

Sparks

THE RANK-AND-FILE TRANSPORT WORKERS' PAPER

Call for Immediate Rank & File Meetings on the job to breakout from Gladys's 2.5% EBA pa pay cap with direct action and foil the privatisation conspiracy against NSW Railways and the STA!



The media has lately been probing intensely into Gladys private life, without much success. However, our spies have uncovered a most unnatural and unwholesome 'discrete' affair. But is it surprising given the conspiracy to privatise the STA buses and NSW Railways?

NSW Rail News;	Rail EBA 2017 Treachery;
STA Busie News;	New Insights on Bus Selloff;
STOP Emerges;	Victorian Rail News;
Letter to the Editor;	SPECIAL INSERT: RAIL EBA 2017

EDITORIAL

Welcome to another edition of Sparks.

Some of the most explosive news lately was the NSW Govt. proposal to privatise the Inner West STA buses. At “top secret” weekly meetings between the NSW Transport Minister and the State Secretary of the union it’s likely the green light was given many months or even a year ago.

Time to put the Kibosh on Rail EBA 2017 Skulduggery and get the Goodies!

In the case of the 2017 Rail EBA negotiations, the union officials have suddenly been engaging in brazen lying about the actual commencement and have refused to supply regular detailed reports going back many months given the nasties to the grass roots. Particularly throat cutting affecting guards and other grades. Are you aware that Alex Claassens Union State Secretary, does not just have the union job, but also he is on the board of SASS Super and Encompass Credit Union. If he abdicates or is pushed out of his union job, he will also lose his super board position. With this type of position and gross salary in the likely multi hundreds of thousands, he is unlikely to be hard hit by the nasties - the trip to the dole queue for many and a meagre “imaginary” pay rise of 2.5% pa cap for the NSW public sector obliterated by spiralling power costs and rents. This is the time to push for much more and so challenge the whole railway network privatisation agenda. Work place meetings of the rank and file need to be held urgently. Only a campaign based on hard hitting direct action and can foil the certain railroading and likely ballot rigging of the EBA and secure a fair shake of the goodies..

In this edition, we throw important light on how the union brass is turning the campaign to oppose the privatisation of the STA into a laughable lame duck circus. Focusing on ALP and Greens electoral stunts. Whilst the so called campaign is run in a completely bureaucratic style. (See articles on pages 3 and 15.) Article page 3 particularly examines the privatisation push in the NSW Railways over many years and a way forward for the grass roots.

In articles on pages 19 and 20, we provide new insights into the Govt’s bus privatisation strategy and the role of the union bureaucracy, private bus companies. and the Govt. in the strike breaking against the snap bus strike. A new movement which has emerged to fight privatisation is STOP (Sydney Transport-users Opposed to Privatisation.) In contrast to the lame duck farce of the Hierarchy of the Union, ALP and Greens, it is pursuing a hard hitting campaign on the issue which will seriously hurt the Lib’s. (See article page 19.)

Sparks welcomes contributions in the shape of poems, articles and cartoons by transport workers. Please send to Sparks PO Box 92 Broadway 2007 NSW or via our web site www.sparksweb.org

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N.S.W. RAILWAY NEWS

What are the lessons from the proposed Inner West Bus Privatisation (Operation)?

In May 2017 the NSW Government announced that many State Transit bus routes would be privately operated and that 1300 bus drivers and other support jobs would be on the line.

The Government's reasoning for handing over the buses to the private sector was beyond convincing. They stated that it was necessary to privately operate the buses following complaints from commuters about poor timetable "on time running". When asked about the complaints the Transport Minister, Andrew Constance could not provide any evidence. Anyway, if on time running is an issue how will devolving the buses to the private sector solve this problem? Drivers have constantly railed about tight running schedules amid Sydney's growing traffic density as a major problem. A private operator will not fix this, nor will it save money for NSW Transport. The Minister has already said that it will not cost less.

The real reason for privatisation is ideological. The privatisation panacea is the Liberal Government's reason for its own existence. As far as they are concerned privatisation solves everything, especially for their mates at the business end of town.

Commuters in the Inner West are not fooled by the rhetoric of the Minister and know that handing the buses over to the private sector will leave transport services precarious at best. There has been good support from the Inner West community to keep bus operation in public hands. A recent meeting called by the Greens to garner support against the privatisation was well attended by locals from the Inner West as well as a handful of bus drivers and RTBU Officials.

The RTBU has held a restricted day of industrial action and a Fare Free Day but generally all actions have been controlled from the Union office. The issues of privatisation are similar to many that are operating in the rail industry where little has been organised in the way of fight back involving rank and file workers. If the union office was serious about a campaign then all sectors of the union would have been mobilised in the fight.

Politics being what is, the union has instead opportunistically used the issue of bus privatisation to garner support for ALP candidates in NSW. We have in the past heard Union officials publically state that "we don't care if jobs are in the public domain or in private hands as long as we have the membership."

"You can't stop privatisation" that's what the union chief once told me.

So we've had a handful of bus drivers turn up on the street for the cameras while the leader of the ALP Opposition in NSW, Luke Foley, waxed lyrical about keeping STA buses in public hands, promising also to return the Industrial Allowance that was taken from bus drivers for taking Industrial Action. Returning the Allowance is hardly an issue for busies who are

likely to lose their jobs. Foley's spiel followed that of the Union Secretary of the Bus Division and a number of ALP candidates in the effected electorates.

In their latest public show, after hearing speeches from the ALP candidates, bus drivers were asked for questions to be put to Parliament aimed at embarrassing the Government. As if Parliament ever solved any workers problem or was even interested in the welfare of workers? What brazenness

from the union officials to pull on such a stunt. It's no longer about the jobs of bus drivers and STA staff but about getting local ALP candidates elected. It's a real slap in the face for the bus drivers because it shows that the union can't mount a campaign using its own workers to win a dispute. Can't or does not want to? Such wanton opportunism.

Let's look at the track record of union officials and judge for yourself. What are the chances of them mounting a fair dinkum campaign to halt privatisation? Here are a few examples of how they fared when faced with the issue in the past

* Eveleigh Workshops- closed in 1988 during the ALP Wran era about 100 years after construction. It once was one of the largest enterprises in Australia employing around 5000 workers in its heyday and was the origin of the famous 1917 national strike. Despite a vigorous campaign from rank and file work groups it closed with barely a whimper from the union hierarchy. In the 1980's the workshops spawned a rank and file challenge (A.R.U. Reform) to the right wing old guard within the union, going close to defeating them in a well organised election.

* Chullora Workshops - despite \$61million being invested to upgrade the facility between 1980 - 1985 it closed its doors in 1994 with the land later sold to News Ltd and Fairfax for their print mills. Maintenance was outsourced to A Goninan and Co in Auburn in a brand new facility. No all out campaign was forthcoming to halt privatisation of the maintenance of City Rail's electric cars.

* Freight Corp - At the time of the Freight Corp sale it was already making a small profit. From the inception of incorporation of freight business in NSW the then State Secretary of the RTBU said on a number of occasions that he saw no future for rail freight in NSW. He believed that privatisation of Freight Corp was the best course of action despite the fact that rail freight workers would be only guaranteed their jobs and working conditions for a limited time. A few years later privately owned freight business in NSW had been turned into a lucra-



tive business model with myriad of operators. For the former workers of Freight Corp it was a betrayal.

* Opal “Smart” Card - introduced in 2012 the travel card takes revenue collection out of the public domain and puts it purely in the private domain creating an easy profit for the new operators, a consortium of Commonwealth Bank, Cubic and Downer. While this was a no-lose situation for the new operators, in the workplace it was wholesale slaughter.

Ticket sellers (Sales Clerks) and Station Staff who traditionally sold tickets lost their jobs. The travelling public lost a lot of options with their ticketing and travel arrangements and now pay much more under the new fare structure. There’s no doubting the convenience of the card for some people, but when things go wrong it is difficult and costly to remedy the situation. There is no way to get a refund or to fix your problems with your Opal Card at a Station ticket window as this is handled online or over the phone with the new operators.

Rail staff were slowly being cut out of the system until they have now no role in revenue collection or ticketing at all. There are concerns that further job losses will follow, e.g. ticket barriers are not essential to the operation of Opal.

Was there any opposition to the new ticketing and revenue system? From the employees point of view they would have preferred that it remain in house, operated by them. From the union bosses point of view, despite the job losses, not a whimper of disapproval about the privatisation and loss of jobs.

* Station and Train Cleaning - in the past few years cleaning has been progressively outsourced with the loss of hundreds if not thousands of jobs. What makes this so bad is that knew unscrupulous operators now hire cleaners (some on 457 visas) at a pay rate and on conditions that are far inferior to those of the former State Government employees. The new employees are not union members as far as I know. If they were, then the union has an obligation to bring them up to parity with the employees previously hired by the State.

* Epping/Chatswood, Bankstown Metro - The privatisation of these lines is the beginning of the end of Public Transport as we know it. It is a quantum shift in State responsibility for transport. It also has massive implications for job losses down the track. Metro is hoping to eventually operate these trains without train crew and possibly with minimal Station Staff. Driverless trains are a possibility on these lines in the future.

Yet despite the shortcomings in planning and development, despite the fact that single decker trains don’t carry as many passengers and that people will be standing instead of sitting and despite the fact that an overseas company will be profiting from the debacle and repatriating profits out of the country not one official from the union has met with rail staff to voice a concern or to listen to the gripes that members might have.

The Rubicon is no more

As you can see this is not an exhaustive list of jobs and services that have been outsourced. However they are a monumental shift in policy, just as great as that of the Inner West bus privatisation (and yes we believe that this may be the tip of the iceberg as far as bus privatisation is concerned). These are all life changing events as far as public ownership is concerned.

Is it any wonder that public transport workers no longer believe that privatisation of their jobs can be halted.

So what can we do?

We know that the public is against privatisation and that they believe that it will be cheaper and the travel routes more extensive if it is publicly operated by the government. To win a campaign of hearts and minds we must link with the public who is opposed to the privatisation of public assets. The public have learned much from the privatisation of electricity and the like. The hype from Government circles has not matched reality in terms of price nor reliability.

As workers, we need to support public outcries against privatisation and supporters of public transport. We do that by making ourselves known, helping groups such as those opposed to the West Connex Motorway and other public sector anti-privatisation fights. We need leaflets and organisation to inform and build solidarity with the community.

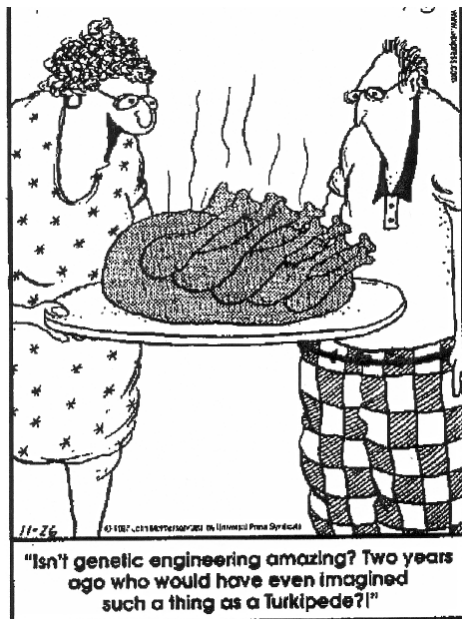
We also must build solidarity and educate in our workplaces. Pressure must be built to say enough is enough on privatisation. Start an anti privatisation group in your workplace even if you have to meet off the worksite.

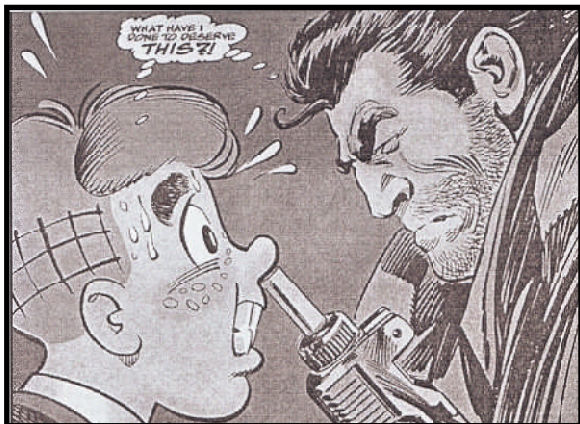
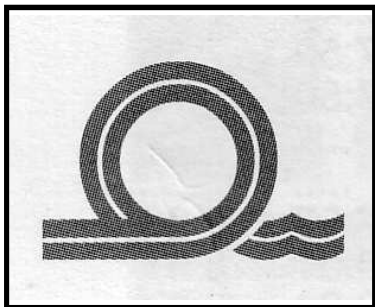
Sure, you say, shouldn't this work be done by our union? History is teaching us that that ain't going to happen. It's really up to us to resist the outsourcing, privatisation and job losses.

Don't be fooled either by appeals to vote for this or that politician to halt privatisation especially when the both major parties support such projects as the West Connex Motorway, private operation of trains, outsourcing of government services, privatisation of electricity, private operation of the Airport Line, privatisation of Sydney's second Airport at Badgerys Creek, private operation of Sydney Ferries and so on ad infinitum.

We have to build pressure ourselves. If union leaders stand in the way, then build a movement that can change the way the union operates to one that is inclusive and concerned about such issues as privatisation. Change your union to one that is not driven by outside political forces that dictate what can or cannot be fought for.

For job security, for a fairer workplace, for an end to exploitation by huge multi-national corporations, for a future with human dignity and not despair, then it's up to us all to take a stand now! Let us know how you can help?





“Called into the office for a cosy little chat about a customer complaint when “a little surprise” was sprung....”

THE “DIRTY DOZEN”

Recently one of our correspondents with his family attended the Sydney Film Festival during his holidays. For some entertainment, they attended a remake of the Hollywood comedy about WWII, the “Dirty Dozen”.

Instead of Nazi occupied France, to their horror this film focused on another dangerous terrain - to-

day’s austere Sydney Buses and the ravages of a marauding pack of bosses. It starred the Hollywood legend Arnold Schwarzenegger sporting an expensive long haired wig, fake plastic opal necklace and even a sex change for authenticity, as Gladys Berejikilian Liberal NSW Premier, “The Boston Strangler” of international TV wrestling fame as “Mr Incontinence”, NSW Transport Minister and Wrestling TV legend “Killer” Killowski as Lindsay Lee, Caretaker STA CEO and new STA CEO Steffen Faurby. Ex-Waverley Depot manager “Mr Hercules” with side kick “Madame Lash” from Randwick together with assorted other STA bosses formed the “Dirty Dozen”. Special Guest stars were members of the union executive.

The opening scenes of the movie were of a management meeting in the conference room at Leichhardt Depot in early February of this year. It was held in regard to the selection for depot manager jobs due to the readvertising of the positions associated with the restructure of STA Admin. The successful applicants for the positions were to be briefed on a special mission involving the carve up of the STA for private profiteers and the Liberal’s business mates. The conference was attended by the top STA brass including the caretaker STA CEO, with his execs, and the applicants for the jobs. Whilst even ex-CEO Peter Rowley came along, together with rookie depot Admin. Officers fresh from the training school, including one of our Sparks moles. Curiously execs from Veolia and TransDev and a mysterious “technical” adviser an ex-Stasi Officer also attended.

At the opening of the proceedings, a choir composed of the union executive serenaded the assorted bosses and small fry with the Shirley Bassie hit and Liberal Party hymn, “Hey big spender, spend some time with me!”. The assorted bosses engaged in a risqué exhibition of

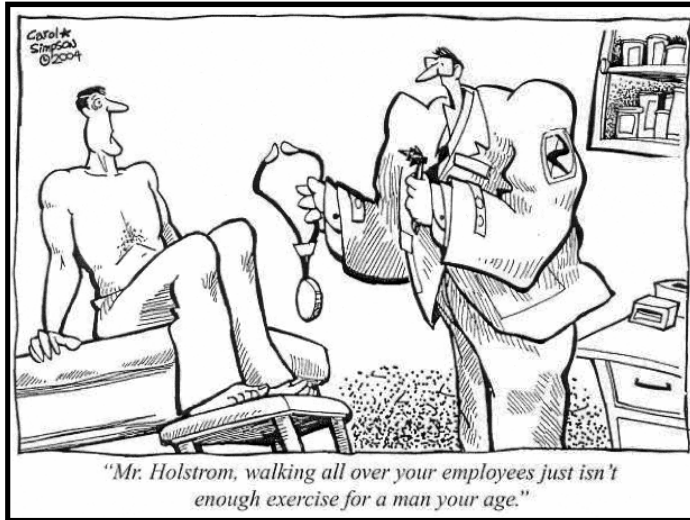
muscle flexing, arm twisting and “head kicking” techniques which would be performed on a captive audience of targeted “bus operators” in the privacy of their offices to show their managerial prowess. The editor of “We are Moving Sydney” magazine did some “happy” snaps for a “beef cake” centrefold for the next edition.

Following the selections for the positions, surprisingly Peter Rowley ex-STA CEO, went to the rostrum and gave a few words. He tearfully reminisced about his achievements at the helm of the organisation. “Optimisation” Phase 1 and 2 were the “apple of his eye”. Whilst his ever tightening of bus “running times” were his heart’s joy! Members of his staff in the audience were glassy eyed. They

recalled his unusual dedication to the job. Attending “very important” Optimisation exec. conferences in the early hours of the morning in a strange location, the VIP room at the handy located “Gateway Club” in Petersham! Where Madam Lash was observed creeping in via the “discrete” back entrance wearing an all leather Stasi Officer outfit and waving her favourite whip. She had an eye for elevation

to an executive position, and was engaged in the “orchestration” of the proceedings. His staff had been thrilled and inspired. Believing Rowley was planning to wring the very last drops of productivity and blood from drivers at these conferences. He was so dedicated. He even had no time for the attentions of his dearest wife. Little did they know that other forms of “bondage” were going on behind the lace curtains and tightly closed doors of the conference venue....

Rowley finished his touching rave which had his audience enraptured and teary, with the declaration that his work sadly had now to be completed by others. Caretaker CEO Lee and then the new CEO Steffen Faurby soon to come into office, assisted by the union executive will complete his good work, with the selloff of the inner west depots. Followed by other slices of the delicious cake. Lee thanked Rowley for his inspiring final words to rapturous applause. A performance “management consultant” from the “Gateway Club” which the STA has a corporate partnership handed Rowley a lovely fake bouquet. Whilst Lee issued Rowley with a medal depicting the STA Snail Logo and dollar signs. With that medal and 50c, he could buy a cup of coffee.



Transport Minister “Mr Incontinence”, then took over the show and gave an inspiring pep talk to the “Dirty Dozen”. He emphasised the importance of constant “bulldozing” of drivers so they don’t have a minute to scratch their heads and organise to fight back. With pride he expanded on his role in the ruthless bulldozing of heritage houses which stood in the way of the his pride and joy, the “WestConnex”. “This is how its down!” He announced. He then joked, “Monkey see, Monkey do!”

Lee then addressed the “Dirty Dozen”. “You have displayed excellence to me in your capacity to cause shell shock amongst drivers with your precision head kicking techniques. We are in the last lap now before the carve-up, so your mission will be to ensure there is no let up in the speed up in drivers jobs. Be assured them that the union executive will derail any effective industrial resistance when the privatisation axe falls. If action has to be taken it will be just taken to let off some grass roots steam and anger. There will be no mass meetings of the Bus Division or all other Divisions of the union. It will be completely run by the exec., so the action can be controlled and then called off after sufficient “steam is released”. ”

S.T.A. BUSIE NEWS

Leichhardt Depot News

Sparks: What’s the latest with the Admin. Restructure at Leichhardt?

Leichhardt Busie: The management area is still looking like a call centre. The bosses haven’t moved in yet. With the Govt’s announcement to privatise the Inner West depots, its perhaps awaiting the big bosses of the “new owners”? Whilst there had been no changes in regard to the roster clerk.

Sparks: What have been the latest developments with STA EBA 2017?

LB: Latest news is that an important nasty is the extension of the broken shifts spread to 13 hours. These shifts are the most common type. It will create problems for many drivers who live far from the depot and can’t go home during the break. Other news is that the bosses have introduced a new initiative where you can be paid a “spotters” fee of \$300 for a new recruit and a further \$300 if they remain on the job for 12 months. It just shows how difficult the bosses find it to recruit new drivers. With some only lasting one day. The union reps seem to be preoccupied with looking after their own situation, rather than assisting us in the fight against the bosses.

Sparks: What are your views on the campaign against privatisation?

LB: With the 24 hour snap strike, it only affected the Inner West depots despite the rest of the STA also facing the chop later down the road. Whilst the union hierarchy’s community campaign focusing just on the Inner West, certainly wouldn’t worry the Libs much as they have little presence on the Council or Parliamentary levels in this area. Lately, we have heard nothing further from the union officials.

Campaign Against Privatisation

Sparks: What are your impressions so far of the industrial campaign against the privatisation of STA bus routes and depots in the Inner West?

Leichhardt Driver(1): Rather than the snap strike and free fare day. A better approach would have been to hold just a snap free fare day involving the 12 depots. As a result of the two actions the Govt. has suspended our industrial allowance due to not providing 72 hours notice which will cost drivers approx. \$2600 gross per annum. So far we have not heard any developments on this question from the Govt. or the union hierarchy.

The Web of the Privatisation Conspiracy

Sparks: What are your thoughts on the issue of the NSW Transport Minister's suspension of the industrial allowance?

Leichhardt Driver (2): Following the Opal Free Fare Day snap industrial action occurring Constance in reply to a censure motion by the Leader of the Opposition Luke Foley over the bus privatisation said his Govt. was going to rip up the STA bus drivers' award and suspend their "industrial allowance". Only when the STA routes were privatised would the allowance be restored. According to an unconfirmed source, the Transport Minister has subsequently approached the STA bus union hierarchy and presented the proposition, that if drivers from STA bus depots on the Nth Shore sign individual declarations that they will never go on an Opal Free Fare Day action, they will have their industrial allowance restored!

Sparks: What are your views on the Govt's private tendering of the STA bus routes?

LD2: According to information I have received the tenders were only open for 2 weeks. This would be insufficient time for companies to work out accurately tenders for the routes. Consequently, it seems likely the Lib's business mate would have much prior warning of the upcoming private tendering perhaps even for 12 months, so they would have no problem winning the tendering. Competitive tendering would be just a facade created by the Govt. for public consumption. It's certain the union officials were similarly informed by the Transport Minister via weekly meetings between the Transport Minister and the union state secretary as exposed in a very interesting flyer recently issued by Sparks.

Sparks: How will drivers at the depot react to privatisation?

LD2: Currently there is a massive shortage of drivers. Whilst with the constant turnover of drivers it's difficult for us to fight this new attack by the Libs with the assistance of the union hierarchy. Many drivers who are coming up for retirement will take a redundancy golden handshake should privatisation go through in the middle of 2018. Whilst other drivers will resign en masse and get jobs at private bus company depots in the far west of Sydney. Many live in such places as Blacktown, etc. Most drivers live out that way, and would be uninterested in travelling 3 hours per day for shifts at private bus conditions, when they can travel just 10 minutes or so to a local private bus depot from their homes.

Burwood Depot News

Sparks: What's the situation with the union rep?

Burwood Driver: Our former union rep Mark De Lorie was forced to resign or be sacked. The bosses had something on him. They back tracked a lot through his record until they found further issues for which to have him sacked. Our new acting union rep until elections later in the year has in the past worked with De Lorie in the union rep position but he is less forceful and more democratic.

Sparks: What else is happening at the depot?

BD: A strange situation is developing with trainees. They are being trained up as drivers at Burwood, but after they get their licences, they disappear. Do they go to other depots or just leave the job, as was common years ago? We continue to experience a great shortage of drivers. With many DOC'S occurring. The manager continues to be helpful with drivers in regard to on the job problems.

Sparks: How are things developing following Transport Minister Constance announcement of the privatisation of the Inner West depots and subsequent snap strike and free fare day?

BD: Lately the union hierarchy has been very quiet. Particularly in regard to the ramifications for us of the loss of the "industrial allowance" and the breakdown of the "dispute settling procedure" and our associated current enterprise agreement. Following the announcement of the Transport Minister to suspend the allowance stemming from the snap free fare day. However, Jodi McKay, the ALP NSW Shadow Minister for Transport has come out to the depot on the privatisation issue in recent weeks. She suggested to us at a meeting that if we provided sufficient signatures for a petition, that the ALP would be able to launch an enquiry into the privatisation, which would expose irregularities and illegalities in the decision making and tendering. She also mentioned that the Transport Minister is taking a particularly hard line on the issue. Whilst the Premier Gladys Berejiklian is less gung ho. Local MP's seem also opposed to the privatisation push. Other news is that since the privatisation announcement many drivers have been applying for transfers to other depots.

Waverley Depot News

Sparks: What is the latest with the bosses?

Waverley Busie: There has been a truly bizarre development. They have announced that they intend paying drivers a "talent spotters" fee of \$300 for a new recruit and if the recruit stays on the job for twelve months an additional \$300 is paid. It's in sharp contrast to the situation thirty years ago when I first came on the job. At that time the bosses were paying redundancy payments to long term drivers who resigned. It just goes to show how the job has worsened under the Liberals, with their attitude of "Money First and People Last". Associated with this attitude, running times have been tightened by the bosses using the excuse of the new Opal system. Now you don't have a spare 5 minutes to think, discouraging new drivers staying on.

On a recent talk back radio program about the 40th anniversary of the Granville Train Disaster, a very well versed caller mentioned that the major cause of the accident was inadequate train maintenance involving a faulty wheel contributed by NSW Govt. cutbacks to staffing in the rail workshops. Guess who was in office in NSW and behind the cut backs? The Liberals!

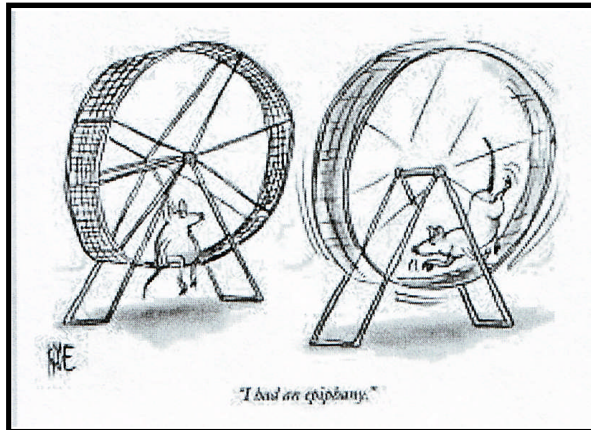
Sparks: What are your thoughts on the NSW Govt's announcement of the privatisation of STA bus routes in the Sydney Inner West and South Region 6?

WB: Initially, I heard on Channel 7 News on 15/5/17 that the NSW Govt was intending to privatise just Leichhardt Depot. Later other media reports revealed that the privatisation was much more extensive. 233 routes covering the area from Parramatta to Rozelle to Sans Souci involving 1200 STA drivers were to be put up for private tender to be completed by 1/7/18. Leichhardt Depot and other Inner West Depots such as Burwood, Tempe and Kingsgrove will be affected. It is using the ludicrous excuse of late running and customer complaints as a pretext for the attack. A similar ploy was used in regard to the privatisation of Sydney Ferries. Prior to that sell off, a "beat up" story along these lines appeared in the Murdoch owned Telegraph. The public aren't fooled that it's all a con by the Liberals.

Next morning I spoke on Talk-Back Radio. Given the limited time available, I explained only one important reason for the late running, which the NSW Transport Minister "Mr Incontinence" has used to justify the selloff.

Obviously with such an initial carve up, the other STA routes and associated depots will follow on the chopping block. On Wed. 30th May I heard on mid morning ABC Radio, "Mr Incontinence" bumbled that he would like to privatise the rest of the STA, for similar reasons. Even those routes which the STA would have the tender from 1/7/18 could be privatised during the tender period. Does the Govt. seriously believe the Privates will do any better in operating these routes? Good luck to them! TransDev which secured the tenders for Melbourne Inner City runs can't even make a profit. Drivers are very angry and there has been a snap 24 hour strike on Thurs 18/5/17 restricted to the depots to be privatised. Following "Mr Incontinence's" bomb shell, that all the STA could face privatisation, drivers held a free fare day on 1/6/17 following a call for the action by the union hierarchy. However, not all drivers participated. Some I spoke to at Waverley did not participate. Subsequently, "Mr Incontinence" announced the removal of drivers' industrial allowance costing drivers gross \$49.50 pw from next pay, for taking snap industrial action. In reality, the removal of this allowance will have a more extensive effect, as a result of its impact on overtime pay. Whilst drivers' wages are already being hard hit by massive power bill hikes, rising rents and private health cover costs. However, drivers don't now have to worry about losing the allowance when taking industrial action.

"Mr Incontinence's" latest bomb shell is that the bendies will be replaced by a return to double deckers which look as large as houses. Hills Buses currently operates them, so the Govt as part



of deceiving the public that its taking this new initiative, could fund Hills to operate more of these buses, but for only a limited time.

An important “hidden agenda” behind the privatisation is the associated selloff by the Libs of the public owned land with the depots and the space above it which are extremely valuable. Several years ago there was developer interest in building an apartment complex above Waverley Depot.

The privatisation will result in the cutting of runs. Those runs which are considered unprofitable will be given the chop. Already I have noticed in Rockdale and Kogarah that the STA has cut out small service runs due to low patronage. Other ramifications of the privatisation would be the massive loss of particularly experienced long term drivers. Consequently there would be much more likelihood of accidents. The whole Govt. strategy on the privatisation of the STA looks to be a “piece by piece” approach. With the Sydney Ferries first, then Newcastle, now the Inner West and then the rest of Sydney to be flogged off.

Some of the bosses were even taken by surprise by the Liberal Govt.

decision. They together with drivers had the impression that although privatisation was somewhere on the horizon, that following the renewal of the STA tenders for routes in the middle of next year, which the shonky second hand car salesman Mike Baird promised, they would have another 5 years of job security. I believe the union hierarchy had advance notice of the privatisation push from the Transport Minister. Whilst just before the decision was made, the rate of union dues was increased. Many drivers are angry about it.

I was recently in Newcastle, and spoke with STA drivers. Privatisation of STA buses, together with the ferries and Light Rail there is coming up on 1/7/17. They complained that there was no support by the union hierarchy for them to fight it.

The corporate media in the shape of Channel 7 has been spreading big lies about STA buses to smooth the way for privatisation. In a recent very slanted TV program, it focused on 2 accidents involving STA buses with dramatic shots. It gave the false impression that these accidents are very common. Additionally the program gave the impression that most drivers are speeding. It focused on one private bus which was going 140 KMPH. However, STA buses can't go any faster than 80 KMPH.

Sparks: What's the latest news on the WESTCONNEX?

WB: On an ABC Background Briefing TV program in mid May, more information was provided in regard to the NSW Govt's plans for the WESTCONNEX. It plans to change the route through the inner west suburbs. Already there has been several route changes. Initially, it was to go to the Port Botany Container Terminal. Now it is to go through Rozelle and end at the brickworks at St. Peters. Recently I noticed some cottages from a bygone era near that location on Canal Road have been bulldozed to facilitate the development. It's likely to cost the taxpayer many more billions. Whilst the CEO gets a \$1 million pa salary. Now that's some money. Hey big spender! The Liberal Govt. is just doing what they want and running rough shod over local communities.

Sparks: What are your views on the recent coverage in the Sydney Morning Herald of housing built in contaminated sites?

WB: They have published a series of articles about how there has been extensive dumping of asbestos and PCB on various sites in Sydney. The articles show that there has been no clean up of this hazardous stuff in these areas, prior to the housing construction. Indicating the NSW EPA (Environment Protection Authority) has turned a blind eye to the illegal activities of developers and Liberal business mates.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sparks,

“Greed is Good”

The NSW Govt. in pursuing its drive to satisfy Big Business agendas is displaying ever more duplicity and generating smoke screens to cover its privatisation of public assets and services and facilitating Big Business profit making. In the case of the recent announcement by the NSW Transport Minister that his Govt. was not ruling out the privatisation of all STA bus routes, he provided a sweetener in the shape of an extra 24 train services on the weekends for the Blue Mountains line. However due to the tunnels on that line being a certain size the new proposed Driver Only Operation trains running from the city won’t fit unless all the tunnels on the line are widened. This modification will cost a lot of money. Policy on the run.

In regard to the Power House Museum site sell off, its resulting in a massive cost blow out. Due to poor foresight, it will cost the Govt. \$250 million just to move the exhibits to the new site in Parramatta. The Govt. choreographed the community consultation meeting on the issue so that local people didn’t have their say. Policy on the run.

In the case of Mike Baird’s announcement that his Govt. would close down Greyhound racing due to animal cruelty concerns and in reality a pretext to sell off Harold Park. Following massive industry and community protests, he backed off the closure. However, Greyhounds which are proven to be ineffective in racing are still being shipped off to China where they can meet a grisly end. Whilst, the Govt. is allocating \$30 million in the 2017 Budget to fix up Greyhound race tracks. Interestingly the ACT has recently banned Greyhound racing. Again policy on the run.

The duplicitous approach of the Liberal Govt has extended to covering up environmental hazards affecting housing developments. The mainstream media such as the Sydney Morning Herald lately has been exposing the role of the EPA (Environmental Protection Authority) being pressured by the NSW Govt. to keep secret the details of contaminated land which has become sites for housing developments. Isn’t the EPA supposed to be independent? Could you be living on one of these contaminated sites?

In the case of the WestConnex, Govt. expenditure on the project has steadily increased. Lately it has increased from \$17 Billion to \$19 Billion. In the recent NSW Budget, which the media has crowed about as the “best in the Western World” the Govt. claims to have made major expenditure allocations to hospitals and other public infrastructure, but the “fine print” may reveal it’s over 10 years to 15 years and in reality inadequate for current requirements

and may be used to build private medical centres. At the Prince of Wales hospital, there is a nearby private hospital complex. Despite making huge sums from privatisation, the Govt. has capped public sector pay rises to 2.5% pa and has cut public service jobs by 1-2%. The WestConnex will just further contribute to traffic gridlock in the city. The real agenda being the invisible spin offs such as more money for concrete suppliers, construction firms and engineers.

The Liberal politicians such as Gladys Berejiklian and Andrew Constance are quite unprofessional and unauthentic in their dealings in comparison with such politicians of an earlier era such as Don Dunstan. In the case of the recent Grenfell Fire disaster in London, these Lib politicians were quick off the mark to signal a crackdown on building code violations. However, it was obviously just a ploy to help out their real estate and construction business mates. Prior to Dunstan becoming Premier of South Australia in the 1970's and implementing brand new legislation on a range of issues such as protection for the environment and putting public transport in public hands. He had been an advisor for Gough Whitlam when he was Prime Minister in the ALP Federal Govt. from 1973 to 1975. Dunstan was for the people not just money making for the mega rich.

With the Liberals in their last two years in office in NSW, we are in a dangerous situation and must be ready to resist ever more vicious attacks. They are like a super fast train running off the rails. A useful tool to expose the Liberals attacks and rorts on a large scale which the Lib's can't stop and hide from is Social Media. We have to put a stop to their visions of corporate grandeur and the associated mayhem confronting workers and communities.

Waverley Busie

Greens Staff & Community Meeting to Oppose Privatisation of the Buses

There was a fantastic attendance at the meeting held at Leichhardt Town Hall on Monday 19th June (the Greens were expecting perhaps 20 or so and were very surprised by the attendance). It was absolutely packed, mostly with local residents and Green supporters/voters and progressives. There was at least 40 or so STA drivers, mostly from Leichhardt depot.

Home-made posters put up by concerned locals on the night before the meeting seemed to have played a key role in mobilising the drivers' attendance. Upon hearing of the large contingent of drivers intending to go, the union officials put up a notice of the meeting on their website/Facebook page just 2 hours before the meeting! The union brass turned up even though they had snubbed Greens politicians when lobbying in State Parliament just a week or two earlier.

Chris Preston RTBU (Rail Tram & Bus Union) Bus Division Secretary and even Alex Claassens RTBU State Secretary and other officials attended. They burst into action and were clearly impressed with the local Greens ability to mobilise grassroots. Preston spoke about the privatisation push by the Liberals. He had nothing to say about the common belief

that the union hierarchy had prior knowledge of the privatisation push. One can assume this because of the “Top Secret” weekly meetings between the union State Secretary and the NSW Transport Minister Constance.

Jamie Parker NSW Greens MP for Balmain who organised and financed the meeting, suggested people could support his on-line petition which trebled in subscribers on the day of the 24 hour strike which alerted the public to the Liberal Govt’s proposal. He omitted to address issues that had been raised privately with him before the meeting such as Transport Minister Constance ripping up the bus drivers’ industry award during the parliamentary debate. This meant the suspension of the Dispute Settling Allowance of approx. \$50 pw. All drivers are now losing the allowance from their pay packets. As a letter in the Daily Telegraph 29/6/17 demonstrates this has divided the drivers in the non affected depots, outside Area 6.

For instance the union rep at Ryde depot said it has been difficult to convince all his members that they must stick together to win the battle in the long run. Another driver, working on the 370 route from Randwick depot, expressed cynicism saying the battle was already lost and the union was going through the motions



and we will be no worse off under privatisation. He is wrong, but said the pay cut was hurting him as he had commitments. With these attitudes it is essential that depot militants build confidence with their fellow workers, as history shows if workers stick together they will win. The union hierarchy has eroded this confidence by refusing to organise a mass meeting of all depots, because they all face privatisation and cuts to working conditions, if not before the next State election, then immediately after.

On this point of ‘divide and rule’ between the depots, Jamie Parker was also asked to raise publicly the rumour from drivers that Constance allegedly offered drivers from the North side depots the opportunity to sign individual declarations agreeing to renege on any repeat industry-wide Opal Free Day if called by the RTBU like the one held on June 1st last. To call workers to break ranks and reward some drivers with their allowance back is clearly not beyond Premier Berejiklian’s strategists? She is worried about industrial action in her own Local seat of Willoughby. Union member splitting ‘carrots and sticks’ are not beyond her and her business mates. The Taxi industry and Uber shows what happens when workers don’t stand together. Ask any Taxi driver.

Another rumour concerns potential corruption in the tendering process? Some say the privatised pie has already been dished out to a Govt. favourite behind the scenes. ICAC caught out

the Libs and their developer mates after the last State election. This was hot on the heels on the disgraced ALP Govt. before them. The tendering process will be watched with interest by all. At the moment Berejiklian and Constance have set a long phase in time to test the waters over driver and commuter resistance. The union leadership sank their own ship in this regard by not mobilising Sydney drivers over the privatisation of the Newcastle depots which has gone ahead in July after a 12 month delay, this has set a precedent of which the Liberals are fully aware.

Another issue that was to be followed up at the RTBU meeting the following week was where the focus of the campaign should be. The RTBU officials are focusing solely on area 6, the affected Inner West. It would appear this is a defeatist policy of promoting Luke Foley's credentials for the next State election which they are on paper. But to isolate the other Northern and Eastern depots from the campaign while expecting them to take a pay cut is a ridiculous strategy. Berejiklian has no fear of losing political seats in the Inner West.

Preston in responding to a retired MUA (Maritime Union of Australia) member of the "old school", who demanded "Direct Action" by drivers and the so called union to fight privatisation - I didn't quite catch it - but I think he referred to the IR court directive - that any such - snap strikes etc "would be illegal" so he can't call for it. However he provided the caveat that he is not responsible for grass roots initiated direct action. He didn't seem to recall that he had called for "illegal" industrial action already in the shape of the 24 hour snap strike and Opal Free Fare day. So the ice has been broken on the union taking illegal action. If there are fines for illegal industrial action, perhaps surpluses from the STA drivers Traffic Fine and Picnic Fund which have never been paid to drivers for many decades as a premium, and would work out as a tidy sum, should cover any such fines! When was the last time STA drivers ever had a picnic? Drivers could have a chat "en masse" with Chris on these issues when he next comes to visit your depot.

Another local resident supported the snap strike and free fare day and also called for direct action by drivers to fight privatisation. Another guy who spoke was a driver from Leichhardt depot. He was on the roster committee and mentioned problems with developing good/sane rosters since Transport for NSW was set up.

Another interesting point raised by one of the Greens politicians was the likely use of Leichhardt depot as a site in the construction of the WestConnex. Jamie or another Green was to look into it. It was another possible reason for privatisation.

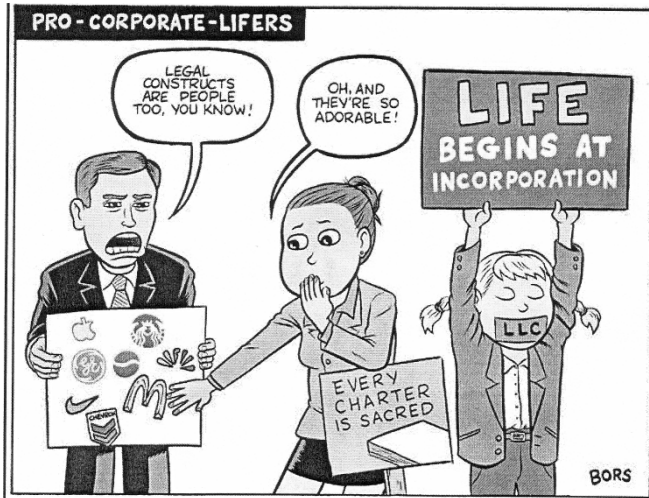
So it looks like sections of the Greens hierarchy may be in on the privatisation conspiracy, together with the union hierarchy and the ALP.

Don't Sell Our Buses Community Assembly

This meeting was held at the Uniting Church at Pitt St. City on 28/6/17 organised by Unions NSW. It seems connected with the RTBU State Secretary Claassen's Hillsong Church associations and an ALP Community Alliance electoral strategy involving Churches. It was chaired by Chris Preston RTBU Bus Division Secretary. Similar meet-

ings were held in that week in the City organised by the ALP and the union hierarchy. One even starred Shorten Leader of the Federal ALP Opposition.

No questions from the audience were allowed and no debate, displaying the absolute contempt the union hierarchy and the ALP bosses have for drivers and those genuine concerned people who attended. Interestingly, there was a cop van hanging around outside. Perhaps to intervene against anyone trying to raise questions and challenging the bureaucratic running of the event.



Some important questions to be raised included: (1) The importance of holding a joint rail and bus workers mass stop work meeting to fight privatisation. (2) Does the union have a strike fund? As a serious industrial campaign needs to be waged. (3) What is the union doing to compensate drivers for the loss of the Industrial Allowance? (4) What is the union doing to negate the "Transmission of Business" clause in the current EBA? This clause has featured in all STA EBA's since 2002 and gives the green light to privatisation. (5) As these clauses feature in all NSW public sector EBA's, what is the union going to do to work with the unions in these sectors to oppose privatisation?

The ALP and the Union hierarchy were planning to hold on Wed. 5/7/17 a community day of action. The union hierarchy and the ALP bosses are trying to encourage people in the Inner West to get 10,000 signatures on petitions to Parliament and chat with people, etc about privatisation of the Inner West. Such an approach is completely useless! The Libs are mainly worried about the North Shore buses and to a lesser extent Eastern Suburbs buses in regard to upcoming Council elections in early Sept.2017. The Libs are already in hot water over Council Amalgamations. Unions NSW and the union hierarchy planned to devote huge resources to this useless campaign. No mention was made of these council elections and the need to raise STA bus privatisation as an issue on the North Shore and Eastern suburbs which would worry the Libs considerably.

Luke Foley, ALP Leader of the NSW Opposition spoke and constantly used the code word "reform" of STA drivers being needed. It meant incremental cut backs to drivers' conditions as the way to go rather than full on privatisation. The Greens NSW MP Mahreen Faruqi had a similar outlook and also emphasised new technology. Interestingly in contrast to the Leichhardt Town Hall meeting (with 40 approx) - only approx 30 STA drivers attended the meeting

mostly from Kingsgrove. The audience was composed mainly of Union bosses and their lower rung officials and ALP hacks. There was a video made probably for Union NSW/ALP propaganda. You needed tickets to attend. There was about 200 people overall.

So the meeting looks like mainly as an ALP electoral stunt. So they and the union hierarchy which has stopped all industrial action, can “look like they are doing something” in fighting STA bus privatisation, but in reality waging a totally ineffectual commuter/community campaign.

Sparkie

STOP (Sydney Transport-Users Opposed to Privatisation)

Clearly the travelling public from pensioners to working daily commuters see the threat of privatisation of the bus and train industries. They are fed up with the major parties state and federal privatising essential utilities, major resource assets and heritage buildings. The community is being impoverished to fatten up corporate mates and global conglomerates. Like the bus drivers people want to resist out of necessity for their futures. A group of individuals have started Sydney Transport-users Opposing Privatisation (S.T.O.P) in response to the immediate attack on Inner West buses and drivers. They hope STOP will encourage the formation of grass roots community groups all over Sydney in support of rank and file groups developing at the depots and work places as we all have a common cause. Hands off the People's Assets Now!

In sharp contrast to the ineffectual commuter and community campaign being promoted by the Greens hierarchy and the union hierarchy/ALP bosses, a new grass roots community movement has emerged to put a stop to bus privatisation. STOP will be waging a vigorous campaign to enlighten commuters and locals in marginal Lib seats in Sydney and the seats of the Premier and NSW Transport Minister. It will particularly focus on making bus privatisation a big issue in these areas in upcoming council elections. STOP will assist people in the community and on the job in the STA to establish their own committees and activity. In the interest of solidarity sign the on-line petitions from the Greens, RTBU and Unions NSW and other political parties and community groups who are taking a stand. Unity is strength.

If you want to discuss generating action in your area, contact us via

STOP PO Box 703 Leichhardt 2040.

New Insights on the STA Bus Privatisation Conspiracy

There is an important new dimension to the STA Bus privatisation conspiracy revealed in an article in 'Neighbourhood'. It's a free newspaper from Surry hills. In its July 2017 No.3 edi-

tion, there is an article entitled “Automatic For The People”. Check their website neighbourhoodpaper.com for the full article.

The NSW Govt and their business mates hidden agenda for privatisation of the Inner West STA buses/routes and then subsequently the rest of the STA, is to wreck up public transport and force people with the money to use tollways. Should driverless vehicles such as personal cars, Uber taxis and buses become the norm perhaps in 1 to 5 years time, the Govt and its business mates are planning to lock, their operation in tollways.

Transurban will operate and own amongst other freeways/tollways, M4 (ending at Haberfield) and M5 (ending at St. Peters) so fitting with Inner West STA depot/routes privatisation. On these freeways/tollways, they want a special lane for driverless vehicles. These vehicles will be forced on these roads via Govt regulations unlike conventional vehicles with drivers for so called safety reasons. Poor people will be forced on to the cramped and overpriced private buses and railways networks. The article reveals that at the ‘AFR Business Summit’ held in March and the ‘National Infrastructure Summit’ held in June, Transurban was positioning itself to take advantage of this new driverless vehicle technology for their profit making via lobbying the NSW Govt. to compel driverless vehicles to use dedicated lanes on their tollways.

Today populist politicians like Malcolm Turnbull travel on public transport as ‘one of us’. Under the cattle truck privatised transport, you won’t see him or the NSW Premier Berejiklian or NSW Transport Minister Constance there. Currently, Berejiklian and Constance with their considerable media manipulation resources are constantly holding media stunts about allegedly improving public transport to divert public attention away from their incremental privatisation agenda.

Lithgow Buses and Opal Exemption

An article in ‘Senior’ Newspaper July 2017, reports about the case of Lithgow private buses which don’t accept the Opal. Gold Opal card holders are being charged double the Opal fare capped at \$2.50 per day. It’s an indication of the way ahead. So in the case of STA bus privatisation, the Govt. will either subsidise a private operator to maintain profit levels or allow exemptions from normal Opal fares as in the Lithgow case.

SOME CURLY QUESTIONS

Some curly questions for Tim “Wink Wink” Ayers from AMWU...for the RTBU leadership....TWU leadership....and for Unions NSW...and for ALP and Greens politicians to ask re financing “scab” drivers in next Question Time in NSW Parliament?

Questions about Private Bus Strike Breaking during 24 hours Snap Strike on 01/06/2017

1. Why didn’t the officials of the RTBU contact the officials of the TWU (private drivers bus union) to prevent strike breaking on June 1st last?

- Have the RTBU officials contacted their TWU counterparts since to avoid similar strike breaking in the future, as a serious industrial campaign is required to defeat privatisation of NSW Govt run bus routes?

- Have the RTBU officials contacted the AMWU (mechanics union) officials to avoid strike breaking in the STA and by private bus company depots during further industrial action?

2. According to information from a Private bus company contact, the NSW Govt. contacted many private companies (both inside and outside the Sydney Metropolitan area) to supply buses for the strike breaking on June 1st last. The private bus company bosses were required by Andrew Constance office in Sydney to ring up all drivers late at night on the eve of the June 1st strike to "request" whether they can come to Sydney to operate on STA bus routes one driver was rang at midnight and told to report to Burwood area from the Hunter Valley in under 5 hours!

- Were these drivers paid overtime?

- Who were country coach companies involved?

- Which companies, depots and how many private buses were involved in total? Cost to NSW Taxpayer?

3. What was the exact amount the Liberal NSW Govt. paid private bus companies for their strike breaking efforts?

Were mechanical section staff at the private bus depots paid over time for extra work involved in the strike breaking?

What was the amount? Can the officials of the AMWU supply the details, now or in the future, from their membership involved?

From what budget allocation did this money come from? Does the NSW Liberal Govt. claim it has sourced finance from the STA drivers loss of the 'Dispute Settling Allowance' (\$98.00 a fortnight cut in pay indefinitely) and the imposition of the \$10,000 fine on the RTBU Union for the strike on June 1st 2017 ?

Please explain...all those Union officials who spoke up so vociferously at the recent Uniting Church "Stop Bus Privatisation" meeting while denying any "question time" ?

From ex Leichhardt Bus driver (1977-81) and supporter of STOP (Sydney Transport-users Opposing Privatisation).

VICTORIAN RAILWAY NEWS

In this issue of Sparks we will discuss Human Resources and their efforts to introduce a complaint workforce into V/Line. Once again Drivers, Conductors and Station Staff will discuss these ongoing issues. Once again names have been changed.

Sparks: What is going on with Human Resources?

Rastas and Roscoe: They are trying to introduce a complaint workforce.

Sparks: What do you mean?

Clarence: They want to have V/line employees acting like robots.

Jethro: In other words they will pick who they want in various positions within V/Line.

Sheona: They set the rules in the selection process for applicants.

Sparks: In what way?

Penelope: I will give you an example of what happened in regards to the selection of station staff for an outer suburban station which opened at the end of January.

Jethro: One of the applicants was told by Human Resources that the Referees he used on his Resume were not acceptable to Human Resources and Human Resources would select who they want as a Referee. Their selection and not his.

Clarence: That's not all. I did hear about the selection of a Staff Clerk for a vacant position at Southern Cross.

Jethro: A similar incident to what was reported some eight years ago was in issue 131.

Clarence: You are correct. The successful candidate for Staff Clerk was placed in the position in his spare time to learn the position. Another candidate asked to be given a trial in the position during his spare time, but was told by the manager in one word. No!

Penelope: This gave the successful candidate an unfair advantage over other candidates. A similar thing happened eight years ago for the selection of a Customer Service Manager and was reported in issue 130.

Sparks: What about the selection for Drivers?

Rastus: In the years up to 2009, most of the Drivers came from the Electric Trains and some from various Freight Companies such as Freight Australia. The Electric Train Drivers had a Right of Return.

Sparks: What was Right of Return?

Roscoe: This goes back to the 1970's when due to Closures and altered work practices on Country Lines, a large number of Passed Out Drivers were compulsorily transferred to the Electric Trains.

Rastus: Under Right of Return when a vacancy occurred at a Country Depot these drivers had a Right of Return, to a job in Diesel Locomotives.

Roscoe: When Privatisation occurred in 1999 the original agreement was honoured as it was a legal document registered with the Arbitration Commission.

Sheona: By 2001 a decision was made to recruit internally. Also redundant drivers from freight companies were recruited.

Clarence: Interest from the latest intake of drivers was high and a fair number of employees applied for the positions and most internal applicants were unsuccessful.

Sheona: The selection tests were tough particularly Mechanical Aptitude, but wait for it, two of the failures were qualified Diesel Mechanics. No wonder morale is low amongst employees.

Rastus: Human Resources considered that many of the internal candidates were unsuitable so they have advertised externally where interest has been high. In fact qualified drivers from Freight Companies have applied and they were unsuccessful.

Penelope: The same thing has happened with conductor vacancies. A large number of station staff have applied and they were unsuccessful.

Sparks: I have heard of the unsuccessful applicants for a driver's position resigned from V/Line and has decided to do a Second Person's course in NSW.

Jethro: You are correct. The applicant was upset at always being unsuccessful so he decided to do the Second Person's course at one of the training companies in NSW.

Rastus and Roscoe: We have heard stories about the Training Schools in NSW. We know they charge high fees for the Second Persons Course. Perhaps someone with a knowledge about these Training Centres could report in a future issue of Sparks.

Sparks: What about a future shortage of drivers?

Rastus: The way Human Resources recruits drivers and the time they take, the shortage will get worse and they will have to pay a bounty to return some of the drivers after retiring age.

Sparks: We move on. What is the code when an employee is stood down with pay?

Sheona: They stay at home and are called to Human Resources for an enquiry. They are not to talk to anyone about the reason they are stood down.

Rastus: They could be stood down for anything and some matters are minor. As we have said in previous issues of Sparks. I think of the stress it causes an employee. In fact some have been stood down for four months before a decision is made.

Jethro: They haven't changed. They are still trying to frighten employees.

Sparks: Once again we have run out of space. I will say one thing, Human Resources has to be cleaned out from top to bottom and people placed in there who are promoted from within V/Line and not a bunch of university graduates.

Rastus and Roscoe: In having the final say. Human Resources are a bunch of Bullies and Bludgers. We Drivers call on V/Line employees to STAND UP to them. Finally if you are in trouble with Human Resources let your WORKMATES know. FINALLY, you touch one employee, you TOUCH ALL.



What is Democratic Unionism?

Democratic Unionism means grassroots-controlled unionism, not control by officials. It also means that workers in one industry should be in one union so as to remove artificial divisions that can cause disunity. Such a union should be fully organised and controlled by the membership.

To achieve this we believe a union should be organised along the following lines:

1. That no person employed by the union should earn more than the average income of the membership.
2. That spokespeople should have no executive power – all decisions should be made by the union membership in the course of mass meetings.
3. Spokespeople are only to act as delegates elected by the membership to carry out decisions made by the membership in mass meetings.
4. That a mechanism be instituted for the instant recall of spokespeople/delegates who break the above rules.
5. That all positions within the union be held on a limited tenure, the duration of which will be decided by the membership.
6. That a programme of decentralised decision-making be implemented within the union structure, so that we won't need full-time paid officials
7. All loss of earnings incurred by elected delegates who miss work as a result of carrying out union duties will be reimbursed by the union to the extent of the lost wages.

Only in this way will we see the creation of a democratic, united, fighting organisation which can stand up for the rights of workers and their families against unhelpful union officials, bosses, political parties and governments.

MEMBERS' VOICE - Fighting for Membership Control of the Union and Direct Action.

**Web Site: User.tpg.com.au/retepsni/MembersVoice
Email: membersvoice2010@yahoo.com**

Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Members-Voice-RTBU-rank-and-file-group/Members-Voice-RTBU-rank-and-file-group/531249043571323?fref=ts

What is Democratic Unionism?

Democratic