

QUEENSLAND BRANCH NEWS

NEWSLETTER of the QLD Branch of the MARITIME UNION of AUSTRALIA

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To be truly radical is to make hope possible, rather than despair convincing - Raymond Williams No. 116 - 02 February 2018

VICT Dispute - Life Members and Retirement - Legal Eagle and Contracts - 75th Anniversary Victory at Stalingrad - Activist Union Leader Taken Back to Prison - Autonomous Ships - Global Capitalism and Livelihoods Denied - Box Ship Cyber Certification First - Book Corner - Decline in Trade Union Membership

VICT Dispute

ROUND THE CLOCK meetings regarding the biggest threat to wharfies jobs in recent history!

Reports to members on this important dispute were conducted at the following workplaces:

- DP World
- Patricks
- Hutchisons
- Qube
- Linx

VICT has the potential to cut wages on the wharf dramatically and is a threat we cannot take lightly.



Qld Branch Members being addressed about VICT

The Agreement has been put together by a former MUA Deputy National Secretary in Mick O'Leary who is using the knowledge learned from this union to hurt workers' pay and conditions along with the AMOU who have jumped into bed with an employer once again.

Why an ex union official would destroy an industry they came from is really difficult to understand. The agreement cuts the industry rates and conditions by 40% through the introduction of:

1. Flat hourly rate of pay no penalty rates for casuals of \$36.50 for all hours worked any time of the day on any day of the week.

2. The introduction of 12 hour shifts in terminals which cuts manning by a third.
3. 2.5% cut in super to the bare minimum.
4. Threats and intimidation to outsource jobs to the Philippines, which has happened already.
5. Annual salary for Grade 6 of \$75,000 for 1820 hours worked annually.

This employer has aspirations to move into Brisbane and Sydney by acquiring Hutchisons, which is very possible.

It is absolutely essential that every wharfie in the country gets up to date and behind this fight to protect the stevedoring industry.

If a wharfie had to pick one campaign to support this year it is this!

Say NO to the VICT / ITCSI scourge on your industry and get behind this vital campaign.

In unity - Jason Miners - Acting Branch Secretary

Life Members and Retirement

MICHAEL GREEN "GREENY" has hung his boots up. Greeny has worked on the Brisbane River for the best part of 20 years. Greeny has been an inspiration on the Brisbane Ferries with assisting the MUA and the Brisbane Ferries members fight for better wages and conditions. Greeny is a friend of anyone's. Doesn't mind a punt as long as it's not the favourite on the First four. Happy retirement Comrade.

Trevor Glossop, long time member joined the SUA in 1992 and recently retired from the towage industry in 2018. Trevor, over his long time in the industry, was a key strategic delegate in the core condition of equal time towage rosters in the Port of Gladstone. Trevor, in the twilight of career, was always a sounding board for young members as well as the "Run Job Specialist" Enjoy retirement Comrade.

Rob Lewin, long time Gladstone towage deck rating, has retired after a career spanning over 37 years. Rob first joined the mighty SUA in 1981 and retired from the industry in 2017. Rob first got away in the dredging industry where he worked hard and played harder. Enjoy retirement Comrade.

In Unity - Phil Hansen - MUA Queensland Branch Relief Official

Authorised by Bob Carnegie, Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) Queensland Branch Secretary

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What's in a Contract?

By David Greene



HERE IS A SCENARIO: You are in the market for a new lounge and decide to jump on the website of your favourite furniture retailer.

They have an easy to use online store, where you find and purchase your perfect lounge. You pay by credit card, and the money leaves your account immediately. The website tells you your chosen lounge is available for collection at your local store.

You wait a few days and drive to your local store to pick up your new lounge. The friendly staffer behind the counter clicks on the computer, and says "sorry, we don't actually have that item in stock and it's not available for us to order anymore."

Your dream of that perfectly plush lounge sitting in your living room flashes before your eyes. The retailer tells you they have one in stock in a different city, but you must go and collect it yourself.

Alternatively, you can select one of their other lounges and pay the difference.

You ask if they would transport the lounge from the other city to your local store. No is the answer; that's not their policy. They 'graciously' offer to refund your money, but you aren't at all happy. After all, what's the chances you'll find the perfect sofa again, and anyway, you had your heart set on the one you thought you had bought and paid for!

So, for a very motivated and unhappy customer, what does the law say?

As soon as you went through the online store, selected your item, and paid the price advertised by the retailer, a contract was formed. In basic terms, the contract required you to pay the price in consideration for the retailer providing the lounge. Some online stores may have terms and conditions which say any online order must be confirmed before it is finalised, but many do not. Even with such an apparent exclusion clause, it is arguable a contract has been formed, and is enforceable.

A failure by a retailer to perform under the terms of a contract (in this case, supply of the lounge) is a breach of the contract and enlivens a claim in damages against the retailer for its breach.

The Australian Consumer Law also provides protection and a remedy in damages. Advertising goods for sale on an online store, and entering a contract for those goods, in circumstances where the retailer knew or ought to have known it couldn't deliver on its bargain, is at least misleading and deceptive conduct.

The point of this story is to remind you that just because you do not have a written document called a 'Contract,' it does not mean a legally enforceable contract does not exist. Contracts can be formed in a multitude of ways, including in writing, orally or by conduct (or parts of those in combination). That is true for all types of transactions but note that in Queensland a

contract for the sale of land is not enforceable unless the essential terms are recorded in writing.

An unhappy customer doesn't have to accept any of a retailer's bluster about what it is and is not willing to do in lieu of complying with the contract (supplying the lounge). The law will provide a remedy in damages against a retailer who breaches a contract or engages in misleading and deceptive conduct.

The lesson is to know your rights and stick to your guns. The Queensland Office of Fair Trading, and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission both provide helpful information on their respective websites about the rights of consumers and the responsibilities of retailers.

Before commencing any legal action, it is advisable to seek the advice and guidance of a Solicitor.

Victory at Stalingrad 75th Anniversary

On February 2nd, seventy five years ago, on the banks of the Volga in a city named Stalingrad, the Wehrmacht's elite 6th Army surrendered to the Soviet Army, thus marking the end of the greatest battle in human history. For five brutal months the Soviets 62nd Army, led by the redoubtable General Chuikov, against all odds held out against the better armed, better trained and more numerous German 6th Army, The Conquerors of France.



During this titanic struggle, which held the world's attention for 5 months, the outcome of WW2 quite possibly was held in the balance. After Stalingrad, the allies knew the Wehrmacht could be comprehensively defeated as an entire army had been surrounded and destroyed at Stalingrad.

The losses on both sides were staggering, the 6th army consisted of over 320,000 men at the beginning of the battle with 90,000 surrendering, with only around 6,000 ever returning home to Germany years after.

The losses on the Soviet side were enormous. During the height of the defence in August through November the average life expectancy of a Red Army soldier involved in the cauldron of the battle was less than 24 hours.

The street fighting tactics devised by Chuikov, based fundamentally on 'hugging' the enemy are still taught in armies



around the world today.

Stalingrad marked the decisive turning point of WW2. The German Army and people never really recovered psychologically or physically after the defeat at Stalingrad. For the Soviets and the allies, it meant, as Churchill so succinctly put it, that "the hinge of fate has turned".

The enormous sacrifices of the soldiers of the Red Army and the Soviet People as a whole during the 2nd World War has never been really recognised in the west. One example is that the most cited figures of the Soviet Union's losses in WW2 is 27 million (and this is probably understated) the entire population of Australia is 25 million!

General Chuikov was later to become Marshall Chuikov, his 62nd Army became the 8th Guards Army and fought all the way to Berlin and were some of the first troops to capture the citadel of Nazi Germany.

For those that care, let's ponder a moment and think of those people everywhere from all nations who gave the supreme effort so we, today, do not live under the yoke of fascism.

Iranian Teacher Union Leader Esmail Abdi was Taken Back to The Notorious Evin Prison on Saturday 20 January 2018



HE HAD BEEN released on 9 January, but this was only a temporary reprieve from his six-year sentence, which started in 2016.

The authorities refused to extend his furlough, despite his poor health which resulted from harsh detention conditions.

Esmail Abdi has been targeted for his union activism and campaigns for teachers' rights and for free public

education.

He has committed no crime.

Please take a moment to send your message of protest to Iran:

[Click here to send your message](#)

And please share this message with your friends, family and fellow union members. Thank you.

Rolls-Royce Bets on Autonomous Ships with New Facility

JANUARY 26, 2018—Rolls-Royce sees a future where autonomous and remotely operated ships are a regular part of the maritime landscape. To help the

transformation process, it has opened a new autonomous shipping R&D facility in Turku, Finland.

Called the Research & Development Centre for Autonomous Ships, the new facility includes a Remote and Autonomous Experience Space aimed at showcasing the autonomous ship technologies Rolls-Royce has already introduced as well as those in the development stage.



Photo by Rolls Royce

Marking the opening of the centre, Finnish Minister of Transport and Communications Anne Berner, said, "There is great global interest in autonomous vehicles and vessels as a future means of transport. The opening of the Rolls-Royce Research & Development Centre for Autonomous Ships here in Turku, a maritime city with a history of technological innovation, will help achieve our goal of digitalizing the country's transport sector."

Research at the new facility will focus on autonomous navigation, the development of land-based control centres, and the use of AI in future remote and autonomous shipping operations.

Speaking at the official opening on January 25, Rolls-Royce President Marine Mikael Makinen said, "I'm proud to say that the R&D centre is now up and running and that all stakeholders, partners and customers will be able to see here what a remote controlled and autonomous maritime future could look like, and work with us to shape the future. The experience space that is part of the centre here in Turku, and a similar one we have in our Technology Centre in Norway, is aimed at demonstrating to our customers the very tangible benefits of what is often considered an intangible technology."

The Experience Space includes several interactive tables on which Rolls-Royce can showcase existing and future technologies while aiding the development and introduction of new rules and standards for autonomous shipping.

"The centre allows us to more accurately communicate our capabilities, what we have available today and what will be available tomorrow," said Karno Tenovuo, Rolls-Royce Senior Vice President, Ship Intelligence. "It will completely focus on the development of solutions

capable of smoothing the maritime industry's transition to the digital age. An autonomous maritime ecosystem will open up unprecedented opportunities."

Sourced from:

http://www.marinelog.com/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=28202:rolls-royce-bets-on-autonomous-ships-with-new-facility&Itemid=231

Global Capitalism and Livelihoods Denied: Whipping India's Farmers into Submission!

SOME MEMBERS WHO take the time to read the Branch News might be puzzled about how this article relates to them. Well it's about, once again, the negative effects of globalisation and in this time of neo liberalism and the massive push to urbanisation around the world.

Some of the figures in this article are terrifying, 300 to 400,000 poor Indian farmers have suicided in the last 20 years. That is 15 to 20000 a year or further breaking it down, 300 to 400 a week. They do this in utter despair, with the main reason being in debt to money lenders for buying seed and keeping their farms afloat. All in the name of driving of profit, urbanisation and the industrialisation of agriculture. Also another disturbing fact many Indian farmers are consuming less calories (meaning less food to eat) than 40 years ago. I hope those who read this article ponder on its meaning. Bob Carnegie

In India, there is a push to drive people from the countryside into cities. The mainstream narrative implies that urbanisation is natural in the evolution of societies and constitutes progress. The World Bank wants India to relocate 400 million people to urban centres. Former Chief Finance Minister P. Chidambaram once stated that 85% of the population would eventually live in cities, which would mean displacing many more than 400 million people given that the country's population is heading towards 1.3 billion and that over 60% reside in rural India.

It is easy for some to conflate urbanisation and progress and to believe this is how to 'develop'. But societies do not 'evolve' in a unilinear way. Policy makers merely look to prosperous countries and see the bulk of their populations living in cities with a small percentage working in (heavily subsidised and an unsustainable system of) agriculture. This is what 'we' must do, Indian politicians then say, spurred on by World Bank directives.

The route to capitalism and urbanisation was not 'natural' in Europe and involved the unforeseen outcomes of conflicts and struggles between peasants, landowners, the emerging class of industrialists and the state. The outcomes of these struggles resulted in different routes to modernity and levels of urbanisation.

In the book 'The Invention of Capitalism', economic historian Michael Perelman lays bare the iron fist behind the invisible hand which whipped the English peasantry in a workforce willing to accept factory wage labour. In this article by Yasha Lavene, it is noted that English

peasants didn't want to give up their rural communal lifestyle, leave their land and go work for below-subsistence wages in dangerous factories being set up by a new, rich class of industrial capitalists.

A series of laws and measures were designed to push peasants out of the old and into the new by destroying their traditional means of self-support. Perelman outlines the many different policies through which peasants were forced off the land, not least the destruction of the access to common land by fencing off the commons.

Early capitalists and their cheerleaders complained how peasants were too independent and comfortable to be properly exploited. Indeed, many prominent figures advocated for their impoverishment, so they would leave their land and work for low pay in factories.

In effect, peasants were booted off their land by depriving a largely self-reliant population of its productive means. Although self-reliance persisted among the working class (self-education, recycling products, a culture of thrift, etc), this too was eventually eradicated via advertising and an education system that ensured conformity and dependence on the goods manufactured by capitalism.

'Development': facilitating capital

"We build cyber cities and techno parks and IITs at the cost of the welfare of the downtrodden and the environment. We don't think how our farmers on whose toil we feed manage to sustain themselves; we fail to see how the millions of the poor survive. We look at the state-of-the-art airports, IITs, highways and bridges, the inevitable necessities for the corporate world to spread its tentacles everywhere and thrive, depriving the ordinary people of even the basic necessities of life and believe it is development." – Sukumaran CV

Today's affluent sections of urbanised Indians are often far removed from the daily struggles of the farmers for whom they depend on for their food. While inequalities spiral, many city dwellers echo similar sentiments of the cheerleaders of early capitalism described by Perleman when they say loan waivers for farmers are a drain on the economy and any subsidies given to them or the poor in general just encourages unproductivity or fecklessness.

Neoliberal dogmatists are quite content to sign a death warrant for Indian farmers.

Despite nice-sounding, seemingly benign terms like 'foreign direct investment', 'ease of doing business', making India 'business friendly' or 'enabling the business of agriculture' - behind the World Bank/corporate-inspired rhetoric, policies and directives is the hard-nosed approach of neoliberal capitalism that is no less brutal for Indian farmers than early industrial capitalism was in England for its peasantry.

Like the English peasantry, India's farmers are also being booted off the land.

Let us take a look at what has happened to India's farmers. Trade policy and agriculture specialist Devinder Sharma has written much on their plight (access his

writing here). GDP growth has been fuelled on the back of cheap food and the subsequent impoverishment of farmers. The gap between their income and the rest of the population, including public sector workers, has widened enormously. Rural India consumes less calories than it did 40 years ago. And corporations receive massive handouts and interest-free loans because it supposedly spurs job creation (which it has not), while any proposed financial injections (or loan waivers) for agriculture (which would pale into insignificance compared to corporate subsidies/written off loans) are depicted as a drain on the economy.

In short, although farmers continue to produce bumper harvests, the impact of underinvestment, lack of a secure income and effective minimum support prices; the undermining of the public distribution system; exposure to cheap imports courtesy of rigged international trade; the hardship caused by deregulation and profiteering companies which supply seeds and proprietary inputs; the loss of state agricultural support services; and the impacts of the corporate-backed/written Indo-US Knowledge Initiative on Agriculture, have made farming financially non-viable for many.

It is a deliberate strategy: part of the plan to displace the existing system of production with one dominated from seed to food processing to retail to plate by Western corporations. Independent cultivators are being bankrupted, land will be amalgamated to facilitate large-scale industrial cultivation and those that remain will be absorbed into corporate supply chains and squeezed as they work on contracts, the terms of which will be dictated by large agribusiness and chain retailers.

Between 300,000 and 400,000 farmers have taken their lives since 1997 and millions more are experiencing economic distress. Over 6,000 are leaving the sector each day. And yet the corporate-controlled type of agriculture being imposed and/or envisaged only leads to degraded soil, less diverse and nutrient-deficient diets, polluted water and water shortages and poor health.

In addition to displacing people to facilitate the needs of resource extraction industries, unconstitutional land grabs for special economic zones, nuclear plants and other corporate money-making projects have forced many others from the land.

Various reports have concluded that we need to support more resilient, diverse, sustainable agroecological methods of farming and develop locally-based food economies. Indeed, small farms are more productive than giant industrial (export-oriented) farms and produce most of the world's food on much less land.

Instead, in India, the trend continues to move in the opposite direction towards industrial-scale agriculture for the benefit of Monsanto, Cargill, Bayer and other transnational players. Is this the future India needs, with a fraction of farmers left on the land, trapped on an environmentally unsustainable chemical-GMO treadmill?

While whipping farmers, tribals and the unorganised sector into submission by depriving them of their livelihoods by one way or another, India's political elite blindly adhere to the mantra that urbanisation equals progress and look to the West, whose path to 'development' was based on colonialism, eradicating self-reliance and beating the peasantry into submission. There was nothing 'natural' or 'progressive' about any of it. It involved the planned eradication of peasants and rural life by capitalist interests and the sucking of wealth from places like India.

In India, the bidding of capital is these days done through its compliant politicians, the World Bank, the WTO and lop-sided, egregious back-room deals written by corporations.

By Colin Todhunter

Sourced from: <https://www.counterpunch.org/2018/01/26/global-capitalism-and-livelihoods-denied-whipping-indias-farmers-into-submission/>

Giant COSCO Box Ship Achieves a Cyber Certification First

JANUARY 16, 2018 — Delivered today by shipbuilder NACKS (Nantong COSCO KHI Ship Engineering Co, Ltd.) to China's COSCO Shipping Lines, the 20,000 TEU MV COSCO Shipping Aries is the first containership to have an energy management system that has been cyber-certified by classification society Lloyd's Register.

"She is not only one of the largest containerships in the world, but also a ship with high cyber functions," says Shi Yongxin, COSCO Shipping Container Line Co., Ltd, Safety & Technology Department, General Manager. "We have always attached great importance to a cyber enabled fleet in order to enhance fleet management, reduce energy consumption and control emissions. In the field of cyber enabled ships, LR has great research findings and well established requirements. During the construction of the MV COSCO Shipping Aries, we are very fortunate to have the great support from LR and finally, successfully obtain the first AL3 level descriptive note for ultra large containership in the world, this ensure our goal is successfully achieved."

The ship complies with the revised version of LR's Cyber-enabled ships ShipRight procedure, issued in December 2017 and its energy management system has received LR's cyber-enabled ship (CES) descriptive note "Cyber AL3 SECURE PERFORM."

The Accessibility Level (AL) refers to the level of autonomous/remote access to a system, ranging from the information-only AL0 (no access) and AL1 (manual access) through AL2 (cyber access for remote or autonomous monitoring) up to the highest AL5 (autonomous monitoring and control, with no onboard permission required or override possible).

AL3 is defined by LR as "Cyber access for autonomous/remote monitoring and control (onboard permission is required and onboard override is possible)."

According to LR, "cyber-enabled systems" are

considered to be systems installed onboard ships that would conventionally be controlled by the ship's crew but which, through recent advances in IT and Operational Technology (OT), now include the capability to be monitored, or monitored and controlled, either remotely or autonomously with or without a crew onboard the ship.

The functionality provided by cyber-enabled systems can range from simple remote monitoring with a crew onboard through to a fully autonomous vessel without a crew onboard.



Consequently, as the risks can vary considerably, the assessment of cyber-enabled systems requires a risk-based approach to identify the hazards introduced by cyber-enablement and to mitigate the associated risks. COSCO Shipping is now hoping to apply LR's CES descriptive notes to some of its other vessels.

Nick Brown, LR Marine & Offshore Director said: "The request from COSCO to apply LR's descriptive note was made relatively late in the project, which represented quite a challenge for LR, NACKS and COSCO to complete this prior to delivery, especially with the system being AL3. However, with support from LR's global network of experts, we were able to ensure that the system could be certified in time for delivery and we are delighted to have been able to work on this innovative project."

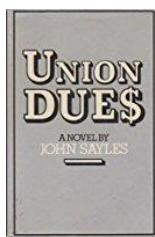
Sourced from:

http://www.marinelog.com/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=28123:giant-cosco-box-ship-achieves-a-cyber-certification-first&Itemid=231

Book Corner

Union Dues - John Sayles (1977)

Review by Craig Buckley



JOHN SAYLES IS best known as the progressive, independent film-maker who gave us films of American working class life, such as *Matewan* (about the Virginia coal strikes in the 1920s), *The Brother From Another Planet*, *Eight Men Out*, *Lone Star*, among others. However, he has also penned several novels, including

this 1977 work, *Union Dues*. Set in the late 1960s, Sayles

uses the story of a father and son to contrast the experiences of two generations during a time of social and political conflict. The father (Hunter), a West Virginia coal miner and union activist, tries to find his son, who has run away from home to Boston. The son (Hobie) finds himself involved with radical college students during the political (anti-Vietnam war, anti-racist) upheavals of the 1960s. Hunter takes day labouring work and other short-term blue collar jobs to support himself while trying to track Hobie down.

Like his films, Sayles' novel provides us with a variety of authentic characters, not stereotypes or caricatures. Among its other virtues, the book does an excellent (and realistic) job of portraying the bankruptcy of a middle class radicalism disconnected from working class struggle and experience. Although out of print for a long time, the novel was republished in 2005, so both original and second hand copies are available via the internet. I am not aware of any e-book format, apart from an audiobook version available from Amazon.

Decline in Trade Union Membership Article Continued

By Bob Carnegie and Martin Thomas

CHANGES IN THE workforce mean that unions have to be quick on our feet, and if we limit ourselves to conserving membership in "traditional" sectors then we will decline. But the changes do not necessarily make new sectors harder to organise than old ones. The spread of tightly-timed global supply chains gives more groups of workers industrial power by creating "pinch points" in those chains.

Unionists often say that the expansion of consumer credit has made union organising harder, because many workers, even on high wages, spend up to their credit-card limits, and box themselves into being narrowly focused on maximising wages to service their debts. There are surely some like that. As of January 2017, the average credit card holder in Australia had an unpaid balance of about \$4,262 and was paying \$734 in interest per year.

But figures from the USA, which has higher credit-card debt levels than Australia, show a heavy concentration of maxed-out credit-card holders among students, not among better-paid workers. When workers say they "can't" take industrial action because "they can't afford it", very often they are giving what they think sounds like a respectable reason, but the real reason is that they just don't want to. If that response is common, it is an effect of union weakness, not an original cause of it.

In some ways the expansion of consumer credit eases industrial action. Urging his fellow-employers to support the Dublin lock-out of 1913, to break the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, William Martin Murphy declared: "Every one of the shareholders will have three meals a day... I don't know if the men who go out can count on this". And indeed, even after transporting many of their children to England to be cared for in trade unionists' families there, the Dublin workers were starved

into defeat. In the longest strike or lock-out today, workers have many ways to avoid starving, and defer debt until later.

Unionists also say that young workers are reluctant to join unions, and fail to understand union culture. Unionisation rates are lower among young workers. Yet surveys in the USA, in the UK, and in Ireland have shown more favourable attitudes to unions among 18-24 year olds than older people. In the British general election of June 2016, in which Labour was closely associated with unions and pro-union attitudes, 18-29 year olds voted almost two-thirds for Labour and scarcely 20% for the Tories, while people over 60 voted over 60% Tory and scarcely 20% Labour. Young people join unions less because most of them have their first jobs in areas like fast-food, in which unions have little presence and mostly make little effort. Their jobs are often short-term: in Australia, 20% of all casual workers are 15-19, and 60% under 35. Even if young workers are pro-union, they are less likely to join unions than workers who expect to be in their jobs for a long time, and who find other unionists in their workplaces when they start.

Trade unions can roll along, reproducing themselves, in stable industrial environments, without much political input. The history of the movement, though, tells us that most young trade-union activists start off being young activists of the political left before they become trade-union figures. Even in the Britain's conservative New Model Unions of the 1850s and 1860s, leading people like George Odger and Robert Applegarth had been Chartists before they became trade-union figures. All the leading figures of the French CGT of 1895-1914, avowedly syndicalist and anti-political, had been left political activists in one or another of France's small socialist parties of the time before they became trade unionists (the one exception, Emile Pouget, had been an organised anarchist). Samuel Gompers, the father of US "business unionism", was inducted into labour-movement activism by Karl Lurrell, a former leading member of the First International, and learned German as a young man in order to be able to read socialist pamphlets.

The Australian union movement seems at first sight to be an exception. Australian workers had small unions of skilled workers from the 1820s, and larger unions from the 1850s, though they had no socialist groups until the Democratic Association of Victoria (which lasted only some months, in 1872) and then the Australian Socialist League (from 1887). First sight is misleading. Most early Australian trade unionists would have had their social and political awareness developed before their union activity by experiences in Britain, or ideas passed on among migrants with radical backgrounds.

A new generation of young workers will be organised into trade unions, not just by older trade unionists doing steady work in the areas where they are already organised, but by a big-enough core of new young people being inspired and educated as social activists, and taking

their inspiration and education into their workplaces to organise other young people round them.

A critical determinant of recent decades was that the crises of the 1970s hit labour movements which, in Dan Gallin's words quoted above, had "gone to sleep" for two decades. Everywhere social democratic parties, which had had an influx of new young members after 1945, saw their memberships decline and age, and their ambitions fade. The ALP followed the pattern: its membership declined from 75,000 in 1954 (when the country's total population was nine million) to about 45,000 at the end of the 1950s. (It is about the same now, in a population of 24 million).

The Communist Party of Australia was a major factor in the unions into the 1980s. But it too brought a culture of decline and diminished aspirations into the crises of the 1970s. Its membership had been over 20,000 at the end of World War Two, but declined to 5,000 by 1968. Since the early 1950s its main political ideas had been reduced to "unity" and "peace". As one description puts it, a "requirement of the search for unity for peace... was the deliberate setting aside by the CPA of revolutionary and class slogans... When helping to formulate statements or slogans for peace organisations, communists avoided all reference to 'class struggle' or other traditional militant terms".

By 1970, moreover, fourteen years had passed since the USSR government's formal statement, in 1956, that Stalin had been guilty of crimes. Thinking like that of the British CP journalist Alison Macleod would have been widespread in at least part of the minds of many CPA members: "We knew about it [the crimes of Stalinism] and we did not care. We had, by an act of will, decided not to care... [we] had insisted on being lied to". Or like that of the former British CPer Doris Lessing: "It was the most sensitive, compassionate, socially-concerned people who became Communists... These decent, kind people supported the worst, the most brutal tyranny of our time".

Such qualms disabled the CPA from inspiring young people to ardent militancy. Its Eureka Youth League, fair-sized in 1945, collapsed completely after 1968. Radical socialist groups beyond the CPs were small and beleaguered everywhere in the 1950s and 60s. In Australia there was almost nothing beyond a small group around Nick Origlass.

The roots of the decline of trade unionism since the 1970s were planted long before the 1970s, in the period when the trade unions were a powerful "estate of the realm", confident and even complacent about their future.

As Dan Gallin puts it: "The unions concentrated on their presumed 'core business' - collective bargaining with 'social partners' - the [labour-based] parties concentrated on elections, and the movement lost its roots in society". The "civil society of labour... vanished".

One index is the decline of the working-class press. From 1912 to 1964, the British labour movement had a daily newspaper, the Daily Herald, from 1922 owned by

the TUC. In 1933 it had the biggest circulation of any newspaper in the world. In 1964 - long before neoliberalism, in a period when the unions were confident about their influence and strength - the paper was sold off, and became The Sun, under which name it is notorious today as the vilest of the capitalist press.

The German SPD's daily Vorwärts - once a source of light for millions of workers - was restarted after 1945 as only a weekly. In 1989 - before the decline in union density, which started in Germany only in the 1990s - the SPD reduced it to an SPD members' bulletin, which now appears only six times a year. The French Socialist Party's Le Populaire had the biggest circulation in the country, after the CP's L'Humanité, in 1944-6: it declined to a 27,000-circulation one-sheet bulletin by 1954, and was abandoned in 1970, at a time when the labour movement was expanding fast. L'Humanité itself declined from 600,000 circulation in 1945-6 to 170,000 in 1954.

Australian labour movement papers expired earlier rather than later: Sydney's Labor Daily in 1941, when it taken over by the Daily Telegraph; Brisbane's Daily Standard in 1936.

Unions still have union journals, and now they have websites. But the best that can be said of the best of them is that they enable union activists to search for information about conferences, campaigns, and so on without difficulty. None of them thinks of seeking a readership outside union members.

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Email: paul.gallagher@mua.org.au

QLD Organiser Paul Petersen
Mob: 0404 453 869

Email: paul.petersen@mua.org.au

WHERE?? - CANNON HILL BOWLS CLUB
18 Lang Street, Cannon Hill, QLD


WHEN??? Thursday 22 February, 2018
1600 - 2000

WHAT??? Free Bar Tab, Food and Entertainment
Partners and Kids welcome
The first of many social events for 2018.

WHY??? Have a fun afternoon and a yarn with like-minded people.

RSVP: QLD MUA Office: 07 33957215 or muaqld@mua.org.au

Paul Petersen MUA QLD Organiser: 0404 453 869
Phil Hansen QLD Youth: 0401 799 934



Member Survey

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Members should be aware MUA Queensland Branch has put a survey out to all members. If you haven't received your survey via email, please contact the Queensland MUA

Branch to ensure your details are up to date. (07 33957215)

It is important members fill in the survey and add any constructive comments to ensure your union is moving in the direction the members want. *Paul Petersen - Qld Organiser*