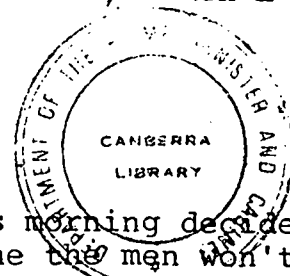


from the Press Office

SUMMARY OF NEWSVOICE



A mass meeting of tanker drivers in Sydney this morning decided to end their strike from tomorrow, but in Melbourne the men won't be going back to their jobs until Monday. Despite the resumption of work, the issue of secondary boycotts and Section 45D of the Trades Practices Act could lead to further industrial turmoil in the oil industry.

Mr Varnum:

We have stated our position in relation to secondary boycotts, and we have made it more clear today. We have considered that the issue in relating to secondary boycotts, in fact, was secondary to this dispute. We believe that the first issue, in fact, and the only issue, has in fact been an industrial where the livelihood of our members has been threatened. The position in relation to secondary boycotts from our point of view indicates that it is an unjust, the ACTU is opposed to it, it has been exploited by an employer organisation who are hiding behind it so they can continue to employ or engage employees in inferior conditions as if they were engaged under the federal oil stores award.

Question:

...is still before the court. What will happen if the union is fined?

Mr Varnum:

Well, our policy is quite strong in relation to that. We have resolved not to comply with any decisions, orders or awards made by an civil courts on industrial issues. And the ACTU has a strong policy on it. We support it. The NSW Labour Council, endorsed a similar policy last night, and that of course would have the full backing of this union.

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In Victoria, the petrol tanker drivers are going back on Monday, but the State Secretary of the TWU, Mr Davis, said it represented an uneasy peace. Mr Davis says he is not happy with the proposals accepted by the Sydney tanker drivers. Says his members are sick and tired of other people deliberately attacking them all the time.

The Trades Hall Council in Victoria has decided to call a 24 hour public transport strike in its campaign against the Workers' Compensation Act. The strike is set for the 24th of March. The strike is intended to hurt employers in an effort to convince them to lobby the State government into holding new talks which could result in a compromise. The Trades Hall believes the new act reduces the number of workers entitled to workers' compensation, while the State government says it will cut down on the number of false claims and increase benefits to genuine cases.

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Talks in Canberra aimed at finding a way to overcome bans on the movement of wool are still going on. The Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, and four government ministers, are meeting with representatives of the wool industry. Barry Cassidy reports: "The meeting has been going on in a crowded cabinet room here in Parliament House since 10.15 this morning. As it became obvious it was going to be a long day, both the Prime Minister and Deputy, Mr Anthony cancelled afternoon engagements in Victoria. The only representative to emerge from the meeting so far has been the President of the National Farmers' Federation, Mr Don Eckersley. He left Parliament House for a quick trip to his office and he has since rejoined the talks. He, in a sense, inspired today's talks when he described the Government's role in the dispute so far, as spineless and timid. But, as he emerged today he was saying nothing, except that there might be a statement later on. There are 16 representatives of the wool brokers at the meeting alone, an indication that strategy mapped out today could be binding on the industry when it goes into private conference in the Arbitration Commission in Melbourne tomorrow morning. Given that wool brokers have already made an offer, however small, to the striking storemen and packers, part of the reason for the length of the talks could be due to disagreement among brokers as to whether they should tough it out or go to the Commission tomorrow with a new proposal."

We have just heard from our Canberra office that the meeting could last for another two hours.

There were further moves of support for the reorganisation of the ALP in Queensland today. The Leader of the State Parliamentary Labor Party, Mr Ed Casey, announced he was joining the interim administrative committee being set up by the national executive. Report: "It was all smiles and good will when Mr Casey handed his letter of acceptance to the Federal ALP Secretary, Mr David Coombe at Brisbane airport today. Casey told reporters he had accepted the battle was lost and vowed he would concentrate on uniting the party behind its new image. Mr Casey, "I have said all along, and the Parliamentary Labor Party has also stated that there is only one Labor Party and that is the Australian Labor Party. Now, the Federal Executive has made a decision. Even though I was an opponent of the original suggestion that there was any need for intervention in Queensland, that particular argument was lost a fortnight ago in Canberra." Mr Coombe praised Mr Casey and his Parliamentary colleagues for playing a constructive role in the current transition in Queensland, and he forecast an early end to the remaining resistance. Mr Coombe, "I guess almost a week ago we thought that the transition was going to be a bit smoother than anybody expected. Now, we are faced with the reality that there will be a little more resistance, but I don't anticipate that that will last for long because what you now have in Queensland is an enormous enthusiasm with the democratisation with the party here. Party members and supporters overwhelmingly are expressing the desire to get on with the job of making Ed Casey the Premier of this State, and Bill Hayden the Prime Minister of Australia." "

TAA says bookings for their super apex discount airfares have increased by nearly 500% since the scheme was extended to a year round basis recently. International Sales Manager interviewed.

An Aboriginal Lands Council Leader who came from north western Australia to a demonstration today in Pitt Street, Sydney, warned that several families could die if sacred land in the Kimberleys was drilled for oil. Interview with leader.

Sir Charles Court today made a strong call for more Commonwealth road funds, and claimed the Federal Government was not fulfilling its responsibilities to the States. Sir Charles was speaking at an Australian Automobile Association symposium in Canberra. He said he supported calls by motoring associations for a large portion of the petroleum excise revenue to be redirected to road funding.

The Australian and New Zealand governments have been asked to make firm commitments to closer long term economic ties. In a lengthy submission to both governments, the Australian New Zealand Businessmen's Council said it wanted all transTasman trade barriers to be eventually abolished.

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