

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL
OF TRADE UNIONS'

75th

anniversary

COMMEMORATIVE BOOKLET



THE ACTU 75 YEARS STRONG

When union delegates gathered in the Victorian Trades Hall in 1927 to establish the Australian Council of Trade Unions they had a clear vision — to lift the living standards and quality of working life of working people.

And their strategy to achieve this was also clear — to build union organisation of the workforce on a national basis.

75 years further on, the ACTU, its affiliated unions and their members can celebrate a proud record of achievement on behalf of working Australians and the community.

The industrial gains are many: decades of wage increases through the award system and campaigns in the field, safer workplaces, equality for women, improvements in working hours, entitlements to paid holidays and better employment conditions, and the establishment of a universal superannuation system.

The ACTU has played a role in all of these achievements, but has contributed to fairness and justice in the community as well – contributing to Australia’s post-war development and immigration program, the social security system, Medicare and education — to name just a few areas of policy.

The ACTU has also represented Australian unionism in the international arena, opposing discrimination and oppression and supporting human rights. The ACTU aid agency, APHEDA — Union Aid Abroad, contributes to humanitarian projects in many countries.

The enduring commitment of working Australians to a fairer society is reflected in the continuing fight to protect the fundamental principles of unionism.

The right to organise and the right to collectively bargain sit at the heart of the 21st century struggle for a just Australia, just as it did throughout the previous century.

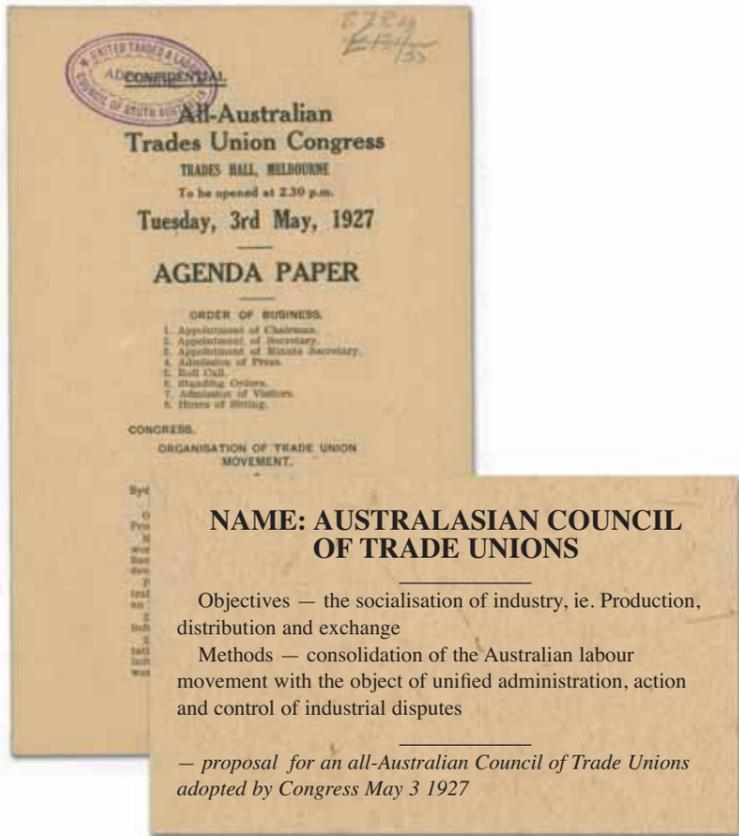
We will best keep the faith with those who have worked and sacrificed to build the ACTU over the past 75 years by keeping the union cause bright and vibrant into the future.



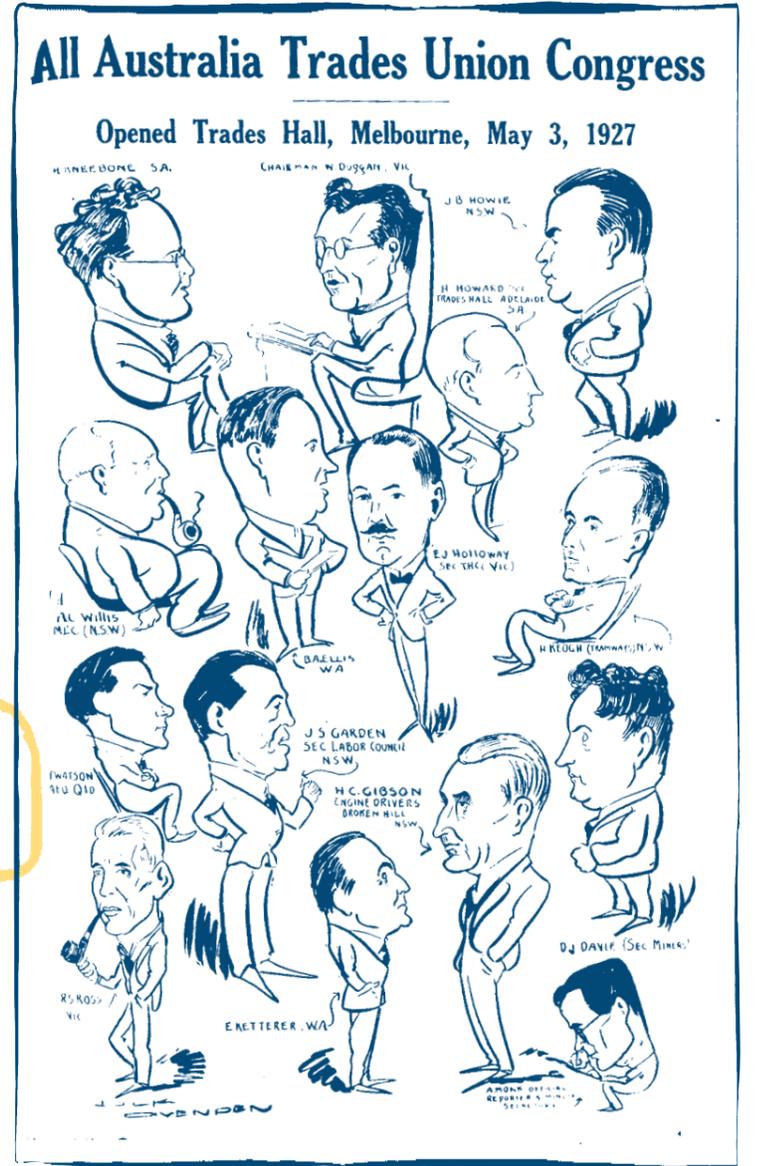
Sharan Burrow
ACTU President

Greg Combet
ACTU Secretary

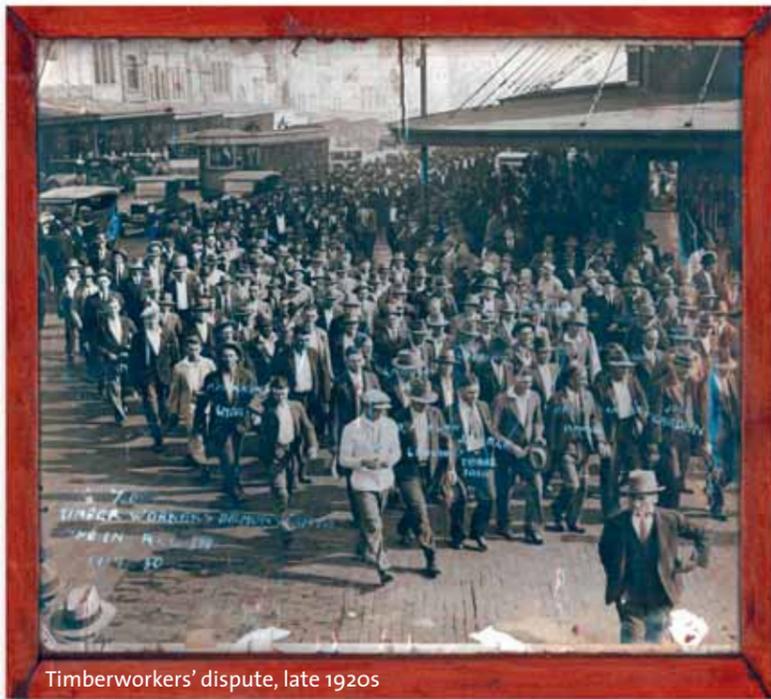
1927 THE BEGINNING



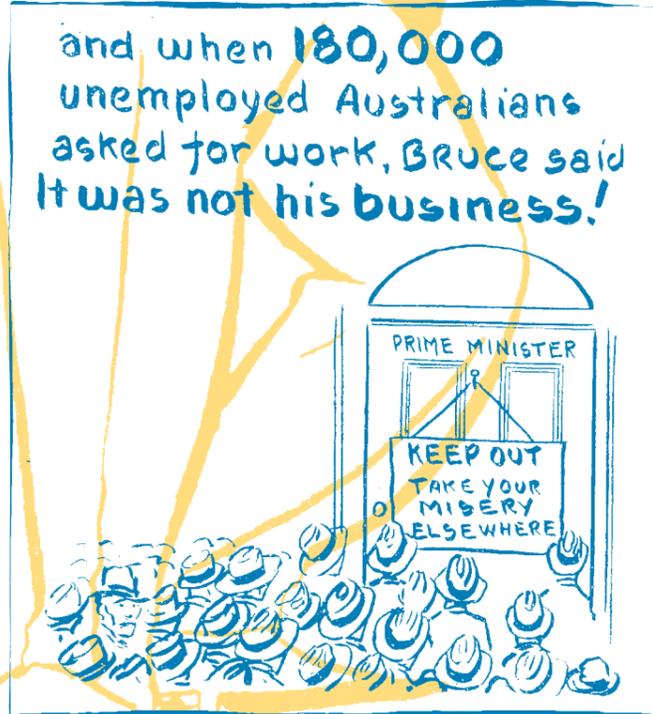
Bruce's militant anti-union government had its own waterfront dispute, attempting to control unionists by refusing them a license to work. The ACTU would essentially face the same fight 70 years later.



The ACTU was born in a period of intense industrial turmoil. Coal miners, timberworkers, wharfies and manufacturing workers were all mired in bitter strikes or lock-outs, some lasting more than a year. Under the conservative fist of Prime Minister Stanley Melbourne Bruce, secret ballots, repressive anti-strike laws and heavy financial penalties for strikers were the order of the day. On May 3 1927, 108 unions held their own parliament at Melbourne's Trades Hall and voted overwhelmingly to form a national body. As the 20s drew to an end, the infant ACTU was about to be further tested by the extreme unemployment of the Depression years.

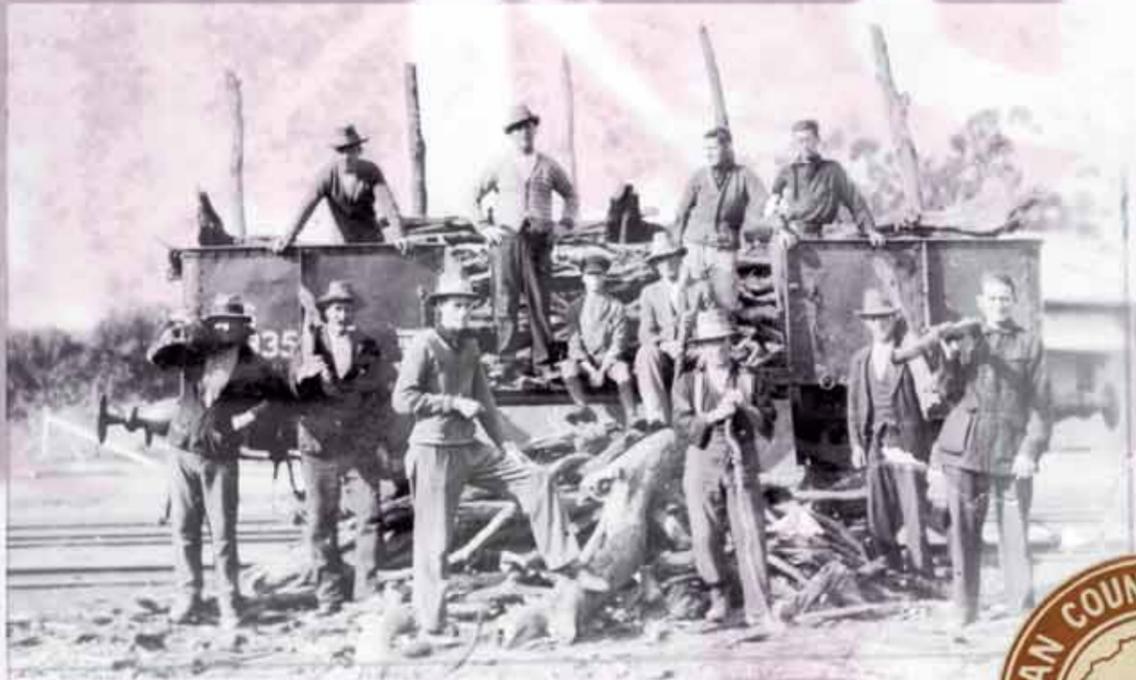


Timberworkers' dispute, late 1920s



1927-2002 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

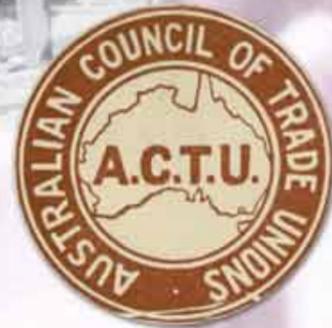
Over the last 75 years the union movement has made tremendous gains on the most important issues for workers and their families — wages, hours, representation, leave, security, safety.



Surviving the Depression

By 1932, 30% of all trade unionists were out of work. Affiliation to the ACTU weakened as unions lost money and members. Australia's GDP fell by 30 million pounds in one year. The Arbitration Court cut award wages by 10% indefinitely.

When the recovery began in 1933, the ACTU argued that workers should share in the new growth and from 1934, succeeded in having the wage cut gradually restored.



In 1944 staff at Sydney newspapers the Herald, the Telegraph, the Sun and the Mirror struck successfully for a 40 hour week. ♡



▶ 40 Hour Week

In 1946, the ACTU lodged a claim for a 40 hour week. It argued that shorter hours would make workers more efficient and the booming economy could afford it. Two years later the case was won and the 40 hour week began on January 1, 1948.

▶ Reasonable Hours

A 38 hour week was adopted in many awards throughout the 1980s and used as a standard in the 1983 National Wage Case. However, in the last 2 decades working hours have steadily grown again for many workers. This year, under the ACTU's Reasonable Hours Test Case, the right to refuse overtime — if it conflicted unreasonably with family responsibilities or health and safety — was extended to all workers.



▶ Embracing Immigration

For decades, unions opposed immigration and demanded enforcement of the White Australia Policy, in the belief that cheap, foreign labour hurt employment.

But the expanding economy of the 1940s brought full

employment and the ACTU — driven by the foresight of Albert Monk — embraced the ALP's "populate or perish" program. Millions of post-war migrants entered Australia and by 1966 they made up more than 30% of the manufacturing workforce and had begun changing Australian life for the better.

1927-2002 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

TO GAIN LONG SERVICE LEAVE JUSTICE!



Marching up Bourke Street, Melbourne

▶ Leave

Over 75 years the ACTU has fought for and won an impressive raft of leave provisions bringing humanity and balance into the lives of workers. This includes:

- 1941 ▶ 1 week annual leave
- 1941 ▶ sick leave
- 1946 ▶ 2 weeks annual leave
- 1953 ▶ long service leave
- 1963 ▶ 3 weeks annual leave
- 1970 ▶ 4 weeks annual leave
- 1971 ▶ maternity leave
- 2001 ▶ maternity & carers leave for casuals

The ACTU is now pushing for extended carers leave, paid maternity leave and better access to all forms of leave for casuals.

▶ Equal Pay for Women

For decades, women doing the same work as men were paid just a fraction of their salary. In line with societal norms of 1907, Justice Higgins, in establishing the Basic Wage, ruled that a man's wage must be enough to feed and clothe his wife and family. A woman's wage was to pay only for herself.

A landmark ruling in 1969 smashed through the discrimination and by 1974 all women were finally entitled to equal pay for work of equal value.

▶ 50/50 ACTU Executive

In 1993, the ACTU Congress voted to bring gender balance to the Executive which had been male-dominated since 1927. A 50% quota achieved in 2000 has seen women equally included in the decision-making processes of the ACTU

▶ Superannuation

From as early as the 1960s, a number of unions achieved superannuation for their members and established industry funds. This led to a wider push among unions to ensure working people would be able to enjoy a decent level of retirement income.

In the 1986 National Wage Case, the ACTU argued for and won 3% universal super for all award workers. Compulsory super has since risen to 9% through the legislated Super Guarantee Charge, negotiated under the Accord in 1991. The ACTU is now campaigning for a 15% rate. Industry funds started by unions and employer organisations in the 1980s now have 7.4 million members and \$50 billion in workers' savings.



▶ Unification of the Union Movement — ACSPA & CAGEO

In the late 1970s, Australia's blue and white collar unions merged under the banner of the ACTU, unifying the movement. The merger with ACSPA (Australian Council of Salaried & Professional Associations) and CAGEO (Council of Australian Government Employee Organisations) extended the ACTU's reach across banking, insurance, teaching, local government, nursing and many other white collar occupations.

▶ Work and Family

In 2003 the ACTU will begin a Work and Family Test Case to create flexibility and choice for workers with young children. The claim includes an increase in unpaid leave for new mothers, more flexible working hours and the right to return to part time work.

▶ Redundancy Payments

In 1984, an ACTU test case established a standard of 8 weeks severance pay as an award right for sacked workers. The case reflected the changing nature of a globalised economy in which thousands of jobs were being cut across most industries, particularly blue collar. In 2003 the ACTU will launch a new test case to increase the 8 week limit to 16

weeks, and for workers over 45, 20 weeks.

▶ Unions At Work — Building Our Future

The ACTU's new organising strategy detailed in the unions@work report in 1999 has delivered intensive training to more than 9000 organisers and delegates through organising centres in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. The increased focus on strategic workplace organising has been accompanied by two years of net growth in union membership nationally.

▶ Occupational Health and Safety

Unionists have consistently ranked OHS as a priority since the ACTU's first detailed policy was adopted at the 1979 Congress.

Recent national campaigns by the ACTU's OHS Unit include hazardous chemicals (1995), dangerous machinery and equipment (1996), stress at work (1997), work overload (1998), dangerous hours (1999) and bullying at work (2000).

A National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (NOHSC) was established in 1985 and in 2002, the ACTU, state and federal governments and employers endorsed Australia's first 10 year national OHS strategy.



LEADERS

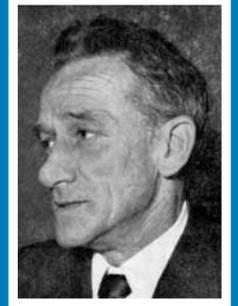
The unionised workplace has produced some of our toughest and most savvy leaders. From its inception the leadership of the ACTU has been a roll call of brilliant working men and women who have played a central role in shaping Australia's history.



Albert Monk (1900-1975)
President 1934-1943 / 1949-1969
Secretary 1943-1949



Harold Souter (1911-1994)
Acting Secretary 1956-1957
Secretary 1957-1977



Reg Broadby (1904-1956)
Secretary 1949-1956



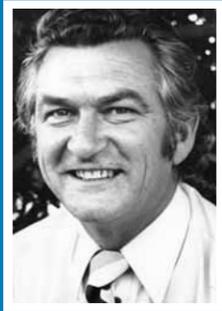
Jennie George (b.1947)
Assistant Secretary 1991-1996
President 1996-2000



Greg Combet (b. 1958)
Assistant Secretary 1996-2000
Secretary 2000 – present



Sharan Burrow (b.1954)
President 2000 - present



Bob Hawke (b. 1929)
President 1969-1980



Peter Nolan (b. 1934)
Secretary 1977-1983



Cliff Dolan (1920-2000)
President 1980 – 1985



Simon Crean (b. 1949)
President 1985-1990



Bill Kelty (b. 1948)
Assistant Secretary 1977-1983
Secretary 1983-2000



Martin Ferguson (b.1953)
President 1990-1996

ACTU PRESIDENTS

Bill Duggan 1927-34	Albert Monk 1934-43	Percy Clarey 1943-49	Albert Monk 1949-69	Bob Hawke 1969-80	Cliff Dolan 1980-85	Simon Crean 1985-90	Martin Ferguson 1990-96	Jennie George 1996-2000	Sharan Burrow 2000—
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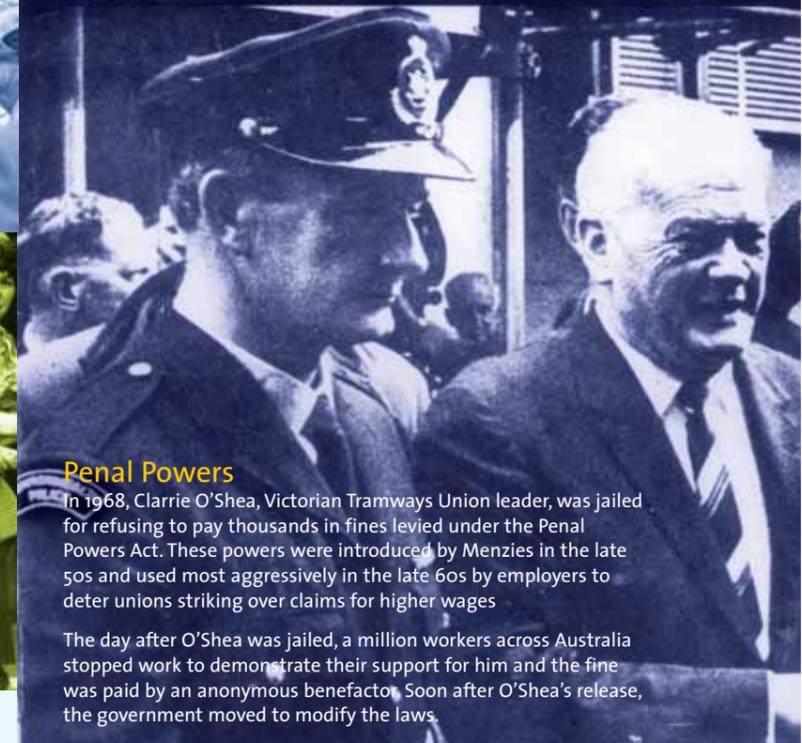
ACTU SECRETARIES

Charles Crofts 1927-43	Albert Monk 1943-49	Reg Broadby 1949-56	Harold Souter 1956-77	Peter Nolan 1977-83	Bill Kelty 1983-2000	Greg Combet 2000—
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▶ POLITICS, UNIONS AND THE ACTU



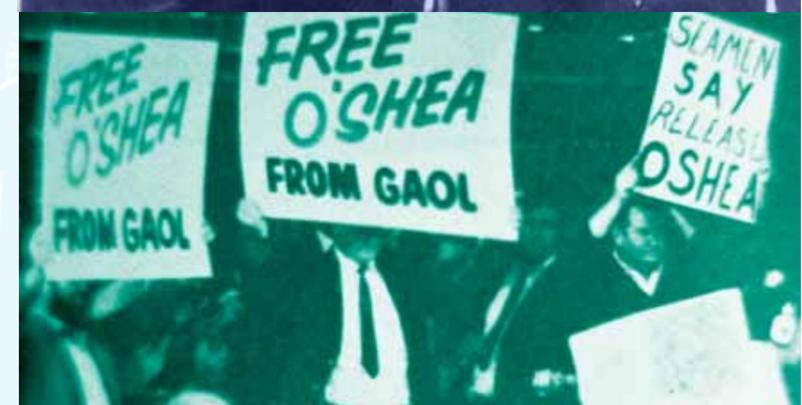
ABOLISH THE PENAL POWERS FREEDOMS FIGHT OF '69



Penal Powers

In 1968, Clarrie O'Shea, Victorian Tramways Union leader, was jailed for refusing to pay thousands in fines levied under the Penal Powers Act. These powers were introduced by Menzies in the late 50s and used most aggressively in the late 60s by employers to deter unions striking over claims for higher wages.

The day after O'Shea was jailed, a million workers across Australia stopped work to demonstrate their support for him and the fine was paid by an anonymous benefactor. Soon after O'Shea's release, the government moved to modify the laws.



After World War One, the beliefs and actions of many unionists were shaped by turbulent international events, coupled with economic conditions at home. When the ACTU was formed in 1927, it was backed by a broad church of affiliates - some with revolutionary beliefs, some following the labourist tradition and others occupying the political ground in between.

The Russian Revolution in 1917, the Depression and the rise of Fascism in the 1930s, the onset of the Cold War in the late 1940s and the long economic boom of the 1950s and '60s significantly influenced ideas and debate within the ACTU.

Despite political tensions, particularly during the Cold War years, affiliated unions increased their membership and the ACTU's authority grew.

Tellingly, the union movement remained united when the ALP split in 1955. In the most testing of situations, union leaders remained committed to the overriding goal of protecting and advancing the wages, conditions and quality of life of ordinary working Australians and their families.

The 1960s and Beyond



▶ The Hawke Transition

In 1969 Bob Hawke was elected ACTU President and steered the organisation through a period of enormous social change. The ACTU's role in influencing social policy came to the fore in areas like education, health, housing and family payments. Meanwhile, industrial protests against apartheid, the Vietnam War, sexual discrimination and other social issues captured the headlines.

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▶ Whitlam

Gough Whitlam came to power in 1972, shrugging off 2 stifling decades of conservative rule. Labor introduced Medibank, encouraged union membership, supported the ACTU's wage and hours cases and expanded the public sector. Unions were, however, disappointed by a hefty cut to tariffs. With the

long boom years at an end, unemployment and inflation had begun to dog Australia's economy.



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▶ Fraser

The conservative Fraser Government brought in anti-union legislation to dampen wage growth. In response, the ACTU began to develop its "consensus" policy - a proposal to work with a Labor government to bolster the economy.

▶ Hawke

In 1983, Labor was elected to power with former ACTU President Bob Hawke as Prime Minister. In partnership with ACTU Secretary Bill Kelty, Hawke launched "the Accord" with unions - a mechanism to bring inflation under control, promote jobs growth and investment and to implement social wage improvements in partnership with centralised wage fixation. Union membership began a slow decline as the economy underwent substantial restructuring.

After the stock market crash in 1987, unemployment and astronomic interest rates

hit workers hard as recession took hold.

▶ Keating

Enterprise bargaining was introduced in 1993, ending decades of centralised wage fixing. Since that time the real wages of many unionists have increased.

▶ Howard

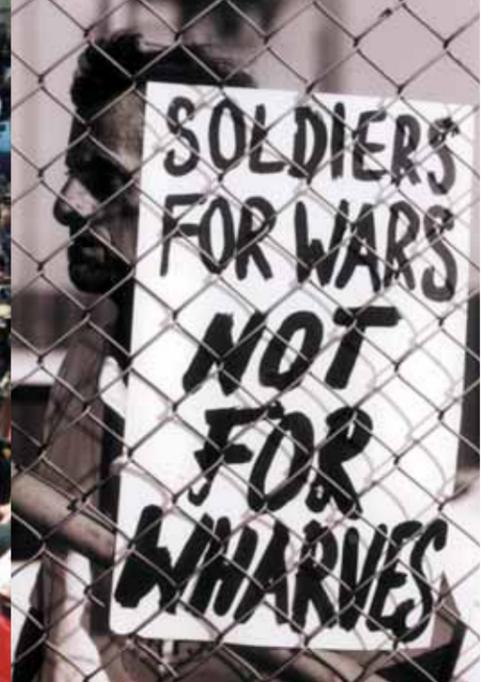
Reminiscent of the anti-union Bruce Government of the 1920s, John Howard came to power with a detailed plan to demolish unionism in the maritime, meat, construction and mining industries, resulting in some epic battles, not least the Waterfront Dispute of 1998. His Workplace Relations Act

re-introduced fines for illegal strike action, reduced awards to "20 allowable matters" and introduced individual contracts. He also stripped the powers of the Industrial Relations Commission. During this period, the ACTU and

unions have successfully defended the right to collectively bargain and staved off further anti-union laws. Union membership levels have increased over the last two years as unions have refocused on workplace organisation.



▶ WATERSHED DISPUTES



Large strikes don't tell the whole story of our movement. Every day millions of trade unionists take small stands that incrementally better the lives of working people. But big disputes showcase the passion, courage and breadth of solidarity that holds our movement together.



▶ Early Battles 1920s – In the Beginning

The fledgling ACTU had a baptism of fire with several major industrial conflicts in its first years. An early victory in a dispute over piece work in the metal trades industry was followed by a spate of protracted disputes, with few positive outcomes. In a political climate that was militantly anti-union, timber workers struck for five months as employers tried to increase their hours to 48 a week, while the miners were locked out for more than a year over a wage cut.

▶ Pig Iron and a Principled Stand

In 1938 waterside workers at Port Kembla refused to load pig



iron bound for Japan in a stand against fascism and the Menzies Government which was prepared to put BHP's profits before the national interest. The wharfies received widespread support from the union movement. The willingness of the WWF to accept the assistance of the ACTU during the dispute marked the peak body's growing authority.

▶ War Heroes Demand a 40 Hour Week

Hours of work were the defining issue for returned servicemen and their unions at the end of World War Two. The campaign for a 40 hour week began with a successful strike in the newspaper industry in 1944. The ACTU took up the issue for other unions in the Arbitration Court, kicking off what Albert Monk described as a lawyers' picnic, lasting 2 years. In 1948, it culminated in the historic decision to codify the 40 hour week.

▶ Cold War Splits

Cold war politics cast a shadow over the union movement from the late 1940s, notably in the 1949

coal strike where the Communist leaders of the Miners Federation clashed bitterly with the ACTU and Labor Government.

▶ Defending the Social Gains of the Long Boom

In 1976, the ACTU led a national stoppage in defence of Medibank, the national health scheme.

The Fraser government was threatening to dismantle the scheme — a principal social gain of the Whitlam era.

Australia. Howard secretly trained soldiers as wharfies in the ports of Dubai and colluded with Patrick to sack its 2000 workers and replace them with the strikebreakers.

The lock-out took place in the dead of night. Security guards in balaclavas roaming the docks with attack dogs on chains became the defining motif of the dispute.

The fight produced a robust display of modern union solidarity, as well as



▶ MUA Here To Stay — Waterfront Showdown

In 1998 the Howard Government marked its first term by backing Patrick Stevedores in a vicious attack on the Maritime Union of

widespread community support, over many months at picket lines across Australia. After a stunning moral and High Court victory, the MUA workers were re-instated.

WORKING WOMEN'S UNSTOPPABLE MARCH

Over the last century, women have transformed the workplace through their struggle for equal pay and the right to work. Union women led the way over those decades and are still fighting today recognised in the modern workplace.

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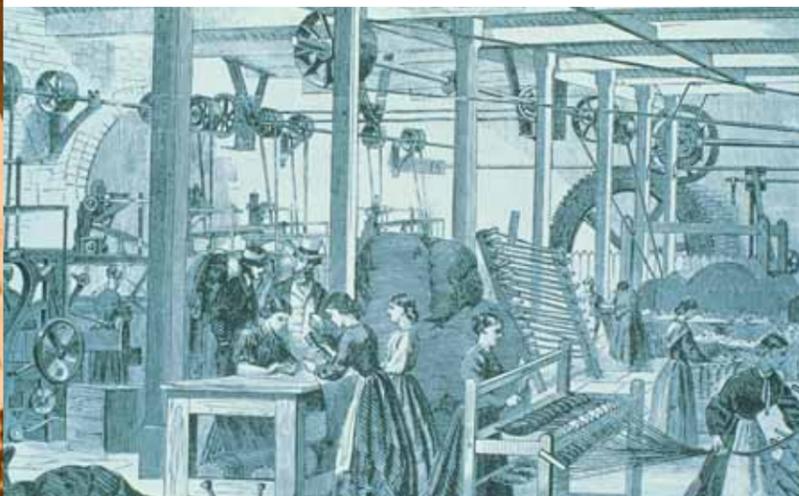


Vida Goldstein — one of Australia's leading suffragettes and an early campaigner for equal rights in the workplace

► **Early Years**
Prior to World War Two, working women were excluded from craft-based unions because they were regarded as unskilled. They formed their own unions such as the Shirt and Collarmakers, the Confectioners, Liquor Trades and the Garment Workers. They were not well paid, earning just 54% of the male Basic Wage. It was nearly 70 years after the Harvester Judgement that the principle of equal pay was finally accepted in law.

In those early years of unrelenting high unemployment, male-dominated unions and the ACTU feared the entry of women into the workforce would dilute wages and put men out of work.

But World War Two necessitated the large scale



recruitment of women into industry and services, urged by the government and cautiously agreed to by unions.

“Women must be permitted to come into industry only upon such principles and conditions that when men return to Australia they will not find their positions prejudiced because it is cheaper to keep women in certain jobs...”
— Percy Clarey, ACTU President

Equal pay lasted only as long as the war, but it was enough to start a cultural shift. Having tasted a degree of financial independence women were more confident of their place in the world of work. The economic expansion of the 50s and 60s meant there was more than enough jobs — in fact a shortage of labour.

But equal pay was still out of reach. Employers, courts and the Menzies Government argued it would ruin the economy and women were less productive and less

dedicated to their work. Unions, however, were now in favour of “equal pay for equal work” with the threat of unemployment long gone.

In 1969 the ACTU took a Female Rates Case to the Commission, with partial success. Another case in 1972 finally secured an equal minimum rate for all women and men, to be phased in by 1975.





WORKING WOMEN'S UNSTOPPABLE MARCH



"If we're supporting affirmative action and its application in the wider context of society, then the union movement has an obligation to put its own house in order in terms of female representation."
— Jennie George, *Women at Work*, December 1985

In 2000, 16 years after Jennie George was elected the first woman Executive member, the ACTU Executive achieved equal representation of women and men.

▶ Women's right to work

Many women were also denied the right to work. It wasn't until 1963 that unions achieved the abolition of bans on married women holding permanent jobs in the public sector.

In 1966 women made up just over 30% of the workforce, and only 22% of union members. Today, women make up 43% of the workforce and 42% of unionists. Significantly, over 70% of women of childbearing age work. Not only are mothers working, they are taking less time out after giving birth.

▶ A More Flexible Working World

In 1977 the ACTU adopted its Working Women's Charter to bolster women's right to work. Campaigns for workplace reform to accommodate family responsibilities, which still fall largely to women, became and remain a priority for the ACTU.

In 1979 the ACTU won a Maternity Leave Test Case, which provided 52 weeks unpaid leave for women, and job protection during pregnancy and maternity.

In 1984, the same year Jennie George joined the ACTU Executive, the Hawke Government outlawed discrimination in employment on the basis of gender.

In 1985 the ACTU successfully extended unpaid leave to adopting mothers, and in 1990 to fathers.

In 1995 the ACTU won 5 days special family leave for workers caring for an ill family member

In 2003 the ACTU is planning another test case to

- ▶ extend the period of unpaid parental leave
- ▶ improve the right to part time work
- ▶ provide workers with flexibility to vary their work patterns to accommodate family responsibilities.



3. MISS TRADE UNION COMPETITION:
The Miss Trade Union Competition was a highly successful undertaking — jointly organised by the TLC and ACSPA. There were 12 entrants, representing a variety of unions. The entry fee was \$30.
Judging was on the 15th September at the Riverside Ballroom before 250 guests.
The winner, Miss Jean McEwen, Electrical Trades Union, entered the "Miss Warana" Competition and was runner-up to the winner.
Proceeds of the Miss Trade Union Competition were donated to the Montrose Home for Crippled Children — the donation being over \$400.
This popular activity will be repeated during 1967 Youth Week.

It seemed a good idea at the time...

WAGES

A fair go and a dignified, secure standard of living for working people is the core business of Australian unions. For 75 years the ACTU has played a pivotal role in the redistribution of wealth and the drive towards a fairer society.

The Basic Wage

Harvester Judgement 1907 – the Basic Wage
 In 1907, Henry Bourne Higgins, President of the Arbitration Court, decided 7 shillings a day was a “fair and reasonable wage for an unskilled labourer to maintain himself and his family in frugal comfort.”
 He added on another 3s/day, a “margin for skill”, for a tradesman.
 At the time it was a 27% increase on the average low-paid salary and was to set a safety net for wages for the next century.



“Unless great multitudes of people are to be irretrievably injured in themselves or in their families, unless society is to be perpetually in industrial unrest, it is necessary to keep this living wage as a thing sacrosanct, beyond the reach of bargaining.” – Justice Higgins



1922
Wages indexed to the cost of living, automatic quarterly adjustments introduced

1927
The ACTU takes responsibility for the Basic Wage Case

1937
the Arbitration Court acknowledged the recovering economy and for the first time combined the 2 wage-fixing principles by setting a Basic Wage based on needs with “a prosperity loading” added on.

1950
Foster’s one pound — 2 judges of the Arbitration Court were split between extreme positions: no increase versus 1 pound, considered a large sum at the time. Employers were infuriated when a third judge ruled in favour of Justice Foster’s generous increase

1953
Quarterly adjustments abandoned. Capacity to pay supercedes wages based on need. Decision later reversed twice

1967
Basic wage with separate margins for skill rolled into a single “total wage”

72-75
Wages indexed to inflation

76-80
Partial Indexation

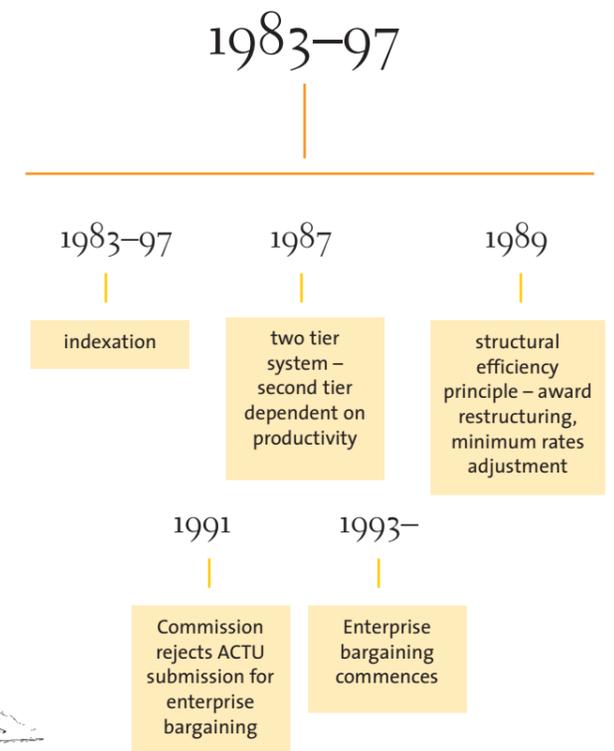
81-82
Wages freeze, indexation suspended

83-96
The Accord ended the turbulent cycle of wage break-outs and inflation that marked the previous decade, particularly the Fraser years. It boosted employment and improved the “social wage”, raising the living standards of working people chiefly through medicare, welfare and family payments, and housing

1997
Living Wage Case to determine award minimum rates of pay. Since that time the ACTU has achieved a real increase in minimum wages of 7.6%, including an \$18 a week increase in 2002 – the largest for almost 20 years

The Depression

The Higgins principle that wages should be determined by need was eclipsed in 1930 by a new principle that wages be set according to industry’s and the economy’s ability to pay. In the shadow of Depression, a coalition of employers claimed they were facing “the gravest economic emergency in the history of the Commonwealth” and applied to have the Basic Wage and 31 awards slashed. From February 1931, with the Depression at its deepest, workers suffered a 10% across the board wage cut. The Basic Wage no longer represented an unassailable standard based on the needs of a working man and his family. Outraged unions called it a swindle and urged a General Strike. Communist critics declared capitalism a failure and called the ACTU a “strike breaking institution” that was delaying revolution. The ACTU argued in vain that workers had been disproportionately burdened. It took several years to restore the cut.



The ACTU actively participates in international forums and supports actions of solidarity with working people all over the world fighting for freedom and dignity.



In 1937, the ACTU made appeals for humanitarian assistance during the Spanish Civil War

▶ ILO

The ACTU — represented by former President Albert Monk — was a key participant at foundation meetings of the International Labour Organisation. The ACTU has continued to play a leading role in the ILO as well as other international bodies such as the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the advisory body to the OECD, TUAC.

▶ Vietnam

Many unions were strongly committed to ending Australia's participation in the Vietnam War and this provoked spirited debate among ACTU affiliates over tactics, particularly the use of industrial action.



The ACTU, through its aid organisation APHEDA, has played a large part in providing aid to restore damage done to the Vietnamese people.

▶ Amandla – Ngawhetu!

Power to the People! The stirring call for liberation by black South Africans



resonated deeply with Australian trade unionists from the early 1960s. ACTU support for consumer boycotts of South African products started at this time and union action intensified with the 1971 Springbok tour. The protest continued till the ANC, strongly backed by the South African Council of Trade Unions, ousted the racist regime from power.

▶ **Creating an Anti-nuclear Pacific**
Over 3 decades Australian unions were prominent international leaders in the fight against French nuclear testing in the Pacific. Coordinated action with our Pacific neighbours including bans

and blockades finally forced the French to abandon testing at Muroroa in 1996. From this pan-Pacific campaign, the South Pacific and Oceania Council of Trade Unions was born.

▶ East Timor

Australian unions have consistently supported the struggle for self-determination in our region. Maritime unions blockaded Dutch shipping in support of Indonesia's struggle for independence following World War Two. Since 1975 Australian unions, through their own overseas aid agency, APHEDA, have also stood by the East Timorese people in their fight for independence. During the Indonesian occupation, APHEDA established a radio station in Darwin to help Timorese scholars codify and preserve the indigenous language, Tetum. Post-independence, APHEDA is teaching radio skills and contributing to trade union development in the fledgling East Timorese nation.

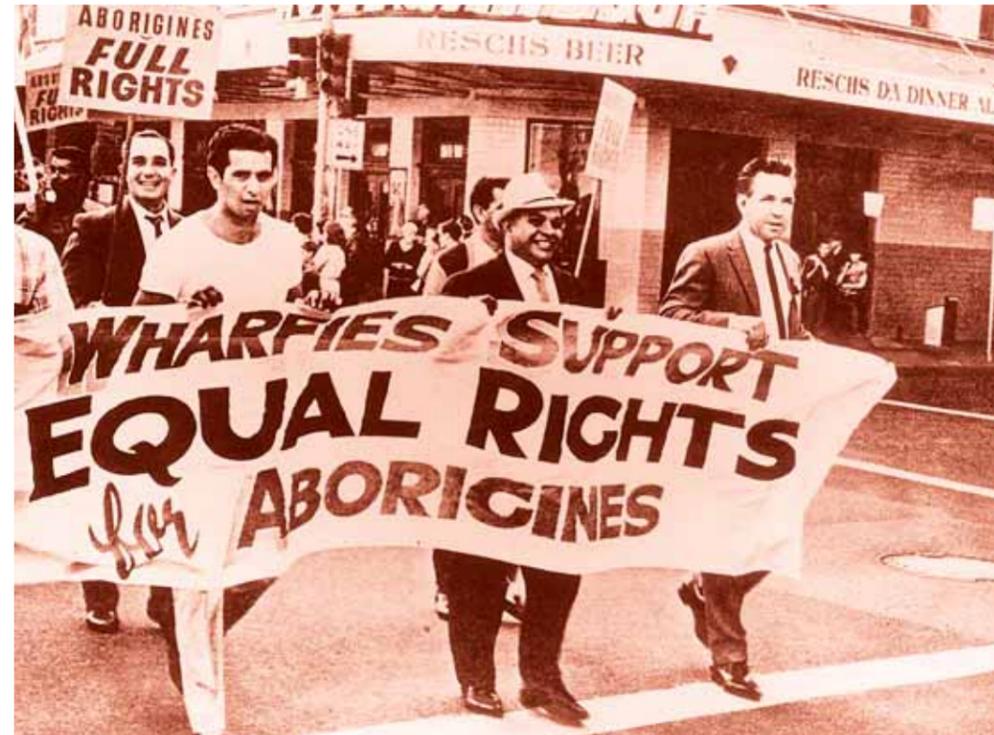


Unions are helping rebuild an independent East Timor

▶ APHEDA

APHEDA assists workers struggling for their rights, through around 50 projects and project partners. It aims to improve the opportunities and options of disadvantaged women, refugees and HIV/AIDS sufferers. APHEDA also provides education for indigenous people and child labourers.

Well into the twentieth century, the wages and working conditions of indigenous Australians reflected the appalling social conditions imposed upon them since white settlement. Many worked as unpaid labourers in the bush or were raised to work as domestic slaves. Some did belong to unions, particularly miners, shearers and waterside workers and were involved in many industrial campaigns.



▶ The Pilbara

In 1947 Aboriginal stockmen went on strike over pay and land claims in the Pilbara. With the support of West Australian unions, the sheep industry in that state was brought to a standstill for three years.

Although the strike leaders were jailed, the strikers went on to form a mining company and bought 2 large pastoral holdings — a huge advance in the fight for self-determination.

▶ "Jedda"

In 1955, before the filming of the Australian cinema classic "Jedda", Actors Equity ensured that Aboriginal actors were adequately represented and remunerated.

▶ Wave Hill

In 1965, the North Australian Workers Union launched a case for equal pay. The Arbitration Commission delayed the case for 2 years sparking a walkout by Aboriginal workers at Lord Vestey's Wave Hill station.



A camp was established on traditional land and in 1975, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam returned the land to Vincent Lingiari, one of the traditional owners. It was a celebrated breakthrough in the fight for self-determination. The ACTU and unions all over Australia supported the Aboriginal claim through many years of protest.

▶ Land Rights

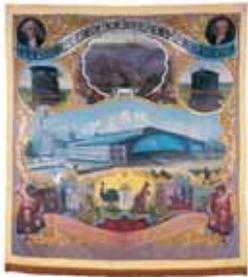
In 1979, unionists lined up with Aboriginals and church leaders in an attempt to halt a convoy of police and mining trucks heading for sacred land in W.A.'s Kimberley region, where the state government had approved a CRA drilling project.

The protestors failed to stop CRA, but the protest threw the land rights issue into sharp relief around Australia.

▶ Reconciliation

During 1980s and '90s, the ACTU and unions supported the reconciliation process initiated by the Hawke Government and fully backed the Mabo legislation in 1993.

In more recent years, the union movement has supported calls for recognition of the Stolen Generations, as well as a national apology to those whose lives were damaged by forced removal from their families under government policy of the last century.



IN COMPILING THIS BOOKLET, THE ACTU COMMUNICATIONS UNIT RELIED HEAVILY ON PROFESSOR JIM HAGAN'S OFFICIAL *HISTORY OF THE ACTU*, A METICULOUSLY RESEARCHED BOOK, PRINTED IN 1980. WE ARE GREATLY INDEBTED TO PROFESSOR HAGAN. IF NOT FOR HIS EFFORTS, MUCH OF THE DETAIL OF DECADES PAST MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST.

FOR PROVIDING PHOTOS AND GREAT ASSISTANCE, THE ACTU COMMUNICATIONS UNIT WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK: NOEL BUTLIN ARCHIVES, AUST NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, CANBERRA — EMMA JOLLEY (SEN. ARCHIVIST), PENNIE PEMBERTON AND DEIDRE WARD; VICTORIAN TRADES HALL COUNCIL LIBRARY — SARAH BROWN; MITCHELL LIBRARY, STATE LIBRARY OF NSW; STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA— LATROBE COLLECTION; NATIONAL LIBRARY; CARTOONIST GEOFF PRYOR AND THE CANBERRA TIMES; PULSE DESIGN, SYDNEY —TRISTAN RIGLIET; ACTU STAFF; UNIONS BANNERS COURTESY OF LABOR COUNCIL OF NSW.

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THIS BOOKLET IS NOT INTENDED TO BE A COMPREHENSIVE ACTU HISTORY. FOR A MORE COMPLETE ACCOUNT, WE RECOMMEND A *SHORT HISTORY OF THE ACTU* OR *THE HISTORY OF THE ACTU*, BOTH BY PROFESSOR HAGAN.