

## **Queensland Dossier**

Producers: Jeune Pritchard and Luce Pelissier

(project completion February 1979, Sydney)

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"This videotape examines the implications of the street march ban and the pattern of systematic political and civil repression which the Queensland Government has instituted during its past decade in power."

The tape was compiled from material shot during the time of the street march ban - from the first huge anti-uranium march in late 1977 (when over 400 people were arrested) through to the Trades and Labor Council sponsored demonstration and march of December 1978.

The tape-makers Jeune Pritchard and Luce Pelissier have attempted to demonstrate that the Government's attacks on Aborigines, women, trade unions and even the state education system are not the random acts of an aberrant hillbilly regime, but rather parts of a concerted plan to lay Queensland wide open to exploitation and profiteering by multi-nationals mining corporations over the silenced voices of blacks, environmentalists, unionists and all those opposed to this massive sell-out of Australian resources.

The tape is organised into several sections:

### **Women**

In June 1976, the Queensland cabinet cut off all funding to women's health centres, refuges and the rape crisis centre.

This action took place in the context of Bjelke-Petersen's open support for reactionary women's groups such as Women's Action Alliance which promotes the ideal of keeping women in their homes (helping to obscure the fact of growing female unemployment).

Abortions are virtually unobtainable in Queensland except for the rich. Most women are forced into expensive interstate trips to Sydney or resort to backyard abortionists.

### **Education**

Reactionary pressure groups have successfully persuaded the Queensland government to ban the progressive study courses SEMP and MACOS from the state education system. These social science teaching materials are available in every other state school system, but summarily banned in Queensland without any consultation with the Education Department.

Bjelke-Petersen wants the state education system to place more emphasis on "technical education", claiming that there are people in the Education Department "who don't know what the government want the children taught" (i.e. a fundamentalist Christian philosophy based strictly on the heterosexual nuclear family unit).

### **Aborigines**

Multinational mining companies are gearing up for further expansions into Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

To continue attracting large scale capital investment, the Queensland Government offers particularly generous terms including the tacit promise that it will contain and repress any black land rights demands.

The Bjelke-Petersen government is bitterly opposed to Aboriginal land claims, but attempts to disguise its aim of cultural genocide by claiming that black efforts to establish and maintain an independent culture based on their essential relationship to tribal land is a form of 'apartheid'.

The Federal Government has betrayed its pledge to protect Aborigines by failing to oppose the Queensland Governments ferocious attacks on the peoples of Aurukun and Mornington Island.

### **Unions**

The Trade Union movement in Queensland has been placed under threat by the promised Right to Work legislation (in effect, the right to scab legislation). These laws would give employers the right to employ non-union labor, to exclude union organisers from the shop floor, and would give all workers the right to claim any privileges won by the unions.

In spite of this threat to the very existence of unions in Queensland, the Trades and Labor Council has never publicly supported a direct action of mobilisation.

One of the few unions to militantly support the Civil Liberties movement in Queensland is the Seaman's Union which has been under direct threat of de-registration because of its dispute with Utah Mining, (a subsidiary of General Electric) over the right to employ Australian workers on Utah ships.

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