

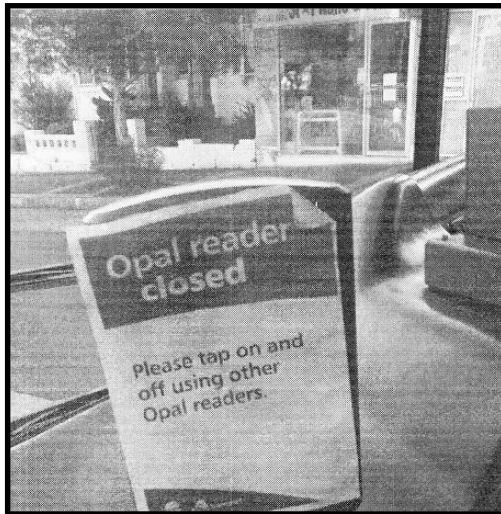
No.165

April - May 2020

Sparks

THE RANK-AND-FILE TRANSPORT WORKERS' PAPER

**SAFETY FIRST FOR FRONT LINE
TRANSPORT WORKERS!
DANGER MONEY! NO SERVICE CUTS!
NO RETRENCHMENTS!**



NSW Railway News P3;	New Light on XPT Crash P22;
Checking DOO Push P2;	Sydney Buses News P14;
Vic. Railway News P19;	Fair Game Part 3 P 6;
Panademic & The Job P3;	Not Privatising! Franchising! P11;

**SHOCKING NEW SELLOUT BY CLAASSENS! LOOKS TO OKAY
STANDING DOWN THOSE OVER 60! THEN THE SACK? SEE P. 5**

EDITORIAL

Welcome to another edition of Sparks.

Checking the DOO Push

Some of the most important news in the NSW Railways was the defeat of a push by the rail bosses to introduce DOO (Driver Only Operation) on new interurban trains as of 16/12/19. The push was assisted by RTBU NSW Secretary Alex Claassens with his okaying of a fake so called trial, which is code for permanent. Following the publication of the last edition of Sparks, exposing the ploy on the front cover, the bosses and Claassens backed off. As was subsequently revealed by the union officials, DOO means a cut in guards wages, transfer to customer service, undermining their industrial muscle and becoming 'dead meat'. Awaiting culling by the bosses further down the track. Whilst drivers would be bribed with thirty pieces of silver for compliance. Courtesy of the 'Facilitation Clause' in EBA 2018 slipped in by Claassens and the bosses, DOO would be facilitated to the Millennials, Waratahs and Tangaras, and open the doors for the NSW Railways privatisation carve-up as private operator's costs would then be cut. The likely new strategy of the bosses and Claassens is to wait until mid Dec. 2020 and then make a renewed push with DOO on the new trains. Taking advantage of the holiday period to minimise the impact of any industrial 'blue' if required, to let off some steam and easier to cover up any accidents with the aid of the corporate media and the union officials.

Some other important news was the XPT derailment at Wallan in February of this year. In this edition we throw new light on the background to the accident. (See articles on pages 22 to 24.)

In this edition we throw much light on the Covid 19 Outbreak and its impact in the NSW Railways, the Buses and other sectors of transport. We look at the totally inadequate response of the union hierarchy which favours the big end of town and provide an intriguing theory about the outbreak. (See Articles on Pages 3 and 6.)

In the Buses, we look at a big change at the top of the STA and focus on the increasing savage attacks by the Transit Systems bosses in Region 6 particularly focusing on the Ex-STA drivers. In the wake of Berejiklian Govt. announcement of intentions to privatise the rump of the STA, we look at its continued running down by the bosses and the fake Anti-Privatisation campaign being waged by the RTBU officials and Unions NSW. Another policy of the Liberal Government which is hard hitting the buses is its deregulation of various aspects of transport in the interest of Corporate profit making. (See article Page 14.)

Sparks welcomes contributions by transport workers. Please send to PO Box 92 Broadway 2007 NSW or via our web site www.sparksworld.org Subscriptions are \$5 year. Please make out postal notes to Rebel Worker. Sparks is published by Sydney Local of the Network for Democratic Unionism.

**SPARKS WEB SITE - www.sparksworld.org SAVE OUR UNION PETITION:
Fighting Against Bureaucratic Lies & Corruption:<http://chnge.it/D4ZL9ftX5T>**

N.S.W. RAILWAY NEWS

Pandemic and the Struggle for Dignity

The union movement in Australia's response to the Corona Virus is failing working people.

The A.C.T.U. pushed for a wage subsidy by sitting down with Employers and the Government for a cash top-up for the bosses in order to be able to operate and to pay wages. The \$1500 subsidy will go directly to employers. It is nowhere near enough to keep families going, especially if they have a mortgage or are paying rent. Most rents these days are over \$500 per week.

Nothing was negotiated to protect essential service workers such as those in public transport or those in health related jobs from the hazards of the COVID-19 virus. Proper protective equipment for transport workers has been scarce, yet people have been face to face with the public during their shifts putting them at considerable risk of getting the infection. Many public transport workers have been proudly going to work each day to transport other people essential to keep the system functioning. For that they should be commended. But for all the risks they are not paid an extra cent for the hazards they face each day. There is no doubting that one of the passengers they are transporting each day is the SARS-2 Cov virus itself.

Trains and buses are cleaned and disinfected only once per day, although there are few passengers. The risk of virus droplets from hands and mouth remaining live on surfaces such as seats and railings is real. In scientific tests done on virus droplets it has been found to remain infectious for up to 72 hrs. An increased cleaning frequency reduces the risk but never totally. That's also an added risk to employees. (Singapore buses cleaned at end of each trip (ABC-TV)

Recently baggage handlers working for airlines in several states became infected on the job. This emphasises the real danger to public transport workers who do similar tasks.

During the corona virus crisis sick leave should have been open ended or special leave conditions needed to be applied that are open ended. You don't get over a serious infection like this in 2 weeks. The R.T.B.U. is saying that 20 days Special Leave is being made available to Government employees. This is only available once you have used up your sick leave.

However Special Leave is not guaranteed in the private transport sector. Although Special Leave has been agreed to on a case by case basis according to the R.T.B.U.

The problem comes once "Special Leave" runs out. According to the R.T.B.U. "You can approach your employer for consideration but once paid leave has run out, unpaid leave must be taken."

Sydney Trains is asking employees over 70 years of age to stand down for the duration of the Coronavirus Crisis. They will be paid their base rate for the 20 weeks of Special Leave, no penalties or overtime. What happens if this goes for more than 20 weeks is anyone's guess?

If ever there was a time when a union had the upper hand it is now. At a time when our politicians are obsessed about keeping the economy functioning we have an inordinate amount of

leverage to get the best deal from the employer that we can. That should be possible even if we are classed as an “essential service”.

Failing to organise and put forward a credible protection for the members that you represent is not only reprehensible but criminal. In the interests of keeping the economy ticking over employees in public transport, education, and health have been thrown to the wolves.

In Victoria passenger numbers have dwindled by an estimated 90%. There it is a mostly privatised public transport service. Operators such as Metro are claiming that they are losing up to \$12 million a week. Other private operators also have their hands out, although the lockdowns have only just started. Within this background the Rail Tram and Bus Union and T.W.U. have called on the Victorian Government to keep public transport operating.

The danger of such a position of the unions is that they could be misinterpreted as putting the safety of workers in jeopardy just as the teachers, building workers and shop assistants have been. The economy and profits have been placed ahead of the well being of workers.



Here was a chance for the transport unions to push forward a more radical agenda of bringing public transport back under public ownership and control. A similar position should have been proffered when private hospitals started standing down staff due to the curtailment of elective surgery. Instead the private transport operators are likely to be handed large amounts of cash to keep operating.

We have a whole lot more to win. The A.C.T.U's position of pushing wage subsidies is about returning to the status quo. The market superstructure and the way it operates is the issue that is stopping us dealing with the COVID-19. It certainly is not the cure.

When you have businesses that pay very little tax and have done little to contribute to the national interest this becomes a class issue. Shareholders will still get their dividends paid for by the labour of the labouring class. Workers get less for putting their lives at risk.

Who actually gets the \$1500 “Job Keeper” subsidy that goes to the employer? It's the employer that benefits the most, since his wages bill is paid from taxes on ordinary workers. He/she pockets a massive surplus value. The worker gets his normal wage which now costs the boss or owner \$1500 less. Once the worker gets the money in his/her pay they will be paying tax on that money anyway.

Sally McManus, Australian Council of Trade Unions boss working out a deal with the L.N.P.'s Christian Porter is symptomatic for working people of just how rotten this whole system has become.

Something the union has never understood is the issue of the class divide.

Saving business to save workers sends the wrong message to workers. Should we always be grateful for what the boss trickles down to us? This goes against Sally's earlier position where she raged about the whole concept of “trickle down” economics.

The A.C.T.U.'s total disregard of a dialogue with workers who will bear the brunt of this crisis is still the main problem within the union movement. Negotiations (cooperation) are taking place at the highest levels between Capital and Labour yet the opinions and aspirations of workers have been neglected as they have been for a very long time.

Instead of advancing the interests of workers, getting them to believe that we don't need the bosses and owners of capital to secure what we want, the A.C.T.U. pushes workers back into the arms of parasitic owners of capital.

The alternative of organising workers on the ground to demand what they rightfully produce and the usurping of the national wealth they produced to change the relationships in production forever has never been contemplated by the A.C.T.U.

The Coronavirus crisis is a crisis primarily of the market. The crisis came about because of the needs of the voracious self serving neoliberal beast that puts profits before people. We forget that workers have been forced to their knees because of what this system has been doing to them. This is a life and death struggle not just against the virus but a system that is also killing us. Simply put, we are struggling not because the bosses and owners are struggling, but because they have taken away our lifelines, our medical services, our public infrastructure, our natural environment, our dignity and our lives.

This is a life and death struggle from here on in. We cannot return to the status quo that the A.C.T.U. so desires.

The urgent need for a rank and file union movement to deal with the struggles that lie ahead has to be built. The traditional union movement structures have shown that the survival of their own bureaucracy is more important than the needs of their own members.

After the virus passes (we don't know how long that will be) the Government and Bosses will be trying to "balance the books" again. The shareholders will be asking workers to tighten their belts so that they can increase their profits again. Put bluntly, workers will be under attack to give concessions to the bosses amid cutbacks to social programs and wages. The money always comes from us, not them.

It's then we must be prepared to fight as hard as we can to hold on to what we have and what we hope to achieve. The failure of traditional establishment unions to consult with workers that are directly in the firing line means we cannot trust their compromising attitude when it comes to our lives and livelihoods. We have to build trust amongst our work colleagues, our workplaces and our communities. Start the dialogue and organisation now, while we still can.

RTBU Union Bosses Look to Okay Stand Downs of Over 60's !!!

Looks like the bosses want to stand down employees over 60. Instead of the union pushing for further protections and safety measures they are pointing to the door and siding with the employers by trying to get them covered by the new "job keeper" wage subsidy. The union is saying that they agree that the over 60's should be stood down. The subsidy goes to the employer who is the real beneficiary off this scheme. Employees would be left out in the cold and might find it hard to get reinstated.
http://www.rtbu.org.au/leave_no_worker_behind

Fair Game part 3, the moment of truth!

And what a moment it is!

Here we are in 2020, right at the beginning (or is it the middle no one really knows) of a physiological bio-weapon war. Yes, it's a bio war and the corona virus or COVID-19 is a bio-weapon, designed in a US university lab (a front of course for a bio-weapons facility) then sold to the Chinese by Obama and Co back in 2015, when he was still the president.

The bio-weapons facility in Wuhan "tweaked" it a little and gave it what these doctors of death call "gain of function" to be able to attack and disable your immune system, which of course is an auto immune disorder. Yes, HIV and the "news" isn't telling you that and the government certainly isn't. It gets worse, this bio-weapon is a virus that can reactivate. And worse still, it sterilises men. Beginning to get the picture? This virus and others like it are bio-weapons designed to depopulate the planet. Oh yes there are others. How do you think they got to 19, there was/is an 18, 17 and 16, etc, which should make Greta Thunberg and Co happy at least? But let's not get distracted with deluded little puppets. It's also a psychological war, designed to create fear on a global scale and in the process destroy economies and with them your job, standard of living and your freedom. All designed to create a global dictatorship based on communist ideology for the masses and fascism for the elite and it's been in the making for a long time. And don't worry the elite shorted the markets months ago and are making billions if not trillions, while your super is getting shredded!

Welcome to the future, you're in it now scrambling around for toilet paper, afraid to sneeze or cough for fear that you might need to go and get yourself tested and worse self-isolate or be forced to isolate. But secretly in your mind you don't know if it's all real or just hype? First there was the footage of Chinese in Wuhan just dropping dead or flailing around uncontrollably and then dropping dead, apparently. Then there was footage of Chinese driving around in trucks, vans and even motorbikes spraying or fogging some type of chemical around deserted streets. Some had white coats, some didn't, some had face masks, some didn't. It all looked a little fake, staged even. The Chinese wouldn't fake or stage something would they? You know the answer to that is yes, of course they would. Remember, they just lost the trade war with Trump and there was all that unrest in Hong Kong and elsewhere they've been trying to suppress. Of course, they'd fake anything, do anything to save face and how convenient all the protesters are off the streets in Hong Kong now and no "mean and nasty" talk of a lost trade war to embarrass Xi, emperor for life. Oh, that's right they supposedly had a communist revolution to get rid of emperors, so that would mean that Xi is dictator for life. Doesn't sound very democratic does it? Funny how these communist so-called leaders always end up dictators for life and their children and close relatives end up owning most of the property and recourses of the "people", the proletariat. But I digress.

Then they put out that fake bat soup story and the so-called western media, "the news", just regurgitates it as if it was fact. Then the big show of spraying and fogging empty streets. But wait, what were they spraying around anyway? They allegedly don't have a cure yet. But if it was all staged wouldn't those sharp "investigative" reporters and current affairs programs with all their resources and technology be able to see through the fakery? Wouldn't Waleed or Karl or Lisa or any number of those overpaid, condescending talking heads be able to spot the

fakery. If you thought that, you'd be wrong. Sorry to bust your bubble but the answer is no. Waleed and Karl and Lisa and all the rest are just overpaid, photogenic teleprompter readers and the media doesn't bring you "the news", it's just a scripted show just like any other theatre. The so-called mainstream media is just a giant propaganda machine and the "beautiful" and "insightful" "reporters" and "commentators" are nothing more than overpaid actors reading a script. The media was designed to feed you propaganda and at the same time make you pay for it through advertising and selling you overpriced products you generally don't need. It was all theatre coordinated and then released to the "media", "the news", to hype it up and set the scene for panic. And that's exactly what we've got a panic, no one really knows exactly why, but the media, "the new" keeps hyping it.

All sound a bit farfetched, a little bit out there? Tin foil hat stuff? Let's see.

What is a bio-weapon?

"A biological agent (also called bio-agent, biological threat agent, biological warfare agent, biological weapon, or bio-weapon) is a bacterium, virus, protozoan, parasite, or fungus that can be used purposefully as a weapon in bioterrorism or biological warfare. In addition to these living or replicating pathogens, toxins and bio-toxins are also included among the bio-agents. More than 1,200 different kinds of potentially weaponizable bio-agents have been described and studied to date.

Biological agents can adversely affect human health in a variety of ways, ranging from relatively mild allergic reactions to serious medical conditions, including serious injury, as well as serious or permanent disability or even death. Many of these organisms are ubiquitous in the natural environment where they are found in water, soil, plants, or animals. Bio-agents may be amenable to "weaponization" to render them easier to deploy or disseminate. Genetic modification may enhance their incapacitating or lethal properties or render them impervious to conventional treatments or preventives. Since many bio-agents reproduce rapidly and require minimal resources for propagation, they are also a potential danger in a wide variety of occupational settings." Source Wikipedia.

Defiantly sounds like we've got a bio-weapon here and bio-weapons are used in bio-warfare. But how deadly is it really? Does it kill more people than the flu or pneumonia? The numbers keep changing because the people that get counted as having or not having it keep changing and it all sounds like someone is being creative with the numbers. And why is that? What are they hiding? Is it that this is a targeted bio-weapon that only kills a certain age group or a certain DNA type or maybe only those who have a predisposition to a certain disease or an existing condition? No one really knows and those that do know aren't allowed to tell the rest of us. But what we do know is that the media, "the news" have wiped up a lot of fear, when at all other times it's played down. And that smells like psychological warfare! Are we at war? Is that what they're really trying to hide from us?

What is Psychological Warfare?

Psychological warfare is a broad term, but in all documented cases, the concept uses actions intended to reduce an opponent's morale or mental wellbeing. The aim is to use manipulative tactics to intimidate or persuade a person or people. This process is usually employed through

propaganda. Propaganda is ideas or statements that are false or exaggerated and is deliberately spread to influence the masses. The goal of psychological warfare is to intentionally use propaganda to manipulate another and break down their will without using physical force.

To get a clearer picture, let's look at some techniques that have been used throughout history:

Psychological warfare uses fear to break down the psychological wellbeing of an opponent. Look at the list below for techniques that can be used to spread psychological uncertainty, fear, and terror.

News Outlets: The news is a large information source that all can tap into. Government run or independently owned, the "news" can spread whichever information it chooses. By infiltrating a news source, a population could be tainted by volatile information.

Threats: Threats of violence, restrictions of freedom, and control can be made to instill fear in the people. These could be empty threats or threats with true intention. Whatever the case, threatening a group or groups of people can psychologically damage the recipients over time, putting them in a state of constant fear, anxiety, and terror.

Leaflets: Leaflets are pieces of paper with manipulative messages/pictures that are dropped from the air over areas of war or political unrest. The goal is to persuade the recipients to either support or oppose the political event taking place. (Could the contrived and irrational hoarding of toilet paper be a sophisticated form of manipulative message that supports and reinforces the fear being whipped up by the media, "the news")

Objects: Using objects such as t-shirts, posters, hats, pins, and more is an effective way to get a message across. The objects can become symbols for larger messages regarding politics, radical beliefs, religious philosophies, etc. These objects can become tools for promotion and even worship.

False flag: A false flag is when a group releases false information or carries out a fake terror attack to instill fear in people. However, the blame is put on another group or organization to gain control over the masses and shift opinion.

Media: While it may not seem like it, films, music, and books can act as tools for psychological warfare. The messages in media can rewrite history from a new perspective and/or put new ideas in the minds of the populous. Source Wikipedia.

Let's take a closer look at Propaganda. What is propaganda:

Propaganda is information that is used primarily to influence an audience and further an agenda, which may not be objective and may be presenting facts selectively to encourage a particular synthesis or perception, or using loaded language to produce an emotional rather than a rational response to the information that is presented. Propaganda is often associated with material prepared by governments, but activist groups, companies, religious organizations, the media, and individuals can also produce propaganda.

A wide range of materials and media are used for conveying propaganda messages, which changed as new technologies were invented, including paintings, cartoons, posters, pamphlets, films, radio shows, TV shows, and websites. More recently, the digital age has given rise to new ways of disseminating propaganda, for example, using bots and algorithms to cre-

ate computational propaganda and spread fake or biased news using social media. Source Wikipedia.

Clearly, we're in a 21st century psychological, bio-weapon propaganda war. But who is at war with whom, you may ask? There are no clear protagonists, only fear gripping the whole world and shutting down economies globally. Perhaps the answer lies in more questions. Who has the resources and capacity to develop bio-weapons? Who has used propaganda in the past, perfected it and is most likely using it now? Who is most likely to engage in psychological warfare? The answer seems obvious, the government. But which government, since seemingly opposing governments are being similarly affected and are using similar draconian kneejerk reactive tactics against their own people? Who has the capacity to orchestrate and coordinate a global campaign of fear and disinformation using bio-weapons, psychological and propaganda warfare? The answer of course is the global financial and technical elite, through their network of secret societies that formed the foundations and continue to be the controlling elements of government agencies, both covert and overt. These same elite through



their various secret societies and its members are able to manipulate government organisations and political parties to serve their goals. This of course includes the development and manipulation of various political ideologies to control the masses.

Bringing it back closer to home, in Australia, one such secretive organisation is the Fabian socialists. Fabian socialists are a front organisation for various secret societies “The Australian Fabians have historically had close ties with the Australian Labor Party (ALP). This is evidenced by the number of past ALP prime ministers, federal ministers and state premiers who were active members of the Australian Fabians while in office. The Australian Fabians have had a significant influence on public policy development in Australia since the Second World War, with many of its members having held influential political offices in

Australian governments.”

Here's a list of some members of the Fabian Socialists that you may have heard of:

Prime Ministers: Julia Gillard (2010—2013), Bob Hawke (1983—1991), Paul Keating (1991—1996). Gough Whitlam (1972—75)

Premiers: John Cain (Victoria 1982—1990), Don Dunstan (South Australia 1970—1979), Geoff Gallop (Western Australia 2001—2006), Neville Wran (New South Wales 1976—1986)

Politicians: Chris Bowen (Shadow Treasurer 2013—2019), Jim Cairns (Deputy Prime Minister 1974—1975), Arthur Calwell (Opposition Leader 1960—1967), Julie Collins (MP 2011—2013), Frank Crean (Deputy Prime Minister 1975, Treasurer 1972—1974), John Faulkner (Senator 1989—2015, ALP National President 2006—2008), Luke Foley (Leader of the Opposition, New South Wales 2015—2018). Bill Hayden (Opposition Leader

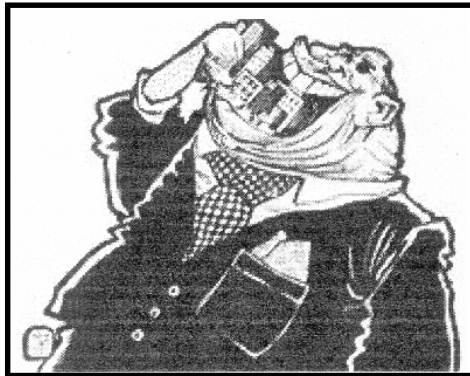
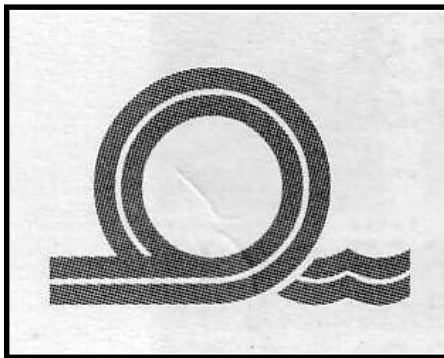
1977—1983), Stephen Jones (MP 2010—), Andrew Leigh (MP 2010—), John Lenders (Treasurer, Victoria 2007—2010). Clarrie Martin (Attorney General, New South Wales 1941—1953), Race Mathews (MP 1972—1975, MP, Victoria 1979—1992), Jenny McAllister (Senator 2015—, ALP National President 2011—2015), Claire Moore (Senator 2002—) Queensland Patron, Tanya Plibersek (ALP Deputy Leader 2013—2019), Bill Shorten (Opposition Leader 2013—2019), Wayne Swan (Deputy Prime Minister 2010—2013), Susan Templeman (MP 2016—), Tim Watts (MP 2013—)

Other members: Phillip Adams (broadcaster), Van Badham (writer and columnist), David Charleston (trade unionist), Eva Cox (writer and academic) National Patron, Henry Hyde Champion (journalist), Charles Marson (clergy), Bernard O'Dowd (writer), Nettie Palmer (writer), Charles Strong (clergy).

The Australian union movement has more than a small connection with the ALP and according to the ACTU, in 1891 unions in New South Wales and Queensland created a new political party to represent the movement. It was the birth of the Australian Labor Party. Interestingly, the emblem of the Fabian socialists is a 'wolf in sheep's clothing' and represented its preferred methodology for achieving its goal. This was later changed to a turtle for obvious reasons. And so, the question is who do these secret societies and their members really represent and what is their end game. It is through secret societies that government agencies picked up the ideas of compartmentalisation, a technique employed on lower level members, both in government, political parties, unions and the secret societies themselves, to get individuals to perform tasks that are often counterproductive both to their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of the people the government represents. Of course they also use other techniques like sex with minors and blackmail as run by Epstein and Maxwell. This is how a global psychological, bio-weapon propaganda war can be launched against all global governments and peoples by the governments themselves.

John F Kennedy said: "The very word "secrecy" is repugnant in a free and open society; and we are as a people inherently and historically opposed to secret societies, to secret oaths and to secret proceedings". "We are opposed around the world by a monolithic and ruthless conspiracy that relies primarily on covert means for expanding its sphere of influence — on infiltration instead of invasion, on subversion instead of elections, on intimidation instead of free choice, on guerrillas by night instead of armies by day". "It is a system which has conscripted vast human and material resources into the building of a tightly knit, highly efficient machine that combines military, diplomatic, intelligence, economic, scientific and political operations"

JFK tried to warn us so many decades ago about this "monolithic and ruthless conspiracy", that the game is not fair and we must be very careful in whom we put our trust in. Unfortunately, he got assassinated for it and the monolithic and ruthless conspiracy continued to grow and become so embolden that it now threatens the whole world with a psychological, bio-weapon propaganda war, unless we submit to its demands, albeit subtle, to enslave us all. The game is not fair! Look out for the next addition where your editor expands a little deeper on the Fabian socialists, the ALP and the union movement.



Warning! Political Satire We aren't Privatising! We are Franchising!

At 10am on the morning 12/7/2019, a call was received by the head of the AFP Reece Kershaw at HQ in Canberra, from the NSW Commissioner of Police Mick Fuller. Fuller advised that due to jurisdictional factors and the savage cutting of the budget of NSW ICAC (Independent Commission Against Corruption) by the Berejiklian Govt., the AFP was requested to investigate massive rorts associated with franchising of the 'rump' of State Transit and Sydney and NSW Trains after DOO (Driver Only Operation) has been generalised from the new Inter-Urbans to the Waratahs, Millenniums and Tangaras. Chief suspects were the CEO's of Transit Systems/Sealink, TransDev, some cashed up Shanghai based 'Transport Boys' who were tipped as hot favourites and not so 'hot' other Multinational Transport Companies. Whilst there were a range of 'facilitators' such as Alex 'Its legally binding. My hands are tied. You wouldn't want me to do anything illegal!' Claassens, RTBU NSW Secretary, 'The Pink Panther' new STA CEO, Sydney Trains CEO and NSW Trains CEO. Together with faceless bureaucrats from Transport for NSW Head Office. Whilst the bag man for the scam and the head of the NSW Liberal Party Election Campaign fund drive committee was NSW Transport Minister Andrew Constance.

As part of the AFP investigation, the NSW Transport Minister's office was broken into by an AFP surveillance team in the early hours of 22/7/2019 which planted bugs. Subsequently a series of 'top secret' weekly and special emergency meetings between Constance, Claassens and on occasion attended by the CEO's of Sydney and NSW Trains, State Transit and Transit Systems were recorded. Transcripts were supplied to the head of the AFP and then forwarded to Peter Dutton Minister for Home Affairs and are presented below:

The Transcripts:

Meeting 21/8/2019

Constance: These hot shot Chinese Transport Boys are keen for a generous slice of the rump steak of the STA runs as part of their franchise. They are offering big money for our electoral slush fund and want to elbow, Transit Systems/Sea Link out of the picture. They are putting on plenty of pressure to get the franchising process going.

Claassens: No worries. It's in the bag. With Unions NSW and their petition we will have the fake anti-privatisation community campaign going and the Bus Division Executive certainly won't be holding any stop work mass meetings. Whilst the grass roots are still demoralised by the Newcastle and Region 6 privatisation sell outs. So you can go ahead and make the announcement for the selling off.

Constance: Alex, are you a CIA or maybe a MOSSAD agent with that Israel junket some while back? I never knew the Israelis had their eyes on the transport game here! I was joking. Alex you're good as gold! I can't fathom why Gladys doesn't trust you! You seem so honest and upstanding!

Meeting 15/12/2019

Claassens: Andrew mate, I've struck a problem with helping implement DOO (Driver Only Operation) on the new interurban trains. There's this certain underground magazine, its latest edition exposed my manoeuvre. I just can't get the train crews to rollover. We'll have to have a plan B. I'll need to drag out a dispute over a so called 'design fault' and safety until near the 2020 Xmas/New Year period and January holiday period in 2021. I'll try to demoralise the grass roots by then and hopefully they will cave-in or we can have an industrial blue and let off some steam in the unfavourable holiday period and I can claim we lost.

Constance: Mate, I can see your point. However, I'm under a lot of pressure from these Shanghai Transport Boys. They are desperate for the franchising carve-up to commence, following the generalisation of DOO to the other train types in NSW. They are offering us Libs a big pot of money for our electoral campaign fund. However, I think I can put them off for a while. Alex you're a hard man. With all this, many of your members will get the sack, lose their homes, and end up on the dole queue.

Claassens: These losers shouldn't have voted for me!

Constance: But we all know the 2014 and 2018 RTBU elections for key positions were rigged by the AEC (Australian Election Commission), the ALP octopus and you! With the secret codes on the ballot envelopes, the AEC shredding machine running hot with your opponents ballot papers before the so called official ballot count and the rest. You're the one quoted "always obeys the law of the land!"

Claassens: The AEC is part of the Govt. like you. So it must be 'legit'. Or so those gullible losers think about the outcome of union elections run by the AEC for positions like mine. You've read that in the underground paper I suppose. There is also the lie they spread that I have secret weekly meetings with you! Where we make secret deals. You'll believe that too!!!

Meeting 7/2/20

Claassens: Andrew, I'm having more grief from that underground paper again, it's really stirred up the grass roots in train crews. Getting them thinking I help out with cover-ups for the



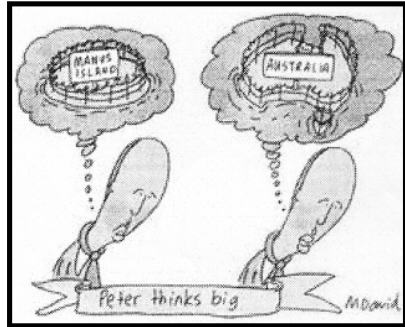
bosses with those fictitious secret meetings I have with you. I'm desperate for some help. Like getting a front page story in this Sunday's Telegraph 9/2/20 about the interurban running over a body.

Constance: But Alex you do help us out with our cover-ups! I'm joking. Sorry Pete, you have to take a bullet on this. Maybe the furore will all blow over soon and I won't need to sack you. I've got to help my mate Alex who is so vital to the big picture of franchising of the railways and buses.

Pete Allaway NSW Trains CEO: Okay boss. Looks like I'll have to lie low for a while.

Meeting 24/2/20

Constance: Alex, I would like to introduce you to 'The Pink Panther'. He is the new CEO of the STA. He is replacing Stefan Furball, who was getting a bit cheeky. He was putting out his own 'illegal' little paper resembling a certain 'legal' underground paper and spilling the beans inadvertently about the not so savoury 'Brave New World of Franchising' for drivers after the STA carve up.



Claassens was about to shake 'The Pink Panther's paw, when the Panther slipped with his claws landing on Claassen's big toe. Claassens seemed to be about to throttle the Panther, when Constance comes to the rescue and pushes them apart.

Constance: Break it up you two knuckleheads! You've got to work together on that upcoming 'comedy of errors' fake privatisation opposition campaign which is soon showing to STA drivers at the cost of hefty wages and conditions cuts. To gull drivers into not taking direct action to fight the carve-up. 'The Pink Panther', here will have a Peter Sellers as 'Inspector Clouseau' style starring role with most of the limelight, while you Alex, and the Bus Division Executive will play more low key and behind the scenes production roles.

AFP Raid & Unofficial 'Drag Show' in the Electorate of Bega!

On the morning of 9/3/20, Peter Dutton Minister for Home Affairs receives transcripts of the bugging surveillance of Constance's Office from the Head of the AFP. Later an ASIO Liaison officer rushes into Dutton's office out breath and hands him a CIA report courtesy of the Five Eyes Agreement on the mysterious Shanghai Transport Boys. It turns out they are President Xi's grandsons, have links with the Chinese military and are agents of their secret police. Dutton is outraged. His bald head flashes fluorescent red. He screams blue murder about Constance. He yells, "Bush fires didn't roast him, but I will!" He continues yelling, "That 'Shanghai' Constance is a threat to Australia's National Security with his support for those Chinese Govt. stooges!" He orders the AFP to carry out an immediate raid on Constance's home in Bega.

In the early hours of next morning, an AFP team breaks through the front door of Constance's home. Confronting an astonished, bleary eyed Constance and yelling, "This is the Australian Federal Police! This isn't a raid! It's just a cosy chat about those Shanghai Transport Boys!" A

burly AFP cop suddenly puts Constance in a head lock, twists his arms and cuffs him. He quips “you’re trying to escape!” The rest of the cops make a beeline to Constance and his wife’s bedroom and her underwear drawers. They upend the drawers and get perversely excited about the underwear. They immediately notice the label ‘Made in China’ on the underwear which are decorated with what look like Chinese currency symbols. Disregarding the hysterical screams of Constance’s wife, the cops start trying on and prancing around the bedroom in items of her underwear. They start holding an impromptu ‘unofficial’ AFP drag show. Taking selfies and a video for the AFP End of Year Xmas Party.

The deviant high jinks and wild cavorting come to an abrupt halt when they stumble across millions in vast wads of US dollars with the note. “Thanks to Andrew and Gladys and some help for your Lib. Election Campaign Fund. Best Wishes from the Shanghai Transport Boys.” Attached were lengthy franchise submissions for the STA and NSW Railways carve-up. Constance is carted off to AFP HQ in Canberra and then to the Ministry of Home Affairs where he is personally grilled by an enraged Dutton. He soon spills the beans on the Shanghai Transport Boys. The Corporate Media is tipped off and lurid spreads with the towering headline “Andrew Constance, NSW Transport Minister: From Bush Fire Hero to Threat to Australian National Security!” appear in media outlets. Constance is forced by the NSW Libs Godfathers to resign as Transport Minister and Member of Parliament using the pretext of ill health. He starts a new career as a rural fire fighter in Bega. The local fires are delighted and he features in a bare chest Vladimir Putin style macho pose in their new calendar. I’m sure all Transport for NSW workers will be delighted by his career change.



Australian Federal Police about to cart Andrew Constance off to AFP HQ following the raid.

Sydney Buses News

LEICHHARDT DEPOT NEWS

Sparks: What are your impressions of the latest developments at the depot?

Leichhardt Busie: Things are continuing to go downhill for us. There is a constant push by the bosses to displace the older experienced drivers from their rosters. In particular they are being taken off the bendi rosters. These rosters are being given to the new drivers on TWU style conditions so the bosses can avoid paying the experienced drivers the \$25 per day bendi allowance. Experienced drivers are also being put on the ‘G’ rosters – standby rosters, so they don’t get paid DOC’s. A likely next step by the bosses is the displacement of the experienced older drivers from the bendi broken shifts. Whilst there is high turnover of new drivers who can’t cope with the rigours of the job.

Other news is that there continues to be a poor level of maintenance of the depot fleet and a high level of bus accidents i.e. an estimated 30 bus accidents a week. In a nutshell the Transit Systems bosses don't care about staff or commuters just money!

In regards to the unions. We now have the situation where we have both the RTBU and TWU having members amongst drivers. The TWU basically does nothing for its members, explained by the TWU officials being in the pockets of the private bus companies. A possible future step of the bosses is to force all the older experienced drivers to sign on to TWU membership, so as to further cut our wages and conditions.

Sparks: What is the latest with the routes?

LB: The names of some routes have been changed. The M30 has become the 430 and the M20 has become the 320. The bosses say that the change in name is to avoid commuters' confusion with the Metros. The 320 has been shortened, so instead of going to Botany, it now just goes to Mascot. With the Govt's proposed culling of many routes to force commuters onto the Light Rail in the Eastern Suburbs revealed in a recent SMH article, we will be affected with the culling of the M10 and M50.

Sparks: What's the latest at the depot?

Leichhardt Driver1: We continue to be hard hit with tight running times. I have particularly noticed this problem on Saturdays with runs on routes into the city. There is no provision for lay-over breaks. As a result of this factor and others, many drivers can't cope with the job. So there continues to be a constant churning out of new drivers from the job. Whilst we still have not heard the outcome of the new court case over the squabble between the TWU and RTBU over 'representing us' industrially. **Stop Press: Covid19 Lock Downs have occurred. Greatly reducing passenger numbers and traffic.**

Sparks: What are your impressions of the 9/2/20 timetable/roster changes?

Leichhardt Driver2: I've not noticed any major changes. However, there has been more cutting out of lines of work from shifts. We have had this problem since the old days with the STA. Whilst the bosses are trying to encourage paranoia on the job with the very new buses, in contrast to the older buses.



BURWOOD DEPOT NEWS

Sparks: What is the situation at the depot lately?

Burwood Driver: An issue of great concern to us has been the introduction by the Transit Systems bosses of two rosters for the early AM's and late PM's. One for TS drivers and the other for State Transit drivers. As a result the union has made many complaints causing reversing

of these rosters. There is talk on the job of major changes coming up in March-April which we have been kept completely in the dark concerning. In the case of ex-STA drivers, the bosses are treating them better than under the STA in that they are not setting out to harass them. However, in the case of ex-STA Bendi Shift drivers such as at Leichhardt, they are having bendi shifts pulled from them as they have to pay the extra allowance and giving the shifts to the new drivers paid on the TWU style conditions and don't get paid the allowance. Transport for NSW seems to be allowing the TS bosses to get away with a lot of stuff which is outside their legal responsibility such as route changes. It seems the attitude of the Govt. is that if things seem to be running okay, they don't mind too much. Whilst the Govt's basic strategy as occurred with their plan to privatise the rest of the STA over 2 years is to privatise everything so as to cut costs. STOP PRESS: We have been hardly affected by the 9/2/20 timetable changes. However we are still being kept in the dark on forthcoming major changes by the bosses and the union. We are in a waiting game.

Sparks: What is the latest with the union?

BD: The union has been gradually via the legalistic channel of the Fair Work Court, defending some of the conditions of ex-STA drivers attacked by the new company. In the case of the issue of Easter Saturday being paid as a Holiday for those not working that day and have worked 'X' number of Saturdays. The union has been successful in winning the case. However, Transit Systems is still refusing to pay the holiday. Other talk on the job is that there is a new Fair Work Court decision which regards the situation of two unions - the RTBU and TWU in the same sector - Transit Systems/STA as 'illegal'. The tactic of the bosses of course has been to play one union off against the other.

Sparks: What are your impressions of Transit Systems new 'Green Roads' scheme?

BD: It seems to me quite unfair. Under the scheme we get black marks for errors in operating the bus. If say I have to put on the brakes to avoid a collision with someone walking out in front of my bus, I get a black mark. When I should get a good mark for avoiding an accident and injury to someone.

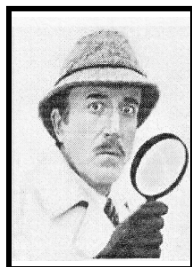
Sparks: What is other news?

BD: We have all seen notices in the depot about the takeover of Transit Systems by Sea Link. The bosses are presenting the development as a 'merger' rather than a takeover. Whilst a group of our drivers have left the job and have been re-employed as Light Rail drivers on the new extensions in the CBD and Eastern Suburbs.

WAVERLEY DEPOT NEWS

Sparks: What's the latest at the depot?

Waverley Busie: There has been big changes in the STA. We've got a new CEO, we call him 'The Pink Panther' as he seems to be playing an 'Inspector Clouseau' role. He is replacing Stefan Faurby who suddenly disappeared and he was transferred over from the Railways, where he held a management job. He recently held a staff meeting at the depot. He claimed that he was on our side, wanted to keep the STA in public hands and fight for our rights. However he didn't seem very reassur-



*New STA CEO
The Pink Panther*

ing. He spoke about how he is going to fight privatisation, but he wasn't sure he could win. God help him! Why open his big mouth on the subject anyway? He claims to have all the answers, so why not ring him about how our wages will be in the new franchises? Why are we getting a new boss just before the STA is privatised? According to latest talk on the job we won't be privatised for one year, perhaps connected with the COVID-19 virus outbreak.

Whilst in regard to the RTBU officials and Unions NSW, they say the campaign against privatisation has entered a new stage. They got over 22,000 signatures for the petition to be presented to Parliament against STA privatisation and are now lobbying various politicians and high up people to oppose the STA carve-up. Latest news is that on 26th February, they organised a rally as part of the campaign outside Berejiklian's electoral office in Willoughby. Various progressive politicians from the ALP and Greens have also come to the depot to address us on the privatisation issue.

Sparks: What's the situation with the bosses?

WB: Since Constance's announcement regarding the STA privatisation, the bosses seem to be in 'caretaker mode'. Just counting the hours before the selloff. The bosses are also disregarding any community service role for the STA. If you notice an accident on the road involving other vehicles, they say we should just ignore it. Selina isn't doing her job. She is just letting things drag down. In particular there have been complaints made about a decline in bus cleanliness and a running down of bus maintenance at the depot. As a result drivers are losing interest in the job.

Sparks: According to an article in the SMH 2/3/20 there will be many routes cut to provide business for the Light Rail extensions in the Eastern Suburbs. What are your thoughts about it?

WB: With the proposed culling of the bus routes into the city, commuters will be coerced into sitting on Gladys 'white elephant'. Bizarrely even feeder services for the Light Rail will also be cut. One agenda of the extensions seems to be about creating a so called 'glamorous' French Boulevard style effect in the CBD streets. Another is about helping the transport needs of the gambling and clubs fraternity such as Randwick Racecourse and South Sydney Juniors Leagues Club. Whilst the 'white elephant' has been hard hit by cost blow outs from \$1.4 Billion originally to now \$3 Billion. This money would now be very handy helping workers who are sacked or face wage cuts due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak. The buses do a far better and efficient job of transporting people into and out of the City. I've had a ride on the Light Rail. There were few commuters aboard and I found it quite slow as it stops at every one of the 12-15 stops. Whilst causing commuters to change from Light Rail to buses to get to destinations. It's quite inconvenient for them. Most people don't want to go on them. Given its design flaw, the Light Rail has been heavily affected by break downs and accidents so far. In a recent incident, one broken down Light Rail Vehicle blocking the rail line caused one third of the fleet to be stopped for a considerable time. I give it two and a half stars. Another incident reported in the news media recently, involved a high level safety expert pressing the emergency button on a Light Rail Vehicle and to his surprise getting no response.

Sparks: How is the STA handling the COVID-19 outbreak?

WB: Despite their motto of 'safety first' and drivers being isolated in the bus and being in the virtual front line, the bosses seem to be doing the bare minimum. The initiatives implemented include: only allowing use of the inner Opal readers and shutting off the area near the driver.

Sparks: What are your impressions of the state of heavy vehicle regulations over the years in NSW?

WB: I believe in the last 2 to 3 to 4 years accident rates involving heavy vehicles have increased. The increased rate must be seen in the context of the Liberal Govt. watering down regulations affecting heavy vehicle safety and relaxing the stiff monitoring of accidents. The Govt. presents the process as removing unnecessary 'red tape' which stands in the way of companies cutting their costs and making larger profits. In this context, rogue companies are particularly seizing the opportunity to further bend the rules resulting in more accidents. A particularly catastrophic accident occurred recently involving a truck hitting two cars on a bridge. Whilst the overall cost of these accidents can be between \$2 million to \$3 million.

The deregulation push under the Liberals in NSW extends into many other sectors with disas-



trous results. In the case of the building industry, the watering down of regulations has led to the recent major scandal involving shoddy building work highlighted by the Opal tower fiasco. The estimated cost to repair this shoddy work affecting unit owners is \$5 Billion. In the case of the forestry and parks sector, under the Liberals there has been a 20% to 30% cut back in the number of park rangers. Contributing significantly to the recent exceptional bush fires. This whole

deregulatory process has affected the buses, particularly in regard to driver training. 10 to 15 years ago an important focus of training was safety as paramount on the job. It was about preventing accidents before they happened. Now this focus has gone by the way side. There is less emphasis on driver training which I had many years ago. Whilst there is a high turnover of driver instructors. This is a bit worrying as there is no rapport built up between them and new drivers. There is now no pre driver education and after training. Consequently new drivers are not as skilled as they were 15 to 20 years ago. Whilst in Region 6 Transit Systems is increasing casualisation to cut the shifts of old timer ex-STA drivers to save money. Another factor is the reduction in the number of mechanics at depots from 5 to 10 years ago affecting bus defects and safety.

In recent months there was the accident involving a Kingsgrove driver which killed two people on a motor bike. Whilst, just recently I noticed a driver at a layup area, not sitting sideways when using his mobile. This could be detrimental to your job if a journo from a media outlet were to take a snap.

Confusion over Federal and State regulations has likely contributed to the XPT derailment in Victoria in late February of this year. The different regulations allowed for different speed limits on parts of the Sydney to Melbourne rail line.

Sparks: What is the latest with bus privatisation in Adelaide?

WB: I recently met in Sydney, a 40 year veteran of the buses in Adelaide. He said don't privatise! It doesn't work! It's been a huge failure. It doesn't save money. However it has led to a major casual positions influx, reduced bus stops and more split up times.

Other news has been the Liberal Govt. getting up to its old tricks and privatising the extensions to the tramways in Adelaide from King William Street to Nth Terrace to much fan fare. A current operator of the buses in the city has been given the 8 year contract for the extensions.

Sparks: What is other news on the workplace front?

WB: Currently there is increasingly collaboration of the corporate unions with the bosses and ripping off of workers by employers in many industries. The Federal Govt. has also put a clamp on officials from the Corporate Unions having access to workplaces in certain industries. Whilst Fair Work Australia is not being very fair with workers. It's slanted toward the Corporate Big Boys and takes orders from the Govt. There has developed a new initiative to assist workers who are scammed. I heard a program on Radio recently, it featured interviews with representatives from two on-line groups attached to an Ap on your mobile. These groups link workers up with volunteers with much industrial relations experience who can assist them for example to regain underpaid wages. The identity of the workers using the service is kept confidential and so they can avoid being targeted by the boss for the sack.

By the way these magazines are legal. You should feel free to take copies to read at work. Don't feel threatened about it.

Victorian Railway News

In the last 12 months there have been a number of changes at V/Line, some of which are not for the benefit of employees. In this issue Drivers, Conductors and Station Staff will discuss these issues. As in previous editions names have been changed.

Sparks: I hear job share has been changed.

Rastus and Roscoe: Drivers and Customer Service Staff have had a job share for a number of years. Drivers since 2012 and Station Staff for the last four years.

Sparks: Then why is that Conductors were not in job share?

Midge and Moose: Management said it was hard to implement for Conductors.

Ichabod: Management was lazy and placed it in the too hard basket. It was finally introduced twelve months ago.

Sparks: Job share is supposed to be a transition to retirement but with the Conductors this is not happening.

Moose: With job share you work four weeks on and four weeks off and with overtime a Conductor in job share is only asked to work overtime if no one is unavailable.

Midge: In other words only as a last resort.

Ichabod: The Staff Clerks are not following the instructions.

Moose: One of the Conductors who is on job share makes himself unavailable on his time he is off due to job share. In one instance he was brought in on job share to do an available shift.

Moose: Conductors are taking note of the sign on sheet and if they see this person doing overtime, they take photos of a particular page on the sign on sheet.

Sparks: You don't blame Conductors.

Ichabod: No, you don't but some of the staff clerks ignored the matter as it was easy to ring this person than ring another employee.

Midge: As long as this Conductor is asked to do overtime alone other conductors will raise the matter.

Sparks: What is happening with the EBA negotiations?

Rastus and Roscoe: In a ballot for industrial action 98% of employees voted for industrial action.

Sparks: What is the EBA?

Rastus and Roscoe: V/Line has rehashed the modified EBA they tried to introduce in early 2018. This was rejected by the membership by a large majority.

Midge: The EBA is for a 2% wage rise but to obtain this rise you have to give up a large amount of benefits.

Moose: Speaking to other Conductors they have said if it is only a 2% rise. NO TRADE OFFS.

Clarence: V/Line has brought in the Big Guns to achieve their aims.

Jethro: One of the persons V/Line employed is a former manager who left V/Line 16 years ago. He has been employed on a fixed contract.

Rastus: When this person was a manager he caused a fair amount of trouble with the drivers during EBA negotiations in 2000. The Drivers won that EBA.

Roscoe: The other blow-in in V/Line has employed has come from Metro Trains. He was their industrial officer.

Rastus: He caused a fair amount of trouble at Metro Trains.

Sparks: He was a former union official.

Rastus: You are correct. He was an organiser with the Printing Division of the AMWU. He left the AMWU and in 2012 he joined Metro Trains.

Roscoe: We Drivers haven't forgotten these rats. Other members of the former AFULE remember the Victorian Secretary of the early 1980's who retired because of ill health. He later worked in the State Industrial Affairs and helped towards the deregulation of the BLF.

Sparks: What has been the industrial action at V/Line?

Rastus: Drivers are taking protected industrial action.

Sparks: What action?

Roscoe: Overtime bans and instead of widespread industrial action, drivers have stopped work on a line by line basis. Bendigo one day, Ballarat the next day. Trevelyan the next.

Archie: V/Line a few days before industrial action, texted all employees a message about the evils of industrial action. Many employees ignored the message. Trains on lines where industrial action occurred were replaced by buses.

Rastus: In early 2020 industrial action will increase.

Forsyth: It would not surprise us if V/Line goes to the Federal Court to prevent further industrial action.

Roscoe: If prevented from taking industrial action, there are other ways.

Sparks: What about the manager at Southern Cross station who was stood down for making inappropriate comments to female employees.

Archie: This individual was never appointed as manager. He was seconded to the position on a fixed term contract.

Clarence: When he came to Southern Cross he was bragging that he would climb the ladder of promotion.

Forsyth: Most of the Customer Service staff particularly females hate his guts particularly after he terminated a number of employees just before their periods of probation expired. Even the station masters hate him.

Archie: As the matter is still subject to an inquiry we will have to wait to hear what happens. Five months have passed since he was stood down and the place now is a happy environment. It was his tongue that got him into trouble.

Sparks: Has V/Line given its employees a Christmas Party this year?

Rastus: Straight answer. No!

Archie: They gave some money for a local party but some locations have been knocked back.

Forsyth: The amount they gave was peanuts. Metro Trains maybe a pack of bastards to work for but they hired one of the Racecourses for a party.

Sparks: Once again we have run out of space. Yet there is supposed to be a transition for employees toward retirement. Not a cash cow for certain employees.

Archie and Forsyth: Human Resources should note that the employees at Southern Cross both daily paid and salaried hate this manager who is stood down. Place him in another section of V/Line as an ordinary employee.

Rastus and Roscoe: In having the final say, in the ten years we have written in Sparks, V/Line has changed from being a happy family to a pack of bastards. If V/Line obtains a court injunction to prevent industrial action the employees must resort to guerrilla tactics.

EBA INDUSTRIAL ACTION

By Special Correspondent

Yarra Trams: Stoppages every couple of days since August last year for four hours. There was to be four stoppages over four days of Grand Prix. The dispute has gone to mediation but if this fails the Govt. is going to Fair Work to have the industrial action declared illegal.

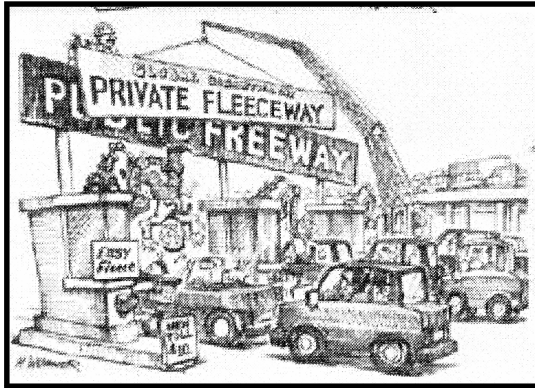
V/Line: There has been stoppages since December. One day Bendigo is out for 24 hours. Next day Ballarat goes out. The following day Trevelyan is out. Outcome will be reported in a future issue of Sparks.

Metro Trains: Metro Trains have gone to Fair Work and industrial action was declared illegal. The union went to the Federal Court who upheld the decision. The matter is being appealed to the High Court.

NEW INSIGHTS INTO THE XPT CRASH

NSW Sparks: What are your thoughts on the XPT derailment at Wallan on 20th Feb. this year?

V-Line Conductor: Currently there is a Govt. Inquiry into the matter. Amongst us it's a foregone conclusion that the Driver and Pilot who died in the accident will be blamed for it. In the past two years there have been three major incidents on the Albury Line. A goods train clipped the tail of a passenger train, a roll of steel fell off a goods train into the path of a passenger train causing a derailment and the injury of three passengers and a train had to be brought to a sudden stop as it was only 100 metres from where the tracks on the line had been removed due to maintenance work. Factors which have contributed to accidents on the line have been its takeover by the Federal Govt. several years ago and the recent destruction of a signal box for the line. Whilst drivers have been instructed by management to run their trains at 90 KMPH on the line. A driver who refused to comply with this directive for safety concerns was stood down in recent months. Whilst drivers will only run their trains up to 25 KMPH on the loop for safety reasons.



NSW Sparks: What are your impressions of the Victorian RTBU officials?

V-Line Conductor: They are part of the Left ALP Faction and are very 'thick' with the Victorian ALP Govt. In the case of Luba Grigorovitch who became State Secretary, there is some union rule that you have to have a background in the industry to stand for election for the posi-

tion. So she suddenly got a job as a rail consultant for just two weeks to fill the requirements! This is a common practice for the Left ALP machine to find union jobs for their hacks with such practices. Needless to say with the help of the bosses. Left ALP faction is heavily funded for elections in the union by the CFMMEU officials who are also in this Left faction. There is a 'Rank & File' faction associated with two guys from the Loco Division which contests union elections. However they won't have conductors on their election tickets so they have restricted electoral support. *(Ed. Comment: Given the likely role of the AEC (Australian Electoral Commission) and RTBU officials in rigging NSW 2014 and 2018 union elections, seems AEC and Union officials in Victoria doing likewise if needed. See back issues of Sparks.)*

STOP PRESS: RAIL BOSS GRILLED OVER TRACK WORK AFTER FATAL WALLAN DERAILMENT

As authorities piece together what caused the deadly train derailment at Wallan, it's been revealed a long-awaited upgrade to a troubled section of track between Melbourne and Albury had been delayed by a year.

Herald Sun

BACKGROUND INFO ON STANDARD GAUGE AND XPT

By Special Correspondent

1962 Standard Gauge line is opened from Albury to Melbourne.

1990 Order is placed for an XPT train owned by the Victorian Government.

August 1991 Sydney-Melbourne Daylight is discontinued.

1992 Victorian Government tells V/Line to withdraw from operating XPT from Melbourne to Sydney Corridor.

1993 XPT is inaugurated between Melbourne to Sydney. Train only operates on an overnight journey staffed by CountryLink and V/Line.

October 2nd 1994 CountryLink takes over operation of Melbourne Sydney Corridor on train service. Drivers still employed by V/Line operate XPT between Melbourne and Junee.

December 19th 1994 Daylight service to Sydney is inaugurated.

1999 Kennett Government hands over Albury to Melbourne Standard Gauge line to ARTC.

1999 Full control of Standard Gauge line Nth Melbourne to Albury controlled from Adelaide.

2008 Victorian Government announces that the Broad Gauge from Seymour to Albury to be handed to ARTC and converted to Standard Gauge. The work to convert the line is undertaken by contractors.

2011 V/Line passenger trains resume. Delay is caused from problems converting the line.

2012 Full V/line service is resumed for passenger trains. Three trains a day.

2013 Victorian Government sells its share of the XPT to NSW for a token price. V/Line drivers are replaced by CountryLink drivers. Junee drivers work from Junee to Melbourne.

2010 to 2011 Crossing Loops for Broadmeadows to Seymour are lengthened to become passing lanes. The Loops lengthened are Somerton, Wallan, Kilmore East and Tallarook.

2012 onwards trouble with mud holes in the line. Drivers are concerned.

2014 Abbot Government wants to privatise ARTC. Unable to be passed as the Senate opposes the privatisation. Because of the unreliability of contracts ARTC takes bush track work in house.

Aug. ARTC hands the wheat lands e.g. Tottenham, Lake Cargelligo to John Holland.

Further Information on the Standard Gauge Line 1. Until 1999 V/Line controlled the line from Sims Street West Melbourne to Wodonga. There was a panel in Number 1 box Spencer Street which controlled the Standard Gauge from Spencer Street to Sims Street. The yard at South Dynon was controlled from West Tower. Wodonga controlled the line from Wodonga Loop to the Murray Basin with Albany South Box to Albany Station.

In 1999 Wodonga Signal Box lost control of the section with ARTC taking over control to the Border controlled from Adelaide. V/Line lost control of the Standard Gauge and staff at Control were given the option to go to Adelaide, or redundancy. The CTC Control was taken to Adelaide.

2. ARTC is what was left after the privatisation of ANR. Victoria handed over the Standard Gauge line to ARTC late 1997. NSW was from 2005 onwards control of the track.

3. Maintenance and some pilot work was contracted out in 1998 to a number of firms (1) Skilled Engineering (2) Safe Working Solutions.

These are two examples. There are other firms which have been engaged over the years.

V/Line still uses its own Pilot men on their Passenger Trains. I don't know about Broad Gauge Freight Trains.

4. XPT TrainLink has a depot at Albury who staff the onboard Train Service. Drivers are from Junee. At busy times Staff from Sydney assist the train to Melbourne. In 1992 it was proposed that the train operate from Sydney. Because of loss of jobs at Wodonga with V/Line the Arbitration Commission recommended that Albury stay as a Depot with a number of V/Line employees transferring to CountryLink. This happened and on 02/10/1994 CountryLink took over the XPT and on 1/12/1994 the Daylight Service commenced.

5. There was hatred between Victorian and NSW Employees. The person who was targeted was the union delegate for CountryLink in Sydney. The reason was because he was involved in the negotiations for CountryLink to take over the train. This has mellowed over the years.

6. The reason CountryLink did not want Victorian staff running the train was because they were strong unionists and could not be sold out.

7. Drivers: Victorian Drivers shared the working with Junee Drivers from Junee to Melbourne until 2010.

8. One XPT was owned by Victoria and it was sold to NSW in 2013. Rumoured to be at a token price.

What is Democratic Unionism?

Democratic