

TRAIN TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION



Newsletter

August 1981

Train Traveller's Association,
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Registered for posting as a publication - Category B

Annual Reports 1980-'81

The fifth Annual Meeting of the TTA was held on Thursday 18 June 1981 in the Victoria Hotel, Melbourne. The Transport Minister, Mr Maclellan who had accepted an invitation to address the meeting as guest speaker failed to fulfil his commitment and sent VicRail Chairman, Mr Alan Reiher, as a last minute substitute.

Despite the cold, wet weather,

over 300 members attended an otherwise successful meeting. Among those present were our founder President, Frank Casey and Mrs Casey and Mr Peter Gavin, MLA for Coburg.

Copies of the Annual Reports are printed on pages 3 to 9 of this issue.

The following Office bearers were elected for 1981/82.

President	:	Dr Douglas Sherman
Vice President	:	Ivan Powell
Secretary	:	Ken McIntyre
Treasurer	:	David Bowd
P.R.O.	:	Patrick O'Connor
Council Members	:	John Alexopoulos
		Pat Minihan
		Robin Vowels
		Rod Bryant
		Ria Smit
		Margaret Panter
		Alex Boyne

The TTA places on its record its appreciation of the leadership and work of the outgoing President, Dr Charles Sowerwine. Charles is leaving for Paris for professional reasons in July and we look forward to his return next year.

Our new President, Dr Douglas Sherman, is a founder member of the TTA, a co-author of its constitution and one of our delegates to the Victorian Transport Study. In his professional career Dr Sherman graduated as a civil engineer in 1965 and since 1971 he has been a research scientist studying atmospheric turbulence and its effects on aircraft.

Dr Sherman believes that the basic fact mitigating against the viable development of public transport in Victoria (be it Government owned train or privately owned bus) is that the private citizen is required to fund the major portion of his personal travel costs on

an annual basis rather than on a per trip basis as is the norm for public transport. Thus when John Citizen chooses how to make each trip the choice reduces to the 'cost of petrol' versus the cost of a public transport trip. Changing the economics of personal transport so that more of its costs are generated on a per trip basis rather than on an annual basis is, in Dr Sherman's view, fundamental to revitalising public transport in Victoria.

In his closing address as the incoming President, Douglas called for renewed interest and support from all members and users, for our campaign towards better public transport in the State.

The TTA once again thanks all members, supporters, donators, voluntary workers and the media, for their assistance, co-operation and support.

The photographs below show a section of the large crowd that attended the meeting and Mr Alan Rieher substituting for the Transport Minister, Mr Maclellan, as guest speaker addressing the gathering on progress towards major improvements in the standard of VicRail services.



IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION DUE

Many members have not yet renewed their subscription. Adjacent to your name on the Newsletter wrapper the date to which your subscription is paid is noted. If it is expired please use the form on Page 19 to arrange renewal.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1980-1981

Your Association has been particularly active this year, not so much by choice as by necessity: for the first time in Victorian history, the Government has ceased to make even the pretence of honouring its election promises to improve public transport and has instead mounted a sustained offensive to dismantle even the existing public transport system. In the face of this offensive, your Association has found unexpected sources of support.

The first of these is the public and the great influx of new members. I want to thank all members, new and existing, for their active participation, but I must also call them to renewed action: financial renewal as soon as possible, active support through one of our committees, recruiting of new members, letters to your local MP, the Government, and local press, and whatever else you can do. All this and more will be need from all our members if we are to prevent the wholesale destruction of Melbourne's public transport.

We have so far fought the Government and the motor lobby to a standoff, but the latest indications are that the present country closures are only a prelude to the closure of five suburban electric lines scheduled for 1st August. If the Government gets away with this, and if it is re-elected next year, how long will the Alamein and Sandringham lines last?

Our campaign so far has included constant representation at all levels on behalf of public transport in general and members' problems in particular. This takes a great deal of energy, particularly from the Secretary, although it is not

visible in public.

Another side of our non-public action has been our efforts to respond to the statements of the opponents of public transport. Much of our work during 1980 was our submission to the Lonie Report and our harrowing three hours of testimony, during which we realised that Mr Lonie and Mr Underwood (senior engineer with the CRB) had been chosen deliberately to begin the campaign against public transport. This was followed by a series of fruitless representations to the then Premier, Mr Hamer, requesting him to call off Mr Maclellan's anti public transport campaign and by our successful exercise of riding the trains with the two opposition leaders.

Of course we have been more active than ever in public. We conducted a highly successful meeting in the Assembly Hall in December and a major demonstration upon the opening of Parliament in March. These received significant radio and television coverage, although 'The Age' did not deign to mention them.

The second unexpected source of support was in local government. Several dozen municipal and shire councils came to our aid to support the publicity campaign preceding the public meeting. We were thus able, despite our limited financial resources, to run three large ads in 'The Age', and one in 'The Sun'. These were imaginative graphic exercises done for us by Mr Rod Bryant with text by Mr Ivan Powell (both of whom are standing for the TTA Council this year).

The task for 1981-82 is

daunting. We must not only stop the government from closing suburban public transport and important country services, but also positively get our message across so that a positive programme for public transport can at last begin. Our message is that public transport needs a fair share of funds. It has been starved for fifty years while roads have been given almost unlimited funds. All we ask now is a fair go.

Public transport is always presented by the forces opposing it as a drain on the public purse. But Mr Maclellan and his allies exercise a hypocritical double standard about costing. Even in their own terms, costs for roads are ignored and those for rail and tram emphasised.

The concept of a public transport deficit is only possible through such blinkered perspectives as that which ignores the cost of providing roads and attempting to reduce pollution, pay for the road toll, etc. Would there be a real overall saving if we continued along the path outlined by Mr Maclellan and supported more Nepean Highway widening, more Hoddle Streets, and more Eastern Freeways? On the contrary, the overall outlay would increase. In our September Newsletter I argued that costs associated with road transport would reach \$1000 million for 1980-81; no one has contested this figure, nor has anyone objected to my point that the petrol taxes due to the import parity pricing system would largely disappear by the mid 1980's, when we have become dependent on imported petrol, so that the costs of the road transport system will become a huge deficit in the sense that roads will generate only a fraction of tax revenue compared to their associated costs.

The concept of a public transport deficit is only possible through accounting which also overlooks VicRail's different cost structure. If railway stations, signals, signalmen, level crossings and track were all paid for by government and VicRail given a free ride, how much deficit would remain? That is the situation of VicRail's competitors. Who pays for airports and air traffic controllers? The Government has given up any pretense of "user pays" in that regard. Who pays for road repairs, traffic signals and police? All taxpayers and all levels of government bear the cost, but these costs remain hidden.

True Mr Maclellan loves to talk about taking from "transport poor" areas and to portray those of use who use public transport as fat cats (easy to do from a chauffeur-driven limousine). The facts are different. Not only do all members know just how poor a deal they are getting, especially if they have been overseas or interstate recently, but also Mr Maclellan is taking from the poor, not the rich, and he is not giving anyone anything.

The projected closures are all in areas where alternative transport is limited or non-existent. And how many improvements have we seen, let alone increases in service. The government has made drastic cuts in country rail services but has refused to honour its last election promise to build 36 new country carriages for the Geelong and Ballarat lines. These carriages will be built (six are near completion) at VicRail's expense, by leverage leasing paid out of VicRail revenue. The increased "deficit" resulting will then be part of the pretext for the next round of cuts. Does

anyone seriously believe that the savings (if any) resulting from the cuts in service to Healesville, Mornington and Stony Point, let alone the five suburban electric lines threatened, will go to improve transport?

Mr Maclellan has already told us where they will go: to increased road construction precisely as indicated in the Lonie Report. Mr Maclellan would like to build an arterial road (like Hoddle Street) on the Upfield railway reservation and use the Sandringham and Port Melbourne railway reservations for a freeway or arterial road connecting the South Eastern Freeway to the West Gate Bridge. The costs involved in these projects dwarf any of those involved in public transport.

We have won twelve months to fight. Mr Maclellan has made a strategic retreat, but his intentions are unchanged. The closure of the Altona line involves insignificant cost 'savings' (indeed VicRail will lose a major investment in the recently rebuilt Altona station) but it is extremely important symbolically; Mr Maclellan wants to demonstrate that he can and will close suburban electric train lines; even only one is a beginning. The Victoria Government continues to support Mr Maclellan's policies. Mr Hamer refused even to meet us to discuss them and both he and Mr Thompson maintained Mr Maclellan in the Transport portfolio through Cabinet reshuffles.

To prevent the realisation of Mr Lonie's Melbourne, we have to fight more and stronger battles in the future. I know that next years leaders of the TTA can count on renewed and increased support from all members. This is our only hope.

I regret having to end my presidency on the eve of a series of battles that will make or break public transport and indeed the city of Melbourne.

It has been a great pleasure to serve you as President. My task has been made easy by the selfless dedication of Ken McIntyre and of the other members of the Council, all of whom have pulled hard. I know that Doug Serman, Ivan Powell, Patrick O'Connor, and Pat Minihan will continue to provide lucid and effective leadership. But members should know too that many other Council members do an enormous amount of back-up work, largely behind the scenes. I have not space to thank all of them but I must give special mention to Andrew Potter and Rod Bryant whose designs have helped our meetings and our publicity, to David Bowd who has single-handedly taken charge of both the finances and the Newsletter, and to John Alexopoulos who has assured the printing and distribution of reams of materials, in order to publicise our activities. If you know of the TTA, it is very likely to have been through one of these tireless workers.

We will need not only more leaders like these, but also more support, both financial and direct, please give a hand.

- (Dr) Charles Sowerwine

President 1980/81

SECRETARY'S REPORT: 1980/81

I have great pleasure in presenting the fifth Annual Report of the TTA for the year 1980/81.

Office Bearers:

At the Annual Meeting Held on 30 July 1980 in the Victoria Hotel, Melbourne, the following Office Bearers were elected for the year 1980/81:

President	:	Dr Charles Sowerwine
Vice-President	:	John Alexopoulos
Secretary	:	Ken McIntyre
Treasurer	:	David Bowd
Public Relations Officer	:	Patrick O'Connor
Council Members	:	Pat Minihan Dr Douglas Sherman Barry Gray Lynne Thompson Steve Howard Robin Vowels Alex Boyne

Administration:

To ease the heavy workload on the Secretary and Treasurer and to utilise the talents of Council and Ordinary members, a start was made during the year to conduct the administration through a sub-committee structure and the over-all liaison and control of the four key office bearers. The following sub-committees, each with their own Chairman and members were formed:

Membership;
Newsletter;
Publicity;
Line Co-ordinators;
General Affairs.

With greater co-operation and interest from members, we look forward to a more successful implementation of this system in the year ahead.

Meetings: (Council)

The Council met on eleven (11) occasions during the year. There was an average attendance of 9 out of the 12 Council members at each meeting.

A pleasing feature of these Council meetings was the attendance of an average of 10 Ordinary members. All members are welcome to attend these meetings and participate in the deliberations.

Meetings: (Public)

The TTA organised a mass public meeting on 26 November 1980 in the Assembly Hall to protest against the Lonie Report recommendations. The guest speakers were the Leaders of both Opposition parties - Mr Frank Wilkes and

Mr Peter Ross-Edwards. The meeting was attended by about 1,000 people. The TTA also organised a joint Rally on the steps of Parliament House on 11 March 1981 to protest against the proposed cuts in rail services.

During the year the President, Secretary, Public Relations Officer and Council Members, Pat Minihan and Dr Douglas Sherman were guest speakers at public meetings in Ballarat, Healesville, Kilmore, Sandringham, Hampton, Key Greenborough and Williamstown. Secretary Ken McIntyre was a guest speaker at public meetings organised by the Henry George League and at the Trade Union Training Authority's training session for Rail Union members.

Membership:

The year started with 343 members and during the year, we are proud to announce, that membership increased by over 198% with 1024 effective members on the rolls at the end of May 1981. We even have the rarity of a resident of Canada joining the TAA!

In order to carry weight with the Government, we need the numbers behind us. We appeal to all existing members not only to renew their membership, but to actively recruit more members to the cause.

Branches:

We are proud to announce the formation during the year of two Branches of the TTA.

The first branch was formed in Bendigo and the second in the suburban city of Sandringham.

The formation of these branches will enable members to concentrate on matters of local interest and concern to them

within the over-all plan and interests of the TTA.

We wish the Office bearers and members of these two Branches all success and we would welcome the formation of other Branches especially in Country areas.

Activities:

Our main activity throughout the year was the continuing campaign against the Government decisions to close down and cut rail services in the State. Our activities centred around attendance of protest meetings, support and assistance to local organisations with literature on the issue. A Petition signed by over 15,000 people protesting against these cuts was presented to Parliament at the March Rally.

In December 1980 we appealed to all City and Shire Councils in Victoria and interested organisations, for financial assistance to conduct a publicity campaign against the Government decisions to cut rail services. We received overwhelming support and contributions totalling \$3765. The funds were used for a series of newspaper advertisements in THE AGE and THE SUN in March, highlighting the damage to the State's economy that will result from the Government's transport policies.

A study by us and the Victorian Employers' Federation published in the City press and media in July 1980 revealed that as a result of the daily late running and cancellations of suburban trains in Melbourne over 12 months, workers lose over \$90m in wages and the State suffers over \$450m in lost production and sales. Six days after the publication and after receiving a personal copy, the

Premier, Mr R. Hamer made a public confession that "VicRail is a Mess".

Newsletter:

Our informative Newsletter, published quarterly, has served as a means of communication with our members and as a source of information to the general public and the media, of our campaign.

Each issue of the Newsletter has received wide coverage in the daily press and by the radio stations. Articles have been reproduced by other papers and organisations in their Newsletters.

The Present

Even the most ardent supporter of the State government will have to admit that the rail services today are a shambles and a disaster. Not a single day passes without dislocations and delays to the services due to shortages of trains, defective trains or shortages of qualified staff.

The continuous denial of adequate funds by the Government for more trains and staff, inadequate and inefficient services, poor management, low staff productivity and morale and the threat of closures and further cuts in services and staff have reduced the level of our rail services to its lowest in service standards and efficiency, in the history of the State.

The Future:

The year ahead will be the most crucial and decisive for rail and public transport in Victoria's history.

Faced with the Government's policy to close and cut services, and the continued

imbalance of funding for public transport compared to roads, the TTA faces an uphill task to create a greater degree of public awareness and knowledge on these issues.

Before the next Annual Meeting, Victorians will go to the polls to elect a new government. The TTA must conduct a vigorous campaign to ensure that the political party elected to office at that election will support, legislate and act to improve, expand and upgrade rail and public transport in accordance with our aims and objectives.

Acknowledgements:

In a year of disaster for public transport but of achievement for the TTA, I thank our President, Dr Charles Sowerwine, for his invaluable leadership and assistance in guiding the TTA through a difficult year. Charles will be leaving Australia to take up an overseas appointment for a year. We wish him all success and will look forward to him resuming his activities with us next year.

With such a dedicated bank of Office bearers it would be unfair to single out individuals, but I will be failing in my duty if I do not pay special thanks to John Alexopoulos, David Bowd and Patrick O'Connor for their valuable assistance in the administration of the TTA.

The TTA acknowledges the continued support of the City's daily newspapers and the interest and support of their Transport Reporters. We thank the two Sunday papers and the many Country and suburban newspapers for their coverage of our campaign. We thank the 4 city television stations also, for their

support and coverage of our activities.

Special thanks go out to the Australian Broadcasting Commission, radio stations 3KZ, 3DB, 3UZ, 3XY and 3CR for their numerous interviews of our Office bearers, news items, reports and coverage of our campaign during the year.

We thank the City and Shire Councils, organisations and individuals who contributed funds, obtained signatures for our Petition and supported our publicity campaign on the rail cuts.

We thank the officials and staff of the Commercial Travellers Club and the

Masonic Club for their courtesy and assistance to us at our monthly Council meetings held in their Club premises.

Finally, we thank all our officials, members and supporters, without whose interest, support and financial assistance we cannot exist.

We look forward to your continued support and renewed interest in the year ahead, to enable us to achieve a better deal for public transport users in the State.

- Ken McIntyre
Hon Secretary
1980/81

PUBLICATION AVAILABLE

"Hold The Line - Costing Melbourne's Transport Options"

Is public transport really a big money loser for Victorians? Will we really save money if we close suburban rail lines, as the State government plans to do? Is there a financially better way of meeting Melbourne's transport needs?

Hold The Line is a tightly-argued answer to these topical questions. It puts a critical spotlight on the facts and figures behind the government's claim that we are subsidising trains, trams and buses too much. It spells out the actual costs to the community of all modes of transport - including the private motor car.

Using official government sources and detailed surveys, this report challenges the findings of the controversial Lonie report on metropolitan public transport. It demonstrates that closing railway lines is not the way to reduce our overall spending on transport. Instead, it puts forward

a realistic program of new investment to upgrade public transport, and shows how this would pay off in hard financial terms.

The authors, John Andrews, Geoff Lacey and Patrick Moriarty have extensive backgrounds in transport and energy research and spent several months carrying out this study.

Hold The Line is a valuable contribution to the growing debate about transport. It takes the issue beyond rhetoric and into solid analysis. It is vital reading for transport decision-makers, researchers, community representatives and local transport activists.

Copies of this report can be obtained from E.F.F.E (Environmentalists for Full Employment), 672B Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn Victoria 3122. The cost is \$1.50 including postage.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Cash at Bank 1-7-80	\$ 142.03
<u>Receipts</u>	
Subscriptions - Regular Members	\$2526.00
" - Donor Members	\$2110.00
" - Corporate Members	\$ 150.00
	<u>\$ 4786.00</u>
Donations	\$ 5756.11
Cheque Account Interest	\$ 50.41
(June '80, December '80, June '81)	
	<u>\$10734.55</u>
Subscriptions on behalf of other Associations	\$ 188.00
(eg Tram & Bus Traveller's Association, etc)	
	<u>\$10922.55</u>
	<u><u>\$10922.55</u></u>

Due to the rapid growth of the Association during the 1980/81 financial year there was a substantial increase in income. Subscriptions received increased by 762% and donations were up by 5768%. The increase in subscription income arose from a three fold increase in membership coupled with the successful introduction of the Donor and Corporate membership categories.

Somewhat more than half the donations received came from Local Government bodies in response to the TTA publicity campaign appeal but there was also substantial support from our own members to this appeal and the earlier emergency appeal following the release of the Lonie Reports. Members and

supporters further contributed to our funds at public meetings in the Assembly Hall and outside Parliament House.

Expenditure increased heavily too, mainly due to TTA activities in opposition to the Lonie Reports, such as newspaper advertisements and leaflets.

The basic membership fee has been held at \$3 per annum for five years now. This has been made possible by economies achieved through growth in membership numbers which has enabled the average cost of providing membership benefits to be reduced. Whilst the basic subscription is sufficient to cover these costs it yields little surplus to expand the

FINANCIAL YEAR 1980/81

<u>Expenses</u>	
Newspaper Advertising	\$ 2866.64
Printing Leaflets, etc	\$ 2383.08
4 Issues of Newsletter (printing and postage)	\$ 1294.77
Miscellaneous (stamps, stationery, publications, etc)	\$ 656.12
Secretary's expenses (postage, telephone, etc)	\$ 380.11
Hire of meeting rooms and halls	\$ 364.00
Establishment assistance to TTA Branches	\$ 152.43
(Bendigo and Sandringham)	
	<u>\$ 8097.15</u>
Subscriptions forwarded to other Associations	\$ 188.00
Cash at Bank 30-6-81	\$ 2637.40
	<u>\$10922.55</u>
	<u><u>\$10922.55</u></u>

Association's activities.

Many members have joined the TTA or renewed their subscriptions as Donor Members or added donations to their basic subscription and these amounts have helped considerably to make the TTA more effective.

At the close of the financial year the Association was in a much better position financially than usual. This was largely due to many members renewing their subscriptions early. However, about half of those due to renew at this time have not yet done so.

Would all members please check their subscription renewal date shown on the address label of their Newsletter and return

this label (or other means of identification) with their subscriptions when they fall due.

With increases in telephone and postage charges looming and the need for a special effort to make our aims understood in the lead up to the forthcoming State elections, we will need to develop our strength in numbers and financially. Members are requested to maintain their membership and help to recruit others.

- David Bowd
TREASURER

FARE RISE WILL PERPETUATE VICRAIL'S VICIOUS CIRCLE

Every rail fare increase in the past decade has resulted in a massive decline in passenger patronage indicating clearly that train travellers are not prepared to pay more for inefficient, irregular and unpunctual services. Despite this fact fares will rise again shortly.

Instead of holding fares at existing levels, or reducing them, as the New South Wales government did, and increasing the level and standard of the services to attract greater patronage; the Victorian government wantonly increases fares each year to perpetuate the vicious circle and provide it with further excuses to reduce services and again increase fares. Once again the rate of increase (13%) has

been higher than the cost of living increase, and is not justified.

Since 1978 we have been pushing the government to introduce a modal interchange ticket system. The government promised it at the last State election.

Cynically they announce a restricted system on the eve of the Key By-election and less than a year before the next State election. Restricting modal exchange tickets within zones will restrict their utility and attraction. Only an across the board interchangeable ticket valid for travel by train, tram and bus will help attract more passengers to public transport.

- Ken McIntyre

NEW DEAL TURNS INTO OLD MESS

The recent news report (Herald 28/7) that the new trains and services promised by the State government in January 1981 as part of a "New Deal for Country Travellers", are unlikely to be realised or implemented as scheduled; is yet another episode in the government's shameful saga of empty promises to improve rail services.

The "Great Transport Revolution" promised by the government at the last two State elections has become a "Great Rail MESS" as ex Premier Hamer was forced to confess. The metropolitan area is littered with unfurnished rail projects commenced as election gimmicks but which the government has no intention of completing even in this century!

The promised Country improvements will meet the same fate. The excuse of lack of funds

cannot be accepted because the Transport Minister never lacks funds for freeway construction and expansion, irrespective of priority, need or public objections.

Victoria's country residents must question the government's obvious intention to close down the entire country system and force them to use less efficient forms of transport. They must demand improvements to the system from the government and their Local MP's.

Thirty years from today dwindling fuel resources and escalating oil prices will make car travel a luxury. Will you be proud to tell your children and grandchildren you helped destroy the rail system through your apathy and indifference?

- Pat Minihan

THE LESSONS OF THE RAIL DISPUTE

The recent rail dispute was caused by the refusal of the State Government to hold enquiries into the closure of country rail lines and the replacement of rail services with bus services. The handling of the dispute by the Transport Minister, Mr Maclellan, proved conclusively the unmitigated disaster and danger to the entire rail system, the users, the political future of the government and the industrial peace in the State we face in having Mr Maclellan as Transport Minister.

Holding the public enquiries is mandatory at law under the Transport Regulations Act. Not only did the Minister flout the Act by refusing to hold the enquiries, but he circumvented them by issuing temporary permits for the bus services that replaced the rail services. The fact that the enquiries are to be held only after a protracted seizure of trains resulting in millions of dollars damage and loss due to the blockage of the movement of freight in the State, is an indictment of the Minister's handling of the situation.

Throughout his period in office Mr Maclellan has exhibited an open hostility and double standards towards rail transport and a wanton plan to destroy the rail system. On 17 June 1981, truck drivers blocked the movement of freight in a demand for reductions in the truck licence fees. Within 24 hours Mr Maclellan not only capitulated to their demands but cancelled the licence fees altogether, thereby adding an annual bill of \$5.2m to all the State's taxpayers!

Fully aware of the assurance from the rail unions that there would be no stoppage of the suburban rail services, the Minister attempted to

provoke the situation by his repeated press statements that the suburban services were on the brink of closure, causing unnecessary anxiety and concern to users. In worse taste and a proof of his intentions to seek the destruction of the rail system, are his remarks reported in the media on 2 July, that the breakdown of the rail system would "coincide with the deregulation of road transport" and would be "a marvellous launch for anyone interested in the trucking business".

The fact that law abiding citizens in the State, spontaneously resorted to unlawful actions to seize and blockade trains, is an indication of their strong feelings on the future and need for the system. In the interests of the very future of the rail system in the State, and to ensure a reduction in industrial strife, the Transport Minister must be removed from office. His continuance in the portfolio is not in the interests of the economy of the State and the success of public transport.

The TTA executive was active in the rail dispute through constant contact with the unions and a deputation to His Excellency, The Governor Sir Henry Winneke, calling on the State to hold the enquiries which were mandatory at law. Had the Government and the Minister agreed to the only rational and legal solution to the dispute, the State would have been saved the massive economic loss and damage to the goods and freight movements; rail workers would have been saved the huge losses in income and traders and industry would have been saved the millions of dollars lost due to the blockade of freight movements.

- Ken McIntyre

AMENDMENT 150 - TRANSPORT IMPLICATIONS

Amendment 150 to the Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme purports to be a strategy of urban containment and with a focus of commercial development around public transport nodes. It is actually a strategy of employment stagnation for the Central Business District with 15 suburban growth centres, not based on public transport, but firmly based on an expanding arterial road network. It is a recipe for the final "Los Angelification" of Melbourne.

It is not in any sense an active planning document as it does not establish a clear hierarchy for conflicting goals. By default, it provides for a continuation of car-based urban sprawl beyond the turn of the century. At best, Melbourne's planning will be done by OPEC, with MMBW abandoning its responsibilities! The report talks of a 'balanced transport approach' yet it is entirely a highway report. Public transport is only mentioned in cliques to divert attention.

The Strategy report says most of Melbourne is served by public transport and only proposes improvements to local buses serving district centres. New freeways are proposed but no new railways such as the Eastern Railway, Waverley, or Altona extension to Laverton. No tramway extensions are proposed either nor radial bus services. In the Amendment itself there is a return to the discredited 1969 Transportation Plan with

inner, middle and outer ring roads.

While some TTA members might be unconcerned at the prospect of a stagnant Central Business District, the suburban growth centre concept will be almost entirely car-based. Over 70% of work trips to the CBD are by public transport, yet less than 20% in the suburbs. Amendment 150 addresses principally white collar employment, and provides for a diversion of growth away from the CBD into 15 (at least) suburban centres. The claimed attraction is shorter work trips (by car). Overseas, in periods of high unemployment work trips (by car) get longer as people are forced to take jobs in any of the many suburban centres.

J.M. Thomson in his book "Great Cities and their Traffic" identified the instability of the MMBW "weak centre" strategy and the results of no rail building and substantial ring-road building.

One big loser is the public transport user. Patronage will continue to decline. Fares must rise fast. Just what is happening! Another loser is the taxpayer who pays for both under-utilised public transport and expensive freeways. The big loser is the public at large. The car-based city serves only the healthy and wealthy adults.

- Ivan R. Powell

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

Members and other Newsletter readers are invited to make contributions to the TTA Newsletter. Articles of interest, suggestions for improvements to service and accounts of overseas systems and trends broadly relating to public transport will be considered for publication. The TTA reserves the

right to edit, abridge or reject any material, however, subject to availability of space every effort will be made to publish items submitted. Material for the next issue should be addressed to the Editor, TTA Newsletter, PO Box 116, Hurstbridge 3099. The closing date is 15 September.

TRANSPORT MINISTER FAILS AGAIN

On 18 May 1981, the Transport Minister, Mr Maclellan accepted our invitation to be the Guest Speaker at our Annual Meeting on 18 June 1981 at the Victoria Hotel.

At 5.40pm on the day, without even the courtesy of a phone call from the Minister to state he could not attend, VicRail Chairman, Mr Alan Reiher arrived at the hotel and informed us he was deputising for Mr Maclellan.

In all fairness to Mr Reiher, who was put in the embarrassing position of having to address the TTA members at short notice, he did a splendid job and we thank him for his presence.

The Minister claimed he was attending a meeting of striking truck drivers who had held up movement of all freight in the ports of Victoria, demanding a reduction in truck licence fees. Mr Maclellan capitulated to their demands and cancelled the licence fee altogether, thereby adding \$5.2million a year to the taxpayers' burden.

Members are reminded that apart from the Annual General Meeting commitment which he failed to keep, Mr Maclellan has continuously refused:-

. to accept our invitations to address public meetings organised by us,

. to travel the trains with us to personally witness "the MESS" he has contributed to since assuming office as Minister.

As the users of the system and the taxpayers who pay his salary to supposedly manage the transport systems in the State (mismanage would be the more appropriate term as facts prove) the Minister's repeated failures to meet the public; his open hostility and double standards to public transport; and the massive declines in public transport service standards since he assumed office, indicate he is unsuitable and unfit to be the Minister for Transport.

His irrational, provocative and inflexible attitude in times of rail industrial disputes, indicates how dangerous he is to industrial peace in the State and to the very future of public transport in the State.

- Ken McIntyre

A CHANGE IN OUR CONSTITUTION

At the Annual General Meeting the proposed change to the constitution foreshadowed in the June Newsletter was approved unanimously. This change means that when a person joins the TTA their membership will run for 12 months from the date of joining. Previously all members were required to renew their subscriptions by the first of April to remain financial. All people who joined during the last membership year will be considered to still be members until the anniversary

of the date on which they joined although legally these people ceased to be members after the Annual General Meeting.

The legal status of these members is not likely to be a concern unless a member is co-opted onto the council, wishes to call a special general meeting or move a motion at a general meeting. If any of these situations occur, legal membership status can be obtained by paying a pro-rata subscription.

(The following article has been reprinted from a Labour Transport Campaign Special Newsletter as it is considered to be of interest to members. As stated on Page 20 of this issue, however, the TTA is a non-party political organisation and use of the article does not imply support of or alignment with the Australian Labour Party or its platform - Editor)

PUBLIC HEARINGS MANDATORY ON ALL RAIL CLOSURES

The State Government has now confirmed that public TRB hearings are mandatory at Law before any bus service can replace a rail line. In the closures to date, VicRail had applied for and obtained temporary permits.

It now appears that this is in contravention of the Transport Regulation Act as temporary permits (issued without public hearing) are only intended for "essential emergency transport of persons necessitated by failure, break-down or stoppage of the ordinary passenger transport service".

The Opposition has informed the TRB and VicRail of its intention to lodge objections to each application for a replacement bus service.

ANY INTERESTED PERSON MAY OBJECT AND MUST BE HEARD. EVERY INTERESTED PERSON SHOULD BE HEARD.

So far, not one application for a bus license has been advertised.

But everyone concerned about saving our rail services should be prepared to move quickly.

THE PROCESS

1. Application will be made to the TRB specifying all the details of the proposed bus service.
2. This will be advertised in the Government Gazette and a date set down for a hearing. Everyone concerned should keep a close eye on the Gazette.

3. Any interested person may object on the prescribed form. Community groups should consider distributing copies of the form throughout their community.
4. At the hearing each objector can be heard and may call witness and submit documentary evidence. The more evidence we can provide, the more likely we are to save the line.
5. Any objector may be represented by a Lawyer or any other person.
6. At the hearing, the TRB must take into consideration all of the social effects of the proposed change in service and all the matters set out in Clause 21 of the Act.

They must consider reports from Municipalities in the area affected.

These public hearings should be used to achieve the proper consideration of the social and community costs involved in the transport services - a consideration which has been lamentably absent from both the Lonie Report and the Government's own decision making process.

This opportunity must be used.

Every citizen, community group and Municipality affected by the closure proposals should immediately start formulating their objections to the rail closures.

HIGHWAY ROBBERY

The Minister for Transport, Big Mac, recently announced that the Princes Highway between Dandenong and Berwick would be closed as part of the recommendations of the Looney Report on country travel. By closing down the highway and instituting alternatives without a proper enquiry, the Minister was found to be in breach of the Transport Act (AGE 23/6/81). In spite of repeated requests, the Minister refused to agree to have an enquiry (ibid).

The Cranky Roads Board (bemoaning "one of our highways is missing") was adamant that a public enquiry would be held and on 5 June 1981 commenced a campaign of blockading trucks until the Minister agreed to the enquiry. Commuter groups, concerned about the closures, blockaded passenger cars along the route on 13 June. The campaign escalated to such an extent that 3.5m cars and trucks were blockaded all over Victoria and most roads became impassable (HERALD 26/6/81). Asked if the government would be taking any initiatives to bring the matter (the blockades) to a head, Big Mac replied:

"I'm available for discussions with the unions whenever they want it." (ABC News 23/6/81)

What transpired from the government's initiatives? Big Mac negotiated an additional \$31.1m deficit for the CRB, bringing the deficit for 1980/81 to about \$190m - a record (AGE 1/7/81). It took 8 days for Big Mac to agree to a compromise put forward by Opposition Leader, Will Franks (AGE 24/6, 2/7, HERALD 26/6/81) - so that a proper enquiry could be held.

Big Mac also negotiated to give away \$5.2m to the Train Workers' Union (TWU) by waiving train registration fees (HERALD

19/6/81). (The shortfall comes out of the general transport fund which finances such things as elimination of level crossings). The loss of \$36.3m in the space of 28 days would be the pinnacle of Big Mac's achievements during his term as Transport Minister. If Big Mac keeps up the hard work, he could increase the deficit by \$473.2m in a full year.

On 19 June, Big Mac dusted the cobwebs from the Clever-Ploy report on Transport which recommended wholesale increases in charges and of reductions in services (AGE 20/6/81). The report revealed "a significant excess of road capacity provided in relation to demand in the off-peak periods". (Clever-Ploy Report, 1980, p.iii). One of the "Cost Reduction Options" identified is the so-called restoration of the Hume Highway to dirt road standard in order "to ensure that supply is more commensurate with demand. (ibid p. vii). In the "upgrading" of the route, stage coaches will supplant cars as they would be better able to negotiate it in inclement weather.

The Report stated however, that coaching stations would be closed at night and weekends and whipping machines would replace stage coaches drivers and stage coaches would use camels instead of horses during these periods in line with the Looney recommendations. (ibid p. vi)

We look forward to Big Mac's promotion in view of his outstanding achievements in transport.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



MOBILITY - HONG KONG STYLE

Hong Kong has a problem - there is not enough land, and there are too many people: but the 'city-state' proudly boasts that no one goes to bed hungry.

As the high rise tenements move up the slopes and further and further out into the New Territories, rehousing the shanty town dwellers, and attempting to reduce the number of 'boat-people' the problem of providing food clothing and shelter is joined by another - mobility. For it is recognised that it is little help to people to provide new housing if it means isolation from employment, friends and recreation.

The MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY (MTR) is designed for this purpose, of bringing mobility to the people, and it is already doing this job. Three years ago I was in Hong Kong watching Nathan Road (far, far busier than Bourke Street) being ripped up to accommodate the underground tracks. A month ago I was lucky enough to go back to HK and ride on the MTR from Admiralty station on Hong Kong island under the harbour, to Tsim Sha Tsui on the Kow Loon side. There are 15 stations, 3 above ground, in operation; two stations on Hong Kong island; and thirteen on Kow Loon peninsula, terminating a journey of 15.6kms at Kwun Tong. Another supur line to the North West of New Kow Loon is being built, and two more lines, one running South to Kennedy Town and the other North to Chai Wan, are in the planning Stage.

The MTR is now handling 550,000 people a day, a figure that is expected to rise to 800,000 by the end of this year, and when the new lines (now in planning stage) are added some time in the mid-eighties, daily passenger figures are expected to rise to two and a half million.

A lot has been learned from the London and other undergrounds where unwary travellers can well be on the right line only to find themselves travelling in the wrong direction. Stations on the MTR are huge, tiled, well lit, with plenty of directions and are equipped with many entrances and exits. All tickets come from ticket machines and are surrendered at the end of the journey for re-use, that is unless one has purchased a ticket to the value of HK\$25 which give about 12 trips, which are recorded by computer and the ticket withdrawn when the appropriate number of journeys has been made. Provision is being made for 'Stored Value Tickets' in demoninations of \$50, \$100 and \$200 to be sold and used for any journey or combination of journeys on the MTR until the value of the ticket has been used.

The trains are of six carriages and it is possible to see and walk from one end to the other, seats are of stainless steel, and are along the sides - vandal proof and shiny from the sliding

that takes place with each acceleration and stop. The whole system is a marvellous achievement, and as the high rise housing settlements march forward, the MTR is providing a mobility not possible on the roads (which whilst being continually upgraded, are congested, some idea of which may be gauged from the fact that there are more than 284,000 vehicles using 1,150 kms of roads, 246 vehicles per km) or the many ferries which make Hong Kong such a pleasure for tourists.

A lot of thought and effort has gone into the mobility of people in HK and apart from the

MTR, a 'pedestrian freeway' goes South from the Star Ferry terminal and allows people to walk freely for about half a mile, above street level, and away (or almost) from the diesel fumes of taxis and buses.

Only years of indoctrination of miles per gallon for the family car could made the writing about walkways for people seem strange, and make one so enthusiastic for the accent given to the need for efficient public transport - for mobility.

- Frank Casey

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

or
OFFER TO HELP

I wish to join the TTA ☐

I wish to renew my subscription ☐

NAME	Ordinary Member	\$3.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
ADDRESS	Donor Member	\$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
..... Post Code	Corporate Member	\$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Donation	\$.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

Telephone - Home/Business

I want to help with:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflet hand outs | <input type="checkbox"/> Typing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking at meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Research for newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letters to press, politicians | <input type="checkbox"/> Telephoning messages to other members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signatures for petitions | <input type="checkbox"/> Setting up stalls |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mailouts | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

I can help ☐ often ☐ occasionally

TTA Membership and Newsletter

The TTA Newsletter is published by and for members of the Train Travellers' Association.

The TTA is a voluntary, non-party political, non-profit organisation of train travellers and public transport users.

Its function is to lobby the government for a modern, adequate, efficient rail and public transport system. Our plan for improved public transport calls for optimum use of trains, trams and buses in the interests of saving our scarce fuel resources, protection of the environment and incorporating the advantages of the various modes of transport in the most cost efficient and energy efficient manner.

The membership includes regular issues of the Newsletter for the basic subscription of \$3 annually. Those who can afford to are requested to become Donor Members at \$10 per year or to make donations towards the costs of printing, postage, hire of halls for meetings, etc. All members have equal status and their category of

membership may be changed, if they wish, when subscriptions are renewed.

Regular TTA activities consist of monthly meetings of the TTA Council to which all members are invited. The Council meets on the first Wednesday of each month (except January) in the Masonic Club Premises, 164 Flinders Street, Melbourne at 5.30pm. Please enquire the location of the meeting room from Ground Floor reception and sign the visitors' book.

Other TTA functions are the preparation of briefs and submissions; liaison with VicRail managers through regular meetings; representations to the Premier and Transport Minister on suggestions, complaints, etc; media interviews; speeches at public meetings; articles and letters to the press; publishing and distribution of leaflets; etc.

Members are encouraged to contribute articles to the Newsletter and offer suggestions and ideas to the Council for consideration.

Office bearers elected for the year 1981/82 are:

<u>President:</u>	Dr Douglas Sherman	a/h
<u>Secretary:</u>	Ken McIntyre	"
<u>Vice-President:</u>	Ivan Powall	"
<u>Treasurer:</u>	David Bowd	"
<u>Publicity Officer:</u>	Patrick O'Connor	"
<u>Council Members:</u>	John Alexopolous	"
	Pat Minihan	"
	Robin Vowels	"
	Rod Bryant	"
	Ria Smit	"
	Alex Boyne	"
	Margaret Panter	"