feminazis. Every internal reform, from having a women's coordinator to women's training courses, and especially the move to mandate equal representation in the rules, was contested, and the debate became unnecessarily personal and nasty. However, the internal reforms held, and are still in place today.

I was one of the first women on the Queensland Trades and Labour Council Executive, along with Bernadette Callaghan of the Federated Clerks Union. Representation was and is an enduring theme in the fight for gender equality,

not just in unions but in the legislature. Some of the women mentioned in this article initiated the 'Half by 2000' campaign in the ALP, which led to the adoption of quotas for pre-selection.⁷ Some were part of the establishment of the Australian Women's Party which ran candidates in a number of state and federal elections in the mid-1990s on a platform of legislating for equal numbers of men and women in parliaments.

Sexual Harassment

The SDA was the first to include sexual harassment as a separate form of discrimination, something the union movement had supported. Before and after the Act, state public sector workers relied on civil or industrial means to gain justice. Both prevention and redress were union issues and the QTU ran seminars with members to raise awareness; assisted aggrieved members to take complaints to the Education Department and undertook its own conciliation, especially if the complaint involved two members. Appealing to the Education Department was not always a productive exercise. Jenny Hughey recalls having a senior bureaucrat throw the complaint into the bin in front of her.

Similar activity was widespread throughout the labour movement, especially in female-dominated unions. It was the Queensland branch of the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association (ACOA) which had produced the first sexual harassment booklet for its members in 1981, and worked collaboratively with their employer, the Commonwealth Public Service, to implement it. One of the key players was Julie Cork, who would later become the Director of Equal

Opportunity for the Goss Government's public sector reform program.

Lyn Graham was working in the Federated Clerks Union in the period of the Sex Discrimination Act becoming law, and that union, using a grant from the Australia Council's Art in Working Life program, produced four artist-designed posters about sexual harassment, which formed the backbone of their awareness-raising campaign.

The very first Queensland case of sexual harassment which went to the Human Rights Commission (HRC) tribunal was workplace related. A young woman working in a bakery had experienced extreme harassment from her employer and sought redress through the SDA process. She was successful, and it was ordered that she be paid \$7,000. On appeal to the Federal Court the order was upheld. Such cases brought public attention to the issue and had an educative function which supported union efforts, although media reporting was often lurid and sensationalised.

Connections with reformers inside management

Bob Hawke, along with Susan Ryan and John Dawkins, had already required the Commonwealth Public Service to model best practice through a positive obligation to prevent discrimination not just for women employees, but also for staff who were Indigenous, of non-English speaking background or those with a disability. This was well before the Affirmative Action Act of 1986 required private sector employers to report annually on how they were eliminating discrimination against women in their workforce.

Jeni Eastwood was working for Australia Post at the time and recalls implementing recruitment and promotion reforms which increased the number of women, Indigenous people, and NESB people, and doing so with the support of the relevant unions. Jeni later held office in the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association and the Queensland Professional Officers Association (QPOA).

The emergence of feminist policymakers within Government bureaucracies became a distinctive feature in Australia and partnering with them to improve working conditions became part of unions' change strategy. This strategy only became useful in Queensland after Goss was elected in 1989. Women had networked informally before this and by 1988 had incorporated the Equal Opportunity Practitioner's Association, a feminist think tank that provided support for women union activists working in both state and federal public sectors with a focus on strategies that could be implemented regardless of legislation.

An Act of our own

One memorable state-wide campaign of the early 80s involved women from the media, the legal profession, unions, political parties, the Women's Electoral Lobby, the Union of Australian Women, and many community groups. Called the Lobby for Equal Opportunity (LEO), the group produced an information kit for achieving anti-discrimination legislation in Queensland. With assistance from an Art in Working Life grant, the kit was inclusive of multiple diverse voices, with cartoons throughout and striking posters. Thousands of copies were

disseminated including to all members of the Queensland Parliament, along with a draft Bill. Examples described in the kit included cases where women are unable to get a loan without a male guarantor, or a credit card without a male signature on the application. This high-profile campaign did not bear fruit until 1991, when the Goss Labour Government finally enacted the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act, modelled somewhat on the draft Bill from the kit.

The theme of women working across organisational boundaries to achieve change is not unique to Queensland, but was particularly important here, given the hostility of the Government and their conservative allies. Susan Ryan's legislative reforms were an important and enduring part of that long struggle.

Compiled by Mary Kelly, with input from Jenny Hughey, Marg O'Donnell, Jeni Eastwood, Julie Cork, Judy Attwood and Lyn Graham.

Notes

¹See Margaret Thornton and Trish Luke, 'The Sex Discrimination Act and its Rocky Rite of Passage' in Margaret Thornton (ed), *Sex Discrimination in Uncertain Times*, ANU E Press, 2010 esp pp 8-10

²*Gold Coast Bulletin* 12 June 1980

³This was a precursor to the current human rights education resources for teachers – rightsED; see <https://www.vaps.vic.edu.au/national-curriculum/human-rights-education/> and also <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/education/human-rights-education-and-training>

⁴*Courier Mail* 8 March 1985

⁵Commonwealth Schools Commission, *Girls, School and Society: Report by a Study Group to the Schools Commission*, Canberra, 1975. See also Shelley McInnis, *Girls, Schools and Boys Promoting Gender Equity Through Schools: Twenty Years of Gender Equity Policy Development*, Parliamentary Library Research Paper 24 1995-96, https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/RP9596/96rp24

⁶These were published as Roberta Bonnin (ed), *Dazzling Prospects*, QUT, Brisbane, 1988

⁷As described by Madeline Grey

The ALP introduced a specific affirmative action plan in 1981, followed in 1991 by the 'Half by 2000' campaign and in 1994 a formal quota policy was adopted at the ALP National Conference. The policy stipulated that by 2002, 35 per cent of the Labor Party's parliamentary representatives were to be women in safe (or winnable) seats.

Madeline Grey, 'The Nature of Women's Political Leadership: Women MPs in the Parliament of Victoria' in Rosemary Francis, Patricia Grimshaw and Ann Standish (eds), *Seizing the Initiative: Women Leaders in Politics, Workplaces and Communities*, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2012, <http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders/sti/index.html>

A Union Woman in the Public Service

Patricia Hovey

When I entered the workforce in 1967, equal employment opportunity and legislation to ban sex-based discrimination were far in the future and practically unheard of in Queensland during the long reign of Bjelke-Petersen. My personal experience was limited to discriminatory pay rates in the State Public Service and the marriage bar—though that was abolished in 1969 in Queensland, just before I got married. It was abolished in 1966 in the Australian Public Service (APS).

I started work as a female clerical assistant aged 18 on the same pay rate as a male clerical assistant in the State Land Tax Office. At 21, I discovered to my disgust that I would be paid a lower adult rate than a 21-year-old male clerical assistant. My duties were mostly filing huge piles of land tax forms and inserting postcodes on computer forms. By the time I left I'm pretty sure I knew every postcode in Queensland. The male clerical assistants collected files for the assessors and may have also done some filing. They had much more freedom of movement around the office as they moved files from the compactus to the assessor's desks and back again. We

worked at our desks or at trollies loaded with paperwork to be sorted and filed.

The Land Tax Office assessed liability for land tax. All assessors were men. My immediate supervisor, a woman, was the only person in the place with a university degree. She could not be employed as an assessor because of her sex, despite being well qualified to do that work. She was paid at a lower rate for supervising a group of female clerical assistants than she would have earned as an assessor.

Another example of sex discrimination was the dress code. Women were not permitted to wear slacks to work. On the one occasion I did so in complete ignorance of this absurd rule, I feared that the manager who berated me for this infraction would have a stroke, such was his outrage. Men had to wear a tie but were permitted to wear long socks and shorts in summer.

After completing a BA in Asian History and Politics as a mature-age student, I started work in the Australian Tax Office in 1981 and immediately began agitating to transfer to the Department of Veterans Affairs, Greenslopes Hospital, which was close to my home and my young daughter's school. At the hospital I

worked in a couple of different sections, doing fairly boring clerical work.

I became involved in the Women's Committee of the Australian Service and Administrative and Clerical Officers Association (ACOA), where I met inspiring women who encouraged me to stand for the workplace delegate position in the union elections.

Eventually I applied for a job with the union as a recruitment organiser, a short-term position. After a brief stint back in the APS, I applied for and was successful in being appointed to the position of training officer/organiser with the union. I was working in that position when sex-based discrimination legislation came into effect.

The abolition of the divisional structure and the introduction of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)² and Sex Discrimination legislation, in theory, removed barriers to women's advancement. Women became eligible to apply for jobs in the Administrative Service Officer (ASO) stream with access to a career path and higher wages. But change didn't happen overnight, nor without a lot of effort. Critical reviews by some academics in the late 1980s and early 1990s concluded that very few women actually benefited from these reforms due to the highly gendered nature of work and organisational structures in the public sector workforce. EEO and Affirmative Action (AA) Committees were established in federal government departments and some unions. ACOA was represented on departmental consultative committees to oversee the implementation of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies and practices in the

Australian Public Service. The Federal Government had an EEO section in the Public Service Commission. Each department had to produce an EEO plan and consult with unions about the development of the plan and its implementation, so there was a strong focus on EEO/AA.

This also led to demands from women members for affirmative action policy and practice to be implemented within the union. The impetus came from the union's Women's Committee and women members of the union executive.

Women in the union pressing women's issues

ACOA's Branch Conference created a Women's Officer position in about 1984-5. By then we already had some women on the Branch Executive and an active women's committee. We ran a Women's Course every year and offered training for members and delegates on affirmative action in the union. There were some robust discussions on those courses. Some male union members and union officials found these changes bewildering and, in some cases, quite threatening.

With the passage of the Federal Sex Discrimination Act in 1984, it became illegal to deny job opportunities to pregnant women or to sack them because of pregnancy. Women workers in the private sector suffered more serious discrimination than their public sector sisters. Sadly, for those women, proving discrimination was difficult, and it was only through strong advocacy by unions that some pregnant women won their cases for the right to employment and promotion. Women in unionised workplaces fared better



Protesters against the Sex Discrimination Act, 1984

Photo: Christine Fernon, available at <https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/images/protesters-against-sex-discrimination-act-1984>

than those in non-unionised ones. In the public service, women returning from maternity leave won the right to return to a position at the same level as the one they previously occupied. The battle for the right to permanent part-time employment (PPTE) in the APS took a bit longer.

Permanent part-time employment was not a feature of APS conditions of employment until the 1980s and was quite limited when it was introduced and therefore not available to many women. Due to limited access to PPTE, many women chose to resign at the end of their maternity leave rather than return to work full-time. Later, due to unions taking on individual women's complaints and building a case, categories of eligibility

for PPTE were established, namely returning to work following maternity leave, preparing for retirement, specific medical conditions, disabilities and study. It wasn't an automatic right and was subject to 'operational requirements' so some women needing it were still denied access.

Persistent effects of the marriage bar

The marriage bar—by which women were 'deemed to have retired from the Commonwealth service upon her marriage'—was introduced in the 1902 Public Service Act and confirmed in the 1922 Act.³ The marriage bar was repealed in 1966 when 'Australia became almost the last democratic country to lift the ban'.⁴ It was a form of direct sex discrimination and had lasting effects

for women. Being forced to resign on marriage, women lost access to superannuation benefits, in particular the employer component. They lost continuity of employment qualifying them, after 15 years, for long service leave (LSL), for seniority, for Higher Duties Allowance (HDA) and for promotion. It wasn't until the 1990s that employment that had been affected by the marriage bar was recognised for long service leave. I don't believe there was any reinstatement of superannuation benefits, which is of particular importance to women in this cohort as they were reaching retirement age. Superannuation remains deeply gendered; in 2021 women retire with forty-seven per cent of the super payout compared to men.

Seniority and merit were the joint criteria for HDA and promotion until at least the 1980s. One of the most contested issues between the Goss Labour government in the early 1990s and the public sector unions was the abolition of seniority as the basis for promotion, to be replaced by merit-based selections. I recall large demonstrations by unions outside the Executive Building in George Street. But the principal of seniority had discriminatory effects on women.

Where two candidates were assessed as being of equal merit, seniority was the deciding factor. In other words, if the top two candidates could not be separated on merit, the job was given to the one with more seniority, which was measured by length of service. Seniority favoured (and still favours) men.

Women tended then, and still do, to have broken patterns of employment, start employment as a 'temp' and work in lower-paid positions and therefore

lack the smooth career advancement of their male counterparts. It is likely that seniority was used consciously and unconsciously to exclude women from higher positions. It becomes quite easy to justify promoting a male if it can be argued that they were of equal merit and therefore seniority becomes the deciding factor. When seniority is removed it forces, at least in theory, decision makers to make appointments based on merit. Indeed, it allows an argument that if two candidates are equal you must choose the woman. This would advance EEO and go a little way to correcting some past wrongs.

Job Redesign in the 1980s

In the 1970s and 1980s the third and fourth divisions of the APS were effectively divided on sex lines with most women concentrated in low-paid, low-status positions as clerical assistants and typists. About eighty-five per cent of the fourth division were women. Even after the abolition of the divisions, women were concentrated in levels one to three of the pay grades. Traditional 'female' jobs were not given the same degree of importance as traditional 'male' positions, e.g. a typist supervisor of twenty workers was graded the same as a storeman with no subordinates.

The abolition of the divisions in 1987 and the changes to job classifications for clerical and support staff via the 'restructuring and efficiency principle' used in determining industrial awards led to a huge job redesign process.⁵ All jobs had to incorporate a level of multi-skilling, so designations such as 'typist' disappeared, to be replaced by jobs covering a variety of skills and responsibilities. Everyone had to learn

to type, and there was a big increase in training to get staff up to speed. Unions won the right to be involved in the job redesign process.

As a training officer, I worked with organisers to create and deliver job redesign courses for delegates. We developed criteria for assessing whether redesigned jobs met the standards for opportunities to develop new skills, a variety of duties and career paths.

However, because there was no effective challenge to organisational culture, which was essentially patriarchal, jobs remained unresponsive to women's life experiences. There was, and still is, no recognition of the double workload carried by women workers who remain largely responsible for childcare and housework as well as their paid work.

This inflexibility in the structure of work means that women still have fewer opportunities to undertake training and professional development and therefore gain promotion. Women are more likely to be in temporary or casual positions and consequently experience greater job insecurity than men working in the same places.

Authors note

I'm indebted to Pat Rogers, former ACOA Women's Officer and Wendy Greenhill, member of the Women's Committee and Workplace and Branch Conference Delegate for sharing their recollections of their union activism.

Notes

¹The ACOA was one of the precursors of the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU); the latter was formed through the amalgamation of a number of public sector unions in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

²Equal employment opportunity was one of the principles of the Commonwealth Public Service Reform Act 1984. An Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Section had first been established in the Public Service Board in 1975. See Rose Verspaandonk, Dr Ian Holland, Dr Nicholas Horne, *Chronology of changes in the Australian Public Service 1975-2010*, Parliamentary Library 2010, https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/BN/1011/APSChanges

³Marian Sawer, *Women and Government in Australia, Year Book Australia, 2001*, ABC Cat. No. 1301.0, <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/1301.0?feature%20Article52001?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=1301.0&issue=2001&num=&view=>

⁴Ibid.

⁵The 'restructuring and efficiency principle' was implemented in the March 1987 National Wage Case as part of the agreement under Accord Mark III for formal wage indexation and a shift to a two-tier system of wage fixation requiring efficiency offsets in exchange for wage increases. As the Australian Industrial Relations Commission later stated, it 'sought to provide a framework to encourage the parties, through a combination of restraint and sustained effort, to improve efficiency and productivity'. National Wage Case Decision, August 1989 http://www.airc.gov.au/safetyntnet_review/decisions/H9100.htm

Reflections on Then and Now

Constance Millar

In this interview with QJLH Constance shares her experiences as a woman and political activist about the period from the 1940s and reflects on the changes that are still needed

Can we start with whether you were working in the 1970s—that is, the decade before Susan Ryan was able to introduce federal Sex Discrimination and Affirmative Action legislation?

Connie: I was working for a surgeon on Wickham Terrace. I started with him in 1972 (I was 47) and worked for him for ten years. I then left to go and live on Stradbroke Island in a house we had bought. The ten years when I left gave me pro-rata long service leave.

When you were working for him you were paid award wages?

Exactly award wages. I got my ten year's pro-rata long service and he had to pay me £1,996. He never even gave me the other four pounds. He was amazed at the amount of money he had to pay.

He paid your holidays etc?

Yes, I had a month's holiday every year.

How did your wages compare to men doing the same work?

Well I did not know any men doing the secretary's work in those days. It was mostly women; I was a shorthand typist really and the doctor would not use modern technology like a dictaphone and all of that and had to have someone that wrote shorthand. That's how I got the job in the first place. It was a very good job; he was a very good man to work for.

But it was just a known thing that women did not get the same pay if there

had been men working, I did not know any men doing secretarial work. We had no computers. I did not have an electric typewriter but an old manual typewriter, a big old Remington.

Where else had you worked before that?

I worked for the District Committee and the State Committee of the Communist Party of Australia but then I went off to Wollongong in 1963 with my partner and worked for an eye specialist there, a very good job as well.

So, you worked for a doctor in Brisbane; you'd worked in Wollongong. How easy was it for you to get work?

No trouble at all—especially with the shorthand. And I seemed to keep my jobs too.

What about when you first started working?

I should have gone nursing when I was twenty or so. I was all set up to start in the public hospital at Royal Brisbane Hospital. I had all the uniforms made and everything and had paid for them. But I had met the man who was to be my first husband and he was a bit older and wanted to get married within three months. We did in 1952.

The hospital would not take married women in those days (the 1950s) and so they refused to let me start when I told them I intended getting married. I had to give up my nursing then and the nearest I could get to it was to work for doctors. It was their rules.

And likewise, if you were a nurse and got married?

I think you had to leave. That was bad, eh?

Can we talk about women in relationships? Do you want to talk about the domestic violence?

I do; I can. My partner was a very, very violent man, for no reason. He was a drinker, but he did not have to be under the influence of drink. He'd had a very bad childhood, in that he was put into an orphanage, but he was a bully.

I went to Wollongong with him and I got violated down there too, so I left him and came back to Brisbane. But we met up again.

He was very, very violent for no reason at all. I used to hide from him. I had a bag out in the car. It had a dress and a spare lot of keys and some money and when he came home at night and started abusing me I used to pretend to go to the toilet and go out in the car and just drive round the block and wait for him to go to bed.

Was there any kind of support for domestic violence victims?

Absolutely not I would say. When we were in Wollongong we lived in Coledale on the side of the mountain. He threatened me with a gun one night and I got out of bed and got away and hit him over the head with a bottle. And I could have gone to jail then. That was about 1966. I could have killed him; and I would have gone to jail in those days.

So, there was no domestic violence service, no refuges?

No. When I came back to Brisbane, I used to tell lies about what happened. If I had a black eye, I had 'run into

something'. One night he got me and bashed me against the car window and my chin was all puffed. I went to the doctor the next morning and said I'd fallen; you know you just hid the fact that it was happening. And he always apologised the next morning: 'Never do it again; never do it again!'

What about politics and unions when you were younger?

My mum was a communist and I joined the Party when I was eighteen. I was at the Trades Hall where they had the big table. Jimmy Henderson sent a note down the long table asking when are you going to join the Party? I was in the Eureka Youth League and used to march on Labour Day all the time.

As background, my mother came from Glasgow in Scotland in 1922. She was a very strict Presbyterian who played the organ at the church. Her family would have been right-wing.

She came to Collinsville. There the women had to wait for the men to come from the pub on election day and tell them how to vote [but] my mother started to take an interest in politics and completely gave away her religion and joined the Communist Party.

She was in the area (Bowen) where Jim Henderson was and from where Fred Paterson was elected to State Parliament.

I shock people when they're anti-communist and I tell them about my mother. And tell them I'm an atheist and that's how I was brought up. My mother always said that her mother would turn in her grave if she knew what she did.

I was very involved in the Party then. My sister worked for the Party. I worked for the State Branch doing secretarial and



Peace March Brisbane 1950s

Front Row (from left to right) Constance Millar, Jenny Love, Mary Millar

Photo: Constance Millar - private collection

clerical work; they were in Heindorff House in Queen Street and then they went to Roma Street—Charlie Gifford was there. He was a great bloke

When you went to the Party rooms in the Valley the police were all outside. Oh we did a lot of work for the party when it was illegal putting up posters and having meetings. I've got a form at home that my name was on, what was it? ASIO!

As well as the Eureka Youth League and the CPA, were you in any women's groups?

Yes, I was secretary of the Seamen's Women's Committee that was formed in the early 1950s when my daughter was six months old. And they formed the first women's committee of the unions. I was the first secretary of the Seamen's Women's Committee in Queensland.

And what did the Committee do?

What work did we do? We worked around the women who were wives of the seamen who were all away. And we used to have craft groups and committee meetings and I went to Sydney to a meeting of the Seamen's Women's Committee when I was pregnant with my third child. She was born in 1958. I was there for quite a while. All the unions did it; my sister Isabel; she was involved with the Building Workers Women's Committee. And then the Union of Australian Women (UAW) started. I was a member of that too.

Were you an office holder with the Union of Australian Women?

No, I wasn't. No

Did the Women's committees like those with the seamen's and building workers unions get involved in things like equal pay?

No, I don't think so. I think that was left to the union.

It was more welfare and making sure people had money and things. We used to have Christmas trees for the kids and make clothes for the kids and that sort of thing. And we all had little kids too. You know that was early days.

Do you remember much of the party position on women's issues?

No not really. We had not raised our heads enough. In the 1950s and 60s women's issues were not really on the agenda.

Were any of the unions taking them up?

Not that I knew of really. You never heard of the nurses' union in those days. Well look what they [employers] did to me. There was no union saying they could have employed married women. The teachers and nurses' unions were both run by blokes.

Did you get involved in any of those big women's struggles?

The demonstrations. Yes of course. My mother got involved too. And the peace movement; we were involved in that too.

Mainly I can remember marches for the peace movement. The women from these other organisations all got involved in those as well. The ones for equal pay and women's rights were later.

But I can remember Margaret Bailey who chained herself to the Treasury. Do you know that story? It should be better known - like the story of the women in the Regatta Hotel .

Margaret is my friend in London; she's back in London. She migrated with her family from Ireland when she was only a child and they lived at Inala and she

went to Inala High School. It was the days of the shorter skirts and she took her uniform hem up and refused to put it down. And she got expelled and she chained herself to the Treasury with the help of Bob Anderson and Eva Bacon. They threw the key in the river. Eva Bacon took Margaret in a bucket - how sensible was that!

So this is when she was still at school and skirt lengths were getting shorter?

Yes it was in the 1960s. She refused to accept the instruction and then the union - the Carpenter's Union took over! - I think she was there for a few days just in front of the Treasury Building until the police eventually came and cut the chain.

Where do you think we are now? What's needed now? Women are still not equal—what should be done?

There are more people who die of domestic violence than die on the roads or taken by sharks. Oh, we have to change government, haven't we? Scomo can't get anywhere. We've got to organise younger women.

Property's a big question. I never had that problem because we sold the house before we split up. But I know that even if a woman owns the place and if she lived with a man for so long, he has a right to it. Would that apply vice versa? If he owns the house would she have a right to her share?

When we split up, I went to a solicitor. He had money. I saw a solicitor at Capalaba, a younger fellow. I told him our history—the violence—and he said he would work on it for a couple of weeks. I went back he had gone and there was an older man there. He looked

at it and said this man is a very violent man. If I were you, I'd take what you got and be thankful. He would have made sure that I would have finished up with cement feet. He'd have arranged for someone to knock on the door one night and just grab me. I didn't doubt that one bit and I think there are other people like me—women who are too afraid to talk up.

Do you think this happens a lot—whether it is about violence in a relationship or harassment at work?

Yes. How many times do women back-down and say they are not going to do anything? Yes, that still happens for sure. It is still the woman [whose word is doubted], not the man. She was 'asking for it' is still used as an excuse.

At an everyday working level are women any better off than in the 1960s and 70s?

I don't know about that because women still have the responsibility of the children even if there is the odd fellow who will take his share and care for the kids. But these days most women find they have still got to work because of the cost of living and then they have still got to do most of the work—cook the dinner; look after the kids.

And how do we change it—what should be done? You said earlier we've got to organise the younger women?

Yes, try and organise the young people to be interested. But I find these days a lot of people are not interested in politics. Yet we were deep into politics and all that went with it. Politics is a dirty word now like religion. Just because of the way they must live, teenage girls seem not even interested in voting.



*Constance Millar at the Labour Day March, Brisbane 2016
Photo: Constance Millar - private collection*

Labor's Socialist Objectives... from 'Socialist Tiger' to 'Sacred Cow' to 'Dead Dog'

Humphrey McQueen

Reflections on the centenary of the Socialisation Objective of October 28, 1921.

All 'news' is fake because it derives from 'the context of no context.' Context, of course, is not everything since *exactly how* each decision is arrived at sculpts its content. The shaping context for the Labor Party's adoption of a new Socialisation Objective in October 1921 was twofold: first, the Bolshevik Revolution and, secondly, last century's First Great Slaughter. The Objective's content is a double surprise because it calls for *socialisation*—not socialism or just nationalisation—and outlines a *plan* for getting there.

Bourgeois revolutions succeeded before 1917, buffeted by rebellious working peoples. The Paris Commune in 1870-71 provided an exemplar for Soviet power through its councils of workers and soldiers. Where Russia stood alone was in surviving everything the forces of reaction threw at it. Japan's armies of intervention did not withdraw until May 1922.

The centuries-long dream of a world free from war and from want was being realised. The aims of the Victorian Socialist Party since 1905 were no longer songs at its Sunday school but deeds around the globe.

If Bolshevism provided the positive ingredient for adopting the Socialisation Objective, the War to End All Wars was proof positive that monopolising capitals

possessed not a shred of moral authority. More than ever, capitalism deserved to perish.

Wartime Australia endured mounting unemployment, despite 300,000 volunteers for the Australian Imperial Force. Price hikes close to twenty per cent fuelled hatred of capitalists as profiteers. The failure of the Federal Labor government to deal with those economic burdens on working people led the Party to split internally from late 1915.¹

Economic suffering brought an upsurge of strikes and lockouts on the waterfront, in abattoirs and mines, notably the eighteen-month lockout at Broken Hill from May 1919. This open class war was personified by 'the best hated man in Australia,' Percy Brookfield, Industrial Socialist Labor Party MLA for Sturt (Broken Hill) until his fatal shooting on 22 March 1921.

Victory for the anti-conscription forces at the 1916 and 1917 plebiscites encouraged belief that our class could win against any odds.

The battles for Irish Independence that followed the repression of the Easter Uprising attracted support for the Objective from Irish Catholics who could look on Bolshevism as their enemy's enemy. On 11 November, 1920 the Commonwealth parliament voted to expel Hugh Mahon, the Labor member for Kalgoorlie, who reacted to the death of the Mayor of Cork on a hunger strike

by railing against 'This bloody and accursed Empire.'²

Sectarians cobbled a Communist Party together in October 1920, but it had to be re-founded two years later. Many times more influential was the Industrial Workers of the World whose ideal of One Big Union had been endorsed at an Interstate Trades Union conference in Melbourne during January 1919.

To win back the militant unions, the ALP endorsed the following Objective that year ³:

The emancipation of human labour from all forms of exploitation, the obtaining for all workers of the full reward of their industry by the collective ownership and democratic control of the collectively used agencies of production, distribution and exchange.

Here is Marx's discovery of why exploitation thrives despite an exchange of wages equal to the socially necessary costs of reproducing the labour-power that we wage-slaves must sell if we are to exist. Moreover, the 'full reward' is not to be individualised as wage rises but enjoyed 'collectively' through meeting our social needs for health, housing, education, transport and at work. The call for the 'full reward' leaves no room for hedging about 'the extent necessary to remove exploitation' or today's gabble about 'a fair day's pay.' Nonetheless, it is likely that some of the delegates who voted in favour of the 1919 Objective thought of 'exploitation' in terms of sweating and profiteering.

Despite the directness of the 1919 Objective, its 1921 replacement has been the only one to come with a statement of

ways and means. To anyone joining the ALP in the last forty years, the expanse of the 1921 Objective and its Methods is breath-taking. They lay out how to establish the Socialisation of Industry by: -

- (a) The constitutional utilisation of Industrial and Parliamentary machinery.
- (b) The organisation of workers along the lines of Industry.
- (c) Nationalisation of banking and all principal industries.
- (d) The municipalisation of such services as can best be operated in limited areas.
- (e) Government of nationalised industries by boards, upon which the workers in the Industries and the community shall have representation.
- (f) The establishment of an elective Supreme Economic Council by all nationalised industries.
- (g) The setting up of Labor research and Labor information Bureaux and of Labor educational institutions in which the workers shall be trained in the management of the nationalised industries.

Weld the two Objectives together and we're getting somewhere.

Some of the exceptional elements in the June 1921 resolution show why Socialisation goes beyond nationalisation in the sense of an industry's being taken over by the capitalist state. Many advocates of both Objectives had read *Socialism Utopian and Scientific* (1880) where Engels spells out that

The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national

capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of the productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers – proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head.⁴

Like every domain of life under the rule of capital, the state remains a site for conflict, the outcomes of which are conditioned by the relative strengths of the contending classes.

To see to what extent the seven Methods dealt with the problems of operating inside the apparatuses of the capitalist state as a covert class dictatorship, requires comment on its seven clauses.

(a) The constitutional utilisation of Industrial and Parliamentary machinery.

In moving the June 1921 Objective, Victoria's Jim Scullin warned that

All over the world, the capitalist system is breaking down. If something is not done, chaos will eventuate, bringing about that revolution by force which we are trying to avoid.⁵

Could socialism be achieved through the 'constitutional utilisation' of 'parliamentary machinery', even if tied to 'Industrial' as an extra-parliamentary propeller?

'Constitutional' had to be included to ward off anti-Labor propagandists. The Constitution was an Act of the Parliament at Westminster, until repatriated in the 1980s. It remains an insurmountable barrier to nationalisation, let alone to socialism. Federation had been forged in the 1890s to serve the needs of imperial capitals. Even though Labor will never

'smash the state,' it would have to tear up the Constitution to take the slightest steps towards any socialisation.

In *Equality* (1937), the English Christian Socialist R.H. Tawney rejected the violent overthrow of the state demanded by Communists. However, he acknowledged that a future UK Labour government might need to mobilise its supporters should sections of the propertied classes threaten a clear Labour majority in the House of Commons. Tawney raised that possibility because of how ruling classes had reacted against the miners during the General Strike in the UK in 1926, and across Europe with overt dictatorships in Italy, Germany and Spain when just a few of their privileges were challenged. The English Labour Party's Westminster parliamentary majority in the 1945 General Election was overwhelming. Far more important was that the workers who kicked the Tories out were still under arms. For once, the propertied class dared not 'summon the magistrates,' which, as Adam Smith told his students, is how governments operate as combinations of 'the rich to oppress the poor, and preserve to themselves the inequality of the goods ...'

Leo Huberman's *Man's Worldly Goods* (1936) asks whether the personifications of capital will ever voluntarily give up their spoils. He answers his question with a parable about an Asian monkey highly prized by zoos. Its trappers place a piece of sugar inside a coconut. The monkey can put its paw in to seize the prize but cannot withdraw without letting go. It never does. Or, as Norm Gallagher told his members: 'When we see the struggles we have to get a few more dollars, I can't

see the bosses handing over the keys to their treasure-house just because we ask.’

Bump me into parliament

The parliamentarians at the 1921 Brisbane Conference had the numbers to prevent the ‘Objective and Methods’ being included in their election programs. They also backed the ‘Blackburn Declaration,’ named after Maurice Blackburn (1880-1944) who, as editor of Victoria’s *Labor Call*, championed Bolshevism for Russia but Guild Socialism for Australia, an admixture typical of the cross-currents that secured the ‘Objective.’ His Amendment hoped to reassure the electorate:

- (a) That the Australian Labor Party proposes collective ownership for the purpose of preventing exploitation, and to whatever extent may be necessary for that purpose.
- (b) That wherever private ownership is a means of exploitation it is opposed by the Party, but
- (c) That the Party does not seek to abolish private ownership even of any of the instruments of production where such instrument is utilised by its owner in a socially useful manner and without exploitation.

Such ‘on the one hand/on the other hand’ neither appeased middle-ground voters nor satisfied militants.

Before dismissing the Amendment as nothing more than a politicians’ trick, it is rewarding to connect its third clause to the Objective’s call for ‘the collective ownership and democratic control of the collectively used agencies of production, distribution and exchange.’ To identify which ‘agencies’ are ‘collectively used’ is to distinguish personal possessions

from productive property. Owning one’s own house does not make one any kind of capitalist because the past labour present in one’s dwelling cannot be used to extract value from living labour. However, if all or part of the property were rented out, then the landlord does benefit from exploitation elsewhere. A parallel criterion applies to a self-employed plumber or seamstress who operates without employing anyone and so cannot appropriate value. By contrast, small farmers and corner shopkeepers are likely to exploit the labour of other members of the family. Whether such applications of instruments of production and exchange should be judged as a ‘socially useful’ allocation is another matter.

(b) The organisation of workers along the lines of Industry.

In 1912, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) adopted a plan for One Big Union. They divided the workforce into six departments which were in turn split into as many as nine sub-groups. The way forward was illustrated by a Wheel. The concoction looks as impenetrable as does the intricate plan for One Big Union endorsed in 1919. How many rank-and-filers ever absorbed its significance for their struggles? The Wheel summons up the Phalansteries conceived by the French utopian Charles Fourier (1772-1837), and is Utopian in the bad sense of the term by drawing up elaborate schemas to cope with circumstances that a revolution will throw up and therefore cannot be known in advance.

All attempts to construct socialism prove that only those who are building that future can draft the plans. In doing so,

workers must stumble. No model can protect us from unknown unknowns. That is why Marx and Engels say almost nothing about what a socialist society would be like. The 'IWW Wheel' is a denial of all that the Wobblies stood for in basing their practice on workers' learning by doing.

(c) Nationalisation of banking and all principal industries.

By '*industries*,' the delegates intended more than boot factories and blast furnaces. Banks are singled out, but their significance goes further than the delegates appreciated, as explored below. The glaring absence is agriculture which employed a quarter of the workforce in 1921, and even more in related services. Conference delegates were not alone in overlooking Marx's recognition that 'the farmer is just as much an industrial capitalist as the manufacturer.'⁶ Few of his followers ever get beyond equating an industrial revolution with Dark Satanic Mills.

Agriculture

While the Labor Party was neglecting agriculture for its Socialisation Objective, the Bolsheviks were implementing a New Economic Policy to feed urban proletarians by encouraging farmers to produce more by lifting the threat of confiscation over any surplus.

The neglect of agriculture is remarkable considering the Labor movement's long and deep commitment to closer settlement as an escape from wage-slavery. Breaking up the big estates and attacking the squattocracy had been part of the radical legend from the convict era into the Free Selection Acts of the 1860s. During the 1880s, Henry George gained

disciples for his panacea of a Single Tax on land values, often associated with demands to nationalise the land. Federal Labor leader Andrew Fisher during 1910 campaign promoted a graduated land tax as the Party's prime promise. When an interviewer put it to him: 'That isn't socialism, you know—the creation of a large number of small-landed proprietors?' Fisher spoke for many of his colleagues and voters: 'It's my kind of socialism.'

By 1910, conflicts between rural unions and small-holders were fracturing the worker-farmer alliances that furthered Labor parties in the 1890s. Caught between wage pressure from labourers and the power of suppliers and produce merchants, small farmers established radical Country Parties in Victoria and, for a time, in Queensland. Those Parties competed with the nation-wide Country Party set up in 1919 as the agent of the UK-based pastoral and financial interests, or local monopolies such as Colonial Sugar. To gain a say over distribution and exchange, farmers set up co-operatives for eggs and milk, and marketing pools for grains and the golden fleece. Their state socialism had more success at cushioning the blows from 'market' fluctuations than wage-slaves got through compulsory Arbitration.

All Australians were riding on the sheep's back because the total wool cheques determined how much Australia could import.

The Money Power

Why does the Objective single out 'banking' for nationalisation?

Even if a Labor government could have nationalised every local bank, others were wholly or partly owned overseas, for example, The English, Scottish and Australia. Banks were only one part of any financial sector, the most obvious, but not alone in maintaining the flows of credit on which the expanding social reproduction of capital depends. For instance, wool and metal brokers supplied lines of credit

The Fisher government established a People's Bank—the Commonwealth—from 1911; some Labor States followed suit, often to finance rural producers. Australia did not get a Central Bank until 1945. Chifley did not see his 1947 bank nationalisation as the first step to nationalising the rest of capitalism. The agents of capital, however, fought back because they recognised the import of their regime of credit to direct the entire economy.

Looming over all these institutions was The City of London as the source of government loans.

The Colonies-cum-States borrowed to expand their rail networks, which did not need to be nationalized since they were always government undertakings. Not even the swindlers who promoted rival railway lines across Britain could round up enough fools to lend to colonial crooks. The City insisted on government guarantees. The Colonial Office did its part in 1900 by rewriting the Draft Constitution for the Commonwealth to include appeals to the Privy Council to protect British bondholders. The magnitude of the interest payments and war-induced spikes in the rate of interest proved decisive in the N.S.W. Railways Commissioners' actions that

provoked the 1917 General Strike. The British bondholders were also pivotal in the dismissal of the Lang government in 1932 after it threatened to withhold interest payments.

When Queensland's Labor government set out in 1920 to break up the big estates by increasing pastoral rents, The City warned that those moves would make it harder for the State to raise loan funds. Premier Theodore denounced 'the bondage of despotism of the money lenders of London.' He borrowed from New York where interest rates were higher and thus had to retreat by 1924.

Hence, nationalising the banks could never be more than a partial solution to allocating capital for the general good. To accumulate the profits extracted from the surplus-value of workers across Australia would require blocking the repatriation of profits and interest charges, in effect, nationalising almost every firm. In 1920, the Victorian liberal, F.W. Eggleston saw that 'if a Socialist State seeks to realise its objective it must rely on its own resources for money.'⁷

(d) The municipalisation of such services as can best be operated in limited areas.

City councils took over buses and trams, State governments the supply of gas and electricity. In the late 1940s, when Tom Playford took charge of them in South Australia, the Adelaide Club frothed against 'socialism' until the international mining financier, W.S. Robinson, passed through town and gave them a lesson in how governments serve the needs of big capital.

(e) Government of nationalized industries by boards, upon which

the workers in the Industries and the community shall have representation.

This clause needs to be linked to (f) and (g), although there is no mention here of 'elective.'

Worker control is essential for on-site matters, especially health and safety. More broadly, wage-slaves can demand a say over the purposes to which our labour is put, as the wharfies did at Port Kembla by blocking shipments of pig-iron to the Japanese military in 1938, and as Builders Labourers did from 1970 over what should be built—hospitals or hotels, public housing or office towers?

But how can fitters and turners at Bluescope know how much to invest, and when and where, to meet demands for different strengths of steel and its alloys 10-30 years hence? That agents of capital get it wrong is no guarantee that class-conscious proles will be more clairvoyant. Today, the pace of innovation challenges even medium term predictions.

(f) The establishment of an elective Supreme Economic Council by all nationalised industries.

Elected by whom? By all wage-slaves in all those industries? What has happened to the community representatives in section (e)? Was the Supreme Economic Council to plan the economy? If it were, then its members would discover soon enough that they were far from 'supreme.' The natural world does not rain or shine at our command.

Economic planning had not been tried in 1921, except to wage war and manage scarcities. A handful of engineers cobbled together the first Soviet Five-Year Plan in 1928 only to have it jettisoned

before making a fresh start from 1930. Their guide was the final chapter in volume two of *Capital* which deals with accumulation for social reproduction on expanding scales. The problems of how to balance the proportion of production goods against that of consumer goods was never solved by the central planners, many of whom turned to 'market socialism.' As Nicolas Bukharin put it: "You can't build houses out of future bricks."

(g) The setting up of Labor research and Labor information Bureaux and of Labor educational institutions in which the workers shall be trained in the management of the nationalised industries.

Our class got its earliest lessons on street corners, workplaces, and pubs, in country halls, around the Yarra Bank and the Sydney Domain and Brisbane's North Quay on Sunday afternoons. More formal instruction went on from the several Socialist Parties before a Labor College started in the Melbourne ARU rooms from 1917. Those tasks were taken up by the Communist Party and through shop committees under its influence, notably the Seamen, with a captive audience on board.

Clause (g) resounded in battles over the direction of who taught what at the Workers Education Association as one more challenge to universities as boot camps to train engineers and architects to manage men, money and materials—as they did as AIF Generals. Philosophy meant theology everywhere until John Anderson landed in Sydney in 1927, five years after the radical economist R.F. Irvine had been sacked, ostensibly for adultery. History courses trailed the sun around the Empire.

Clinging to the wreckage

Skip sixty years to 1981 and another debate about socialism throughout the labour movement which resulted in the Party's National Conference's affirming the democratic socialism of its 1957 Objective. Here the context runs back to the late 1960s and the breakdown of the Bretton Woods Accords by 1971 when Nixon declared a trade war with Japan, followed by an end of the post-war trough in unemployment, compounded by oil-price shocks in 1974 and 1979.

The loss of 250,000 Australian jobs between early 1981 and late 1982 got the ACTU to corner the Labor Party under Hayden into the Accord Mark I. The arrangement was taken over by the Hawke-Keating deform programme, shaped by the December 1983 decision to float the Australian dollar, thereby surrendering to global piracy. Small wonder *The Banker* named Keating Treasurer of the Year.

The Communist Party of Australia shuts up shop in 1991 by which time a Labor Party also had ceased to exist here, leaving the initials 'ALP' to stand for anti-labour party. The Soviet Union disintegrated and the Peoples Republic of China headed down the capitalist road. Enthusiasm from October 1917 became a caricature. Defeat of secular solutions nourished religious fundamentalisms and quests for individual redemption via mindfulness or reincarnation.

Hence, the centenary of the Socialisation Objective is no occasion to celebrate. Rather, we should take the opportunity to reflect on what has gone wrong. Indeed, we need the intellectual and moral gumption to ask whether socialism is doomed to remain a dead dog. Was

Hegel right in 1807 when he announced the End of History in the dominance of bourgeois society?

Clear-cut choices seem optimal neither in tactics nor strategies. Rather than shots of pessimism of the will and optimism of the intellect, we can benefit from homeopathic doses of both along with regularly recalibrated measures of optimism of the will and pessimism of the intellect. Too much of any of the four risks blinding us to the obstacles before us as well as to our opportunities.

What has not lessened is our apprehension that capitalism is the enemy of humankind. For 75 years, academic-corporate-legislative-military complexes have kept the planet on the knife-edge of nuclear holocaust, against a foreground of wars without end. Throughout, monopolising capitals have plundered earth and oceans for resources before polluting both with the waste from their compulsion to expand if their system is to persist. One result is that we are entering the twenty-first year of a century of pandemics spawned from corporatised agriculture, genetically constrained livestock, slum urbanisation and commodity exchanges at jet speed, all in an effort to maintain the accumulation of capital at rates needed to ward off another implosion.⁸ Disruptions to the last of those drivers is slowing turn-over-times for commodities, including labour, leading to disproportionalities which will contract the production of surplus-value and its realisation as profit, thereby clogging the circuits of money-capital: here be crisis conditions.⁹

Post-1940s capitalism in Australia has been marked by the paradox of lessening degrees of absolute impoverishment

but an intensifying of workplace immiseration, registered in pandemics of anxiety and addiction.

The lead-up to October 28 can be used to do what this article attempts in making a start towards reviving socialisation as a movement and not a Party icon. Stress what we are for more than what we are against by putting the 'social' back into socialism, upholding the moral imperative of mutual aid against the selfishness mass marketed for capitalism. Our best and worst have been evident throughout the Covid upheavals.

We can rebuild socialisation only upon everyday needs in housing, transport, work, health, and education, with the environment running through each pillar of daily life, helping to hold them together, but not focused on distant forests or atolls. The seventh pillar is our willingness to withdraw our capacities to add value, and to protest. These are the twin guarantees of winning through on the other six pillars.

Out of those practices we can conceive a society generating a superabundance of non-material goods and services, although the crudest demand can still seem utopian: that no one goes to bed hungry. Enriching our individuality through social labour and meaningful work will, as Marx observes, open pathways towards the 'development of human potentiality for its own sake, the true realm of freedom.'¹⁰

We take up these challenges confident that a majority of people cannot believe that the world of 2021 is the best of which our species is capable.

Notes

¹Humphrey McQueen, 'Shoot the Bolshevik! Hang the Profiteer! Reconstructing Australian Capitalism 1918-21' E.L. Wheelwright & Ken Buckley (eds) *Essays in the Political Economy of Australian Capitalism, volume two* (Sydney: ANZ Books, 1978), 185-206

²H.J. Gibbney, 'Hugh Mahon,' *Australian Dictionary of Biography, volume 10* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1986), 379-80.

³Looking back from 1951, A.A. Calwell thought 'that the change in the Objective' had been determined to resist 'the spurious claims of the communists to be a working class party.' Quoted S.R. Davis et al., *The Australian Political Party System*, (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1954), 67.

⁴Frederick Engels, 'Socialism: from utopianism to science,' *Marx-Engels Selected Works*, volume 3 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970), 147.

⁵Quoted Ian Turner, *Industrial Labour and Politics: The Labour Movement in Eastern Australia 1900-1921* (Canberra: A.N.U. Press, 1965), 224.

⁶Karl Marx, *Capital, I* (London: Penguin, 1976), 941n.

⁷*New Statesman*, October 16, 1920, 20, quoted Tom Cochrane, *Blockade The Queensland Loans Affair 1920 to 1924* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1989), 73.

⁸Mike Davis, *The Monster Enters* (New York: OR Books, 2021) and *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2006); my *The Essence of Capitalism, The Origins of our Future* (Sydney: Sceptre, 2001), chapter 18.

⁹Karl Marx, *Capital, II* (London: Penguin, 1978), Part Two.

¹⁰Karl Marx, *Capital, III* (London: Penguin, 1981), 874.

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Applications will close on 31 August 2021. The successful applicant will be notified by 31 October.

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Alex Macdonald Lecture 2021

Dr Howard Guille

Let's Make Unions - and History - Everyday

'Making unions' needs an organising model. And so does making history. The better organising models promote 'self-organisation, self-reliance, self-initiative, respect, participation and activism'. The most effective models will include the political lessons of mobilisation. History comes into all of these; history is a big snowball of stories of the past that roll into the present.

The practical purpose of the lecture is to ask how community and civil society organisations including unions might marshal to organise history and what kind of assistance can public agencies such as education, cultural and planning institutions best provide. One question is whether there is an opportunity for a Public History agency to orchestrate everyday debate, mourning and celebration of the past to inform the struggles of the present

The approach stems from disaffection with the 'official' Heritage framework. The failure of the Queensland Heritage Council to protect the University of Queensland Student Union Complex deepened this. Official Heritage seems most concerned with the safe and the respectable and has, by and large, failed to encompass the stories and memories of those who are structurally and socially less powerful. Moreover, the cultural heritage of First Nations is considered entirely separate and separately. An authentic "popular history" needs to be participative, inclusive and progressive and to unite not divide.

Howard Guille worked and taught in Europe and New Zealand before coming to Australia in the mid-1970s. He was the foundation appointment in industrial relations at what became Brisbane CAE. He worked at the Trades and Labour Council of Queensland from 1988 to 1992. He was involved in major projects in restructuring, award restructuring, industrial policy and in trying to combat corporatisation, privatisation and national competition policy.

Howard was the Queensland Secretary of the National Tertiary Education Union from 1992 to 2006. He was involved in enterprise bargaining, the Indigenous



Stolen Wages Campaign and three Papua New Guinea National Minimum Wage Cases. He was a member of the TLC Executive from 1996 to 2006.

He has undertaken research and written on a wide range of topics. He is an editor of Australian Options and of the Queensland Journal of Labour History. In 2016 and 2017 he co-wrote with Emeritus Professor Roger Scott two monographs for the TJ Ryan Foundation on the performance and prospects of the Palaszczuk Government. Howard's most recent publication is *A Paltry Paradise: a History of the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum* (2019).

Wednesday 26 May 2021

5.30pm for 6.00pm

Level 2 TLC Building, 16 Peel Street, South Brisbane

free admission

refreshments available



Dunwich Cricket Team, c.1930. Back row: Archie Newfong, Sid Campbell, Jim Iselin, Charlie Campbell, Barney Delaney, Jim Newfong, Harold Iselin. Front row: L-R Milton Costelloe, Toby Campbell, Colie Eboeth, Bill Martin, Percy King. (SLC 593370)

GETTING EQUAL AUSTRALIA'S FIRST SUCCESSFUL ABORIGINAL WAGES CASE

A MAJOR EXHIBITION - OPENS MID 2021

In 2021, the North Stradbroke Island Museum on Minjerribah will launch 'Getting Equal' an exhibition that shares the story of the 'Aboriginal Gang' of the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum and their fight for equal wages. In 1944, after a 25 year campaign, Aboriginal workers at the Asylum gained equal wages almost 20 years before anywhere else in Australia. The Asylum closed shortly after and the story of the 'Aboriginal Gang' will now be told, 77 years later.

The exhibition Getting equal will be the centrepiece of NSIMM's activities in 2021 to mark the 75th anniversary of the closure of the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum. The exhibition is planned for the second half of 2021. There will be an associated series of events and workshops on Minjerribah and the mainland.

The exhibition will have a multi-media part including interviews with today's family members of those who struggled for fairness in the 1920-1940s. It will also document the work done by Aboriginal people, how and where they and their families lived. This includes telling some of the stories from the One Mile settlement and the relations between Aboriginal people and the Asylum Superintendent who was the face of the State Government on the Island and served as the local 'Protector of Aborigines'.



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Applications and other correspondence to:
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BLHA is the Brisbane branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History (ASSLH)

.....*The Past is always with us*.....

'Blue Days, Black Nights': Remembering Brisbane's Anti-Apartheid Protests of 1971

Raymond Evans

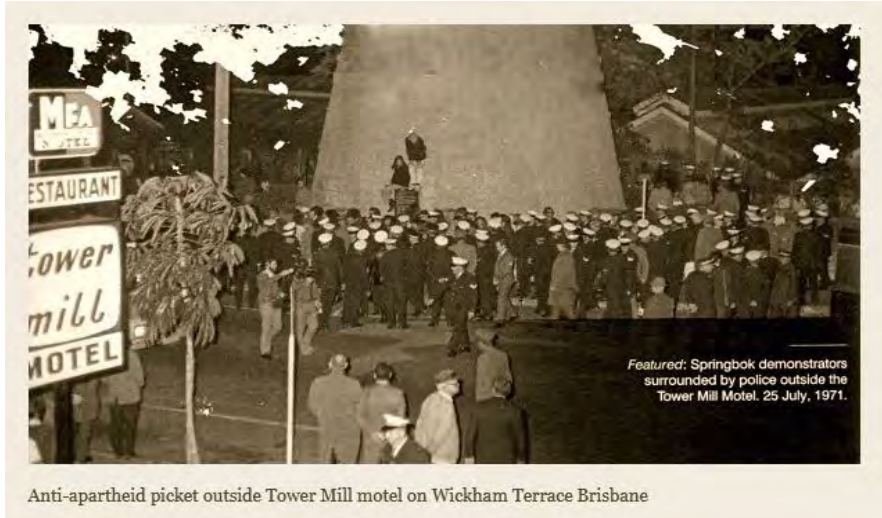
When I sat down to write 'Springbok Tour Confrontation: Tower Mill' for Radical Brisbane in 2003–4, outlining the basic contours of this struggle,¹ it was by then a faded or entirely eclipsed memory for most locals. Even to those minorities who cared about such things, it had been superseded by other pressing race/ethnic conflicts—Black Deaths in Custody; the Tampa incident and the 'Children Overboard' fakery; the Pacific Solution of island gulags for asylum seekers; the Northern Territory Intervention; the boisterous and bruising History Wars and so on. Some of us who had fought in 1971 were still fighting in these new campaigns, often with the sinking sensation that not only would things never improve radically here but also that they were actually becoming incrementally worse—dogged optimism of the Will shadowed by a crippling pessimism of the Intellect.

Back in mid-1971, when it had all exploded, I had just turned 27. I was a contract tutor at the University of Queensland, teaching British History. After some obstacles, I had just obtained my master's degree and was embarking upon a doctorate. Without exaggeration I can say that I was beginning to accumulate a lot of knowledge about the undersides of Australian and particularly Queensland history, still unfolding around me. But, most importantly, my political activities in a range of significant

causes—anti-war, anti-conscription, anti-sexist and anti-racist—were then being broadly fuelled by a sense of ebullience rather than dogged by any sense of defeatism. However small our numbers, we believed, we would not only fight—we would bloody-well win!

Sometimes, without even a modicum of due caution, we felt that optimistic surge of uplift propelling us forward. During the Sixties we would march and carry placards without a permit; we would practice civil disobedience *en masse* in city streets; we would tussle with police; we would get arrested and build movements from handfuls of activists into surging throngs. The most forthright among us researched and thought deeply; spoke publicly with impromptu brilliance; were genuinely charismatic while eschewing such title and always led from the front. At times, it was frightening to be there among them in the naked street. It was dangerous. But one also found comradeship in the ranks and a sense of vindication that the causes were both righteous and right.

It was not simply the obscenities of racism that triggered us—issues swirled about in 1971. Even as the first apartheid protests were burgeoning from May that year (in reaction to a South African surfing tour), the third Vietnam Moratorium mobilisation was mounting, culminating in a June march of 5000 or so from the campus and through the city streets.



Anti-apartheid picket outside Tower Mill motel on Wickham Terrace Brisbane

Foco, that leftist cultural extravaganza at Trades Hall, had been crushed by reactionaries some two years earlier, but spirited radical theatre was alive and well with *On Stage Vietnam* and *I Hear What You Say* at the Rialto and Schonell. The 1971 campus compendium, *Up the Right Channels*, was about to deliver a searing broadside to established academic class cultural hierarchies.² The feminist and gay movements were hitting their early and more radical straps. Young Brisbane Aborigines were adopting US Black Power stances; as, among the general Murri community, opposition was rising against the proposed 1971 *Aboriginal Act*.

As I would later comment of this rich plethora of causes and discontents:

... one coda of this turbulent era was the persistent plaint: 'Who has time to read?' ... For these were angrier days spent in protesting against military conscription, the Vietnam War and apartheid; as well as those

measureless times of debate on human liberation, women's rights or class oppression ... And watching a land rights consciousness painfully emerge into political articulation and national prominence. Another coda of that time, acted out rather than simply stated, was: 'We think therefore we do...'³

So, as relevant context, all of this was then richly unfolding. But, as 1971 moved along, the lens of opposition would focus more and more on South Africa. Apartheid became, as Ann Richards has termed it in her arresting memoir, 'a magnesium flare'.⁴ The movement was spearheaded mainly by tertiary students and a handful of academics; and only half-heartedly endorsed by the rank and file of white trade unionists. For, standing against the first concerted nationwide, anti-racist agitation in Australian history was a far greater and deeply visceral racial intransigence long implanted colonially throughout Australian society.



900 police from all over Queensland assemble in the Exhibition Ground Main Oval on July 21, 1971, to be addressed by Police Minister Mr Hodges and Police Commissioner Mr Whitrod in preparations for the Springbok Tour. *Courier Mail* Article 21/7/1971. Image No. PM1342D courtesy of the *Courier Mail*.
c/o <https://mypolice.qld.gov.au/museum/2017/02/14/vault-springbok-tour-queensland/>

So deeply implanted, in fact, that it could not even own the name: It failed to see that touring white South African sportspeople were front-line ambassadors for the most oppressive institutional racism in the world—that a *herrenvolk* football team was largely a public relations exercise in selling the shiny concept of racial segregation to all the slow punters. So, for us, very little public support was in the offing. As Labor MHR, Bill Hayden warned demonstrators: ‘You will be cleaned up ... Remember the workers are not behind you.’⁵ The national slogan, ‘Sport and Politics Don’t Mix’ became one of the most replicated and contradictory mantras of the century.

During July-August 1971, it unfolded both epically and nightmarishly. Long distance phone calls were a rarity in

those days so I can clearly recall Kathryn Cronin ringing my wife, Kay Saunders and myself from Melbourne on the evening of 3 July, after taking part in ‘The Battle of Melbourne’, where 650 foot and mounted police, armed with batons, laid into around 1200 demonstrators, of whom she was one, at Olympic Park. Her voice shook with alarm and sobs of rage as she detailed the excessively violent assaults.⁶ We knew then that it was going to be very rough; and that concern was heightened some ten days later when Bjelke-Petersen declared his infamous State of Emergency (the eighth in Queensland to that point but probably a world first for a sporting fixture).

So, we demonstrated as best we could from the time the Springbok team arrived in Brisbane on 22 July.

Intimidation was in the air. We knew we were alone. Instead of the many thousands who had recently swelled the three Moratorium marches, only three to five hundred initially turned out to oppose the tour. Semester exams were underway but many of the suburban, largely middle-class students were also clearly overawed by the 900 police the State had mobilised, with the rampant Premier's assurance that they basically could do whatever they liked.

Mounted police attacked student marchers all along the spiked railings of the Botanic Gardens on the afternoon of 22 July, arresting thirty-six. Phalanxes of foot police, drawn up in military formation and armed with clubs, then viciously assaulted fleeing demonstrators in the dark, sloping Wickham Park, adjacent to the Tower Mill convict relic on two occasions—the nights of 22 and 24 July. Dozens were injured and almost thirty more arrested. The air was 'pierced with sounds of people falling, of scuffles and screams ... It seemed that police had been lying in wait behind the trees. It was all planned,' writes Richards, who was in the thick of it.⁷

In outraged response, the mass of students found their voice and conducted a fifteen-day political 'general strike' (23 July–6 August) on the Queensland University campus—an unprecedented event in the history of Australian tertiary education. Aboriginal activists and white student radicals began to liaise seriously for the first time from this point and seminars on racism and colonialism in South Africa and Australia were held. On the afternoon of 24 July, as the Springboks played to a vastly depleted football crowd (6000 instead of an

anticipated 30,000) at an Exhibition Grounds ringed in barbed wire, around 2000 anti-racist protesters, who had gathered in Victoria Park, conducted the first unimpeded sit-down demonstration in Queen Street, in the city centre.

For my own part, I joined the slowly swelling ranks on most of these occasions. I had been involved in anti-racist activism in Brisbane against the White Australia Policy since 1962, although this had admittedly been desultory. After the Springbok Emergency, however, it escalated rapidly. In November, I took part in the first large-scale urban Aboriginal protest in Brisbane (that turned into another serious police riot) and the following year was speaking about frontier relations and the 1897 *Aboriginal Protection Act* at Pastor Don Brady's Spring Hill church as well as to the newly formed Black Panthers at Paddington. In 1973, Kay Saunders, Kathryn Cronin and I came together to write *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination: Race Relations in Colonial Queensland* with little more encouragement than the burning memories we three now carried of the savage political, cultural and social repression of the anti-Springbok mobilisation we had witnessed and experienced firsthand.⁸

In 1975, as that volume appeared, I began teaching the first history-based race relations unit at an Australian university, continuing this until my retirement in 2002. As that course began, Helen Susman, the only white South African parliamentarian consistently opposing apartheid, was visiting Queensland. The conditions under which most Aboriginal people were living here, she told the *Courier Mail*, were worse than

on the South African Bantustans. As she sat and listened to certain Queensland politicians defending this situation, she stated: 'if I closed my eyes, I could have been listening to the most right-wing conservatives in South Africa.'⁹

Racial battles were repetitively enjoined in Queensland after 1971 and remain so today. But it is also worth recording positively that, although we did not stop that all-white rugby tour, we did succeed in terminating further visits of segregated South African sporting teams of any kind to Australia by our dogged activism. It was our small contribution to the eventual overall defeat of apartheid in South Africa, demonstrating to the world that this infamous monolith was both less than invincible and never sporting nor fair.

Notes

¹R. Evans, 'Springbok Tour Confrontation: Tower Mill/Wickham Park, Wickham Terrace' in R. Evans and C. Ferrier (eds), *Radical Brisbane: An Unruly History*, Carlton North, Vulgar Press: 2004, pp. 277–84.

²D. O'Neill et al., *Up the Right Channels*, St Lucia, privately published, 1971.

³R. Evans and K. Saunders, 'Preface to the 1988 Edition', in R. Evans et al., *Race Relations in Colonial Queensland. A History of Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination*, St Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 1993, p. xiv.

⁴A. Richards, *A Book of Doors*, Toombul, AndAlso Books, 2020, p. 136.

⁵S. Harris, *Political Football : The Springbok Tour of Australia 1971*, Melbourne, Gold Star Publication, 1972, p.137.

⁶Ibid, pp.78-90; Evans and Saunders, 'Preface 1988', pp. xiv-xv

⁷Richards, *Book of Doors*, p. 151.

⁸R. Evans, K. Saunders and K. Cronin, *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination: Race Relations in Colonial Queensland*, Sydney, Australia and New Zealand Book Company, 1975.

⁹H. Susman, *Courier Mail*, 27 September 1975.

Whose Heritage? The University of Queensland, the Heritage Council and the UQ Union Complex

Howard Guille

This chronicle is about the campaign to stop the demolition of the University of Queensland Union complex (UQU) at St Lucia. The UQU includes the refectory, student union and the Schonell Theatre. It is a student-controlled space originally built with monies raised by the student union. The group, Save the UQ Union Complex (SUQUC), nominated the complex for listing on the Queensland Heritage Register arguing, among other things, its history at the centre of the fight against authoritarian Queensland governments. The campaign to save the UQU complex also had its own memories of how student opposition to Bjelke-Peterson laid the groundwork for links between students and unions, including during the SEQEB strike. The UQU complex was also a locus for demands for the democratising of tertiary education and its opening up to women and working class and First Nations' students.

The Executive management of the University of Queensland (henceforth in this article the UQ Executive) opposed the nomination, saying the claims were overblown and the complex had no heritage significance. Plus, retaining the complex would make the University less competitive in the international student market and would cost \$300m in lost revenue. The Queensland Heritage Council rejected the heritage application, including going against its

own specialist advice to heritage list the Schonell Theatre part of the complex.

The Heritage Council decision, when it came, was very disappointing and, in my thinking, quite flawed. The experience of advocating for heritage listing was unsatisfying and barren. The Queensland Heritage Council process originated in the protests and political dissent of the 1960s–80s but now seems to me effectively 'closed-off' to the wider community and populated by a coterie of 'heritage' specialists.

The strongest condemnations should be reserved for the UQ Executive which proposed chopping-down the UQU Complex to build something distinguished by little more than its marketing potential. Yet the orthodoxy and conventionality of the Heritage Council leaves a profound *malinconia*. There are too many silences about history. The heritage system, I think, deals well with churches, distinguished architecture, places of notable men and their wars, land development and commerce. Again, for me, it seems to avoid the edgy and the oppositional.

While 'heritage' protection in the 2020s is better than it was in the era of the Deen Brothers, it seems to me that the heritage system is sensitive to the powers of property. It seems calibrated to impose not too many limits on 'development'. Perhaps outcomes reflect the wider structures and imbalances of economic

and social power rather than principles of heritage preservation.

A mature polity and civic society should be able to debate its history. The heritage system is not doing this, and heritage and history are almost separate domains. A Community and Public History Commission could fill this void. It would be dedicated to celebrating, arguing, and grieving about Queensland history, and, even better, Australian history. Its very first arguments should be about how to ensure that it is energised by the widest range of community voices and not just professional and corporate elites.

Background

In 2019 the UQ Executive announced plans to demolish the University of Queensland Union complex (UQU) at the St Lucia campus. The announcement followed a master plan for the campus released two years earlier proposing the replacement of the UQU with a 'Student Hub' featuring commercial food outlets, student support services and teaching and learning spaces. The student hub proposal was strongly favoured and promoted by the then Vice Chancellor Peter Hoj, who argued that the replacement was essential to keep the University competitive in various global rankings and so attract international students.¹

The Save the UQ Union Complex (SUQUC) group, formed in 2018, campaigned against the demolition proposal, mounting several arguments. One was that the UQU had been crucial to the fight against authoritarian Queensland governments. Another that the Schonell Theatre and the community radio station 4ZZZ, that was established onsite, had been vital to Brisbane and

even Queensland culture and media. Furthermore, the UQ Executive was trying to strip away student control of student spaces as the proposed 'student hub' would not be a student union facility. Put plainly, the group thought that the UQU deserved better than to be replaced by a structure designed as part of the branding of UQ in the global student market and valuable only for its marketing potential.

SUQUC nominated the complex to be on the Queensland Heritage Register. Heritage listing, if achieved, would give the place some protection and, at the least, require the UQ Executive to be less cavalier. The Queensland Heritage Register is a list of Queensland's significant heritage places from colonisation onward; these are described as 'places of cultural and natural significance that we want to keep, respect, and pass on to future generations.'² The Queensland Heritage Council, an independent statutory body, determines whether a place is to be added to the Queensland Heritage Register. It makes its decisions on the case made by an applicant, responses from the owner/controller of the place, public submissions and advice from the Heritage Branch of the Department of Environment and Science.

The nominees and supporters of heritage listing for the UQU were well credentialed. The listing was supported by, among others, the National Trust of Queensland, the Heritage Committee of the Australian Institute of Architects, the Queensland Council of Unions, the National Tertiary Education Union, and a large group of senior scholars from around the state as well as a former

Chair of the Queensland Heritage Council and a significant group of UQU students. The Brisbane City Council also confirmed that ‘the UQ Union Complex is included in the Heritage overlay of Brisbane City Plan 2014 and has been protected as a local heritage place since 1 January 2004.’

Supporters of the application argued that the essential case for heritage listing was that the UQU complex was of state and national significance as the locus of opposition to authoritarian political regimes in Queensland—starting with the post-war ALP and culminating in the Bjelke-Petersen National Party governments of the 1970s and 1980s. UQU, it was argued, provided a forum for debate, a place to organise and a sanctuary to recuperate. Over the same period, groups advancing the rights of Women, LGBTQI and First Nations peoples developed and organised at the UQU complex. The overall significance of the complex is the part it played in the wave of democratisation of Queensland politics and society that culminated in the Fitzgerald Report of 1989 and its implementation in the 1990s.

The UQ Executive, through its ‘heritage consultants’ (Lovatts), and its Queen’s Counsel (Rod Lister), made three arguments against heritage listing. One, that the claims were overblown and there was no heritage significance to the entire UQU Complex. Second, that even if there were any heritage aspects to the complex, it should still not be listed because extensive changes to the fabric had obliterated any record. Third, even if significance was accepted, the UQU complex should not be listed because it would impose serious financial and

operating burdens on the University and threaten the future of its ranking among the top 50 universities in the world. More specifically,

UQ cannot deliver world leading facilities and a prominent destination if the existing Union Complex is retained. Retention of the existing Union Complex will compromise attractiveness, the quality and effectiveness of the student experience, student outcomes and market share.³

The Heritage Branch of the Department of Environment and Science recommended to the Heritage Council that the Schonell Theatre part of the UQU complex should be heritage listed but not the forum and ‘union’ buildings because of the amount of change to the fabric. In turn, the Heritage Council, we presume on a majority vote, rejected the entire application for heritage listing, including the Schonell. This gave UQ Executive *carte blanche* in dealing with the complex, including its demolition. At the time of writing (early 2021) ‘This project is on hold in response to COVID-19’.⁴

A glimpse at the proposal

The UQ Executive proposed a ‘28,000m² purpose-built complex that will include world-class teaching and learning space’; figure 1 is ‘a before and after’ image from the same UQ Executive media release.⁵

There might be a little license taken in the comparison shown in the media release because the ‘before’ image seems to be the back of the complex while the ‘after’ is more frontal from the Great Court. In its submission to the QHC, the UQ Executive included a set of images of the type of ‘student hubs’ and



Figure 1. Before and After

Source About UQ. A gateway to a new campus experience, <https://about.uq.edu.au/initiatives/student-hub>



Figure 2. Appendix to UQ Submission

campus developments with which it is ‘competing’.⁶ One of these is the Hive Learning Hub, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore; shown here, without comment, as figure 2.

The existing UQU complex is student space controlled by students. The proposal is for an area of 28,000m² of which only 1,800m² (6.4 per cent) would be for the student union.⁷ The project, named ‘*Redeveloping the Student Union Complex*’, is one of many developments raised in the 2017 St Lucia Campus Master Plan; it is ranked as a ‘high return investment’.⁸ Of more than

passing interest, one of the themes of the Master Plan is ‘The heritage of buildings, landscape and events associated with the campus are celebrated and protected.’⁹ This is laudable but, unfortunately, the UQ Executive seems to want the prerogative to select what is appropriate to be celebrated and what should be demolished.

A note on documents and sources

The attempt at heritage listing the UQU complex generated a copious number of documents. This included the application itself, to which was attached a forty-page history of the place. The submission objecting to the listing from the UQ Executive is also substantial, as is the Heritage Branch recommendation and the QHC ‘reasons for decision’. There are also some thirty or so public submissions, all but one in support of listing, as well as correspondence with the Department and QHC

All these documents were ‘public’ and available without any restriction on the relevant Department/Council web servers during the active period of the application. However, at the time of writing this is no longer so. Accordingly,

as they are major sources for material in this article, relevant documents have been placed on a cloud server to substantiate the references to them. The full list is at appendix A.

The Heritage listing process

The application to heritage list the UQU Complex sought to work within what was understood of the language, meanings and reasonings used within the 'Heritage system'. The Queensland Heritage Act 1992 provides that a place may be entered in the Queensland Heritage Register as a State heritage place if it satisfies one or more of eight criteria specified in the Act.¹⁰ The QHC provides a guide to using the criteria.¹¹ This states, among other things,

In effect the eight criteria are the tests of whether a place is of cultural heritage significance and whether this cultural heritage significance is of state-level significance.¹²

The application was lodged in early May 2019; the QHC considered the application on 25 October 2019 and finally made its decision on 29 November 2019. The statement of reasons for its decision is dated 4 March 2020.

The claim for heritage listing

Its importance to politics, culture and architecture were SUQUC's main reasons for keeping the UQU complex. In turn, these considerations became the elements of the heritage nomination and are elaborated in an essay on the history of the complex prepared as part of the nomination.¹³ The essay covers the development of the precinct and how it served as a centre for democratic change and a site of alternative culture. The essay also reviews the innovative

design by architect Stephen Trotter and includes an assessment of Trotter's work by architectural historian Don Watson.¹⁴ Trotter was awarded the Royal Australian Institute of Architects Bronze Medal in 1965 for the design.

The rationale underlying the 1950-60s design of the UQU complex contrasts sharply with the UQ Executive's portrayal of it in 2019 as a block to their grand plans for a globally competitive campus. According to the seminal history of post-war Queensland architecture, *Hot Modernism*, architects working on university projects in the era were

charged with the reconceptualisation of the university from a place for elite formation to a site that could express egalitarian values, engender a sense of community and—above all—cater for mass education.¹⁵

The conclusion of the essay gives the essence of the heritage nomination: The UQU Complex is

a living tradition of critical thought and practice, a rejection of conformity, a yearning for freer, more creative modes of social life.

Furthermore,

Possibly more than any other built edifice in Queensland, it bore witness to the wave of change that swept through provincialist Queensland in the 1960s and 70s, and it stands today as a monument to the several generations of citizen-students who defiantly insisted that an active democracy is the essence of a full life.¹⁶

The applicant must make a 'statement of cultural heritage significance' against the criteria considered relevant. The full text is in the 'Application form'.¹⁷ Statements

	Criterion	Summary of statement of significance
A	Queensland history	Unrivalled as a site representing the postwar history of progressive thought and activity in Queensland and a pivotal site in the transition from pre- to post-Fitzgerald Inquiry eras of Queensland history. Provided space to organise campaigns and for <u>learning</u> political and organising skills
B	Rare, uncommon or endangered	Not applicable
C	Potential to yield information	Not applicable
D	Particular class of cultural place	An example of public architecture supporting the ethos and functional requirements of participatory democracy.
E	Aesthetic significance	Established the aesthetic reputation of UQ alumnus and architect Stephen Trotter.
F	High degree of creative achievement	Demonstrates a number of innovated construction techniques for the time.
G	Social, cultural or spiritual associations	Not applicable
H	Association with historically important person, group or organisation	A sanctuary and organising space for Queensland's most oppressed and persecuted groups. important base in Queensland for the women's liberation movement, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activists and LGBTQ activists. Training ground for the State's parliamentary and judicial social democrats

Figure 3. Summary of statements of significance in Heritage application

were made against five of the eight criteria. A summary is shown in figure 3.

The rest of this article concentrates on the aspects of the nomination which relied on the history of the UQU Complex and its part in progressive democratic activism. Omitting discussion of the Schonell Theatre and of the architectural and aesthetic features of the complex is not to lessen their relevance. Rather, I wished to gain space to canvass broader implications of why UQ Executive and the QHC were either unmoved by and/or hostile to the arguments about the historical politics presented.

The history test

The QHC guide states that Criteria (a) and (h) are used mainly when assessing the historical significance of a place.¹⁸ Criterion (a) is: 'the place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Queensland's history.' Criterion (h) is: 'the place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person,

group or organisation of importance in Queensland's history.'

The heritage application for criterion (a) states, in part,

The University of Queensland Union Complex was important as one of the main sites in Australia associated with opposition to the Vietnam war and military conscription.

During a period of notoriously authoritarian government in Queensland from 1966 to 1989, the Union Complex was also the principal site in this State for organising extra-parliamentary campaigns for democratic reform and civil liberties.

The Complex is therefore exceptionally important, unique even, as an historic site associated with the defence and development of democratic rights in Queensland. As a crucial hub of democratic activism in the 1960s, 70s and 80s it was deeply implicated in the transition to the era of government

transparency and accountability that began in 1989.¹⁹

Part of the statement in the application to criterion (h) is

Beginning in the mid-1960s the University of Queensland Union Complex had a special association with Queensland's politically engaged university students. It was their base, their town square, a place where they could gather, debate and organise. Despite differences in ideology and strategy, the members of this group, comprising successive waves of students over a 25-year period, were united by a view that injustice in any form should be actively resisted, and that a fundamentally more equal, democratic society was both desirable and possible. The political campaigns they launched from the site had a profound and lasting influence on Queensland society.

And:

Political figures from the post-Fitzgerald era of democratic politics in Queensland have a particularly strong association with the site. A generation of parliamentary leaders, including premiers, deputy premiers and Cabinet ministers. Peter Beattie, Anna Bligh, Anastacia Palaszczuk, Anne Warner, Paul Lucas and Andrew McNamara began their political careers in UQU student politics and/or political campaigns organised at the site. Senior Queensland judicial figures Ian Dearden and Fleur Kingham were also politically active at the UQU Complex.²⁰

A strong argument was put by letter and in oral representations to the Council

that the logical sequence in assessing significance against these two criteria—and most especially criterion (a)—is to start by considering the importance of the events in the history of Queensland.²¹ The Heritage Council was asked to make and publish its conclusions about the level of importance of the historical events. I am far from satisfied that the Council did engage with the history; if it did, I did not receive its analysis and conclusions.

The *Burra Charter*, published by the Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS),²² is the seminal document for heritage conservation in Australia.²³ It informed the request for the Heritage Council to consider history first. An associated Practice note to the Charter²⁴ includes historic value as one of the five heritage values and says the history can be evaluated via the question, 'Is the place associated with an important event or theme in history?'²⁵ The same practice note is also pertinent to the question of physical evidence of the history. The relevant part of the note about the level of significance of historic value states (in full)

For any place the significance will be greater where the evidence of the association or event survives at the place, or where the setting is substantially intact, than where it has been changed or evidence does not survive. However, some events or associations may be so important that the place retains significance regardless of such change or absence of evidence.²⁶

Much historical evidence is in records, photographs, and oral accounts. The

application documented a copious amount about the UQU complex. Such material is not necessarily 'embedded' in the physical place and an analogous example to the UQU complex is the Strikers Camp at Barcaldine. It is item 600019 on the Heritage Register under the name *Shearers' Strike Camp Site, Barcaldine*. The citation against criterion (a) is

The Shearers' Strike Camp Site was the focus of the 1891 Shearers' Strike, a confrontation between capital and labour that was a major event in Queensland's history. The strike was a watershed in the development of organised representation of labour in Australia and the formation of the Australian Labor Party.

The description of the place on the Register includes the statement,

The only visible evidence of its use during the Shearers' Strike is the remains of a camp oven made of ant bed, a blazed tree and a light artefact scatter, some of which is subsequent to the strike.²⁷

To be plain, the QHC listed the Strike Camp Site because of its historical, political importance. It did so despite there being virtually no physical evidence on the site. This is justified by the Burra Charter/ ICOMOS Practice note. What seems an apparent inconsistency between the Strike Camp and the nomination of the UQU Complex is considered below.

The QHC decision

The QHC provided its statement of decision in March 2020, three months after its decision was made. The statement is long and legalistic and seems designed to avoid a Court challenge to the Council

decision. My sense is that it is crafted to give a little consolation to the applicants by partially acknowledging the history; even so the Council rejected putting UQU on the state heritage list.

The statement lists 'the Heritage Council's findings on material questions of fact in relation to whether the Complex met any or each of the cultural heritage criteria.'²⁸ I read the two most important 'material questions of fact' as these:

From the mid-1960s until the 1980s the Complex was associated with Queensland's radical political and civil libertarian movements, hosting student demonstrations and serving as an organisation and meeting site for protest marches, strikes and moratoria. Influenced by the global counterculture movement protesting the Vietnam War and other social issues, and the restrictions on demonstrations and marches enforced by the conservative Queensland Government, radical and civil liberties groups formed at the Complex, and gatherings were held at the Forum.²⁹

And, against this,

The Complex has undergone extensive change. These changes include: removal of approximately 61% of the original Breeze Block screens, a key component of the original facades; replacement of most original doors and windows (except windows to the first floor of the Administration Block and some windows to the Relaxation Block)³⁰

The QHC rejects all the claims for heritage significance.³¹ In summary, the

following seem the most crucial of its reasons

- The claim against criterion (a) (one of the two where ‘history’ is the test of significance) is rejected even though the reasons include ‘The Complex ... played a notable role as a place associated with Queensland’s political protest movement, particularly between the 1960s and the 1980’.³²
- Criterion (d) and (e) and (f) are rejected on the grounds of extensive change to the fabric.
- With criterion (g), the QHC ‘acknowledges the important historical and social associations at the Complex with a range of protest movements and political activism’ and ‘acknowledged that associations do not always need to be demonstrated in the fabric of a place’ but ‘considered that there are no current features of the Complex that are linked to these associations’.³³
- With criterion (h), the Council recognises ‘associations with the life and work of a number of people, groups and organisations who may be considered to be of importance in Queensland’s history’, but extensive change means this is ‘insufficiently demonstrated’ in the fabric.³⁴

I find this is contradictory; stripped to its core the Council reasoning is this:

1. There were ‘important historical and social associations’ with a range of protest movements and political activism; some were ‘notable’.
2. There are associations with people, groups and organisations of importance in Queensland’s history.
3. Such associations do not always need to be demonstrated in the fabric

of a place for a place to be of heritage significance.

All of which can be taken to support heritage listing, but

4. The fabric has been changed and the ‘requisite’ demonstration of the associations is not present in the physical place.³⁵

Perhaps the QHC statement that ‘The Complex...played a notable role as a place associated with Queensland’s political protest movement, particularly between the 1960s and the 1980s’³⁶ is even more salient. The QHC guide to using the criteria applies the question of ‘notable’ to the contribution of people, groups, or organisations not to places.³⁷ The test for significance stated in the Guide is whether people who were associated with the place did important or notable things.

I have no indication that the QHC considered this. Indeed, if the QHC accepted that people or groups ‘played a notable role’, it is tantamount to accepting that the heritage significance indicator was met. Putting the ‘notable test’ on to the physical building avoids this and is anthropomorphic. It virtually requires SUQUC, as applicants, to produce evidence of the buildings demonstrating and getting bashed.

The association of large protest groups, women, LGBTIQI and Aboriginal groups and organisations with the UQU Complex is demonstrated by records, photographs, individual accounts, and recollections. They are covered in detail in the history submitted as part of the application. Again, my emphasis is that the Heritage Council should have been looking at the import of the historical

events rather than sifting through the buildings looking for physical signifiers.

One of the complexities of dealing with anti-establishment activities and protest in heritage is that the 'most-recollected' parts of such activity often do not give identity to a particular place. This is clear for many strikes and pickets. Power poles at which demonstrators were arrested during the SEQEB lockout have no special significance; the spot on George St where Emma Miller was arrested for ostensibly using a hair-pin on Commission Cahill or his horse bears no mark of this; nor the place in Upper Edward St where Fred Paterson MLA was bashed by police. Often the only physical evidence of historically important movements are remnants. Moreover, architecturally inclined assessors are often unaware of social, political, and industrial matters which occurred at heritage places.³⁸

The QHC appears to accept that history was made at the UQU Complex but steers away from evaluation of that history as history. SUQUC argued that the history was a substantial part of the defeat of authoritarian regimes in Queensland. It was part of a national revolt—led by students and some university staff—against the racist Rugby tours and the Vietnam War. It was the genesis of getting First Nations, women's and LGBTQI issues on the political agenda. Put plainly, the Complex is exceptionally important as an historic site where democracy in Queensland was defended and developed. There are links between the police raiding a condom machine at the UQU in the mid-1980s and the decriminalisation of abortion in 2020. There is a continuity between the 'right

to march' marches of the 1970s and the explicit right to freedom of association in the 2019 Human Rights Act.³⁹

The QHC seems to grudgingly accept the importance of the history. It acknowledges regarding criterion (g) that associations do not always need to be demonstrated in the fabric of a place. But it still demands physical evidence of association in the fabric of the complex. Whether deliberately or inadvertently, it seems to me that the QHC is saying that heritage significance is not an acknowledgement or recognition of historical events but of the narrower function of places. It is almost as if history and heritage exist in distinct domains.

This is more than a theoretical matter; in what seems the QHC approach, one looks to the buildings for an account of the historical; it thus becomes easier to give heritage status to places that have a strict and conventional purpose such as churches, town halls and schools. Likewise, those who are less enthusiastic about particular historical claims are able to argue against heritage status by reference to the absence of physical remnants in the place. This enables them to avoid debating the significance of the history.

Presumably the public statements of support provided by the Queensland Council of Unions and the National Trust of Queensland indicate that the decision of QHC was not unanimous. One might speculate that some of the Council found the actual political questions discomfiting if not distasteful discourse. Social conflict, demonstrations and strikes are not regular fare for middle-class professionals but rather behaviour

of deviant subalterns. The sense is that the Council is more at ease conversing with and in the language of architects, designers, and planners than with radicals and unionists. Protesting and opposing, marshalling and organising support and supporters and the practical arrangements for posters, banners and bail money are unknown territory.

Consultation or dialogue?

The QHC followed a strict and quite rigid timetable in dealing with the application—indeed, to the exact fifteen minutes for making oral submissions to the Council. Perhaps the Council was particularly careful because of the reference made in the UQ Executive submission of the importance of ‘*procedural fairness*.’⁴⁰ An emphasis on process has become the hallmark of planning law and industrial relations especially in recent years with greater recourse by developers and employers to court actions.

The QHC consults before making decisions; in other words it asks for written and oral submissions and, under the Heritage Act, must have regard to them.⁴¹ But consultation can be a passive process—the decision-maker listens and makes their decision after listening. It does not require the decision-maker to say why they accept or reject material put before them. Nor does it require them to seek consensus in a negotiated settlement. As almost every union representative knows, consultation leaves the decision with the boss.⁴²

The QHC was explicitly asked to engage in a dialogue about the nomination. Part of the request was for

an opportunity to hold a more comprehensive dialogue on the matters raised in my application, the submission made by the University and the report and recommendation of the Branch. I propose that this dialogue take the form of a meeting at, and tour of, the UQ Union Complex over several hours where the various claims and the recommendation can be discussed with members of the Heritage Council with specialist input from assistants with architectural and historical expertise.

The applicants explained that such dialogue would

permit a two-way discussion and allow the Council to effectively interrogate the claims made for and against the heritage and the historical importance of the relevant events. We think this is especially pertinent to the task the Council faces in dealing with a nomination where the significance draws on anti-establishment and protest activities.⁴³

No reply was received to the request for dialogue. There was no meeting at the UQU complex; no exchange of views; QHC members, UQ Executive, the applicants, the student union executive never met, never exchanged views, and never sought a consensus or compromise. For the whole time those involved might have been talking past each other.⁴⁴

Hence there was no sharing of views about the importance of the history and about the practices of protest and dissent. There was no sharing of views about the question of ‘what’s left’—regrettable because, as argued earlier in this article, this was very much in the eyes of the believer. More generally, the

QHC, by refusing such dialogue, shut off the possibility of a shared outcome that recognised the history of the activities that took place at UQU Complex while dealing with legitimate questions raised by the UQ Executive such as those of pedestrian flows to and from the Lakes Bus Station.

An unsatisfying and barren experience

The attempt to list the UQU complex as a heritage site was unsatisfying. It is not so much the outcome that was disappointing, since many of the supporters of the application have been on the receiving end of corporate, industrial and political power before. Instead the regrets are due to the decision contradicting the Council's own, albeit grudging, recognition of the struggles of the 1960s-80s. And about how the heritage process seems effectively 'closed off' to the wider community and is populated by a coterie of architects, planners, lawyers, and some 'professional' historians.

Many of those who specialise in 'heritage' repeatedly appear, usually on paid gigs, taking sides almost randomly on heritage matters.⁴⁵ Minuscule issues of 'fact' and angel-on-pin-head questions of criteria dominate. Such contributions compare very unfavourably with, for example, Robert Mason's crafted social history of the cane industry and places of North and far North Queensland or Jane Lennon's passion about mining and pastoral homesteads.⁴⁶

Ironically, the current Queensland system for recognising colonial heritage had its origins in the protests and political dissent of the 1960s-80s. Sean Ulm and Geraldine Mate make such a link:

The Bjelke-Petersen era was one of extended political conflict with street march crack downs, extensive powers for the Special Branch, and restrictions on freedom of expression. The demolition of the Belle Vue Hotel and Cloudland Ballroom in Brisbane forever changed the heritage landscape of Queensland, sparking demands for heritage conservation and legislation.⁴⁷

The demands for heritage conservation and legislation were met by the Goss Government with Pat Comben as the first ever Minister for the Environment and Heritage. An advisory committee chaired by Richard Allom was established in December 1989 almost immediately on election.⁴⁸ In 1990, Lorraine Bird, ALP member for Whitsunday, commented on what the government was doing and made explicit comparison with the new heritage and environmental protections and the anti-Vietnam mobilisations.

Many see the protection of the environment as an invention of the eighties. Those of us who were involved in the anti-Vietnam rallies will remember that it was the defoliation that enkindled an awareness of environmental damage and its longstanding effects on the community, subsequently stimulating, in 1971, the implementation of green bans by the Builders Labourers Federation, whose members refused to work on new developments that ate into areas of wilderness and beauty, especially those that local communities wanted to conserve.⁴⁹

The promise and the energy that fed the Goss-Comben action to protect heritage has dissipated in my opinion. This seems to be shared by Richard Allom who was

involved in the Goss-Comben initiatives in 1989–1990. He has complained about what he says is the ‘bureaucratisation of heritage where everything has to be ticked off’.⁵⁰

The heritage regime of the 2010s and 2020s seems to be over-cautious, taking few risks and imbuing little adventure. There is no proselytising of heritage nor much celebration and questioning of public history. Schools and railway stations are safe to put on the heritage register; the ‘respectable’ is favoured over the edgy. As the UQ Executive submission says of the UQU complex,

The primary buildings and “the Forum” are not visually prominent; they are not symbolic in form (in contrast to the Great Court Complex which provides the strongest visual image associated with the University).⁵¹

What has happened to heritage could well be part of a wider outcome from the Goss Government. The Premier’s statement that ‘he would manage his government so as not to “frighten the horses”, became a virtual mantra.’⁵² The energy for radical change, if it was ever present, was subsumed into the combination of what Glyn Davis called a *government of routines*⁵³ and the Peter Coaldrake-led Public Sector Management Commission emphasis on process, staff annual appraisal and key performance indicators. At the time, it seemed preferable to make accommodations with the ‘new managers’ as the alternative was the rabid individualism, deregulation and market fundamentalism of neo-liberalism. This might have been misplaced since these same people who were the new managers went on to leadership positions that

delivered the excrescences of the corporate, market-driven, university.

The strongest condemnations should be reserved for the UQ Executive which proposed chopping down the UQU Complex. It is a long way from the era described by Di Zetlin where the concern was ‘*educated minds*’.⁵⁴ And yet, the Heritage Council is not immune from criticism.

Progressive politics must contest history, present and future; it must invite debate. New arrangements are needed such as a Community and Public History Commission dedicated to celebrating, arguing, and grieving about all social and political history. Its very first arguments should be about how to ensure that it is energised by subalterns as well as academic and corporate elites. A very small step to this is the recent work of fourteen Masters-level architecture students in a display to celebrate the oppositional history of the UQU complex. Figure 4 is from their work; it is worth celebrating.

Author’s note

The people most active in the Save the UQ Union Complex campaign were Jeff Rickertt, Lachlan Hurse, Ian Curr, Dan O’Neill, Desley Agnoletto (Schonell Cinema manager during its heyday), Lee Duffield, Duncan Hart, Priya De, Mitch Thompson, Carole Ferrier, Sam Watson, Peter Wertheim, Anne Richards, Alex Crowley and Peter Marquis-Kyle. We also received support from the management of 4ZZZ, Member for Maiwar Michael Berkman, and both the Queensland Division and UQ Branch of the NTEU.



Figure 4. Architecture students seeking social alternatives

Adele Mammone, Thomas

Webster and Ali Rad Yousefnia

<https://workersbushtelegraph.com.au/2021/02/10/architecture-students-seeking-social-alternatives/>

The text has benefited from comments made by Jeff Rickertt, Tiiti Gill and Allan Gardiner; however, they are absolved from responsibility for the content.

Notes

¹<https://about.uq.edu.au/initiatives/student-hub>

²Queensland Government, Heritage conservation in Queensland, <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/heritage/queensland>. First Nations' Heritage is subject to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 and the Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003.

³University of Queensland Union Complex, University of Queensland, St Lucia Campus, Brisbane, Submission of The University of Queensland para 235

⁴About UQ. A gateway to a new campus experience, <https://about.uq.edu.au/initiatives/student-hub>

⁵Ibid

⁶University of Queensland Union Complex, University of Queensland, St Lucia Campus, Brisbane, Submission of The University of Queensland Appendix 6

⁷About UQ. A gateway to a new campus experience, op cit

⁸St Lucia Campus Master Plan December 2017, https://about.uq.edu.au/files/5659/St-Lucia_Campus_Master_Plan_Final_Dec2017.pdf p127

⁹Ibid p35

¹⁰Queensland Heritage Act 1992, clause 35 <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1992-009#pt.4-div.1>

¹¹Heritage Branch, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Assessing cultural heritage significance; Using the cultural heritage criteria, September 2017, https://www.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0030/66693/using-the-criteria.pdf

¹²Ibid p8

¹³The University of Queensland Union Complex: History and Heritage, Submission to Queensland Heritage Council, May 2019

¹⁴The Architecture of the UQ Union Complex' Assessment by Don Watson. Appendix 1, University of Queensland Union Complex: History and Heritage, op cit

¹⁵Alice Hampson & Janina Gosseye, 'Healthy Minds in Healthy Bodies: Building Queensland's Community One Weatherboard at a Time', in *Hot Modernism: Queensland Architecture 1945-1975*, eds. John P. Macarthur, Deborah van der Plaats, Janina Gosseye, Andrew Wilson (London: Artifice, 2015), p240. Quoted in University of Queensland Union Complex: History and Heritage, op cit

¹⁶The University of Queensland Union Complex: History and Heritage, op cit p 19

¹⁷Application form, Entry of a place in the Queensland Heritage Register, University of Queensland Union Complex, May 2019

¹⁸Using the cultural heritage criteria, p8

¹⁹Application form, Entry of a place in the Queensland Heritage Register, University of Queensland Union Complex, May 2019

²⁰Ibid

²¹See 'Speaking Notes for QHC Presentation', Jeff Rickertt, 25 October 2019 and 'Notes for presentation to Queensland Heritage Council', Howard Guille, 25 October 2019

²²See Australia ICOMOS, <https://australia.icomos.org/about-us/australia-icomos/>

²³Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter*, 2013, <http://openarchive.icomos.org/2145/>

²⁴Australia ICOMOS, Understanding and assessing cultural significance, 2013, https://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/Practice-Note_Understanding-and-assessing-cultural-significance.pdf

²⁵Ibid p3

²⁶Ibid p3 (emphasis added)

²⁷Shearers' Strike Camp Site, Barcaldine, QHC Item 600019, <https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/heritage-register/detail/?id=600019>

²⁸Decision of the Queensland Heritage Council not to enter the University of Queensland Union Complex, Brisbane in the Queensland Heritage Register as a State Heritage Place, letter to H Guille from Manager Queensland Heritage Council & Heritage Register, 4 March 2020

²⁹QHC reasons for decision op cit (s 4.2 (n)); repeated at s 4.8 (b) and s 4.9 (o)

³⁰Ibid s4.2 (q); repeated at s 4.5 (e); s 4.56 (e); s 4.7 (e); 4.9 (r)

³¹This includes rejecting any significance of criteria (b), (c) and (g) which we had said were not applicable!

³²Ibid s 5.1 (a) (i)

³³Ibid 5.1 (g) (I), (ii) & (ii)

³⁴Ibid 5.1 (h) (I), (ii)

³⁵Without seeking to debate meanings and interpretations, the QHC 'Guide to the Criteria' uses the words 'strong, noticeable or influential contribution' as significance indicators for criterion A. The Council does not say whether or not any of these applied. Using the cultural heritage criteria, Table 1

³⁶Ibid s 5.1 (a) (i)

³⁷The guide states that the test of criterion (h) is that the place

Has a special association with:

– a person who has made an important or notable contribution to the evolution or development of our society or our physical environment; (the same words are then applied separately to group and organisation) Using the cultural heritage criteria Table 1

³⁸See Howard Guille, 'What about the workers – how well does heritage represent labour?', *Queensland History Journal*, 22, (2) August 2013 for discussion in reference to worker and union heritage.

³⁹Queensland Human Rights Commission Fact Sheet, Right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association, Section 22 of the Human Rights Act 2019, https://www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/19891/QHRC_factsheet_HRA_s22.pdf

⁴⁰UQ Submission para 37

⁴¹Heritage Act s 51 (2)

⁴²For a more substantial discussion see Howard Guille, 'What work rights are still worth fighting for?', TJ Ryan Foundation Policy Brief, June 2014

⁴³Letter to Manager, Queensland Heritage Council and Heritage Register, Heritage Branch from J Rickertt and H Guille September

⁴⁴We do not know whether the QHC members visited the site -either individually or as a group.

⁴⁵To give almost random examples the QC acting for the UQ Executive against the listing of the UQU Complex had previously acted for the QHC in defending a heritage listing in Townsville. The historian who provided expert evidence against that Townsville listing had previously acted for the QHC in developing listing applications.

⁴⁶Mason, Robert, 'Cane fields and solidarity in the multiethnic north', *Queensland Historical Atlas*, 3, January 2013. <https://www.qhatlas.com.au/cane-fields-and-solidarity-multiethnic-north> and Jane Lennon's piece on homesteads There are also many places with a richly layered history but the physical heritage values are no longer intact due to relocation, abandonment, fire, vandalism and ultimately decay. <https://www.qhatlas.com.au/content/station-homesteads>

⁴⁷Sean Ulm & Geraldine Mate, Conflict: how people contest the landscape, <https://www.qhatlas.com.au/essay/conflict-how-people-contest-landscape>

⁴⁸In 1989, newly-elected Premier Wayne Goss ordered that a Consultative Committee be created, to be chaired by conservation architect Richard Allom. This committee was given the responsibility of drafting a Green Paper for the future Act and creating a Heritage Committee to handle specific heritage cases. Despite the creation of this body, there were still no active government policies

protecting heritage buildings. In response Pat Comben, Minister for Environment and Heritage, announced that from 11 March 1990 no properties listed on the National Trust of Queensland (NTQ) or Australian Heritage Council (AHC) registers could be developed, and in May 1990 the Heritage Buildings Protection Bill was introduced. <https://www.slg.qld.gov.au/blog/celebrating-our-heritage-seminar-rhsq>. To avoid any possible conflict of interest, note the author was the Trades and Labour Council representative on this

⁴⁹*Hansard* 27 November 1990, <https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/hansard/1990/901127ha.pdf>

⁵⁰Digital Archive of Queensland Architecture, Interview with Richard Allom 21 May 2013, <https://qldarch.net/architect/interview/2557?architectId=250>

⁵¹Para 82

⁵²John Wanna & Tracey Arklay, *The Ayes Have It; The history of the Queensland Parliament, 1957–1989*, ANU Press, 2010

⁵³Glyn Davis, *A government of routines: Executive coordination in an Australian state*, Macmillan, 1995

⁵⁴Di Zetlin on 'Educated Minds' on SoundCloud. <https://workersbushtelegraph.com.au/2019/01/22/rally-to-save-uq-union-complex/#comment-809075>

Appendix A

Sources in our archive

Available at <https://tinyurl.com/UQU-archive>

University of Queensland Union Complex, University of Queensland, St Lucia Campus, Brisbane, Submission of The University of Queensland (submission a)

University of Queensland Union Complex, University of Queensland, St Lucia Campus, Brisbane; all other submissions (submission b)

Application form, Entry of a place in the Queensland Heritage Register, University of Queensland Union Complex, May 2019

The University of Queensland Union Complex: History and Heritage, Submission to Queensland Heritage Council, May 2019 (submissions a)

The Architecture of the UQ Union Complex' Assessment by Don Watson. Appendix 1, University of Queensland Union Complex: History and Heritage

UQU History of the Architect and Architecture by Don Watson

Decision of the Queensland Heritage Council not to enter the University of Queensland Union Complex, Brisbane in the Queensland Heritage Register as a State Heritage Place, letter to H Guille from Manager Queensland Heritage Council & Heritage Register, 4 March 2020

Letter to Manager, Queensland Heritage Council and Heritage Register, Heritage Branch from J Rickertt and H Guille, 15 September 2020 requesting consultation and dialogue

Preserving the Heritage of Democracy; The University of Queensland Union Complex; Presentation by Dr Jeff Rickertt for the Campaign to Save the UQ Union Complex

Speaking Notes for QHC Presentation, Jeff Rickertt, 25 October 2019

Notes for presentation to Queensland Heritage Council, Howard Guille, 25 October 2019

Briefing Paper for Unions and supporters re Application to Heritage List the University of Queensland Union Complex; September 2019

Book Reviews

A Book of Doors

By Anne Richards

**Brisbane: AndAlso Books
(2020) 236pp \$25**

Reviewed by Greg Mallory

Anne Richards should be congratulated for writing this book. It details a very important part of Queensland history. The strength of the book is that it chronicles the events of the radical movement in the 1960s and 70s centred around the University of Queensland. The book is important as it chronicles how oppressive Queensland was with the constant surveillance of the Queensland Police Special Branch. There was an ever-present watch by the Special Branch outside all the houses in which Anne lived. This is an important piece of history to record. Without these recorded memories, knowledge of these historical events could soon be lost forever. I was involved in many of the incidents that Anne describes and am thus able to comment with a degree of clarity.

For many of these years Anne lived in a series of houses, hence the title, *A Book of Doors*.

It begins with her time at the University Queensland when she was involved in



the protest movement of 60s and 70s. Anne had prior knowledge of the radical movement when she was at school hearing accounts of older students who were involved with various actions such as the 1967 civil liberties march. This inspired her to get involved with students who frequented the area in front of the refectory which was known as the 'forum' area. This area was a place where students would speak about political matters such as the lack of civil liberties in Queensland and conscription for the Vietnam War.

Her father was opposed to her getting involved with the protest movement.

The crucial point in their relationship came when Anne decided to march in the first anti-war Moratorium on the 8 May 1970. When she arrived home, she was forced to tell her father, who proceeded to argue with her and finally hit her. Anne's response was to pack her clothes and leave the house. Her immediate situation was that she had no money and was forced to rely on the generosity of other people. During this time in isolation Anne had a relationship with a boy called Neil, of whom she speaks highly. He was later killed in an accident and Anne was heartbroken.

Anne describes the lead up to both Moratoriums. She describes Tent City, where people slept before the first Moratorium, and 'People's Park' where student activism was on display. She well recalls telling details of the marches, for example passing the Regatta Hotel and picking up students on the way.

The next incident was the occupation of the University Regiment. The Regiment was located on the outskirts of the campus and students took over the building and destroyed files. This resulted in police chasing several students around Brisbane. One of the students who was not involved in the incident was picked up by the Special Branch and bashed.

In the same week students moved against the South Vietnamese Ambassador, Luic Tuong Quang, who had been invited on to campus by the Democratic Club. Students prevented him from leaving the room he was in and this resulted in a confrontation between radical students and the supporters of the Democratic Club. The police were called. A major confrontation occurred on the streets of

the university, with the Special Branch again being involved.

Anne describes her trip to Canberra for the second Aquarius Festival organised by the Australian Union of Students. The highlight was the march around Canberra protesting US imperialism, apartheid in South Africa and conscription at the Department of Labour and National Service. Many arrests were made at the demonstration, which resulted in police forming a wedge outside the ANU. Stones were thrown, leading to the police charging and entering the campus trying to arrest students.

Anne was involved with the Women's movement, the Black Panther Party and the third Aquarius Festival held at Nimbin.

For all the time Anne was in 'exile' from her home, she maintained a relationship with her mother and Judith, her sister, who she had shared a bedroom with. She managed to do this when her father was out playing tennis on a Saturday afternoon. The book finishes with her reconciliation with her father who, nevertheless, mostly retained his authoritarian position.

A minor criticism of the book from my standpoint as a labour historian is that the radical movement and the various activities that involved Anne are consigned too much to the background to her more personal memories. There is also no attempt to distinguish between the politics of the various groups that were involved in these actions. For example, there is no discussion of the politics of SDA (Students for Democratic Action), RSSA (Revolutionary Socialist Students Alliance), the Labor Club, and various other student organisations that

were around at the time. This may have led to several historical inaccuracies such as the location of the Quang incident which Anne claims was the Physiology Building but occurred in the Relaxation Block.

This book is highly recommended to activists of that period, anyone interested in a good memoir, and anyone seeking to learn from the past to create change in the future.

Comrades! Lives of Australian Communists

Edited by Bob Boughton, Danny Blackman, Mike Donaldson, Carmel Shute and Beverley Symons

Sydney: SEARCH Foundation in association with the Australian Society for the Study of LabourHistory.

(2020) pp435 \$30

(available from the New International Bookshop:

<https://nibs.org.au/>)

Reviewed by Dean Wharton

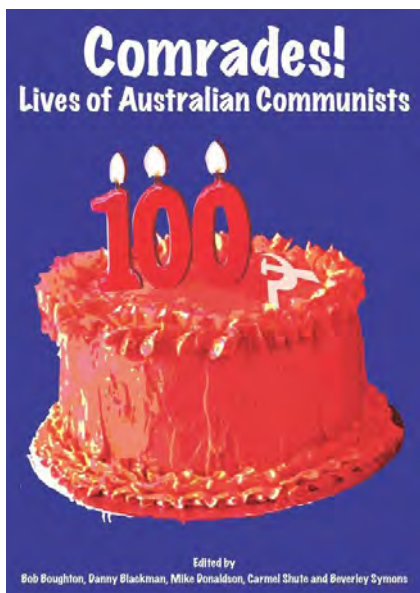
As a Brisbane Labour History Association committee member, I was looking forward with some interest to the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). I expressed misgivings about holding a seminar or series of lectures in October 2020 to commemorate the event; I thought it could be quite divisive. The Left in Brisbane is quite a disparate bunch

politically and the BLHA has previously witnessed some memorable occasions when long-held grievances between sections of the Left had resurfaced. How then to hold a celebration of the formation of this 'revolutionary' party? A party whose history is chequered with hope and achievement but also disappointment, diversion and division.

Unfortunately, perhaps, our plans for an event were prevented by COVID-19, and an article in the last issue of this journal had to suffice.

Faced also by the current pandemic, Bob Boughton and his colleagues in the SEARCH Foundation and the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History conceived of the idea of producing *Comrades! Lives of Australian Communists*. A call was sent out in March 2020 for biographies of individuals who were active in the CPA. In the space of five months, one hundred biographies were received and edited into this book, a further fifty being allocated to a dedicated SEARCH webpage. The book was published in time for the anniversary.

The book does not tackle the question of how effective or divisive the CPA was for the revolutionary Left in Australia. Which is ingenious. A lack of a critical analysis of the party leaves the reader with simply a collection of remarkable life stories of its activists. These people set out to change the world for the better, within the confines of the opportunities around them. There is obvious empathy from each biographer; they express sincere feelings of comradeship towards their subjects, and fortunately there is little grand-standing about how the party did or didn't change society. Each biography is 4-5 pages long.



The SEARCH Foundation, which was developed by the CPA in the year prior to its dissolution in 1991, was at the helm of this project. I anticipated that comrades who were expelled for free-thinking or who had taken the decision to leave the party acrimoniously could be excluded. This anticipation was unfounded. This is not an encyclopedia of life members, those who kept the faith and never wavered; many of the comrades described took the decision to leave during splits in the party or for personal reasons. Some remained politically active in the SPA or ALP. The activity of the individuals also varies greatly. Whilst some members were lifers, some were members for only a few short years, but they took the influence of the party into their later activities, often into 'respectable' society.

For all their talk of gender equality, the CPAs leadership fell far short of a 50%

gender balance. This book at least meets that threshold. This is where the book is most interesting. The lives of the female comrades followed, by necessity, more individual paths. Their opportunities for permanent employment, and within union and party structures, were more limited due to sexism. This means that their stories are more varied, they weren't so obviously bound by party or union activity so were more active in equal rights and pay, the peace movement and indigenous affairs. Some obviously became involved in the Union of Australian Women (UAW), which was facilitated by the CPA and arguably had a greater direct influence on changing our society than its parent.

The way the book is structured was perhaps forced on the editors by the biographies received. There is a geographical bias towards Sydney and Melbourne in this book which may reflect labour history activity now rather than CPA activity in the past. By structuring the book chronologically, grouping the biographies into particular phases of CPA history, the geographical bias is not so obvious. However, it does mean that the biographies stand alone. There is no connecting narrative, there is no link between sequential biographies other than when husband and wife are sometimes grouped together. An article from South Australia followed by one from Sydney only intertwine when external events, federally or internationally, are referred to. A prior knowledge of the CPAs history is expected of the reader, as is suggested in the preface.

Some of the biographies will be very familiar to *QJLH* readers, such as Wally

Stubbings biography by Lesley Synge and the biographies of Bill Sutton and Jack Munday by Philip Edmonds and Greg Mallory respectively; longer versions of these appeared in the last issue of this journal. Other notable Queenslanders with biographies are Stan Irvine, Connie Healy, Sonny Myles, Eva Bacon, Jean Bowden, Alice Hughes, Fred Paterson and Marie Crisp. Clarice Brown's biography has been added to the website. Therese Collier wrote several of the biographies of local female comrades.

A number of influential and significant local CPA members are missing such as Alex Macdonald, Eddie Heilbronn, Stella Nord, Nancy and Geoff Wills, John Manifold and Fred Thompson. Some of these have not had substantial biographies written about them previously and their exclusion from the book was probably due to a lack of local research and the limited window during which biographies were sought.

There is scope for further biographies to be added to this project. At the time of writing (March 2021) the number of additional biographies on the dedicated SEARCH Foundation webpage, (projected to be at least fifty), numbers only twenty. The editor of *SEARCH News* recently suggested to me that further biographies could appear in that journal. The *QJLH* also would happily publish further biographies. In fact, the concept of collecting the biographies of CPA activists like this could have been started years ago by the SEARCH Foundation and local labour history associations, and this particular book could have been one of a series detailing the story of the CPA from various individual perspectives. Reference should be made

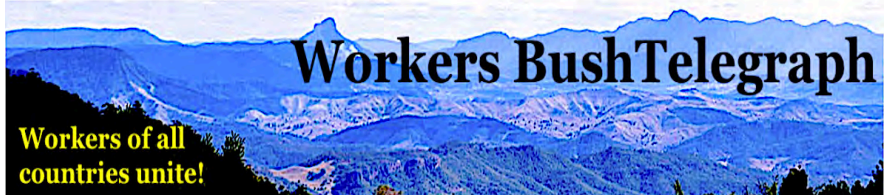
at this point to the work done locally by Ross Gwyther with his *Queensland Comrades Speaks* website and the as-yet little known interviews of prominent CPA female activists conducted by Jan Ryall.

My main disappointment with this book was the fact that I had to read it from cover to cover for this book review. This is not a gripping page turner and it isn't meant to be. Without a narrative it is extremely episodic. This is a biographical reference book, a biographical dictionary that should be returned to again and again. To read several biographies in one sitting is to dilute the important histories of each individual encountered in these pages. This book catalogues the lives of generations of left-wing activists, activists who were drawn to the promise of socialism and the need for a better world.

Anyone with even a passing interest in the subject of Australian labour history must have access to this book.

The Search Foundations webpage for the project is at: www.search.org.au/communist_biographies_project

Noticeboard



www.workersbushtelegraph.com.au

Workers Bush Telegraph has been going in one form or another since the early 1990s. It is primarily for original articles, original news, stories you can't read elsewhere, original verse, original pictures, videos and music. Author's names always appear at the end of their article.

Retired Unionists Network

VINTAGE REDS

STRENGTH IN UNITY!

Vintage Reds is an activist group based in Brisbane/Meenjin of retired trade union members.



Would you like to join our mailing list?

Retired union members who are interested in joining Vintage Reds can email Barbara Williams

barbararwilliams@gmail.com

or look for our banner at various union rallies and pickets.

In Memorium

Vale Peter Simpson 1963-2020

My mate and comrade, by Bob Carnegie

He's left us in dejection now,
Our hearts with him are roving,
It's dull on this selection now,
Since Andy went a droving.

Who now shall wear the cheerful face
In times when things are slackest?
And who shall whistle round the place
When Fortune frowns her blackest?

And may good angels send the rain
On desert stretches sandy,
And when the summer comes again
God grant 'twill bring us Andy.

To me, these three verses from 'Andy's Gone With Cattle', penned by the incomparable Henry Lawson, speak volumes of the type of man Peter Simpson was and the qualities that made him a genuine working-class legend.

Pete was laconic, a larrikin, a working-class leader. He was both a brilliant



Peter Simpson Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union Qld and NT branch from 2009–2016, speaking at a BLHA event in 2011

tactician and strategist; he had a heart of gold and was a loving dad and husband. Peter, I am also so proud to say, was my mate and comrade, my brother in the struggle for a better life for workers.

In this piece I will touch briefly on three areas where our belief in working-class solidarity intersected.

The first was the 2012 Queensland Children's Hospital Dispute, an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement dispute between the Construction & General division of the CFMEU and Abi Group (later merged into the Lendlease empire). I was asked by the leadership of the C&G division to take over the day-to-day running of the picket from day eighteen onwards, as the organisers had been hit with injunctions and could not carry on without leaving the union open to massive fines. After discussions

with the C&G leadership (and with undertakings given) I took over leading the dispute at the site as a community activist.

For the next forty-five days I restructured the entire protest. The reorganisation of how we ran the dispute was based on clear lines of responsibilities, weekly meetings at the Serbian Community Hall, and enforcing the goal to stand stronger as each day passed. And we were in fact stronger on day sixty-three than day eighteen.

The ETU played a central role in the success of this dispute. The ETU organiser, comrade Chris Lynch, was quietly spoken but a man with an iron will. The Electrical Contractor for this site had a fully compliant, up-to-date EBA but, in one of the finest displays of solidarity I have ever witnessed, every day for sixty-three days the ETU members refused to cross the picket line, although they too were faced with the sack, suspensions and fines.

During these days I often spoke to Peter Simpson. Not once did he waiver in his commitment to supporting the CFMEU members, although the financial cost to his union for standing by a fundamental trade union principle was a small fortune. I asked Peter about this and he said, 'Bob, you can't put a price on standing up for what is right.'

After sixty-three days of struggle, Abi caved and an EBA was reached. I was off to the federal court on fifty-four charges of criminal contempt but that's another story.

In August 2015, Hutchison's Ports, which at the time was the largest container operator in the world,

declared war on the Maritime Union of Australia and sacked 50 per cent of its workforce via text. I had been elected, quite unexpectedly, as the Queensland Branch Secretary of the MUA only five weeks earlier. The assistance given to our branch by the ETU during this dispute was simply phenomenal. The ETU's BBQ and information van driven by organiser Wendel Moloney nearly beat the MUA members to kickstart the picket line each morning. Peter Simpson said to us, 'whenever you need assistance, give us a bell and it will be there.' I can't mention all the ETU officials who lent us a hand because everyone did. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you. After 134 days of being locked out, a satisfactory settlement was reached with the company.

Without doubt the greatest campaign led by Peter Simpson was the truly historic and unparalleled 2010 to 2015 'Not for Sale' campaign. It was a struggle that saw Peter Simpson and Stu Trail expelled from the ALP in 2011, only to be reinstated at the 2014 ALP State Conference. The ETU was simply fighting for a basic right that in Queensland, the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity should stay in the hands of the people of Queensland.

The ALP was crushed at the 2012 election. The scale of their defeat is sometimes lost on people. No social democratic party anywhere in the world had ever suffered such a massive drubbing at the ballot box. The writing was on the wall that the incoming conservative government under Campbell Newman would sell the prized electricity assets. But the ETU under Peter was determined and confident that their campaign against

privatisation would prevail. At that stage the only group that believed the ETU could win was the ETU itself. Even a broken-down leftie like myself had my doubts if I'm being honest.

Peter and his wonderful ETU team of organisers, delegates and supporters put together without doubt the finest union or political campaign in Australia in my lifetime (and I am no spring chicken!). From the ashes of 2012, the Labor Party won the 2015 election and the sale of the electricity industry was off the table. This was a direct consequence of the 'Not for Sale' campaign.

Peter passed away in September 2020 after a huge battle with melanoma. His wonderfully courageous wife Penny was at his side throughout. During a period of lucidity during his fight with this dreadful disease, Peter was visited by the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, and the ALP Secretary, and justly awarded life membership of the Labor Party. Peter saw this as acknowledgment not just of his contribution within the ALP but of his efforts for his members and the working-class generally.

During his illness, Peter and the ETU began a campaign for voluntary assisted dying legislation. If Peter, with Henry Lawson and Andy, is looking down at us, he'd be happy to see the progress being made on this legislation. He would also be delighted to see the wonderful union, to which he gave so much of his life, going from strength to strength under Peter Ong's leadership. And he would be able to take pride in the positive and lasting impressions he made on so many of us in the working-class movement.

When you leave this life, you leave nothing but memories. Pete, you have

left me, and so many others, with such wonderful ones. Keep a cold beer ready for all of us Simmo, for as sure as paying taxes, one day we will be joining you.

Your mate and comrade,

Bob Carnegie

Trevor Clive Campbell 1952–2020

By Lyle Barlow

Trevor was raised in Western Queensland and carried a life-long love of the west. He joined the Australian Railways Union (ARU) and then the Australian Labor Party early in his working life. Trevor was elected President of the ARU and served in both Pat Dunne and Les Crofton's terms as Secretary until his retirement.

His lengthy rail career began as a Lad Porter in Hughenden. He became a Shunter in Richmond and in Collinsville, where he graduated to Guard but was unable to act until he was eighteen years old. He was made Guard at South Brisbane and Mayne Junction and was one of the first Yard Masters appointed at Mayne.

Trevor was very proud of his father, a steam train driver in Longreach whose nickname was 'the Flying Flea'. The local radio station would announce that the Inlander was thirty minutes late, but the Flying Flea was on time with the mail train. Sadly, his pensioner father was murdered in his Brisbane home for his

winnings from his local TAB. Trevor hoped the killer would be apprehended before he passed on, but sadly that was not to be.

When the ALP Goss Government indicated its intention to close some rail lines in the west, Trevor took them on, appearing on TV as Acting Branch Secretary, engaging the affected Mayors, and organising a tour of the lines accompanied by the then-Treasurer, David Hamill. Some lines have now closed, but the ones still open are testament to his efforts.

The fact that guards have been retained in Queensland Rail (QR) is due to the efforts of the ARU and Trevor in particular. When QR were abolishing the Fireman position and introducing the Driver's Assistant (DA) position, guards were not considered eligible for the DA roles. The union formulated a case and secured the right for guards to apply.

Trevor then had a new battle. QR introduced a new colour-blindness test, the Ishihara test, for rail employees. He found the test was used overseas for air traffic controllers and other professions that had to be free of colour blindness. The union contended that the mild colour-blindness identified in the test did not prevent QR staff identifying signals. The union suggested a field test be used instead to prove staff were safe in the job with this condition. The field test was set up at Redbank Signal and Telecommunications Depot and saved the jobs of many members.

Trevor had huge successes representing members' claims with the Workers' Compensation Board. These claims spanned many years and he was highly



*Trevor Clive Campbell
Former State President and Life Member of
the Rail Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) from
2003.*

respected by the doctors and legal professionals on the Board.

His Chairmanship and knowledge of the rules of debate were one of the highlights of branch council meetings. Trevor was an eloquent speaker who always had a willing audience at union social functions and Labour Day march gatherings.

The all-grades Australian Railways Union founded in 1921 continues to represent all-grades members as the Rail Tram and Bus Union.

Trevor had a huge input in creating the special edition of the *ARU Advocate* in August 1986, celebrating 100 years of service.

In closing, I will quote the end of his report in that advocate:

May I quote to you all the last written words of Joe Hill, and if you know not

who he was, dear reader, pray enquire,
history is the great teacher.

My Will is easy to decide,
For there is nothing To divide
My kin don't need to fuss and moan—
“Moss does not cling to a rolling stone[“]
My body?—Oh!—If I could choose
I would want to ashes it reduce,
And let The merry breezes blow
My dust to where some flowers grow
Perhaps some fading flower then
Would come to life and bloom again
This is my Last and Final Will.—
Good Luck to All of you,

Joe Hill

Comrades, we must be prepared to
stand and fight again. We owe it to
those who went before us, and to those
we represent.

Vale TCC.



Brisbane
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History
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Contributors

Lyle Barlow (79 years of age) had 47 years of employment in Queensland Railways as a carriage trimmer. His ARU union activities included Sub-branch Chair, Branch Councillor, Acting Organiser for 12 months, and Assistant National Secretary of the Fleet Manufacture, Overhaul and Service Division of the RTBU until his retirement in 2003. He is currently President of the Retired Members Division of the RTBU, and is a committed union and Labor supporter.

Bob Carnegie was arrested 11 times in 1985 during the SEQEB dispute. He was jailed in Maximum Security for three weeks for refusing to sign bail conditions. He was a member of the Queensland anti-Apartheid movement from 1984 to 92, was President and Assistant Secretary of the Qld Branch of the Seamen's Union of Australia during the 1990s. He has been Qld Coordinator of the International Transport Federation, active in the Patricks dispute, and was elected an Organiser in the BLF in 2004. He was Secretary of the Qld Branch of the Maritime Union of Australia until 2019.

Raymond Evans is a well-known Australian social historian, activist and poet. He is the author and editor of many texts including *The Red Flag Riots: A Study of Intolerance*, *Radical Brisbane* and *A History of Queensland* which extends the story of radicalism into a State-wide analysis. His latest work is centred around the frontier as well as several surprising volumes of poetry.

Howard Guille was Queensland Secretary of the National Tertiary Education Union from 1993-2006. Retired from paid work, he is active in community issues including the North Stradbroke Island Museum on Minjerribah. His latest book *Paltry Paradise: A History of the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum* was published in 2019.

Patricia Hovey, now retired, spent her working life in the Qld and Australian Public service, as a union organiser and trainer and in the community housing sector. As a public servant Patricia worked first in clerical roles and on leaving the union, as the mediation training officer for the Community Justice Program, as a Health Rights complaints investigator, and in policy in the Department of Housing.

Patricia is the President of the Brisbane Combined Unions' Choir, Vintage Reds Retired Unionists' committee member, and SEARCH Foundation committee member. She is also a doting grandma of two grandchildren.

Mary Kelly's career in education was as a school-teacher; a union official at State and Federal level; Chair of a national professional body; and finally over two decades in higher education as Director of social justice, all with a focus on worker's rights, poverty, gender equity and Indigenous justice. She was also a founding member of the Australian Women's Party. For much of the period covered by this edition, Mary was Vice-President, and then President, of the Queensland Teachers Union.

Greg Mallory is vice-president of the BLHA after spending 17 years as President. He is a Life Member of the BLHA. Greg has published three books: *Uncharted Waters: Social Responsibility in Australian Trade Unions*, *The Coalminers of Queensland, Vol 2 The Pete Thomas Essays*, *Voices from Brisbane rugby league*, *Oral Histories from the 50s to the 70s*.

Humphrey McQueen, socialist, protestor, free-lance writer, is a member of the Canberra branch of the Labour History Society and Vintage Reds. Since the 2006-8 implosion, he has not been finishing *The Revolution Inside Capital* on how exactly, from around 1800, capital had become the kind capital that has to expand.

His most recent publication is "A Noble Protagonist of the Proletariat and Peasantry: a tribute to Bruce McFarlane," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 51 (2), 2021: 1-17. His chapter, "Do Robots Dream of Becoming Time-poor?" is forthcoming from Palgrave in *Applying Marx's 'Capital' in the 21st Century*, edited by Joe Collins.

Constance Millar has been active in and an advocate for progressive causes since the 1940s including the CPA, the Union of Australian Women, the peace movement and many others. Her activism continues. Her enthusiasm is ever bright.

Dean Wharton leads the editorial committee of the *QJLH*. He was the branch secretary of a UNISON Health branch (UK) and a branch secretary and national executive member of The Society of Radiographers (UK). He has been an active member of the SWP (UK), The Yorkshire Green Party and the Australian Greens. A radiation therapist, he gave up treating cancer in humans after twenty-five years and now works at a veterinary hospital. He studies part-time at the University of Queensland researching former TLC leader and CPA organiser Alex Macdonald. A stay-at-home dad to his two kids, he is originally from Wigan in Lancashire and his childhood home was on the road at Wigan Pier.



NY health care workers
join Striking Amazon
workers May Day 2020
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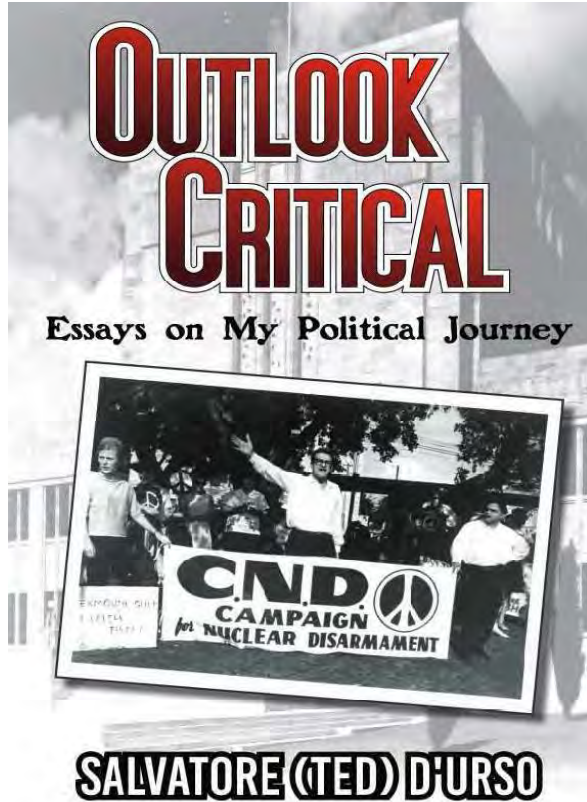
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Outlook Critical: Essays on My Political Journey

Salvatore (Ted) D'Urso

(Brisbane Labour History Association, 2020)



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Howard Guille



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