

The Queensland Journal Of Labour History

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SUBSCRIBE TO *LABOUR HISTORY* — THE NATIONAL JOURNAL OF ASSLH



Labour History (ISSN: 0023 6942) is an internationally recognised journal published twice a year, in November and May, by the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History of which the Brisbane Labour History Association is the Brisbane branch. Contents, abstracts and prices of back issues are available at the web site www.asslh.org.au. The journal is available in both printed form and via the non-profit publisher JSTOR. The association with JSTOR offers individual subscribers a range of advantages, including online access to the full run of *Labour History* from 1962 on.

Members of the **BLHA** who are not already receiving *Labour History* are encouraged to subscribe. The full rate for individuals is \$70.00; the concession rate for students/unwaged is \$40.00. Rates are kept relatively low as ASSLH is a non-profit organisation. New subscribers to *Labour History* receive the current year's journals and a free back issue of their choice.

***Labour History*, 107, November 2014**

The 11 articles in the latest issue of *Labour History* exemplify the journal's aspiration to foster and publish scholarship on the broadest possible range of labour-related aspects of the Australasian historical experience: on work and protest in peace-time and war; on industrial action by workers on the state as a locus of employment, political contestation, and social and cultural control; on varieties of labo(u)r ideology and political action; on the workings of electoral politics at all levels; on media-based struggles for workers' hearts, minds, agency and votes; on the linages and prospects of Australian republicanism; and much more. Building on the theme of labour, war and resistance canvassed in depth in our May 2014 special issue (*Labour and the Great War: The Australian Working Class and the Making of Anzac*, Nathan Wise draws on the written records and oral testimony of Australian soldiers to explore the nature of the work of 'digging' during the 1942 Kokoda campaign. Phoebe Kelloway's article investigates the underlying motives and industrial and ideological dynamic of strike action taken by textile workers in Melbourne and Launceston against a wage cut in late 1932. Pauline Curby's account of the trial, conviction and subsequent execution in 1936 of Edwin Hickey for the apparently unprovoked murder of New South Wales conciliation commissioner, Montague Henwood, illustrates the journal's commitment to publishing fresh insights on Australian social and cultural history. Other contributions canvass matters that fall more neatly within the traditional mainstream of labour historical scholarship, dealing as they do with the overarching theme of Labor, Laborism and the Left. For instance, the article by John Sebesta, Douglas Fullarton, Stephen Morrell and Lyn Smith provides a new perspective on the ideological and institutional interplay between Laborism and varieties of revolutionary socialism during last century. Issue 107 also offers a rich and diverse suite of book reviews as well as extended research notes on topics of interest to our readership, including an edited version Geoff Gallop's 2014 Manning Clark Lecture: "*A Republican History of Australia*".

For full details: see <http://asslh.org.au/journal/contents-and-abstracts/>

Editorial

Howard Guille

The term *historic* seems appropriate to the result of the Queensland election on 31 January 2015. Many expected the ALP to regain 'core' electorates lost in the wipe-out from 51 seats to 7 in 2012. There was a good chance, and a lot of hope, that Premier Newman would lose in Ashgrove. But, not many thought that the ALP would defy the published opinion polls which had a lead to the Liberal National Party of 52-48 per cent on two-party preferred. It also defied the bookies who gave the LNP an 80 per cent chance of winning. One of the most credible commentators on polls predicted the LNP would have an absolute majority of 52 seats out of 89, Labor would have 34, Katter Australia Party 2 and independent Peter Wellington.

If the conservative forces contemplate their history, the result might add to their worries. This is the third time in 100 years that a right-wing party has lost government after one term. Table 1 shows that right wing parties have won government from opposition on four occasions since 1915. Only in 1957 did they keep office for more than three years following the initial victory.

After 1957, the split between the ALP and the QLP probably kept the Coalition in government until well into the 1970s when their position was maintained by the gerrymander and the lack-lustre of the ALP.

Table 2 shows the state-wide primary votes for the last three state elections. In 2015, there was a swing to the ALP of 10.8 percentage points and a swing away from the LNP of 8.4 percentage points. The vote of the Katter Australia Party fell 9.6 percentage points and this appears to have gone to PUP and the LNP. The LNP has an almost identical primary vote to 2009 and the ALP is nearly 5 percentage points less.

Antony Green estimates that the 2-party preferred outcome in 2015 is ALP 51.1 per cent to the LNP 48.9 per cent, representing a swing to the ALP of 14.0 percentage points since 2012. The ALP received around 20 per cent stronger preference flows from the Greens in 2015 compared with 2012; this converts to an extra 2-3 percentage points to the swing to Labor after preferences.

The left should savour that a majority, on primary votes, rejected privatisation

Table 1 Changes of Government in Queensland

| First elected | Time in government | Party |
|---------------|--------------------|---|
| 1915 | 14 years | ALP |
| 1929 | 3 years | Country and Progressive National Party |
| 1932 | 15 years | ALP |
| 1957 | 32 years | Country Party/National Party- Liberal Coalition |
| 1989 | 6 years | ALP |
| 1996 | 2 years | National Party-Liberal Coalition |
| 1998 | 14 years | ALP |
| 2012 | 3 years | LNP |
| 2015- | | ALP |

Table 2 Primary Vote at three elections

| | 2009 | 2012 | 2015 |
|--------|------|------|------|
| LNP | 41.6 | 49.7 | 41.3 |
| ALP | 42.3 | 26.7 | 37.5 |
| KAP | | 11.5 | 1.9 |
| Greens | 8.4 | 7.5 | 8.4 |
| PUP | | | 5.1 |
| Other | 7.7 | 4.7 | 5.7 |

(or so called asset leasing) which was opposed by the ALP, the Greens, PUP and KAP. The electorate also rejected the crude bribery of making new spending in each electorate conditional on electing an LNP candidate. Unions led the opposition to privatisation and cuts to public services throughout the term of the LNP government. The ETU's *Not4Sale*, the Queensland Council of Unions '*Stand for Queensland*' and the Together Union's

Working for Queenslanders were all prominent. Perhaps the Newman government was prescient, in its own interests at least, when it introduced legislation in July 2013 to control and restrict political spending by unions. The QCU responded with a High Court challenge and the legislation was withdrawn in June 2014 in the face of a separate High Court decision rejecting similar NSW legislation because it limited free speech.

While the unions can be rightly pleased with their efforts, it is less clear that the election is a categorical rejection of ‘austerity’ despite claims from some commentators. The Commission of Audit, with Peter Costello and a seemingly LNP friendly University Vice-Chancellor, was a patently political exercise to justify the usual bundle of policies of cutting public spending, reducing taxes, privatising and contracting out. The public service cuts, savage in extent and execution, were an early part of the same logic. However, the reaction against the cuts might be more about how they were done (and because they contradicted explicit promises) than a demonstration of support for public services.

There is still a big task of building a positive agenda about the public provision of services. The campaign against privatisation was successful but there has been little public protest about the more general encroachment of market relations. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that the clamour of the neo-liberals will relent. Similarly, the mainstream media in Queensland are likely to pounce on any suggestion about increasing Government revenue to fund better public services. Maybe the next lot of ‘grassroots’ and social media campaigning by unions needs to be about getting the community to treat these services as collective assets.

The 2015 election will be fertile ground for future historians. One of

the areas for investigation is how so-called conservative Queensland now has a woman as Premier and a woman as Deputy Premier. A majority of the Cabinet are women and there are two Aboriginal people elected to Parliament in the ALP caucus with one a Minister. 39 per cent of the ALP members are women — better than the quota of 33 per cent in winnable seats and almost up the 40 per cent target.

Such matters are more than chance. Yet, and by luck rather than judgement, the interview with Senator Claire Moore in this issue of the journal covers the recent history of the struggle within the ALP to increase women’s representation. Claire is a foundation member of Emily’s List and a major player in getting mandatory quotas for women in winnable seats. She also recognises that some unions in the 1980 and 90s were real leaders in requiring gender balance on union executives and delegations. Indeed, this was how she started going in the late 1980s as a delegate to the monthly Wednesday evening meetings of the full Trades and Labour Council. Those meetings are long abandoned because of lack of quorum.

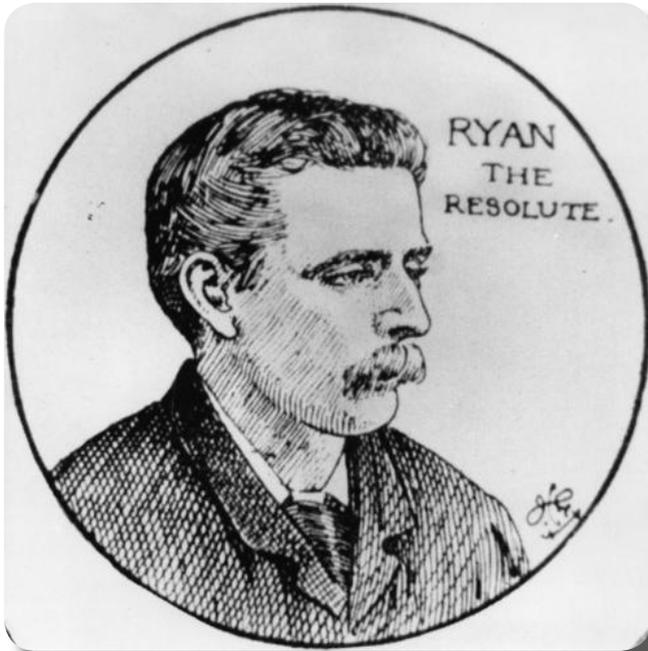
The interview with Claire continues the series of interviews with current history makers and follows on those with Alex Scott, Beth Mohle and Dick Williams all of whom, and their organisations, deserve mention in election despatches. John Spreckley

writes on the changes to industrial law made by the LNP that were, as he says, directed at unions and at weakening the independence of state institutions.

Queensland unions took up the stolen wages issue in the early 2000s and the matter remains to be concluded satisfactorily. Valerie Cooms writes about how the labour of two generations of her family was actively exploited under the Queensland Government's 'Protection Policy'. It is a poignant and gripping story.

We are also pleased to publish the article by India Anderson on Green Bans in

Queensland in the 1970s. This is the second article from student scholars at the Centre for the Government of Queensland at the University of Queensland. Vince Englart is one of the protagonists in India Anderson's article. He is also the author of the story about how the sundial in the Brisbane Botanic Gardens came to tell the correct time — thanks to a BLF member and not an architect. We have two obituaries; David Peetz reflects on his time with Gough Whitlam and we reprint a tribute to Terry Hampson a stalwart of the ALP left and of the battle to stop sand mining on Fraser Island.



Sketch of T. J. Ryan (unidentified artist) (SLQ 106296)

BLHA

President's Column

Greg Mallory

The Association held two events towards the end of 2014. In October member Bob Russell organised a labour history tour of Toowong Cemetery. The tour was held in conjunction with the Friends of Toowong Cemetery who provided the guide who had an extensive knowledge of the graves that were visited. The tour concentrated mainly on Labor Party figures who had achieved high office such as Premier or a State Cabinet positions. The day was extremely successful and was well attended. It finished with an excellent morning tea provided by the Friends of the Toowong Cemetery. In November we held our yearly symposium which had the theme *War and the Labour Movement*. The symposium had four papers given by Mark Cryle, Carol Corless, Sigrid McCausland and myself. The symposium was well attended and provided good opportunity for general discussion.

Ross Gwyther has continued his work on the project *Queensland Comrades Speaks*. This project is funded by the SEARCH Foundation and is based

on a series of interviews of labour movement activists who were active in the Communist Party in the 40s and 50s. Ross has conducted 20 interviews to date and all have been transcribed. After final editing and confirmation by the interviewees these will be uploaded to a website page which is part of the BLHA website. There are three or four more interviews planned.

I recently attended the National Labour History Conference in Melbourne run by the Melbourne Branch. It was a highly successful conference and was held at Queen's College at the University of Melbourne. The theme of the conference was *Fighting Against War: Peace Activism in the Labour Movement*. There were over 70 papers presented and keynote addresses given by Marilyn Lake, Bruce Scates and Verity Burgmann. The conference was attended by 140 delegates. The Federal Executive met at the conference and the Brisbane branch was given the go ahead to hold the National Conference in 2017. This is subject to the BLHA Executive authorizing the proposal

and the branch making a suitable submission to the Federal Executive. The BLHA Executive has given the go-ahead for this and I have been authorized to set up a committee to firstly write a submission to the Federal Executive and secondly organize the conference. If members wish to help in some way please contact me or our secretary.

In the *President's Column* in the September Journal I made reference to some labour history papers that have been published in the *Queensland Speaks* website which is set up by the Centre for the Government of Queensland at the University of Queensland. One of these papers on Green Bans in Brisbane is published in this edition of the journal. I am having discussions with these students in order to run a seminar so that these students could present these papers. The papers cover various topics relevant to labour history in Queensland, they include papers on green bans in Brisbane, a biography on Jack Egerton, papers on the Queensland Teachers Union, and the Queensland Nurses Union and a paper on Alex Macdonald and his relationship with the student movement. This latter paper was published in an earlier journal. We hope to run this seminar in the next few months.

The Executive is discussing a suitable topic and speaker for the annual Alex Macdonald Lecture. This will be held

in mid-May at our usual place at the Trades and Labour Council Building. Another event that members should be made aware of is the Brisbane launch of the documentary *Pig-iron Bob*. This film documents the 1938 Dalfram dispute in which wharfies led by Ted Roach refused to load pig-iron to Japan. The film has been made by Wollongong documentary maker Sandra Pires. Members will be informed when and where the launch will take place.

In conclusion I would like to thank John Spreckley and Jason Stein for their work for the Association, who have stepped down from their positions of Vice-President and Treasurer. John and Jason have worked extremely hard for the Association over the years and wish them well in the future. I hope that both will remain active members of the Association. I would like to congratulate Bob Russell who takes on the Vice-President's position and Phil Griffiths who takes on the Treasurer's position.

Federal President's Column

Nikola Balnave

I am very pleased to contribute a brief report to the Queensland Journal of Labour History. There are probably two main things to comment on — the Review and the 2014 Biennial Conference. The five-person Review Committee of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History has begun its review of the society's affairs. Following a call for submissions in 2014, the committee has received a number of valuable and thought-provoking contributions by branches and individual members and welcomes further input. An interim report was presented to the federal executive at the February National Labour History Conference and a final report with formal recommendations will be tabled at the 2015 AGM in November. The review explores the following questions:

1. How relevant are the current stated aims (<http://asslh.org.au/federal/about/>) of the ASSLH to its future as an organisation and are any changes needed?
2. Is the organisation's current name appropriate to its goals as an organisation?
3. Is a more rigorous and better coordinated approach to social media required?
4. How can the ASSLH cooperate with like-minded organisations (unions, think-tanks, museums, political parties, progressive organisations such as the Sydney Alliance and the Fabians, progressive faith groups and bookshops) in achieving its goals?
5. How can the society make better use of its international affiliations and forge new and more meaningful relationships with overseas organisations?
6. How often should the ASSLH run its national conference? Should it always be run as a separate conference, or could the ASSLH run its conference as part of the Australian Historical Association's annual conference?
7. What is the role of the ASSLH's branches, are they properly resourced, and how should the

- relationship between the branches and the national organisation work?
8. What steps should the ASSLH take to ensure succession planning and attracting young scholars and activists to the Society?
 9. How can the ASSLH promote the teaching and research of labour history in schools and universities, as well as its profile in the public culture generally?
 10. What is *Labour History*'s purpose and who is its audience? How 'international' should *Labour History* be? What is the best 'business model' for its future?

Please forward submissions to the ASSLH Federal Secretary, Nick Dyrenfurth <nick.dyrenfurth@monash.edu.au>

The 14th Biennial Labour History Conference was held from 11-13 February in Melbourne this year, and I'm sure those who attended would agree that it goes down in history as one of our best. The papers were outstanding, at times controversial, but always engaging. The social events were terrific and the organising efforts of the Branch, in particular the tireless work of Julie Kimber and Phillip Deery, were next to none. Julie and Phillip have produced an edited collection of some of the presented papers based on the theme of the conference — *Fighting Against War: Peace Activism in the Twentieth Century*, published by Leftbank Press. For information on how to purchase a hardcopy of the

publication, or an ebook version, please contact Julie Kimber <jkimber@swin.edu.au>.

I would finish this report by again congratulating and thanking members of BLHA for their contribution and commitment to labour history as a field of study, and as a community.

In Memorium

Vale Terry Hampson AM



Terence John (Terry) Hampson died while on holiday in Cambodia on 22 September 2014. At various times, Terry was president, secretary, coordinator or treasurer of the Queensland branch of the Fabians. At the time of his death, he was still the only Life Member of the Fabians in Queensland.

“The Fabians are more fun than the party these days.” This was the greeting Terry gave a friend a few years

ago upon her return after eight years overseas.

Terry was a Fabian to the core: Fabian first and Labor second. The Labor Party was never far enough to the Left for him.

In 2005, on the occasion of his father’s ALP Life Membership Award, Terry’s son Greg said: He’s a Fabian Socialist first. Regardless of whether the Labor Party existed or not, it’s the philosophy of the Fabians that he holds most strongly to. The Labor Party simply best represented the values he held. In short, politics has provided him with a platform to simply be himself.

This was indeed a very telling comment. Terry needed to find a practical outlet for who he was. His activities have been an embodiment of the values that were within him.

During the research for his biography, Terry chronicled the initiatives that created the Socialist Left faction in the Queensland Labor Party in 1979, largely triggered by the passions that simmered after the party’s divisive Rockhampton conference. “There was no organised Left in the Labor Party at

that time, apart from a loose association of like-minded people,” he said. “The Fabians *were* the Left.” He used to laugh that former conservative premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, talked about “Fabian Socialists” as if they were a secret society. In that year, members of the Fabians and fellow-travellers met at the old Trades Hall and the Socialist Left was born in Queensland

Terry saw enormous value for the Labor Party in the fact that membership of the Fabians now includes representatives of party factions other than the Left. He also insisted that the party benefits greatly from access via Fabian members to people *outside* the party, for information and views.

He was persuaded that the very reason some people have used to criticize the Fabians - that they are not seen as achieving very much in practical terms - is the very reason that the society has such vital importance. He emphasised the centrality of research, analysis, reflection, exchange of ideas and learning, seeing this intellectual activity as an essential precursor to policy and program development. He was both a Big Picture and Small Picture person: a man who did “joined-up” thinking.

One facet of his immersion in the world of ideas that he inhabited was his insatiable thirst to learn, his enjoyment of and respect for history and the messages it reveals, alongside

an enormous regard for the importance of retaining historical records. He felt honoured to be asked to try to gather whatever material was available on the history of the Fabians in Queensland to mark 2014 as the 130th anniversary of the Fabian Society.

Two threads dominated Terry’s life: his determination to advance democracy and social and economic justice for all, and his commitment to environmental protection. He sought the first through involvement in the Australian Labor Party and used that involvement to gain striking achievements for the environment through his intense political liaisons within the party.

Without his legendary partnership with John Sinclair, which began during the Bjelke-Petersen era, when environmentalists were scoffed at and branded as Communists, it is unlikely that Fraser Island would have gained World Heritage Listing and National Park status when it did. Sinclair was the front man; Terry was the indispensable nuts-and-bolts strategist and tactician, with his web of political contacts.

He joined the Labor Party in 1965 and became branch secretary at his first meeting. His first project was to help organise a meeting in Brisbane with Aboriginal leader Charlie Perkins, who had recently undertaken the “Freedom Ride”, a bus tour of western and coastal New South Wales towns, in order to protest against discrimination

against Aborigines in those areas and to highlight the appalling state of Aboriginal health, education and housing.

During the years that followed, Terry held almost every role in his local ALP branch and other party entities. He was involved in the Reform movement during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Within the Queensland organisational wing of the party, he held (sequentially) the roles of Administrative Officer, Assistant State Secretary and then State Secretary from 1988 to 1991. During that time, he managed the campaign which ushered in Jim Soorley as Lord Mayor of Brisbane City Council.

Terry was a passionate advocate for democratic functioning within the party, for the rights of ordinary members to have their voices heard on policy and selection of representatives, as well as encouraging participation by women and recognition of their contribution. Many people in politics polarise; Terry always sought to unify.

In the ten years from 1994 to 2004, he was Councillor for the ward of Marchant in the Brisbane City Council, where he became respected throughout the area and beyond, for his genuine involvement in gaining benefits for the community. Together with the Lord Mayor, he worked to improve the environmental sustainability of Brisbane. He retired from paid

employment in 2004, but he remained active and in forward gear to the end.

In his final year of life, Terry still actively participated in discussions on anti-nuclear policy, and was a key leader in establishment of the Senator George Georges Peace and Nuclear Disarmament Scholarship within the School of Political Science at the University of Queensland.

Among many tributes, Terry was honoured with an Order of Australia, an Australian Centenary Medal and was named a Queensland Champion of Conservation.

Terry and his wife, Ann, were “The Terry and Ann Machine”, working as a team with unwavering determination, to make things happen to achieve the objectives they held dear. An extraordinarily selfless mentor, Terry drew people into active involvement in many organisations, perceived talents in others and helped them to recognise and develop their capacities. He was a loyal and generous friend and comrade, forgiving, considerate, optimistic, perceptive, dogged, psychologically tough, resilient, analytical, wise - and fun to be with.

Terry was a true “jigsaw man”, with broad interests: Indigenous justice and reconciliation, refugees, the value of multiculturalism, sport (especially tennis), music (especially Celtic), reading and travel.

The Hampsons travelled the world on many occasions, including when they received an invitation for a VIP trip to Russia just after the election of the Labor government in Queensland in December 1989 - a victory for which Terry, as State Secretary, had worked so hard. The trip was offered as a reward for those efforts.

Terry was not a physically strong man; he had endured many health problems, including four bouts of heart surgery - the most recent in November last year. On the day he died, he had risen with great excitement at 4:30 am to begin a journey to the temples of Angkor Wat, in order to view the site at sunrise. He relished the tour and talked non-stop about it during lunch. The scheduled afternoon outing took him into extreme heat, which he found exhausting and debilitating. While travelling on the coach from one site of interest towards another, he died suddenly with a quiet sigh.

Terry Hampson was a man of small stature, but he made an enormous impact and he leaves a huge hole in the lives of his family and friends. The world is poorer for his departure.

If you would like to be notified about publication of Terry's biography, please contact Fran Ross at franpross@bigpond.com

This obituary reproduced from *The Fabians* Newsletter.

Film Review

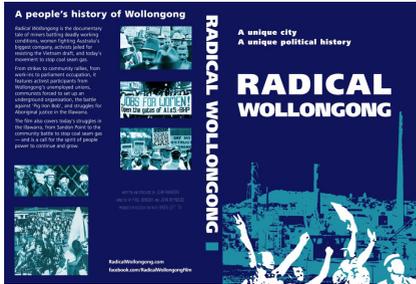
Radical Wollongong

Bob Russell

Instead of undertaking an historical monograph along the lines of the *Radical Brisbane*, labour historians in the Wollongong area have set their sights upon producing a documentary on that city's unacknowledged past. The result has been a lively and extremely informative film. *Radical Wollongong* was screened at the BLHA's Annual General Meeting late last year. The film contains fabulous historical film footage, dating back to the 19th century and the region's coal mining boom, as well as a fantastic soundtrack. It has been professionally produced and narrated, while remaining assiduously non-sectarian.

The radical Wollongong story begins with the Illawara's coal mining exploits. Historical film footage briefly documents the onerous, unsafe working conditions associated with the industry. One mining 'accident' alone claimed 96 lives! Very fertile ground for union organizing indeed, which the film documents in some detail. In fact Wollongong was a hotbed of IWW activity around both coal mining and latterly anti-war resistance.

World War 1 was only the beginning of the city's suffering. At the height of the Great Depression, one-third



of the city's work force was out of work. This level of economic hardship also spawned a significant resistance movement. The Unemployed Workers Association of Wollongong had an amazing 68,000 members at the height of the depression, while the Communist Party grew from 4000 to 23,000 members between 1939 and 1945.

Wollongong was the site of the famous Dalfrom dispute in 1937 and this whole episode is explored in considerable detail in the film. In this early example of social unionism, workers placed a ban on pig iron exports to Japan in protest at that country's rapacious actions in China. Robert Menzies responded with his Transport Workers Act, which sought to de-unionize the docks through a system of individual licensing — (sound familiar?). Militant solidarity prevailed — the export trade, which was fuelling Japan's war machine, was halted and a system of individual labour contracts on the docks went nowhere.

The film also documents in detail that it was not only conservative governments that could act against the working class. At the end of World War 2, miners in the region demanded the nationalization of the industry. This militancy culminated in a 13 week strike in 1949 for a 35 hour working week in the coalmines. This time it was a Labor government, under Ben Chifley, that sent in the troops and conducted the arrests of the union leadership, beginning with the leader of the Dalfrom dispute, Ted Roach.

Radical Wollongong deals not only with the history of trade unionism but more widely with social protest, which became more prevalent during the cold war years and its aftermath. The city hosted an active peace movement during the 1950s, which only grew with the introduction of conscription in 1965. Contemporary film footage of anti-war protesters blocking trains with Viet Nam war conscripts and support strikes organized by the MUA give viewers a sense of the intensity of the anti-war movement in the city. And to its credit, the film also examines support for the Aboriginal population in the region and efforts to address injustices both past and present, including the campaign to stop development at Sandon Point, a site of immense significance to the local community.

Like many primary industry towns, Wollongong has been on the receiving

end of globalization and its so-called 'discontents'. Steel mills that used to employ 25000 workers now provide jobs to 2000, while unemployment has again topped 20 per cent. This has again given rise to an out of work movement that started in the late 1970s. Importantly, the film documents how de-industrialization and the unemployment that goes with it has not led to a narrowing of focus or a search for innocent scapegoats. Rather, as employment was shrinking, activists raised the problem of female unemployment and an utter lack of opportunity for women in the Wollongong economy. This led to the formation of 'Steel Women' and their long and ultimately successful campaign against systemic gender discrimination at BHP. Also, the film

makes clear that it has not been a question of 'jobs at any price'. Rather, Wollongong has also been at front of a strong environmental movement that has stopped coal seam gas exploration — fracking — in its tracks.

Radical Wollongong both documents and explores the rich social history of the region. It sets significant local events within a context of duplicitous national politics. It examines how immediate workplace struggles continue to morph into much broader movements of social protest in civil society. This is a film that will appeal equally to older generations, boomers and generation x/y, which is quite an achievement. Five Stars ***** without doubt!

Interview with Claire Moore, Senator for Queensland

**Conducted January 2015
by Howard Guille and Ross
Gwyther**

How did you get into the Labor Movement?

I'm not from a Labor Party family. Mum and Dad were both community activists, Dad had a car accident and was then mainly active in the Church. However, Mum was in everything, — Church, school, tennis, community everything. They were community workers, but not party political.

I'm pretty sure Mum voted Labor, because she was a great fan of Jack Duggan in Toowoomba. Dad — I'd reckon DLP, because of the classic, Catholic, process. The Nats thought he was one of them because he was a cattle buyer but he never was even though Tom McVeigh used to haunt the place.

When I started work, it was just natural you'd go to the Union. I got involved in the Union (then called the Australian Clerical Officers Association) as soon as I started work in the Public Service at the beginning of the 1980s. The Public Service was a really good place to be in the Union in those



days. Women, affirmative action and equity issues were on the union's agenda and the Australian Public Service was progressive and effective. It was an international leader with proposed legislation on equity, EEO, occupational health and safety and industrial democracy.

What did you do in the union?

I got involved a lot in the Union in my workplace, and then went through being Delegate, going on to the Queensland Branch Executive and being the Queensland Vice-President. In those days, everything involved the public service working in consultation with the Union. I was involved in a lot of that, so it was a great time to be active.



Labour Day at with CPSU Secretary Bill Markwell

I started going along to the delegates meeting of the Trades and Labour Council. Roger Omdahl, the then Queensland Secretary of the union, was very active in the Council. We had quotas in the union to get women involved. I was a TLC Conference Delegate and then I was a Council Delegate. This is long before I was a full-time elected official.

We would turn up to these meetings because we were public servants and goodie-two-shoes. Other people didn't. I remember I didn't say much for a while, and the President, Harry Hauenschild, was convinced that I was a teacher, — because women could be teachers. He'd say, '*Let the little girl from the Teachers say something*' — and that was me. There weren't very many women who would attend. I think there were a couple of nurses, but most of the other people at those meetings were blokes from different unions.

It was a good training experience. I got to know a lot of people there. I got matey with people like Mary Kelly, from the Teachers Union. She's always been a hero of mine. Bernadette Callaghan from the Clerks. These were great women. I went to Townsville in my public service job and I was the Queensland Vice-President of the Union by then and a Regional Delegate. So I got involved with the Townsville TLC, which was another good group.

When did you become the Queensland Secretary?

In 1995; Roger Omdahl was the long-term incumbent. Phil Statham was the Assistant Secretary, and everyone thought that Phil would run against Roger; I supported Phil because he'd been very good to me in my industrial training and development. Over a cup of tea in Townsville, Phil came up with the strategy that the best way to defeat Roger and his team, was to run a woman. The timing was right. It was a very clever and unselfish suggestion from Phil, who everyone thought was going to be the Secretary.

It had never crossed my mind to run for a full time union office. I was very active in the Union, but I always saw myself as a worker in the Public Service who was active in the Union, as opposed to being a Union Official. But Phil was very persuasive about why it was important and why it was time for a woman to be secretary.

We ran a very small campaign but it was still expensive. There were a lot of members in those days and we were running as an outsider team with about 15 really strong supporters. We had to raise money, do mail-outs, printing, enveloping and all those things. I also remember that the weather was very hot.

We had a ticket — most of whom are now dead- a lot of people died too young. We didn't think we would win, but we took the full ticket and that went against the National Union officials who were strongly supporting the incumbent. Roger and I are now good mates and we get on quite well. We didn't then. We still laugh about the fact that we thought the world was going to end in '95.

It was quite a vicious election. There was commentary around the place that I was DLP and the groupers were trying to take over the Union. On the other side, it was said we were International Socialists; it was just a bevy of misinformation and dirty politics. You get some idea of how vicious it was when the National Secretary, Peter Robson, didn't speak to me for 12 months after the election and, at a farewell function for Roger, talked about the 'tragedy' of the Queensland election results.

What was it like being union secretary?
The first period was a tough time for our Union, because Howard came in

'96. His first attack was on the public sector — just as Newman has done in Queensland. When conservative governments come in, they attack the Public Service. Howard privatised a lot of stuff and stripped the public sector. We lost payroll deductions and even though we knew how to handle it because 19 months earlier Kennett had come into Victoria, it was a huge financial blow. We dropped a third of our members in Queensland and that meant having to drop union staff. It was a very tough time.

We got through, and I really enjoyed working in the Union. It was a good place to be, but for the whole time that I was the Secretary of the Union, the Queensland Branch was on the outer from the Feds. It's a tough way to operate, when you've got a federated Union and the national leadership of the Union did not support you at any time.

Was it a federated union, or centrally controlled?

When I started it was a federated union. Central control started just as I left. The CPSU is now used as a model about how you can have a central organisation with state branches that are not elected. If any union should do that, its ours, because our employment is with the federal public sector.

However, I am not convinced it's the best way to go for a lot of unions, because it actually takes away the

electoral responsibility of your state branch. When we were having State elections, you had to win the support of members in Queensland to get elected. The current State Secretary is an office-bearer but he is not an elected office-bearer. He is an appointee from the National Office; a kind of a CEO of a regional area. That's no reflection on Bill Markwell of course.

Did the CPSU pursue its members into the privatised entities?

We did but with mixed results. We had a big loss with the demise of the Commonwealth Employment Service that was also a big loss for the community in many ways.

Our core employment areas were Defence, Telstra (which was huge), Social Security (which was what Centrelink was when I was working for it) and the CES. The CES and Social Security were both highly unionised, highly industrialised and active. The CES was the breeding ground of a lot of the CPSU leadership.

Howard went after them, and introduced that awful Job Network, which I think has proven to be not particularly effective. The CES was destroyed by regulation — there was never legislation. It was very cleverly done by Howard, and our CPSU leadership was quite devastated by the process. We lost thousands of members and people lost their jobs in the union. We felt we'd failed, but I genuinely

don't think there was anything we could have done — but we felt we'd failed.

Then we actually went strongly into trying to unionise the Job Network which took us, for one of the first times, into coverage disputes with other Unions. We had had a very discrete coverage but when we went in to recruit in areas of the Job Network it brought us into conflict with the Clerks, and we'd never been in that situation before.

You would have been one of the first woman to have been an officer of the TLC?

The CPSU had a tradition of being involved actively in the Trades and Labour Council. The breakthrough of accepting Unions like the CPSU, NTEU and the like into the TLC had come a bit before before that. Earlier, they did not always like these kinds of "Sheila" Unions, public servants, academics and clerks — they weren't really unionists. There's still a little bit of that, but Roger had been very active in some of the politics of the TLC, so from the time I was the leader of the Union and part of the leadership team in the Union, we took the Union very actively into every element of the TLC.

I would have been very early. I don't know whether Jenny Eastwood who went from our Union to the QPSU, was an office-bearer at the TLC or Janice Mayes from the Clerks.

It was a good time to be at the TLC. I think there was a willingness to take on ideas around that table. In some areas, we had to push things through. One of the things I was most proud of was pushing the gay and lesbian issues because that really shocked the TLC leadership. They really didn't know how to handle it at all, and the CPSU had the first gay and lesbian Caucus, and we pushed it through that we actually had a gay and lesbian face at the TLC, and on the May Day march. I was very proud that that happened. I'm not quite sure whether it was embraced or whether they thought if they didn't embrace it, it would look bad, but nonetheless we got it.

The Women's Committee was very strong when I was there. It was an active committee and people like Katie Steenstrup were so involved. We got the Anna Stewart Project started and it is still going from strength to strength. Likewise, the Emma Miller Dinner and awards.



Emma Miller Dinner 2007

Emma Miller has been going for what—15 years?

About that— of all the things I've been involved in, getting the Emma Miller Dinner going and the awards for women in the Trades Union Movement is the best. The joy that it gives women — I go to the functions and I'm just so overwhelmed by the pleasure of the women who are actually celebrated by having their work acknowledged.

Also, the way the Unions have engaged. There are still a couple of standouts that really haven't jumped on board, but most Queensland Unions have been involved with the Emma Miller awards, and over a hundred women have received awards.

There ought to be an archive of all the women who got awards. We used to do lovely little brochures about their life and background, and it would be nice to have all that together. A bunch of those women is no longer with us, and I think it would be a nice memoriam. For example, the State Public Sector Union had a bit of a history of thinking all this feminist stuff is not needed; real women don't need such stuff. One person who felt it most strongly was Pat, their Vice-President, a feisty, strong woman. The union eventually nominated her for an Emma Miller award, and she cried and cried and cried. My understanding is that she had her Emma Miller pin with her when she was buried — it meant so much to her.

I think it is a mistake that they don't let the women make speeches any more at the dinner. It's a real loss, because some of the speeches were extraordinary. Some of the women had never talked about what their Union meant to them before, and they'd get up and talk about that and why they all continued doing it. To me, that's our lifeblood and I just learnt so much about so many people. On top of that, while I have no skills in haberdashery, I've learnt to make hatpins. Katie and I used to make them for years and years, and they are beautiful and getting more and more elaborate. Women love them.

So starting that off that was a great thing, and I really congratulate the Queensland Council of Unions for maintaining it. I think now it's established, it's never going to go. It's like May Day.

How did the display on Emma get set up in the current TLC building?

I was lucky enough when I was working in the Public Service to be at the Townsville launch of *Proud to be a Rebel* written by Pam Young. Margaret Whitlam wrote the Foreword with Margaret Reynolds. It was actually nurtured by Reynolds, and she got Whitlam involved. Emma had been forgotten; Pam told how she'd got the idea to write the book when she saw the bust of Emma pushed away and forgotten into a corner at the old Trades and Labour Hall. Most people didn't know who it was and Pam (bless her!)

decided to find out and wrote the book which I now quote everywhere.

Dawson Petie when he was secretary decided to create the little room at the QCU. The bust is a work of art, certainly worth a lot of money. It was paid for by State-wide subscription- people put money in to have this beautiful bust made. When the space was dedicated, we had a lovely little function with Pam and some of Emma's family there. One sad thing with Emma is that over the years the family had thrown away her memorabilia, not knowing the value of what they were throwing away. They salvaged a little bit, but we had a fabulous little function and the QCU has maintained that room.

Back in the days of Art and Working Life projects, in the late '80s/early '90s, we commissioned the beautiful fabric sculpture — a triptych. It's a beautiful thing in the space along with the bust and some copies of the book. Another tragedy is that the book is out of print. I've written many letters to the University of Queensland Press to say, 'Please can you re-print it?' and most times I don't even get a response. We should have been promoting the book in 2012, the centenary of the general strike, because that was the centenary of Emma actually using the hatpin.

How did you get into the ALP?

A very funny story. The first time I tried to be a member of the ALP was in Toowoomba and I went along to the

Trades and Labour Council building which is the heart of the ALP up there. I was very young, a teenager, and they were all blokes who thought I was from the café to bring the tea. They didn't realise what I was there for and I was so shy that I ran away. I wanted to become a member of the Party, and they thought I was bringing the tea.

I didn't join; I worked on every Labor Party campaign for years and I never joined. I gave money, went to fund-raisers, worked on functions, worked on stands, worked on election day. I worked in the New Farm Branch for years. I worked in the Townsville Branch for years on their campaigns. I finally formally joined when I came back to Brisbane when I was in the CPSU. I joined via Helen Abrahams, the Brisbane City Councillor.

So you were the CPSU Secretary when you joined the ALP?

When I formally joined, yes, but when I think of all the years of work I'd done for the Party, I don't know how it happened. All these years we did training in the Union about the first thing you do in almost any situation is ask. But I never did. I think what happened a number of times was that I went along and they were all blokes, and I just felt so out of it and ran away. The first time was in Toowoomba and then at the Uni of Queensland.

But wasn't it still all blokes in '96/'97?
Yes, but it was Helen Abrahams' Branch; the meeting I went to was in Paddington where she had an office. It was just lovely, and that's when I finally put the paperwork in and joined the Kelvin Grove Branch. After being with the KGB for a while — because I just loved it, being with the KGB, it cracked me up — I was living in New Farm and had been for a long time and I decided it was best to be in the local Branch.

When I first went to the New Farm Branch, I was looked at askance because there was a genuine fear from some of the members who felt it was part of a Left stack. They thought the Left was trying to stamp out the well-known Old Guard stronghold of the New Farm Branch. It was just so funny, I couldn't believe it. I've been a member of the New Farm Branch ever since. I actually forget which year I moved to the New Farm Branch. It was before 2001 because I was in the New Farm Branch when elected to the Senate. Once again, it actually shows a little bit about the Party — instead of embracing people, it was like, 'Why are you here?'

When did you get involved in Emily's List

I've been involved with Emily's List from the start. Emily is 18 this year (2015), so she formally gets to vote. Unlike the blokes, Joan Curnow, who I got to know very well, was the epitome

of welcome. Joan's absolute strength is her complete support and welcome. She wants to know you.

In 1995, I went as Secretary of the CPSU, to the Women, Power and Politics Conference in Adelaide. It was to celebrate the centenary of suffrage in South Australia. It was a brilliant Conference with Glenda Jackson and a number of international speakers talking about women in politics. Joan was there as a keynote speaker. I think the idea of Emily's List was born in the discussion groups around that Conference. The year after, I went to the National Labor Women's Conference in Perth with Molly Robson. Because she and Joan were so close, Molly was the driving force for getting Emily's List started in Queensland. We formally established Emily's List at a meeting in Carmen Lawrence's office and I was one of the foundation members. It was quite humbling to be part of such a group.

A lot of my effort since has been getting and supporting women candidates. We have had resistance in Queensland and it was quite an issue for the Right. However, we had Linda Lavarch, who was always marvellous, and a very active member of Emily's List even though she was strongly supported by the Right.

When did you get elected to the Senate?

At the State Conference in 1996, there was controversy about getting a

woman on the Senate ticket and then even more controversy about pre-selection with Brenda Gibbs appointed after a fight with Bernadette Callaghan. It was a very bad time.

We were doing pre-selections again in 2000. The split was still on in the Left. It wasn't as strong as it had been but we still had the separate Metalworker group (Labor Left) and the Misso group (Socialist Left). I was with Labor Left. At first, the Senate ticket had John Hogg No. 1, Brenda Gibbs No. 2 and they needed someone from our side for No. 3, which was the unwinnable seat.

We didn't want a repeat of the furore of the previous time where trying to get a woman elected was the important thing. This time we wanted to make sure of the seat. The handshakes were done and they stuck me on it. It caused great angst in my Union because I didn't know that Wendy Caird, the National Secretary, was trying to get pre-selection for the Senate in New South Wales. I was a bit stressed about that but it was fine because it was No 3 and unwinnable.

Then there was a big blow-up in the Party, of which I had no part, and No. 3 became winnable No. 2. Suddenly, nothing to do with me and not my plan at all, I was No. 2, which was winnable. This all happened three days out from the Conference, and the night before the Conference, I said, "It's different now. This has to go back to the Left,

Laura Fraser Hardy
Labor Candidate for Bonner

Fiona McNamara
Labor Candidate for Brisbane

EMILY's List Queensland
invites you to our
Annual Valentines Day Breakfast!

Hosted by
Kerry Rae and Amanda Richards
with Guest Speakers
Fiona McNamara
And
Laura Fraser Hardy

When: 7:15 am for a 7:30am start, Thursday 14 February 2013
Where: Level 2, TLC Building, 16 Peel Street, South Brisbane.
Cost: \$30/\$25 Concession. We will accept cash, credit card, or cheque.
Payment will be accepted at the door or (especially for bookings over 5 people) preferably with the attached credit card form.
RSVP: Please email qldemilys@gmail.com, or call Meredith on 0401 840 663 before Monday 11 February 2013. Please attached your payment form to your RSVP.

♥♥ *Inspiring Women inspiring Women* ♥♥

Emma Miller Function 2013

because we're talking about a winnable position". So we had to have another pre-selection in our part of the Left to see who would get No. 2.

We had the meeting, it got a bit personal but in the end I got very strong support in my own group to be No. 2 on the ticket. Then of course, we had to go to State Conference, where you had to make a speech to State Conference to justify your pre-selection, even though most times the Conference vote was cosmetic because all the deals were done and only the pre-selected candidates spoke.

However, this time it was very contentious and nasty. There were four candidates not three because Joan

Budd, from the AWU, decided to put her hand up just to be difficult. John Hogg spoke, Brenda Gibbs spoke, Joan Budd spoke, and then I spoke.

It was 4.00 o'clock at the Crest, packed out. John made a speech during which he pointed out every committee he'd ever served on. Brenda made a speech that talked about the outrageous betrayal; who was this person who was going to strip away her livelihood. Joan Budd made almost the same speech; who was this person coming from nowhere who was going to strip away the livelihood of a longstanding woman party member.

I got up and all I can remember was that there were all these people shouting, and I can still see their faces saying, 'Why don't you get the Union to affiliate? Who do you think you are?' The speech said something along the lines of, 'I'm happy to serve the people of Queensland, and whilst the people in this room are important to determine who their Labor candidate will be, the most important thing is to serve the people in Queensland and that you actually get their trust and support, and I will work hard. I have been a public servant.' It was a very short speech. There was booing and cheering, quite extraordinary, and it was all done.

It was all cosmetic because the deal had been signed. The reason I got it was that the Old Guard stuck with me. There'd been a fall-out between



Presiding at the Senate

the Old Guard and the AWU. Brenda was then being supported by the AWU and the Old Guard actually said, ‘We will not support Brenda in the Senate if you don’t give up something.’ And the AWU dismissed them, treated them without respect so the Old Guard said, ‘Well, we’ll be supporting the Labor Left’ — not me, but the Labor Left.

It just happened to be me in the spot. I remember when the election was done, and Peter Shooter, the Left Organiser, was letting me know how it was going, Di Farmer, the Organiser for the Old Guard, walked up to me and she said, ‘Claire, the vote’s yours’. Then I had to be sure that our own Left was sticking,

because that could have been trouble — but they did, and we got the numbers.

Can we go forward to internal democracy in the ALP now?

I am a firm believer that we should have openness in our Party. Sitting Members should not be unopposed, and I think that’s one of our problems. I understand people who say that that shouldn’t happen, but we even go as far in some parts that if you challenge a sitting Member you don’t actually have much hope of getting there yourself.

Do you think it should be opened up further?

This is a really sensitive issue to people who have held on to positions for a long time. My view is that the only way that we can grow is to have people feel as though they’re worthy and engaged with the Party. One of the issues I have talked about for years is how to make Branch people feel as though they’re really valued. I think many people don’t feel that they’re valued in the Party. They are seen only as election workers or donors.

One way is to give them the option, because you can never force anyone to be involved, but give them the option to be involved in decisions and to have more to do than just sit around at a Branch meeting reading previous minutes and that kind of thing.

I think the proof of that was the engagement of people in the Party

leadership ballot in 2013. No one knew how it was going to go. Kevin felt really strongly about having the choice of Leader of the Party subject to Branch engagement and it was his legacy. I think the principle is now entrenched. However, I think the model will continue to be tweaked.

What about the unions and the party

I don't think the Labor Party will ever be separated from the Unions. We are the party of the unions. We are the party of the worker and I have the Barcardine camp up on my wall to remind us of where we are from. I don't think you can represent labour unless you are supported by labour.

However, the idea that a very small number can determine who will represent this Party at any level is wrong. It just can't work. I don't think it leads to the best decisions and it devalues the people both in unions and in the wider community who want to be part of the Labor Party. I think the days of relying on the patronage of one or two people to get selected are gone.



I was thrilled that there will be a members' vote in Queensland to select the Senate candidates. Most people don't know their Senators. When you think of the importance of the job, it shouldn't just be left to the situation where a decision about who gets to be the Senators may be made by 10 or 11 people because the factions control the numbers at the Conference.

Getting the right balance between the Branch vote and the influence of the Unions is difficult. We have the Electoral College process in Queensland and there are variations across all the States. In any circumstance where one of those sides is dominant, you've got to ask why. The situation of someone winning a Branch vote overwhelmingly and then getting knocked off by the College is not right. Then if you had someone who wins the College vote by a large amount but is not palatable to the Branches, that's not right either.

I think we're going to have to continue our discussion and work through a lot of baggage because people are suspicious about the motives of the desire for change. Certainly, I know it was a difficult call around the leadership of the Caucuses at both State and Federal level. There's always an argument that changing the rules is just a try-on to get rid of the current leader.

What about getting more women in politics — are quotas needed?

If we hadn't introduced the quotas in the ALP, we would not have had change. We had policy for years and years, but there was no rule that said it had to be done. When we got the legendary vote for the 33% requirement, it meant that those that did not do it had to go back to the process and do it again.

Then we got it up to 40/40/20. Now there's a move on, certainly in the women's part of the Party, to look at 50/50. That would let us say we've now reached maturity and that there's equity in our Party. We are shamelessly quoting Gough Whitlam and one of his major statements about making sure that this Party is for everyone. When he died, there was enormous interest in things he said. He was the first leader who actually talked about getting women into our Party machine, and said that we were not going to be a true Party until we did. Moreover, it was Margaret and Gough together, working as a partnership. That is a fitting place to end.

Postscript

The new ALP Government in Queensland elected in February 2015 has a majority of women in Cabinet and a woman leader and deputy leader. Many Emily's List candidates were elected.

'Whose Green Bans? The Builders' Labourers' Federation, the Trade Union Movement and Green Bans in Queensland in the 1970s'¹

India Anderson

Introduction

The New South Wales Builders' Labourers' Federation (BLF) was renowned nationally from 1971 onwards for its extensive 'green ban' movement that redefined the very nature of trade unionism as a force for environmental and societal justice.² The term 'green ban' refers to any work bans implemented by unions based on environmental, heritage or community based concerns. Though playing a prominent role in the initial implementation of such bans as early as 1969, the position of the Queensland branch of the BLF was complicated due to its executive's political disenchantment with the Jack Munday-led New South Wales branch. This led to other unions championing the movement in Queensland, the most prominent of which was the state branch of the Building Workers' Industrial Union (BWIU). In effect, the nature of unionism in Queensland, and therefore the role of the BLF,

depended largely upon the political standing of its southern counterparts. Counterintuitively, however, the New South Wales BLF tended to align itself mainly with the BWIU rather than its Queensland contemporaries. This paper will analyse the implementation and concentration of green bans in the early 1970s, investigating the ideological process by which the BWIU and Queensland BLF enacted these interdictions.

Trade Unionism in the Queensland Construction Industry and the BLF

The years predating the green bans in many ways paved the way for such a movement in Queensland. From the late 1950s onwards the Queensland economy, and the local construction industry, was invigorated by emerging coal projects and mineral resource extraction in northern Queensland.³ This was succeeded by significant expansion in the central business district of Brisbane coupled with the construction of high-rise buildings in what had become known as the 'Gold Coast'.⁴ Such projects and development would see the Queensland Building Trades Group (QBTG), made up of unions in the construction industry including the Queensland BLF and the BWIU among others, gaining a high degree of standing and influence.⁵ This was to be challenged by the rise to power of 'authoritarian'

Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen in 1968, eventually severely limiting the extent to which these unions could implement the bans.⁶

This paper ends its investigation in the mid-1970s, as the effective destruction of the New South Wales BLF by Federal Secretary Norman Gallagher in late 1974 ended the 'role model' for the bans, with Queensland's movement having all but halted by the end of that year.⁷ Although the Fraser Island green ban in 1975 spearheaded by the Queensland BLF did garner state-wide attention, the movement failed to realise the success of previous efforts.⁸

The BLF in Queensland had been a relatively left-wing union prior to the 1950s when its right faction began to take hold.⁹ Following this, a trend emerged that would see the BLF only put forward progressive motions if they reflected the stance of the Queensland Trades and Labour Council (TLC) and other similarly aligned right-wing unions.¹⁰ The executive minutes of the BLF's Queensland branch detailed support for nuclear disarmament, Indigenous rights and the anti-Vietnam War movement, motions which were uncontroversial among the trade union movement in the state, and as such were unanimously carried by the executive.¹¹ This is opposed to its New South Wales counterparts who, under Munday throughout the 1970s, held a more progressive stance, instead supporting women's liberation,

migrant issues and queer rights, ideals traditionally reserved for the radical left among the movement.¹² It is important to note that the Queensland branch exercised a degree of power during the Great Barrier Reef ban, which predated the NSW branch's movement, with the Queensland BLF State Secretary, Alfred James Delaney, speaking in a proposal to the Queensland TLC for the ban in 1969.¹³ However, the period leading up to the first green ban on the Barrier Reef in early 1970 saw tensions emerge within the Queensland BLF, as historian Humphrey McQueen noted: "although the Queenslanders still leant to the Right inside the Labor Party, and went to arbitration more often than

they took direct action, that mix had become more fluid".¹⁴

Brisbane and the Green Bans

Although the green ban movement was formally instigated in 1971 when the New South Wales branch of the BLF implemented its first green ban to preserve Kelly's Bush in Hunters Hill, Queensland experienced a lull following the Barrier Reef episode with no further major bans until 1973.¹⁵ This formalisation was followed by a flurry of activity in New South Wales, with the branch's actions eliciting both support and scepticism among



A Qld BLF float promoting the Referendum during the 1967 May Day parade. Photo courtesy of BLF documents in Fryer Library

the broader community, and most damagingly anger from the Federal Executive.¹⁶ Encouraged by the New South Wales BLF, the Queensland green ban movement was revitalised, with the years 1973 and 1974 marked by action centred in Brisbane that would preserve key heritage buildings and environmental spaces, as well as protect community interests. The bans gave a newfound primacy to the construction unions in conserving these spaces. As then State Secretary of the Queensland BLF, Vince Dobinson, noted, “sometimes the greenies wouldn’t even turn up.”¹⁷

The first major green ban site contained three historic buildings on George Street in Brisbane: the Mansions (1890), the Queensland Club (1884) and the Bellevue Hotel (1886).¹⁸ The state government purchased the Bellevue Hotel in 1973 for \$660 000 and protest emerged amid concerns that demolition was imminent.¹⁹ Union involvement in the Bellevue Hotel campaign was initiated by the Building Workers’ Industrial Union. State Secretary of the BWIU, Hugh Hamilton, authorised a demolition ban on the site in 1973, with a public meeting attended by 80 people held on site on November 7 that year.²⁰ Whilst the Queensland BLF joined the BWIU-led campaign, they would never lead it.²¹ The Country/National Party member for Murrumba, Des Frawley, declared that communist influences within the BWIU and other conservationist movements “seized

the opportunity to cause disruption” throughout the campaign.²² Following the BWIU’s involvement in the Bellevue protest, *the Bulletin* reported that,

Brisbane members of the Building Workers Industrial Union have lagged behind their Sydney counterparts in conservation matters. No Jack Munday had emerged to ginger the boys into ‘green ban’ action. But this all changed last week, and the union has chosen a highly suitable subject for its first protests, Brisbane’s historic Bellevue Hotel.²³

Though relatively small in scale compared to the New South Wales movement, Queensland green bans expanded during this period, with the BWIU enforcing such bans at Cooloola, on the Gold Coast and against sandmining on Fraser Island by 1974.²⁴



Crowds held back by Qld police during the demolition of the Bellevue Hotel in George St. on 20 April, 1979. Photo: R. Gwyther

Further bans by the BWIU included the A.M.P. building site following that company's reluctance to assist people after the 1974 Brisbane floods, and the threat of destruction of Her Majesty's theatre following the company's acquisition of that property.²⁵

Northern Freeway Ban

Among the most successful major green bans implemented in this period was the interdiction placed on the Northern Freeway proposal, which was planned to intersect Bowen Hills and Windsor in Brisbane's northern suburbs. Anti-freeway lobbies, including the Brisbane Freeway Protest and Compensation Committee established in September 1973, claimed that elderly, working class and economically disadvantaged groups would be badly affected by the Freeway and that it would further aggravate the housing crisis in Brisbane.²⁶ As the Freeway Protest group began to gain greater traction in the community, many unions added their voice to the struggle, resulting in a large campaign from 1973 to 1974.²⁷ Squatters were evicted from adjoining properties but freeway plans were eventually scrapped.²⁸

Acting as President of the QBTG, Vince Dobinson authorised a pamphlet confirming the demolition ban:

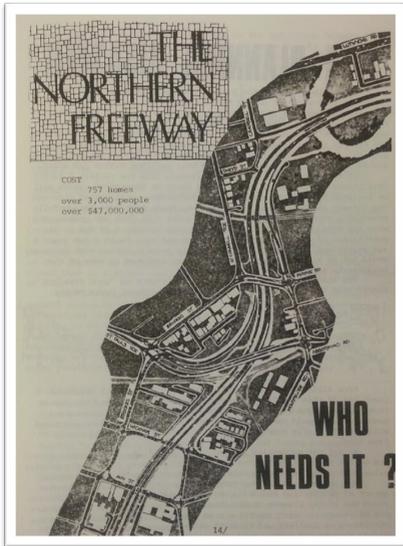
The Building Trades Group of Unions has placed a demolition ban on every house in the way of



Residents being evicted from 13 Markwell St. Bowen Hills". Photo courtesy of T. Reithmuller

the Northern Freeway. This ban will remain until such time as this group of unions is satisfied that the State Government will adequately compensate and rehouse the residents concerned. The ban has been imposed to prevent the State Government from continuing its brutal and inhuman policy towards people in houses in the way of the Freeway.²⁹

The most active member of the QBTG in the Northern Freeway green ban was again the state branch of the BWIU. This was reinforced when Secretary of the Brisbane Freeway Protest and Compensation Committee, Tom



O'Brien, in a speech to the TLC in 1974, stated that the BWIU had been a "major support", and openly thanked Hugh Hamilton among other members of the union who had "shown such keen support for our work" and contributed \$100 towards the committee fund.³⁰ Evidently, the BWIU played a major role during the implementation of these bans, with the BLF largely assisting through the QBTG.

Tensions in the BLF

The prominence of the BWIU in the green ban campaigns can be understood when analysing the context surrounding the BLF's Queensland branch during this period. The actions of the New South Wales BLF in this time had led to a stand-off between it and the Federal office led by Secretary Norm Gallagher.³¹ The Queensland branch,

which had long been a conservative ally of the Federal office, officially supported attempts to discipline the New South Wales branch, which Dobinson perceived as a disruption to the aims of the Federation.³² As led by Dobinson, the BLF had become a far less militant group in Queensland, and although it greatly contributed to the green ban movement the branch was unwilling to "rock the foundations", as the New South Wales branch was determined to do.³³ This was not without internal opposition, however, as Vince Englart and his contemporaries within the Queensland branch sought to become more active in implementing and supporting more radical bans in Brisbane. Englart had long been an active branch member, and was in fact the sole contributor of the aforementioned progressive motions that were unanimously passed by the executive. Despite their differences in political persuasion, Dobinson remembered Englart as "a good bloke ... very bright."³⁴

Throughout the green ban period, Englart and other militant members of the branch outlined their demands for action in *On Site*, a newssheet established for the rank and file members of the Queensland BLF.³⁵ Though the newssheet's supporters were dismissed at the time by Dobinson as "communists" of little importance, they identified an important commitment to the green ban cause, declaring in December 1974

that “we are often employed to pull down houses (in a housing shortage) or destroy parklands or historic buildings ... the boss has the say-so and knows where the profit is.”³⁶ However, the rank and file simultaneously remained preoccupied with rallying for permanency in their construction positions, an issue that remained more pressing than the Union’s social campaigns.³⁷ The battle between ‘communists’ and ‘non-communists’ was evidently a major issue for the branch, with Dobinson stating that “all they [communists] wanted to do was upset and destroy things.”³⁸ However, Dobinson notes that such militants were an unorganised minority, who often remained unwilling to support one another due to internal conflict.³⁹ Regardless, the internal difficulties faced by the BLF, combined with Dobinson’s intent to discipline the NSW branch, contributed to the Union’s comparative lack of prominence in the green ban movement in Queensland.

A Militant BWIU

Due to their similar goals and political persuasions, the BWIU became a closer ally of the NSW BLF as led by Jack Munday, with Hugh Hamilton openly praising the branch in a flyer titled “Greenbans: Who’s Business?” in 1974.⁴⁰ The publication outlined various green bans that the Queensland BWIU were engaged with at that time.⁴¹ Furthermore, Hamilton, an active communist, presented a paper

on radical action in the industry to a BWIU delegates’ convention, where he declared:

The union’s [BWIU] activities in the anti-Freeway campaign and the green bans placed on the Bellevue Hotel, the Mansions and other buildings in Brisbane have received widespread support from other unions and amongst the community.⁴²

Evidently, whereas the Queensland branch of the BLF had been restricted by relations between the New South Wales branch and the federal office, the BWIU had in fact been invigorated. The actions of the BWIU would eventually lead Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen to exclaim that “green bans, black bans and the like are the communist fist in the Labor glove.”⁴³ It is curious to note that whereas the New



Residents meet to plan their campaign to oppose the Northern Freeway, assisted by the trade union ban on demolition of houses. Photo courtesy of film “The Battle for Bowen Hills” by Peter Gray & Gary Lane.

South Wales BWIU had disagreed with that state's BLF allowing community groups to dictate the terms of a ban, the Queensland branch had similarly given primacy to conservationist groups.⁴⁴ This can be attributed to similarities in ideology, with the strong communist influences within the Queensland BWIU and the New South Wales BLF forging an environment that fostered critical analysis of the effects of their work on the community.⁴⁵ Hamilton was noteworthy for his dedication to political education camps at Caloundra, attended by university students and trade workers alike. Plumbers' Union organiser George Britten recalled that "from political issues to safety issues, we made good use of those people from the uni."⁴⁶ In essence, the BWIU's primacy in the green ban movement can be attributed to their long-held political commitment in regards to critiquing the conditions of their labour and being active in the domain of social justice.

Conclusion

The green ban movement was led in Queensland by the BWIU, with the BLF assisting in the bans under Dobinson. The BLF's relative lack of ambition throughout the bans was due to the overwhelming political tension within the Union at a Federal level, with the state branch not wanting to elicit negative attention from Gallagher. Furthermore, this tension was evident at a state level, with the Queensland branch's militant members

preoccupied with internal struggles for greater democracy and permanency on the job. As such, the Queensland BWIU became allied to the New South Wales BLF, both of them linked by communist ideology that informed their methods throughout the green ban movement. As such, the movement saw the concentration of many bans across this state, though predominantly in the urban centres of the southeast corner, and garnered considerable support and achieved relative success. Ultimately, the green ban movement as led by the BWIU and assisted by the BLF was affected largely by Queensland's political climate, which in effect changed the very nature of union relations and left an indelible mark on Queensland's trade union movement.

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Edward Gough Whitlam (1916-2014)

Working with Gough, post-coup

As he once said, he was eternal but not, alas, immortal. So many memories were evoked when Gough Whitlam died, on 21 October 2014, aged 98. Lots have been said about him, much by people who worked with him during his term in government. I need not repeat their words; they are easy to find.

I simply wish to add four things about him that arose from the three years I worked for him in my first real job. He was at the Australian National University (ANU), to which he came, saw and conquered in the period after he left Parliament in 1978.

1. His empathy

The week I started work for Gough was the week that an iconic ABC current affairs show, *This Day Tonight* (a predecessor of the 7.30 Report), came to an end. For the last episode they decided to do two separate interviews: with Gough and with Kerr. So a couple of days after I started work there is a camera crew in the office. Gough immediately falls into conversation with one of the crew, talking to him at great length about, of all things, the crewman's name, which happened

to be Greek. I don't really remember anything much about the interview, but I remember being stunned both by Gough's knowledge of the Classics and by how easily he struck up a conversation with this bloke and continued it.

Behind this was more than a 'common touch'. It was a glimpse into his extraordinary empathy for people whose experiences he hadn't shared. It showed why a middle class, highly educated white man was able to become a hero for feminists, indigenous people, migrants and working class kids for life.

2. His humour

He had a great sense of humour, biting at times, but very funny. It was often self-deprecating, or at least self-mocking. ('This is where the big nobs hang out', he said to me at the Parliamentary urinal; not quite the normal classical allusion.) Margaret would take no nonsense from him, and if she thought he was being egotistical she would tell him in no uncertain terms, with phrases like 'silly thing' and worse, and he would take it all in good humour — as was appropriate.

A few years after he left ANU he was appointed Australia's ambassador to UNESCO in Paris. When my son, Nick, turned two, we went to stay with him and Margaret (at the '*Palais Seidler*'). One morning Nick woke

early and wandered off, it turned out, into Gough's shower. This was announced at breakfast when Gough said, with suitable gravitas, "he caught me with my pants down!"

(For those too young to remember, when Fraser became Opposition Leader in early 1975, displacing Snedden, he promised not to block supply unless the government was engaged in reprehensible behaviour and he caught Mr Whitlam "with his pants down".)

He was 'good humoured' in that other way, too. For all the talk of volatility, we only had one serious argument in the three years of my employment — appropriately enough, over the use of the definite versus the indefinite article. I, of course, was wrong.

3. His resilience and vision

Any ordinary person would have been shattered and embittered by the circumstances surrounding the Dismissal and the vicious campaign that led up to it. If you have any doubts on that think of Fraser, Hawke, Rudd, and how they responded to defeat.

But what struck me while working with Gough was how his focus during his time at ANU was on the future, particularly of Australia's future role in international affairs — things like its links with Asia, decolonisation in the Pacific, Antarctica (he pithily said to a student, regarding some countries'

claims to sovereignty in Antarctica, "they're pissing in the wind — and down there it's a blizzard!"), the Law of the Sea, and so on. And he thought about some domestic reforms that still needed attention, such as democratic electoral laws, as one-vote-one-value was not yet implemented in many states.

He rarely focused on the Dismissal or debates around it, once he got *The Truth of The Matter* out of the way — and that was basically written within seven weeks. After that it was all about the future. Every 11 November he'd be asked to speak at some Labor Party function, and inevitably the Dismissal or constitutional reform would arise, but he would use the opportunity to take time to bring up one of his futuristic visions, such as on internationalism or electoral reform.

He once declined an invitation to speak for one of the electorate campaign committees in Victoria, because he was disillusioned with that state's lack of a reform agenda — and in the process he slammed the state Labor Party for paying too much attention to market research and pollsters, and not enough attention to show leadership. He strongly believed that reform governments must lead public opinion, and not just follow focus groups. (How prescient.) But while he liked to speak his mind, he was also very careful not to do so in a way that would cause public embarrassment to the Parliamentary

Labor Party. He was a strong believer in the Parliamentary system and in the Labor Party, even when it did the wrong thing by him or he disagreed with it.

4. How his legacy was seen

When I worked at ANU, much of his mail was opened by me (the rest went through his Sydney office, where he had a secretary). Many people wrote to him, and the issue they most often wrote about went long these lines:

“Dear Gough, I’d just like to thank you for what you did for education. Without you, I’d have never been able to go to university.”

I too was one of these early beneficiaries of his education policies, but what really struck me was how many people knew that they couldn’t have got there were it not for his reforms.

There were lots of other things people wrote about as well, of course, but this was by far the most common.

Gough was also loved by aboriginal people. Amongst his mail every few months would come the *Central Land Council News*, a little newspaper of 8 or 12 pages, like many newsletters or magazines that people used to send him. One day he went on a trip back to central Australia, to the site of that historic handover of land to

the Gurindji people in 1975, which produced probably the most moving Australian photo of the 20th century, of Gough pouring sand through the fingers of Vincent Lingiari. I didn’t go. But if you read the *Central Land Council News* you could not be unaware that Gough had been there, because every inch was taken up with his visit, using stories and photos.

In at least one of those he looked pretty hot and exhausted, but having a great time and greatly loved by those around him.

As he still is.

David Peetz was research assistant to the Hon E G Whitlam, AC QC, at ANU from November 1978 to December 1981.

He is now professor of employment relations at Griffith University.

Toowong Cemetery Tour

Bob Russell

On the last Sunday of October 2014, the BLHA organized its first ever historical walking tour. This was done in conjunction with the friends of Toowong Cemetery, who conduct organized theme walks once per month. The walk attracted 25 participants, including existing BLHA members, as well as some new faces/members. Over the course of the 90 minute tour, 11 individual sites were visited as well as the Temple of Peace. This anti-war monument, which stands opposite the official Anzac tribute, as well as the grave site of Emma Miller were the highlights of the tour for this participant.

Emma Miller (nee Holmes) was born at Chesterfield UK in 1839. By trade she was a shirt-maker and it was through work in the putting out system of home garment production that she supported herself and four children following the death of her husband. With her second husband, she immigrated to Brisbane in 1879, where she was widowed once again. As a needle worker, Emma Miller stood at the forefront of union formation, including women's trade unionism, suffrage (as President of the Women's Equal Franchise Association) and the formation of a labour party. She actively supported fellow strikers in the

great labour struggles of the 1890s and again just prior to the outbreak of World War 1, most famously in the 'hat pin' incident, while remaining active in the anti-war movement of later years. How fitting that she is affectionately known as 'the mother of the Labor Party' and that she is fondly remembered in various ways around Brisbane — (see the Emma Miller statue at King George Square).

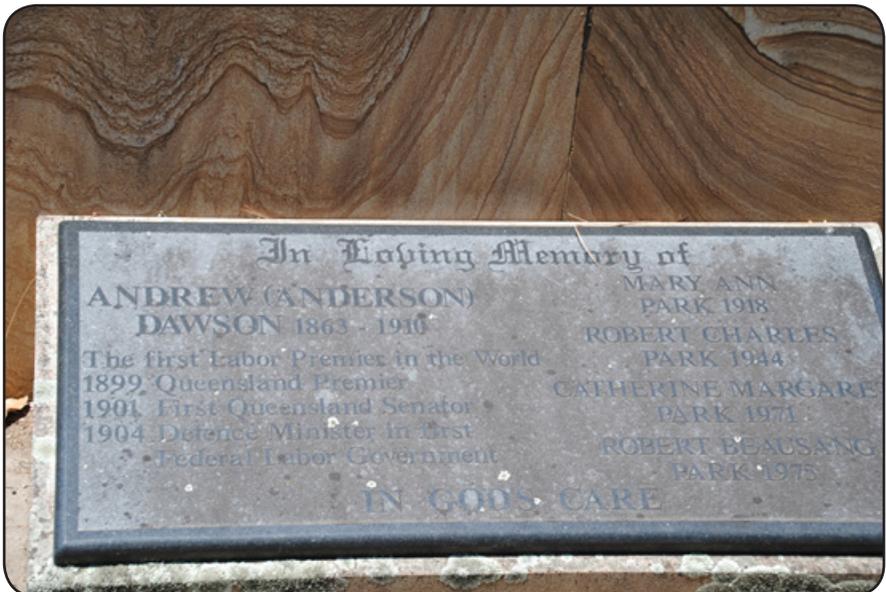




Other sites visited on the tour included:

- Andrew Dawson: head of the first elected labor government in the world
- David Bowmen: leader of the Queensland Labor Party from 1907 to 1912
- William Gillies: Labor Premier in 1925
- Thomas Glassey: Federal Labor Senator, 1900-1903
- William Forgan Smith: Labor Premier 1932-42
- Ned Hanlon: Labor Premier 1946-52
- Albert Whitford: assassinated Labor MLA (1924)

For the most part, the tour focused upon parliamentary Labor in Queensland. Many of Labor's early leaders hailed



from the manual working class with occupations such as coal miner, weaver, and boot maker featuring in the biographies. Others recorded backgrounds in the state's sugar industry. Many were born overseas, with Anglo ethnicity featuring as a common point for both the foreign born and natives. Also notable is the point that a number of the early leaders died at a comparatively young age. This, no doubt, was a result of having worked in unhealthy occupations prior to entering politics. Apart from Emma Miller, resistance to class, gender and racial inequality, let alone authorship of progressive social reform does not seem to be something that these historical figures can be remembered for. While participants on the walk could recall anti-union legislation by the likes of the Hanlon government, progressive social legislation in the areas of health, education and welfare did not easily come to mind.

The BLHA hopes to organize additional walking tours of Brisbane in coming months.

The Queensland Government's Protection Policy and Exploitation of Aboriginal Labour

Valerie Cooms

This essay examines the exploitation of Aboriginal labour by the state government across Queensland from the 1890s to the 1940s. These years coincide with the early years of the enforcement of the *Aboriginal Protection and Sale of Opium Act 1897* followed by the *Aboriginal Preservation and Protection Act 1939*.¹ I will highlight how the Queensland government's protection policy impacted on my family and how they viewed, feared and resisted the discriminatory tactics.

Boulia and Brisbane

Boulia in western Queensland was established as a goods and service centre in 1876.² Many settlers moved to Boulia from other areas to take up lands. These settlers and pastoralists were heavily reliant upon cheap Aboriginal labour. Some settlers accessed local labour while others brought Aboriginal workers with them. Evidence suggests a settler named Alexander McCullough brought my grandmother, Lucy McCullough, to Boulia with her mother. According

to my grandmother, she was born at Moona Creek in the Boulia region.³ We are not sure when she was born but estimate it was between 1880 and 1885.⁴

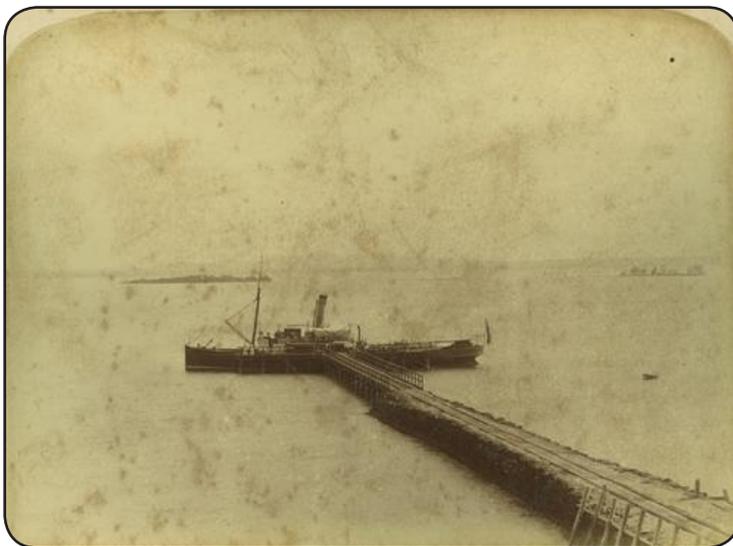
Lucy McCullough was forcibly removed from Marion Downs near Boulia in 1899 under the provisions of the Queensland Government's *Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act 1897*.⁵ She worked on Marion Downs with her mother and was not paid. Lucy never understood why she was sent away but arrived in Brisbane in May 1899 and was placed in the then Magdalan Asylum where she was trained as a domestic servant. Following the birth of her child Mable later that year, she

was placed in the State Government's Aboriginal Girls' Home and sent out to work for white families as a servant in Brisbane. She worked for 9 years and upon being 'released' from service, found that she had no money. While she could not read or write she knew that she must have had up to 9 years wages, confiscated by the government and held in 'trust'.

The Queensland government had amended the Protection Act in 1902 to ensure that employers paid Aboriginal workers' wages directly to the government as a means of preventing exploitation. Furthermore, as noted by Historian Ros Kidd, in 1905 after complaints from inmates at the Aboriginal Girls' Home, an



Children of the Barambah Aboriginal Settlement 1914



SS Otter at Dunwich Jetty

investigation resulted in the sacking of the Female Superintendent for embezzling inmates' earnings.⁶

My grandmother could not understand why the government forcibly removed her from her family, put her out to work and then 'stole' her earnings particularly since she noted that she had worked very hard under difficult circumstances to earn her money. Furthermore, access to her earnings and property was disallowed under the protection policy which made it impossible for her to know what she owned, how much money was being held or where it was being spent.

While the Queensland government's protection policy was put in place to avert growing criticism amongst

settlers about the treatment and condition of Aboriginal people, it did little to improve their lives. It did more to enhance the economy of the colony using cheap Aboriginal labour as a valuable and acceptable resource for settlers. Aboriginal people remained fearful of the state government's protection policy tactics such as confiscation of earnings and property as well as forced removals by compulsion. This seems hardly the reaction to a policy designed to 'help' people and ease the perils associated with colonisation.

While my grandmother was 'in service' working for minimal wages under the supervision of the Queensland government, she was taken by the Protector of Aborigines

to North Stradbroke Island with other Aboriginal women servants for a picnic each Christmas. It was during one of these visits that she met my grandfather Edward Ruska, a Nunukul man who was working for the government on the Dunwich jetty.

North Stradbroke Island

North Stradbroke Island was settled very early in Queensland's colonial history. Matthew Flinders arrived in the very early 1800s but noted that the local Aboriginal people could understand and speak English. This suggests that the Quandamooka people had had contact with non-Aboriginal people earlier than the early 1800s. There are three townships on North Stradbroke Island, Dunwich, Amity and Point Lookout. Dunwich was the site for a Quarantine Station, then a Leper Colony (later moved to Peel Island) and from 1866, the Benevolent Asylum.

Edward Ruska was a traditional owner from North Stradbroke Island and was born around 1882. From around the early 1900s he worked at the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum and was in charge of loading and unloading supplies for the institution.

Not unlike the pastoral industry, the success of the Asylum was dependent upon access to cheap Aboriginal labour. Many non-Aboriginal people were employed at the Asylum but paid

substantially more than Aboriginal workers. He was the head ganger of a team of Aboriginal men, and, in the 1930s led a strike for more wages which resulted in a rise of 2 pounds per month.⁷ Not only did Edward demand equal wages, he also sought the right to live in Dunwich and not be restricted to the Aboriginal settlement at 'One-Mile'.⁸ He was unsuccessful in gaining the right to live in Dunwich and resided at One-Mile until his death in the 1950s.

Edward was also fully aware of the impact of Queensland government's policy and knew that the powers under the protection act meant he could be forcibly removed from his traditional lands in the same way that his wife, Lucy had been taken from hers. Many Aboriginal people were forcibly removed from North Stradbroke Island for refusing to sell their labour.⁹ This saw both my grandparents resort to perceived compliance as a method of dealing with the draconian tactics used by the Queensland government and avoiding official attention or surveillance at any cost.

Brisbane and North Stradbroke Island

In the 1930s, my grandparents sent their three youngest daughters, Lucy, Kathleen and Vivian (my mother) to Brisbane to work for white families as servants. They arranged their employment and placements through

the church. This would have ensured that both the church and the employer were able to speak up for them if or when the Protector of Aboriginals intervened.

The need for servants created much envy amongst non-Aboriginal people. In 1935 when my aunty Lucy commenced work for a white family in Milton a suburb of Brisbane, a neighbour wrote to the Protector of Aboriginals drawing attention to the 'serious matter' of the engagement of a young Aboriginal servant. This complaint resulted in an investigation by the Queensland government into the racial origins of the Ruska family in 1935 because when the police arrived at the employer's house, aunty Lucy ran away from them screaming that she was Portuguese.¹⁰ Aunty Lucy would have been terrified that she would be taken to a reserve and never see her family again. Fortunately my grandparents were able to convince the police who were subsequently sent to interview them that they were in no need of the government's protection.¹¹

My mother and aunty Kathleen continued to work as servants with their stories about working hard under difficult circumstances being told often. Aunty Kathleen joined the Army at the outbreak of World War II, aunty Lucy married and my mother returned to the Island to work at the state government's Benevolent Asylum.

While working at the Benevolent Asylum, my mother discovered that the women brought over to work for the Australian Women's Land Army were doing the same work as her but paid 3 times more. My mother wrote to the state government and complained about this but was given no explanation. She knew it was because she was Aboriginal.¹²

After World War II, aunty Kathleen used her connections with the Communist Party to get my mother a job with a soft drink factory that paid award wages to all workers. My mother's employment at the soft drink factory and aunty Kathleen's years in the Army would have made them the first people in the Ruska family to be paid award wages.

In conclusion, the state government played an integral role in the exploitation of Aboriginal labour in Queensland in an attempt to assist employers, settlers, the economy and the colony. Ironically the protection act that was supposedly put in place to shield Aboriginal workers facilitated the exploitation of Aboriginal labour, denied incentives and encouraged dependence. Arguably the protection policy was used to ensure cheap labour was available to employers in Queensland from the 1890s particularly since access to cheap convict labour ceased once transportation ended in the 1840s. The success of the settler colony we now know as Australia was

heavily dependent upon the uptake of Aboriginal lands, the exploitation of first convict and then Aboriginal labour.

Notes

- 1 Supplement to the Queensland Government Gazette, December, 1897, No. 146 and Ros Kidd, *The Way We Civilise*, University of Queensland Press, 1997, p. 145.
- 2 <http://www.boulia.qld.gov.au/shire-timeline>.
- 3 My grandmother's birth was not registered. Vivian Jane Cooms, formerly Ruska, Personal Communication, 20 October 2000, in relation to her mother's history.
- 4 Lucy McCullough's birth was never registered. Furthermore, we do not know how McCullough was spelt given Lucy was illiterate. Lucy always stated that her father's name was Alexander McCullough.
- 5 Alex Cameron to Archibald Meston [Southern Protector of Aboriginals] 30 March 1899, Letters to Protector or Police Commissioner and referred to Protector of Aboriginals, Lands Department Batch Files and Primary Control No. TR1227, A58929, Home Secretary Batch, RSI 14988, Item 953, 1417 provenance Southern Protector of Aboriginals, Queensland State Archives.
- 6 Kidd, Ros, *The Way We Civilise*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane 1997, pp. 55-56.
- 7 Whalley, Peter, The Aboriginal Significance of the Myora to Amity area and One-Mile, with Special Regard to Areas likely to be affected by the ACI Jetty and Conveyor Belt proposal and the Consequent Revocation of the Fish

Habitat Reserve, Quandamooka Lands Council Aboriginal Corporation, 1991, pp. 60-95.

- 8 Ludlow, P., *A Century of Moreton Bay People*, Volume 1, Peter Ludlow, Stones Corner, 1994, pp. 62-64.
- 9 Dr Patrick Smith, the Medical Superintendent at the Benevolent Asylum wrote to the Chief Protector of Aboriginals proposing that all Aboriginal people who were 'nuisances' to white residents [or not working for minimal wages] be removed from the Island and sent to Fraser Island's Bogimba Mission, Walker, F., *Useful and Profitable: History and race relations at the Myora Aboriginal Mission Stradbroke Island, Australia*, Memoirs of the Queensland Museum, Cultural Heritage Series 1(1); Brisbane, 1998, p. 141.
- 10 Anonymous letter to the Protector of Aboriginals, 19 February 1935, Letter NO. 00847, A/69429, 'Restricted', Aboriginal Community and Personal History Section, Queensland State Archives.
- 11 R. Morrison, Superintendent, Myora Aboriginal Settlement, Memorandum to Chief Protector of Aboriginals, 27 June 1934, Letter No. 03591, Restricted File A/58788, Aboriginal Community and Personal History Section, Queensland State Archives, concerning a full investigation by police into the nationality of the parents of Lucy Ruska [junior] found to be employed by a non-Aboriginal family in Brisbane.
- 12 Vivian Jane Cooms formerly Ruska, Personal Communication, 20 October 2000, in relation to the Australian Women's Land Army working at the Benevolent Asylum during World War II.

Vince's Sundial

By Vince Englart

Vince Englart passed away in 2000, and he wrote this story in the 1990s.

Imagine the architect's busy office, Christopher Wren and Associates. The boss, Chris, asked the junior architect, Archie, if they had a drawing of a sundial on file. Archie soon found a small drawing done some years ago for the city of Newcastle. Chris was very pleased with Archie's initiative but Chris had a contract with the city of Brisbane for a much larger one at the Botanical Gardens. -

"It doesn't matter a bugger how old it is", exclaimed Chris. "A sundial's a sundial, it tells the time by the sun, doesn't it? Just draw it to the scale that the City Council architects dimensions want."

Designed With White Cement

The drawings were later delivered to the Council and were passed on to the construction carpenters and labourers to build the base of the sundial. The dial itself is 4.6 metres diameter, standing on a 400 mm column 3 metres high. It was designed in expensive white cement instead of the normal, which is grey. The carpenter in charge was Bruno, like myself a political 'lefty'; of Italian origin, as was his mate, Joe.



Caption: Vince Englart with his father Ted Englart and Museum Curator Jeff Ryder, in 1982 (approx)]

My mate was Jem Browne, a highly skilled scaffolder, Dublin born, who would always deny he was blarney, but he has been a good mate of mine for years. The four of us successfully poured the concrete 400 mm diameter base. The carpenters then set about constructing the form work for the actual dial. Almost daily, the foreman Alan Green, would call to check up on progress.

South Instead of North

Then the surveyor, John Conway, arrived with his chainmen. He set up

his theodolite to get the bearings for the sundial and indicated its orientation on a north-south line. He then indicated to the carpenters where the point of the 'fin' of the dial should be. He had it pointed south, instead of north.

Alan, it Won't Work!

When Alan Green, called Greenie by the boys, arrived, I protested to him that the orientation was 180 degrees out, but naturally, he couldn't listen to me in front of those responsible, the surveying team. I remember my last words to Greenie as he drove away... "Alan it won't work!" That evening, I rang the trump, the assistant clerk-of-works, John Buckley. I'd helped John out when he was a humble carpenter when he needed to pick my brains on matters mathematical. He invited me to make a model of a sundial and bring it to work the next morning. I did so and the surveyor, John, acknowledged his error.

A Most Conscientious Foreman

That was on a Friday and I went home to enjoy the weekend. On Saturday afternoon, Alan Green was on the phone. He had studied the drawings and noticed a discrepancy, in the figures on the drawing. I must say that he was a most conscientious foreman, because it would be most unlikely for anyone just to pick such an error. "Vince, I've found a discrepancy on the drawings. Can you check the figures?"

I Digress On My Knowledge

I digress for a moment in order to explain how I happen to have knowledge that's mainly the province of astronomers, navigators, cartographers and surveyors specialists on the globe and the sky. During the war in New Guinea, when I wasn't sweating my guts out building roads and bridges, as well as being hassled by nightly storms, giant pythons, as well as the Japanese, I wrapped myself in my books; in particular 'Science for the Citizen' and 'Mathematics for the Million' by Lancelot Hogben. Hogben wrote in the spirit that if humanity had a future the ordinary citizen had to understand what scientists and mathematicians are on about. While I had only a primary education, I had soon mastered not only plain (Euclidian) geometry and trigonometry, but also learnt spherical trigonometry. Such knowledge is necessary not only to plot the path of celestial bodies in the sky, but also to navigate on the surface of the earth. (For example, you have to appreciate the shortest distance between two points is not the Euclidean straight line, but the 'great' circle which passes through them.)

Consistent But Wrong

I worked all Saturday evening; worked out the correct figures for Brisbane; and it became obvious to me that the figures on the drawing were consistent but wrong for Brisbane's latitude; 27

degrees, 25 minutes south. (That was in addition to the mistake that Alan had stumbled on). It became clear to me that they were for some place other than Brisbane. So I worked backward to establish that the figures on the drawing were for a latitude of 32 degrees 52 minutes south. But where?? So I scanned the home atlas and the only Australian city with such a latitude was the city of Newcastle, New South Wales.

Tell Bruno Not To Go Ahead

On Sunday evening I rang John Buckley and told him of my discovery and he told me, your humble labourer, to tell Bruno not to go ahead with the work until he arrived on the job in the morning. When John came on the job early on Monday morning he, with Alan and myself, went straight to the phone in the office of the curator, Jeff Ryder, of the newly constructed Planetarium and rang the Brisbane City Architect. The City Architect referred John to the contract architect. John tactfully told the contract architect of Alan Green's discovery, and suggested that they look over all the figures. John silenced my mutterings, "They're all wrong!!".

Hero of the Job

While I didn't have a computer and worked with mathematical tables, the computers whirled away on Monday evening. On Tuesday morning, I was the hero of the job! John Conway, the

surveyor, confirmed my figures; Jeff Ryder also not only confirmed my work but expressed his disappointment that the authorities hadn't discussed the sundial with him. After all, the sundial was an integral part of the planetarium complex. We stood around for some days, doing nothing (on full pay) but waiting on the response from the contract architects. They didn't have time to re-draw the original drawings, but had written over the original figures on the blue-prints. I enjoyed myself with mind-stretching discussions with the surveyor, John, and the curator, Jeff, on the nature of sundials.

A Natural Revulsion

On hearing me tell of my initiative in this story, a few, very few, said, "Why did you correct the mistakes, Vince? Why not let the 'experts' responsible make fools of themselves?". But most, including myself, think, I did the right thing. We must correct others, even if not rewarded, because of a natural revulsion at people doing wrong, especially when it involves a public good. Besides, who hasn't made mistakes?

A Casualty of the 'Cold War'

Like so many other Australians, I was also a casualty of the Cold War. While U. S. citizens, intellectuals, actors, writers, and civil rights workers, would be 'honoured' by being called to the Un-American Affairs Committee by

Senator Joseph McCarthy, we had no such honour bestowed on those of us who opposed the status quo in Australia. Many thousands of loyal Australians, battlers for a better life, were subject to witch hunts — blacklisted — without finding a single spy. If I hadn't been on Australian Security Intelligence Organisation's blacklist and denied employment in some other field to use my mathematical skills, such as they are, perhaps I wouldn't have been employed by the Brisbane City Council as a labourer, then who could say what would be the eventual history of the Planetarium Sundial? It is the nature of human history to be contingent; what if I wasn't there ?? If we had gone ahead with the original drawings and

orientation the city's landmark would have been a joke and it would have cost a fortune to bulldoze the structure and rebuild it in white cement and stainless steel. I've fictionalised the name of the contract architect to save any embarrassment to the people involved.

Such, is the Nature of Serendipity!

It stands as an example to a most unlikely chain of events — not only because citizens, like myself who can master spherical trigonometry, are rare; with a conscientious foreman like Alan Green; and a boss like John Buckley who's modest enough to listen to a humble labourer. Such is the nature of serendipity!



The sundial at the Planetarium in 2014.

Concert Shell, in Albert Park

I was also proud of my help on other jobs. One challenge was the stage at the concert shell in Albert Park. It is in the form of a quadrant, providing not only the stage — but also dressing and other back stage rooms. The quadrant was designed to suit to the open air amphitheatre audience. The columns supporting the shell are not set out in a rectilinear fashion as in a regular building, but on radii from a central point. It was difficult for the tradesman in charge, Howard Kirby, to be sure that the columns were correctly placed. I worked out the equivalent points on a rectilinear grid using trigonometry.

Three, Four, Five Rule

Many tradesmen use the three, four, five rule in order to construct a right angle. They now have the benefit of hand held electronic calculator. When setting out a job to ensure that the building is square they measure the diagonals which must be equal to be square. They will move the string lines a few millimetres to the right or left, backward or forward, by trial and error, to be square. I would show them, by calculation using Pythagoras theorem, exactly what length the diagonals will be. I've always got a lot of intellectual satisfaction as well as the pleasure of a job well done.

Retired, But Still Working

I retired from the Brisbane City Council aged sixty in October, 1983. Besides devoting time to contribute to the welfare of my sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren, I applied myself to using the computer to generate pattern developments for boilermakers and sheet metal workers. I'm pleased to say that, while I'm falling to bits physically, I still have my marbles.

I remain your amateur mathematician.
Perhaps I'll be rewarded in heaven?

Industrial Law Changes Enacted by the Queensland LNP Government

John Spreckley

Over the three years that the Newman LNP government was in power, first elected with a massive majority in March 2012 and then losing via an unprecedented swing at the next election in 2015 to the ALP, there was much publicity about the extensive and relentless exercise of their power, including the implementation of numerous, controversial laws, and weakening of the perceived independence of state institutions.

I have prepared a brief summary, of just some of the statutory changes made, focussing in particular on the seven major legislative changes directly targeted at workers. I have included, just a few extracts from some of the parliamentary debates as recorded in Hansard.

Anyone interested in reading the whole debates, can find the complete Hansard on the Queensland Parliamentary website.



“Attorney General Jarrod Bleijie & Premier Cambell Newman. Photo by Dan Peled courtesy of “The Conversation”

Industrial Relations (Fair Work Act Harmonisation) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. (May 2012)

Summary of changes:

- Restrictions on the right to take industrial action.
- Complicated and lengthy processes for balloting industrial action
- Government can forbid industrial action.
- Forced arbitration.
- Requirement for QIRC to consider government ‘fiscal strategy’ and ‘financial position’
- Government can bypass the union in CA negotiations and ballots.
- Provides for Treasury to directly brief the QIRC without cross-examination of government and agency budgets
- Dilution of QIRC independence
- Public Service Commission appeals referred to QIRC

MP quotes during parliamentary debate:

Anastasia Palazczuk (ALP): The LNP has wasted no time in returning to its favourite ideological pursuit of attacking the rights of workers. It has broken yet another election commitment and is attacking the powers of the independent umpire, the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. We all know that when the conservatives want to attack the rights of working people, their first step is to weaken the independent umpire.

Scott Driscoll (LNP): I am thrilled to see a piece of legislation like this.

As someone who has been an employer and has worked in the industrial relations system, certainly I commend this bill to the House.

Tim Mulherin (ALP): To require the independent umpire, the QIRC—a quasi-judicial body—to basically implement government policy is a breach of the doctrine of separation of powers, something which has not been very slow to raise its ugly spectre in homage to the Premier’s hero, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, in the earliest days of this government.

Curtis Pitt (ALP): Here in Queensland the Premier flatly denied that the Industrial Relations Commission would be under any threat by a future LNP government. Yet here we are

only two months into the Newman administration and workers’ rights are being eroded.

Of all the promises broken by the Newman government since it came to office, this is the most significant so far.

The LNP went to the extent of initiating discussions with the Chamber of Commerce and

Industry Queensland before the election about these changes but kept them secret from the public.

Michael Hart (LNP): There are a couple of items about this bill that I would like to highlight. Wage setting for public sector employees who fall into the jurisdiction of the IR Act has a very direct effect on the state’s fiscal strategy and potentially on public sector employment generally. The proposed amendments will ensure that such decisions are made with this in mind and are responsive to the prevailing and changing economic conditions in Queensland.

Jackie Trad (ALP): This bill should be renamed the ‘Industrial Relations (QIRC Politicisation) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012’ because this bill completely trashes the role and the independence of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. This bill seeks to destroy collective bargaining, sidelining unions

and trampling on industrial action in the process.

Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 (June 2012)

Summary of changes:

- Transferred responsibility for the administration of the QIRC from the president to the vice president.
- Allowed for increased use of lawyers in the QIRC
- Invalidation of award and agreement job security conditions.
- Invalidation of award and agreement terms dealing with ‘contracting out’, ‘employment security’ and ‘organisational change’.
- Invalidation of existing “Termination, Change and Redundancy (TCR) consultation requirements.

MP quotes during parliamentary debate:

Michael Pucci (LNP): Changes to the act will also see greater access to legal representation, which in turn will assist government in managing negotiations that would otherwise require arbitration by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

Tim Mulherin (ALP): This bill, which is a continuation of the initial changes, is essentially about streamlining the

LNP process of sacking government workers.

Bill Byrne (ALP): I now turn to the changes to the Industrial Relations Commission concerning legal representation. The Queensland Industrial Relations Commission was designed as a layperson’s tribunal and currently many matters are heard without legal representation. This ensures hearings are less combative, less adversarial and less prone to be bogged down by the unnecessary minutiae of legal argument. While legal representation is currently allowed in limited circumstances, this bill significantly expands the scope of when legal representation will be allowed in the commission. These changes mean businesses and the government, with their greater financial means, can hire fancy big-town lawyers to ride roughshod over employees. The truth of the matter is that many employees will be unable to afford legal representation while their employers get the best lawyers money can buy. The Queensland Industrial Relations Commission will be more focused on legal loopholes rather than emphasising fairness and natural justice.

In short, this bill threatens to turn the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission into nothing more than a banquet for fancy big-city lawyers.

Jarrold Bleijie (LNP): Sticking up for the time honoured profession of lawyers, I think it is quite appropriate and that more lawyers is good in all things. I have had that conversation with the Deputy Premier and I know he agrees with me. Lawyers get in there and we get things done. I thank the Deputy Premier for his support of the profession of the legal fraternity.

Curtis Pitt (ALP): Actually, it is not Work Choices; it is actually no choices. This is all about no choices. It is Work Choices on steroids.

Campbell Newman (LNP) (interjecting): Get a real job! ..Speak up and get a real job! ...Speak up and get a real job! ... The Premier can interject from any cabinet seat. That's the ruling of the Clerk. Good one! Good one, you thug! ...Did you support the campaign? Yeah, good one, you grub!

Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 (October 2012)

Summary of changes:

- Moves Queensland workers' Labour Day holiday from May to October
- QIRC commissioners to swear allegiance to the Queen
- Moves Queen's birthday holiday from October to June

MP quotes during parliamentary debate:

Jarrold Bleijie (LNP): "Joe Blow wouldn't even know what May Day is. They just like the public holiday."

Jarrold Bleijie (LNP): I'm giving them October to march and they will get paid in October to march and they will march in October.

Anastasia Palaszczuk (ALP): The Attorney-General confirmed under questioning in estimates that the decision to move Labour Day from its historical connection in May was not borne out of widespread consultation. The Attorney-General admitted that it was his own decision to force this change through. He effectively admitted that this is nothing but an ideological move from an Attorney-General who does the reputation of the important role of first legal officer no favours with his approach.

...In conclusion, and as I said in my speech, the labour movement and people in Queensland will continue to March in May. We will not be marching in October. We will only be marching in May and we should leave the holiday here in May. When a Labor government returns to this place, Labour Day will be restored to its rightful place.

Verity Barton (LNP): I certainly appreciate that the decision this

government has taken has touched a nerve with those opposite. I appreciate the history of Labour Day and its links to the eight-hour-day movement. I know that for more than 100 years Labour Day has been celebrated on the first Monday of May.

Bill Byrne (ALP): This bill is nothing short of an attack on the labour movement and the traditions associated with it. For many Queenslanders, Labour Day in May is as significant as Australia Day and Anzac Day. As has been pointed out, the Queen's Birthday celebration in June has nothing to do with the Queen's actual birthday. ... in Queensland that date is particularly important, because one of the first Labour Day processions in the world occurred in Barcaldine on 1 May 1891 and the public holiday has been celebrated in Queensland on the first Monday in May since 1901.

Jo-Ann Miller (ALP): Queenslanders have celebrated Labour Day in Queensland since 1891. It has been a public holiday since 1901. The labour movement, workers, unions and Labor Party members will continue to celebrate Labour Day in Queensland in May just as we have done since well before this Attorney-General was even born and just as we will continue to do after he has left this place.

Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Amendment Bill 2013 (October 2013)

Summary of changes:

- replace Q-COMP with the Workers' Compensation Regulator;
- amend the requirements to appoint a rehabilitation and return to work coordinator;
- require insurers to mandatorily refer injured workers to an accredited return to work program;
- require a worker to provide an employer with a notification of previous injuries, if requested;
- allow for access to a prospective worker's claims history;
- change the measure for determining statutory lump sum compensation from work related impairment (WRI) to degree of permanent impairment (DPI);
- introduce a minimum 5% degree of permanent impairment threshold to access common law damages;
- increase the onus of proof for compensable psychiatric or psychological injuries;
- provide that WorkCover refer all allegations of fraud-related offences to the Regulator for investigation and if necessary prosecution; and
- increase penalties for persons who defraud or attempt to defraud insurers.

MP quotes during parliamentary debate:

Steve Davies (LNP): As a small business owner in my past life—I still own a small business—we appreciate this. We have all seen the Today Tonight programs and others showing the guy with a bad back who cannot work again lifting things into the back of his car or doing a sneaky job on the side. Fraud in workers compensation does happen.

Anastasia Palaszczuk (ALP): What is perhaps one of the most appalling aspects of this determined effort to penalise workers is that the committee charged with reviewing our system of workers compensation did not recommend that it be attacked. The Premier and the Attorney-General have completely ignored that.

Tim Mulherin (ALP): I believe that the government, the Premier and the Attorney-General have misread this issue completely. They have demonstrated that they are prepared to sacrifice a secure safety net for workers and their families, all for the sake of a secret deal struck with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland before the election.

Now they are abolishing Q-Comp and absorbing its functions into the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. So instead of having an independent body overseeing the

operations of the workers compensation scheme, we will now have the Attorney-General interfering in its operations. Why should Queenslanders be worried by this? For several very good reasons. This is the man who cannot run a boot camp. This is the man who has an almost pathological dislike for workers, particularly those who are members of unions. This is the man who lists Joh Bjelke-Petersen as one of his idols. This is the man who has shown a strong propensity to interfere in the running of our independent judiciary. This is the man who was described just this morning, by one of his former LNP colleagues no less, as inexperienced and as someone who needs to listen to advice. This is not the sort of person we need having hands-on control of our workers compensation scheme

Liz Cunningham (Ind): Each time the conservative government gets into power this is the sort of stuff that occurs. Fundamentally today, the scheme is sound and yet people who are injured at work are going to be made to feel uncertain because of these changes that are not necessary.

Carl Judge (PUP): I can say with my hand on my heart now that I will not be supporting this legislation. It is an attack on workers. It is unjust. The scheme is already working in Queensland. The premiums in comparison with other jurisdictions are fair, and this is simply a ridiculous move by the Newman government.



A rally by 1000's of Qld workers on Labour Day 2013 protesting the new Qld Government laws. Photo courtesy of United Voice

Industrial Relations (Transparency and Accountability) Bill 2013 (June 2013)

Summary of changes:

- Increases red tape and expense for administration on the union for no significant benefit
- Public display of officials pay
- Publication of tax receipts
- Expenditure by unions above \$10,000 on so-called “political” campaigns must be approved by a formal ballot of members. The ballots would involve a lengthy, expensive process conducted by the Electoral Commission. The laws were designed to crush free speech and quash differing opinions. The steps and processes required to undertake such ballots would be prohibitive. (Has been repealed due to High Court challenge.)
- Abolition of all previously agreed union encouragement provisions in awards and agreements. These provisions were included in state government agreements and awards to formally protect employees against discrimination and biased treatment.
- Abolishes obligations for the employer to provide payroll deduction facilities for union members paying union dues.
- Abolishes employment policies from enterprise agreements.
- amend definition of ‘worker’ in Worker’s Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 to dilute

applicability to 'labour only' contractors.

MP quotes during parliamentary debate:

Anastasia Palaszczuk (ALP): We do not need to come up with our own descriptions of the Attorney-General's position. By his own admission, he is introducing extreme measures. As the Attorney-General admitted when interviewed by Steve Austin on ABC Radio, he introduced an extreme piece of legislation.

This legislation is so extreme there is not a similar example of restricting the freedom of industrial organisations participating in public and political debates in any other Australian jurisdiction that I can find. In fact, we are yet to find a similar example anywhere in the world.

Freedom of political expression has been something people have fought for over the centuries.

It is a right for which many individuals have made great sacrifice. It is a right for which people like

Nelson Mandela spent decades in jail. People have died to protect this freedom. It is jealously guarded worldwide but apparently not so here in Queensland. In Queensland the Newman government strikes at the heart of freedom of expression.

Let me remind the House of the submission from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland began their submission as follows—

At the outset CCIQ wishes to state its disappointment and opposition to the passage of this Bill. As an organisation we were not consulted in its drafting, believe it to be ill founded, will prevent political debate and will make it more difficult for member organisations such as CCIQ to effectively perform our duties on behalf of our members.

In this legislation the red tape is the purpose of the legislation.

Standing up for its members is not at the periphery of the work of industrial organisations; it is at the core of their reason for existence. It is the right of workers and unions to join together to promote their collective interests. It is also at the core of modern democracy, and those opposite should feel embarrassed about coming into this democratic institution and trying to drive a stake through the well-established principles of freedom of association and freedom of speech.

The Attorney-General and the Premier have given absolutely no logical explanation as to why union leaders, who were elected by union members in free and fair elections run by the ECQ, will not have the authority to run

the organisation and expend the funds of that organisation to promote the collective interests of their members.

Campbell Newman (LNP): I say will clearly summarise the position that both myself and the government take in relation to this bill. Let me start by saying that I am an enthusiastic supporter of unions—100 per cent—and I am an enthusiastic and wholehearted supporter of people’s right to join a union. ... I have never been afraid of taking on the unions or having them take the fight to me. I did that from March-April 2011 to March 2012 in the electorate of Ashgrove and no doubt I will do that again.

Curtis Pitt (ALP): I heard the Premier speaking earlier when he said that he likes unions. It just seems that he does not like those who lead them, their organisers, their delegates and even their members when they have a different point of view than his.

Peter Wellington (Ind): Earlier I listened to what I think was the Premier baiting the union: ‘Bring it on! Bring on your High Court challenge! We are looking forward to it!’ Do members know what it reminded me of? It reminded me of the Joh Bjelke-Petersen era.

I think that they are simply provocative. I look forward to this going to the High Court as I think the decision will show that it is unconstitutional.

Jarrold Bleijie (LNP): Yes, it will only apply to employee organisations.

Industrial Relations Fair Work Harmonisation (No. 2) 2013 (November 2013)

Summary of changes:

- Further reducing independence of QIRC
- Changing the position of President of the QIRC to part time, and assigning it to a Supreme Court justice
- Appointing new, fixed term industrial commissioners
- Banning payroll deduction of union members’ dues by the public service
- Increases inspectors powers to investigate and inspect union business
- Introduction of the “award modernisation” process
- Limiting scope and content of awards
- Stripping awards and certified agreements to bare minimum
- Removal of existing entitlements
- Introduction of “individual flexibility arrangements”
- restriction on content of awards, such as redundancy pay and removing many long-standing entitlements from awards
- freezing award pay rates in modernised awards so that annual wage case increases will not apply

- Further restrictions on employees taking industrial action during Certified Agreement negotiations
- Compressing the time periods for negotiation and arbitration of Certified Agreements
- restriction on matters that can be discussed in collective bargaining
- limits on protected action
- Employees are locked into existing agreement until award is modernised, and cannot bargain for new arrangements
- Rendering the Auxiliary Firefighter Interim award to have “no effect”

MP quotes during parliamentary debate:

Anastasia Palaszczuk (ALP): Under the language of ‘award simplification’, the legislation strips a huge number of rights and entitlements from workplace agreements

Jo-Ann Miller (ALP): Have no doubt that this is Newman’s Work Choices. This is Newman’s Queensland. Shame on the LNP MPs who will vote for this later on.

Shane Knuth (KAP): I have many concerns.



“Workers protest outside Qld Parliament House in 2013. Photo courtesy of United Voice

I believe that the Industrial Relations Commission must be independent from government. To more closely align the Industrial Relations Commission with what the government wants takes away what we fought for over the years.

Jackie Trad (ALP): The Industrial Relations (Fair Work Act Harmonisation No. 2) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 represents the sixth occasion on which this government has made changes to industrial relations legislation. On average, this government is changing state based industrial relations laws every three months.

Alex Douglas (UAP): The bill is an ugly piece of legislation because it does not allow the employee to negotiate reasonably with their employer.

Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 (April 2014)

Summary of changes:

- Requiring at least 24 hours' notice by WHS entry permit holders before they can enter a workplace to investigate a suspected contravention;
- Increasing penalties for non-compliance with WHS entry permit conditions and introduction of penalties for non-compliance with entry notification requirements;
- Requiring at least 24 hours' notice before any person assisting a WHSR can access the workplace;
- Removing the power of WHSR's to direct workers to cease unsafe work;
- Removing the requirement for a person conducting a business or undertaking to provide a list of WHSR's to the WHS register;
- Allowing for Codes of Practice adopted in Queensland to be varied or revoked without requiring national consultation as required by the Act, and
- Increasing the maximum penalty for offences in the Electrical Safety Regulation 2002

MP quotes during parliamentary debate:

John Hathaway (LNP): We do not need union representatives to stop work willy-nilly under the guise of safety.

Jarrod Bleijie (LNP): I am very pleased to advise honourable members that I attended the Master Builders Association of Queensland lunch the other day with Nigel Hadgkiss, who is the new commissioner for the federal body which will be the reintroduction of the ABCC that the coalition government has announced.

Curtis Pitt (ALP): What a pleasure it is to speak after hearing for more than 40 minutes from the jumped-up K-Mart lawyer from Kawana. That was one of the most disgraceful performances

that we have seen from the Attorney-General.

This bill is purported to be about workplace health and safety, but we know that it is about using an alternative form to attack unions and workers.

After the Redcliffe by-election, the Premier said that he had learnt his lesson and he would listen to Queenslanders, but just weeks after that here we are again, with the Newman government pursuing an ideological attack on working men and women.

Notes on Contributors

Vince Englart

Vince passed away in 2000, and this story has been handed to the journal editors by George Britten. It relates an incident in 1983, shortly before Vince retired from working for the Brisbane City Council.

Vince's son Rod Englart has provided this short comment: My father Vince was a remarkable man. He cared deeply, not only for his immediate family, but for humanity itself. Throughout all of his life he supported causes that he believed would result in a better world for all - the Vietnam war protests, indigenous rights, apartheid, worker's rights - to mention just a few.

He was also one of the most intelligent men I have ever met. There are a number of my fellow year 12 students that never would have passed their senior maths and physics exams without his tutoring. The sundial incident is only one of many instances where his innate knowledge and natural curiosity have come to the fore. This was his favourite story though, and he thoroughly enjoyed its re-telling when he had the opportunity. It was so much a part of his legacy that when he passed away the family buried his ashes in the garden surrounding the sundial. The old boy would have loved that!

John Spreckley

John Spreckley is the immediate past vice president of the BLHA and served on the management committee for the past 5 years.

John is currently the senior industrial officer for the United Firefighters' Union of Queensland (UFUQ), and has previously held similar roles for United Voice (formerly LHMU) in Brisbane and Adelaide, the Queensland Council of Unions (QCU) and the Queensland Metalworkers' union (AMWU). He has appeared extensively over the past 20 years as a trade union advocate in federal and state industrial tribunals.

John emigrated from Yorkshire, England to the South Australian steel town of Whyalla, where he left school and completed an apprenticeship with BHP. He is a boilermaker by trade and commenced his rank and file activism as an AMWU shop steward. John completed a Bachelor of Arts (majoring in Industrial Relations

and Economics), at the University of Queensland, while working shift work as a boilermaker in Brisbane.

David Peetz

David was research assistant to the Hon E G Whitlam, AC QC, at ANU from November 1978 to December 1981. He is now professor of employment relations at Griffith University.

Valerie Cooms

Valerie is an Aboriginal woman belonging to the Nunukul people of Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) in Quandamooka (Moreton Bay). Valerie has spent many years working in Aboriginal affairs, including briefly on the National Trachoma and Eye Health Program in Cunnamulla and Western Queensland in the 1970s. Valerie worked for the Australian Government across many agencies including the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. Valerie was employed as the CEO of Queensland South Native Title Services and worked towards the native title consent determination for Quandamooka people in July 2011. Valerie is currently the Chairperson of the Quandamooka Yoolooburabee Prescribed Body Corporate which holds native title. Valerie has also served on the Community and Public Sector Union governing council and as a board member for Indigenous Business Australia. Valerie has three children and many grandchildren. Valerie's PhD was awarded by ANU in 2013 for her thesis *Free the Blacks and Smash the Act - Aboriginal Policy and Resistance in Queensland from 1965 to 1975*.

India Anderson

India is a final year Arts student majoring in History and Anthropology at the University of Queensland. She was the 2013-14 Student Scholar at the Centre for the Government of Queensland and is one of this year's *Semper Floreat* editors at the University of Queensland Union.