

From the Press Office

SUMMARY OF ABC'S "A.M."

Mother Theresa, who has working amongst the poor and sick in India for 50 years, has won the Nobel Peace Prize.

The row over the controversial amendments to the Conciliation and Arbitration took a new turn in Sydney last night when the Minister for Industrial Relations, Mr. Street, met with the President of the Arbitration Commission, Sir John Moore, to discuss the Commission's reservations about the changes.

Report

The hastily convened meeting last night was the result of an earlier meeting between Sir John Moore and representatives of the 25 Commissioners and 8 Deputy Presidents. The meeting followed revelations that the Association of Conciliation and Arbitration Commissioners had voted unanimously to telex the Minister, Mr. Street, to inform him of their reservations about the legislation. Late yesterday afternoon Sir John Moore in a brief statement said that as a result of informal discussions about the consultative provisions of the amendments it had been decided that he, as President, should seek an opportunity to discuss the matter with the Minister. Mr. Street has made it quite clear that the proper channels for any complaints go through Sir John, and it is significant that he moved so quickly to meet with him. Already Opposition Leader Bill Hayden has attacked the Government for continuing with the legislation in the face of judicial opposition. He said that Mr. Fraser can no longer ignore the reality that his Government is in direct conflict with the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. He added that now that the President, Sir John Moore, had intervened it was an unprecedented situation which the Prime Minister could not dismiss.

Last night Mr. Street's office refused to comment on the details of the meeting with Sir John, but it is understood that Mr. Street will report directly to the Prime Minister before reporting to the Parliament.

While Mr. Street was meeting with Sir John in Sydney, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Lionel Bowen, accused the Minister of misleading the Parliament over circulation of the controversial Staples' letter which was last night tabled in Hansard by former Labor Minister Clyde Cameron. For the last two days Mr. Street has been closely questioned by the Opposition about the exact circumstances which led to his office selectively distributing copies to members of the Press Gallery after the existence of the letter had been revealed on our evening current affairs programme "PM". The Opposition wanted to know if Mr. Street as Minister had authorised the release of the document to discredit Mr. Justice Staples. Yesterday in the House Mr. Street admitted that his staff had distributed copies, but he said only after they checked with the staff of the "PM" programme to confirm that they had a copy of the letter. Mr. Street said that because of the "PM" story the Staples letter had then become a matter of public record. As was stated on the "PM" programme last night, at the time the story went to air "PM" did not have a copy of that letter. However, they had sighted the copy and been able to confirm its authenticity.

After the broadcast, our Canberra office was approached by a member of Mr. Street's staff and a member of the Canberra Press Gallery for a copy of the letter. They were told that we did not have a copy, but that we were seeking to obtain one to enable us to quote directly from it for a report to be broadcast the following morning on this programme. At no stage did our Canberra office inform Mr. Street's office that a copy was in our possession, and no contact was made to our Melbourne office from where the broadcast emanated, to establish whether a copy was being held there. Last night we approached Mr. Street's office for a reaction but we were told he had no comment.

"AM" has learnt that a paper to be presented to the State Council of the Liberal Party in South Australia next week includes a suggestion that candidates standing for office in union elections should have their political party affiliations alongside their name on the ballot paper.

There will be no public transport in Victoria for the next 48 hours. The State Transport Minister, Mr. McClelland, has warned the unions involved that they needn't think of returning to work at the weekend to pick up their penalty rates. He has denied that this would mean a lock-out of employees, but the situation is confused. There are no clear instructions from VicRail or the Tramways Board about weekend work at the end of the strike. Interview with Jim Fraser of the Australian Railways' Union.

Concern over the worsening oil crisis around the world is mounting in the United States. From Washington there are reports of a series of co-ordinated nationwide protests. One demonstration was on Capitol Hill where about 500 people gathered to condemn the leap in the price of petroleum.

A survey conducted by the psychology department at Queensland University has produced evidence linking constant traffic noise in the home environment to ill health.

Britain today outlined proposals which would establish the first British administration in Salisbury since Rhodesia unilaterally declared independence 14 years ago. The British Foreign Secretary proposed the appointment of a British Governor with civilian, military and police advisers supervising elections and legal independence when he met with the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe Rhodesia at Lancaster House. The Patriotic Front, which has refused to accept the first stage of the constitutional proposals was not present. Even if Mr. Mugabe and Mr. Nkomo do rejoin the talks it appears that white farmers in Rhodesia won't accept terms of compensation fund for land reforms. Interview with Vice-President of National Farmer's Union in Salisbury.

There is a lot of speculation in Moscow at the moment about a shift in Russian policy towards the Middle East, following a visit to the Soviet Union by the Syrian President. The Soviet President has not met with the Syrian President leading to rumours that his health has worsened.

In 1951 the CIA was considering using foreigners for dangerous drug and chemical experiments because of the hazardous side affects suffered by Americans involved in the tests. Representative of the American Citizens for Honesty in Government Group gained access to a CIA document revealing this: interviewed.

Report on address by Australian Federal Police, Sir Colin Wood, to the National Press Club in Canberra yesterday.

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