1977 Latrobe Valley SEC Worker's Strike

Number 3 bucket wheel dredge in Morwell open cut. Originally the dredge was in Yallourn open cut and then relocated to Morwell. The dredge was operated during the 1977 dispute until it broke down. It is now an exhibition piece at Power Works in Morwell. (Peter Gray seen filming bottom right.)

Photo: Garry Lane

Workers burning their written notice from the SEC warning them to return to work or be sacked.

Photo: "The Age" newspaper, Melbourne.

John Westhorpe, rigger, burning his notice from the SEC warning him to return to work or be sacked. (Point of interest, John later won the first division Tattslotto right at the end of the dispute).

Photo: "The Age" newspaper, Melbourne.

A family in the Morwell Credit Cooperative redeeming their food vouchers issued by the Central Gippsland Trades and Labour Council (CGTLC). Vouchers were $20 per husband and wife, and $4 for each child. Families wanted to show their support for the dispute and typically brought their children along when redeeming their vouchers to demonstrate how families are in this together.

Photo: "The Age" newspaper, Melbourne.

Mass meeting. John Halfpenny, AMWU Victorian Secretary surrounded by shop stewards. Rear right wearing hat, Max Strong (FIA rigger), and in front of him Sam Armstrong (Secretary, Combined Shop Stewards Committee).

Photo: "The Age" newspaper, Melbourne.

Mass meeting, photo taken seconds apart.

Photo: "The Age" newspaper, Melbourne.

John Halfpenny perched on table with shop stewards behind. Taken in CGTLC office meeting room in Morwell prior to the start of a mass meeting. Man with beard: Chris Howe (FIA). Sitting behind Halfpenny's shoulder and Chris Howe is Harry Brunner (ETU and CGTLC Treasurer). Seated on Harry Brunner's right is Ray Lessiuw (AMWU shop steward). Seated behind Halfpenny on his left shoulder is Lyle Seear (ETU shop steward). Standing at the back of the room next to man with spectacles is Geoff Sherman (ETU Shop Steward).

Photo: "The Age" newspaper, Melbourne.

Bob Hawke and John Halfpenny. Seated at table from left is Les Carey (ASE organiser responsible for the SEC), Bob Hawke (ACTU Secretary), unknown, John Halfpenny, unknown, Bill Mountford (AMWU research officer). Seated behind are state and national union officials.

Photo: "The Age" newspaper, Melbourne.


Mass meetings were noisy, democratic events where everyone who had something to say was encouraged to do so.

Photo: David Spratt

Melbourne City Square rally on 12th October 1977.

Photo: David Spratt

(more photos on next page.....)