Women's Rights and Industrial Relations Under the Postwar Compact in Australia*

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In summing up and commenting upon a series of articles which examined the "postwar social contract" in *International Labor and Working-Class History*, Charles S. Maier observed that one theme which the authors raised but did "not systematically scrutinize [was] the role of gender differences" in the making of that contract.[1] This article takes as its point of departure the importance of this remark both for and beyond the United States. It argues that in Australia, a country where postwar reconstruction was marked by intense labor factionalism, gender relations were in fact central to labor relations and to union strategy. Specifically, arguments and policies concerning women's rights to paid work, to equal pay, and to an active role in unions in large part defined the lines of internal labor movement division in unions with large numbers of women as members. This article charts these developments in three major areas of women's work and unionism: the clothing and footwear trades and in clerical work.

The communist and left-wing social-democratic positions on women's rights and equal pay represented a considerable advance in comparison to the traditional male craft position and to the practices of labor right-wingers which only argued for equal pay as a means of excluding women from particular areas of work. These policy differences sprang from fundamentally opposed social values. In the case studies presented here, three unions are examined to show how these competing ideologies related to specific union practices. Each study provides a different way of evaluating these relationships: over time as leadership changed within one branch of a union, in internal factional struggles, and between different branches of the same union.

In the Clerks Union, the left-wing leaders attempted, as they put it, to "intensify" the struggle for equal pay but they lost control of the union before this could happen. The first signs under the new leadership were not encouraging: One new official declared in 1952 that the real issue in assessing pay rates was employment for men. The equal pay question was effectively set aside and at the same time women's participation in the union's forums began to decline.

In the Boot Trades Union, where the Right remained in control throughout, equal pay was very clearly enmeshed with the role of women as activists. The militants briefly overcame a history of inaction on women's wages, but the formal commitment to equal pay which they won was not backed up with any concerted action, despite shortages of female labor. There was almost ceaseless

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conflict within the biggest branch of the union over equal pay and women's activism.

In the Clothing and Allied Trades Union, the war years had seen women winning significant wage increases but thereafter women faced a series of government attempts to increase male employment and employer demands for changes in work practices. In this union, differences between the branches revealed most clearly that gender issues that were central to factional policy differences.

The article begins by setting out the context in which these struggles emerged: In each of these unions, as in many others, there was a considerable communist presence and there were intense ideological divisions within and between branches of the unions. The core of the argument is then set out in an examination of differences in factional policy, first, in relation to industrial issues, wages, and equal pay campaigning and, second, in relation to women's rights themselves in the workplace and the union movement. The article concludes that the differences between the policies of the factions cannot be explained by internal industry labor processes or industrial demands alone; rather, they lay primarily in fundamental beliefs about gender and work and the nature of both in the postwar world. Indeed, the article argues that the definition and defense of women workers were central elements in distinguishing the industrial and political strategies of the competing factions in these three unions.

Postwar Factional Struggles

The years immediately after the Second World War witnessed intense arguments about the form of the postwar world. Central to these debates were struggles for control within national labor movements which in many cases resulted in national settlements marking these states and their union movements until at least the early 1970s. In Australia, as in many of the Allied countries, unions had secured a new prestige and prominence in the war years. At the same time, the Communist party had achieved what would be its greatest influence by 1945, measured both in terms of party membership and in terms of power within the trade union movement. In that year, the country's national union peak body, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, adopted a number of items from the party's agenda. The federal Labor party government and many union officials were alarmed at the prospect of further communist control. Like social-democratic or broadly prolabor governments elsewhere, they were also concerned about the inflationary impact of militant wage demands arising from the full (male) employment which they had promised for the postwar world.[2] There were many other questions for and about the postwar world which divided opinion within labor movements and which would be central to industrial relations practice: Would there be a "new order"? How would family life be structured? What would happen to those women who had joined the paid work force in the war?[3]

Working-class organizations reflected the divisions over all these questions. The Labor party (which had governed Australia through the wartime crisis)

moved quickly to shore up its position against the communists. It established "Industrial Groups" to fight within the unions to win unionists back from communism and to support those who had not succumbed. The "Groupers," as they became known, would fight a series of often intensely bitter battles with communists in workplaces and union halls across the country in much the same way as rival forces competed in key unions in the United States and Britain. At first, the Groupers were a diverse band, including Trotskyists, disaffected socialists, former communists, and mainstream laborists. But there was always a strand of religious sectarianism to this, not least because of the role of a semi-secret church body, the Catholic Social Studies Movement, which trained and funded a cadre that, in terms of dedication and organization, was the very mirror image of the communists themselves. Eventually, from 1954 on, these tensions would divide not only the unions but the Labor party itself and help to keep it thoroughly ineffective as a federal political force for a generation.[4]

Although much has been written about industrial relations in the late 1940s and events leading up to this "Labor Split," the focus has been on the heavy industries where the major strikes took place and where the anticommunist campaign was most obvious as well as on the machinations within the Labor party itself. In reflecting on this period, there has been little examination of those areas of work and unionism which were mainly female or of the relationship between the "high politics" of factionalism and the routine practices of unions. In the United States, there is of course a body of very useful literature on key unions such as the United Electrical Workers as well as overviews of the Congress of Industrial Organizations.[5] However, as Maier observes, there have been few attempts to think about these struggles in terms of gender issues. These postwar disputes were about much more than who was in control of any given union—as important as that was. Rather, these changes in union leadership affected the policies pursued. Looking at the specific ways in which each side hoped to alter (or maintain) the gender order is one way of making this clear. It is to this task that we now turn.

Structure, Policy, and Conflict in the Clerks, Boot Trades, and Clothing Trades Unions

The three unions which are examined here were federal in scope and were amongst the biggest unions in Australia; they were certainly the biggest of the unions which attempted to recruit women. Like most unions, their biggest branches were those in the most populous of the country's eight states and territories, New South Wales and Victoria. There was also a concentration of population w*ithin* these states such that work and unionism in the manufacturing and service sectors were heavily urbanized. Thus the state branches of these unions were in effect branches based in, and meeting in, the major cities (Sydney and Melbourne, respectively) of those states. These branches exercised considerable autonomy from their respective federal union structures. They were the scenes of factional conflict (and were its prizes) throughout this period.

Therefore, when examining internal union dynamics, it is both necessary and possible to focus on the workplaces and forums in these two cities.

Working conditions for these industries and occupations were formally set by "awards" determined by a process of state-sponsored conciliation and arbitration. These mechanisms had been established at the turn of the century after the depression of the 1890s and a series of major industrial disputes. They formed the centerpiece of a regulated labor market in which unions were formally recognized as the bargaining agents for workers (including, in effect, nonunion labor). Many unions were protected from rapacious employers (and other unions) by this framework; others, especially those with strong workplace organization, were less sanguine about the protection of the state and "bosses' courts," but few had taken a principled opposition to arbitration since the heyday of the Industrial Workers of the World.[6] In the two manufacturing unions examined here, the Clothing and Allied Trades Union and the Boot Trades Union, these awards were determined at the federal level by a Court of Conciliation and Arbitration. For the Clerks Union, most workers and their employers were governed by awards specific to the various states. Hence it is possible to examine this union with reference to just one branch, in this case the biggest branch, New South Wales.[7]

The balance between direct action, arbitration, and politics was to be a central issue in internal union debates over the setting of women's pay and conditions. The arbitration system had made the setting of women's wages a very public matter and tied wages to national social policy. The family wage, premised on the male as breadwinner and female as dependent, was thus more explicit in Australia than was the case in some comparable countries. This meshing of public policy had begun at the national level with the first major test case for a basic wage in 1907 and was entrenched by 1919 when the clothing industry's award set women's pay at fifty-four percent of men's, where it stayed until World War Two.[8]

Wartime conditions had changed much of this traditional practice. Women were able to win far greater wage increases than ever before. In 1943, following official concerns about "an acute shortage" of clothing, Clothing Trades Union officials had bypassed the traditional arbitration mechanisms to deal directly with government and a new regulatory body, the Women's Employment Board, to introduce a new minimum rate equivalent to seventy-five percent of the male wage. In many areas of this industry, however, women had taken matters into their own hands, in some cases earning *over* the formal male basic rate.[9] This formal rate flowed through to most women workers, representing the biggest wage increase won through the state apparatus since the minimum had effectively been set at fifty-four percent of the male basic wage—roughly twenty-five years. This wartime change set the scene for the most pressing defensive demand of the postwar period, namely, that the old rate should not be restored. Conditions seemed propitious because, in both clothing and footwear, labor shortages continued. When some unionists argued for the next logical step, equal pay for the sexes, the differences between the social values of the union movement's factions would become strikingly clear.

These three unions had, to put it mildly, mixed records in terms of their defense of women workers but all had experienced changes in the late 1930s and in the war years. In some cases, these developments overlapped with the factional struggles which would characterize the trade union movement after 1945. In all cases, the leaderships remained in male hands, but there were significant structural differences between the unions. The Clerks Union's and the Boot Trades membership consisted of roughly equal numbers of men and women; women made up ninety percent of the membership in the Clothing Trades Union; in the left-wing Victoria branch they filled about half of the official positions.

Communists and their allies had become active in all of these unions in the 1930s; the activists in the Clerks Union were the most successful: They won control of the two key state branches of Victoria and New South Wales. In both clothing and footwear manufacture, men and women activists in or sympathetic to the Communist party were unable to achieve this degree of support, but they formed formidable "opposition" groups. In the clothing industry, the branch leadership remained in the hands of those close to the Labor party, but their factional position and relations with communists were very different in right-wing New South Wales and left-wing Victoria. This section concludes by introducing each of the three case study unions in more detail.

Communist success in the New South Wales, branch of the Clerks Union was partly due to the leadership's careful direction of the union from the nadir of the Great Depression and partly due to considerable success in improving wages and conditions.[10] In New South Wales, State Secretary Jack Hughes, a leading communist, drew on an array of other communists and sympathizers to help and staff the union. Communists from the party book shop and other unions' offices were conspicuous members, whilst equal pay activists also lent their support.[11]

The Clerks Union was a major prize in the postwar labor struggles. On one side were a number of key communist cadres, on the other, the Social Studies Movement, which was more important in the union than in most others.[12] The internal conflict came to a head in July 1952 when, following factional upheaval in all the other branches as well as in the federal ruling body, the Groupers' leader, Joe Riordan, moved at a special meeting of the branch's council that Hughes's tenure of office be "immediately terminated." The council voted twenty-five to eighteen to dismiss Hughes and the rest of the officers. Communist leadership of the branch was over.[13]

The footwear industry, then known as the "boot trades," was marked by a rigid gender division of labor which remained intact in the postwar years: In 1947, forty-two percent of the work force was women; in 1955 it was forty-five percent. Women worked as machinists, usually in separate rooms from the male clickers (cutters). Employers were desperate to introduce incentive payment and work systems but the federal award which governed conditions in the industry restricted them to straight-out piece work.[14] Like many other employers, they wanted to remove these restrictions, not least because they feared

the industrial and economic implications of full employment. They also expressed concern about imports from Britain and from the massive new Bata Company operating in Czechoslovakia and India. Incentives, they believed, would also help to create a better atmosphere in the industry and "offset the effect of the 40-hour week" which the Arbitration Court had finally agreed to in 1947.[15]

In this union, unlike the Clerks, there was no change in leadership in this period. There was, however, a sustained conflict between the leadership and groups of left-wing opponents. Meetings of the state branches were the scene for these disputes. Held fortnightly, they were consistently attended by about eighty people in Melbourne and about sixty in Sydney. In one fundamental way these meetings were utterly unrepresentative of the membership: They were almost all male. In a study of the prewar industry, Frances has shown how the youth and high turnover of women worked against their developing their own strength within the union whilst making them allies in the men's causes.[16] The war brought more older and married women into the industry—and in 1945 there were many complaints by employers about their "petty strikes"—but it remained the case that women were younger then men. About fifty-five percent of females in New South Wales and forty-seven percent in Victoria were under twenty-five while for men the percentages were about twenty-nine and twenty-one.[17] The remaining sections of this article will show that the low profile of women in formal decision-making should not obscure the importance of gender relations in the factional disputes of the period. Indeed, there is some reason to believe that those lower levels were outcomes of the reshaping of this and other unions.

The precise forms and processes of conflict in the clothing industry were again different, yet the debates were strikingly similar. Just as employment rose in the boot trades, so the clothing trades boomed in the postwar years. In 1951 the union would attain its highest membership. The number of men rose more quickly than the number of women but the female membership still hovered at about ninety percent of the total. Here too the gender division of labor in the industry was to be one of the central issues in postwar policy disputes.

In the Clothing Trades Union, the leadership in both of the main branches was confronted by well-organized opposition groups (of the Right in Victoria, of the Left in New South Wales) but these struggles would not come to a head until the mid-1950s. In the immediate postwar years, the union's divisions took the form of interbranch conflict, with the right-wing (and male-craft-dominated) New South Wales branch and the smaller state branches opposing the left-wing Victorians as they fought to direct the union's national policy. In this union, then, interbranch rivalry shaped the national goals of the national union as to the defense of women as workers and as citizens.

For our purposes, this interbranch hostility is most important because, for the New South Wales leadership, which had been entrenched in office since the early 1920s, the union's main task was the defense of the male crafts of cutting and pressing. They had consistently opposed campaigns for equal pay for women and had used the war crisis to clamp down on women's initiatives in both the

workplace and the union meeting.[18] The tenor of their unionism may be gauged from two illustrative episodes. First, when the Victorians had (successfully) argued that the union should fight for equal pay in the late 1930s, the New South Wales secretary asserted that this would undermine marriage and "destroy the name of Mother"—and, to the amazement of his fellow officials, he intoned that "no man would like to think that his Mother's purity, chastity and virginity had been assailed."[19] Second, in the war, when the Left attempted to respond to women's concerns about speed-up, the same man was derisive: "Why are they squealing . . . ? It seems to me to be time we looked into our own house."[20]

We turn now to an examination, union by union, of the intermeshing of industrial issues with union factionalism and the specific concerns of women workers.

Industrial Issues and Wage Demands

In all three unions there were contests over the appropriate industrial strategies in relation to postwar wages and in particular to campaigns for equal pay for the sexes, whilst in addition the two manufacturing unions were internally divided over what were called "incentive schemes," that is, various forms of payment by results, work measurement, and bonus payments. This section examines the workplace issues in the clothing and boot trades before turning to an examination of wages and equal pay in all three unions.

Union responses to changes in work organization and incentive schemes give us a glimpse of agitation beyond the union meeting rooms. When the policy implications were discussed, there were clear differences in suggested positions which partly reflected the standard range of union views about militancy and accommodation but which also drew attention to the particular concerns of women workers—and to the marginalization of those concerns when they seemed to threaten "efficiency" in industry.

In Victoria, the biggest branch of the Boot Trades Union, right-wing officials and a small group of militant members engaged in a running battle over "speed-up." Women's concerns about work intensification were raised but officials simply asserted that "speed-up" was not possible in times of full employment. They shared the view of many employers and the federal Arbitration Court that the world of work had irrevocably changed since the 1930s mainly in that full employment itself would act as a control on any otherwise unfair or harsh employers. The Left, with one young woman, Ivy Thompson, in the forefront, campaigned hard on these issues, opposing "all forms of speed-up."[21] Communists continued to denounce new methods as disguised speed-up and ridiculed the officials' claims that incentive schemes could be controlled. On the contrary, said one, George Hewett, the union was being "picked out" by employers because of its weakness. Thompson claimed that on this matter as others "females in the industry were neglected."[22]

In 1949, at a meeting of the union's supreme policymaking body, the all-male federal council, union president Hobourn explained the official position:

Accepting incentives was "a big departure in principle," but unions were unable to resist the employers. However, through arbitration, the union had succeeded in "efforts to control and supervise" incentive schemes. Thompson's view, though, was the more prescient; once the lion had been set free, as she put it to a branch meeting, it could not be captured. Workers would be "head down and tail up and going for their lives." In a particularly appropriate metaphor, she claimed that they "would have to go hell for leather."[23] Women were not, as the officials liked to think, passive at work. There were many short strikes in the mid-1940s whilst there is fragmentary evidence of resistance to incentives schemes and even factory design in the early 1950s, but at no stage did the leadership attempt to build upon this or indeed to look at the concerns which the militants had articulated.[24]

In this union, as in others, the hardening of the lines of fissure around the Cold War made it very difficult for those sections of the labor movement which sought to offer a more oppositional vision. In the 1950s, the main industrial issues were still incentives and (and ever more rarely) concerns about women's wages, but the Left had few moments of success. In Victoria the militants' propaganda organ, *The Bootmaker*, maintained its line against incentive schemes and some members continued to express their reservations about the officials' claim that the union could control such schemes. In branch elections in 1951 the militants ran an "Anti-Boss Ticket" against "all forms of speed-up."[25] Ironically, however, the only real change was brought about when in the mid-1950s the employers themselves became disenchanted with incentive schemes.[26]

In the clothing trade, employers were as keen as their counterparts in the boot trades to intensify production through new incentive schemes, seeking to circumvent the dangers posed by a shortage of female labor. Unlike the boot trades militants, clothing trades workers, including many women, were confident that they could exercise some control over these schemes. Indeed in some cases it seemed that women had managed to work the rates so well that employers were attempting to shift them back to weekly wages.[27] In the early 1950s, more employers followed, partly because the production process became still more divided. They preferred simple bonus payments to the detailed calculation of myriad piece rates.[28]

The union's official response, then, was likely to be a compromise. The tensions were exacerbated, however, by intersecting lines of gender and craft. The male pressers in New South Wales, who constituted the dominant force in the branch leadership, had long favored piece rates over weekly wages.[29] The Victorians, though, were much more concerned about the impact of new payment systems on the majority of the Trades employees, the female machinists. By 1949, the national policy was for the union to declare in favor of union-controlled incentive schemes and against surveillance, time-and-motion studies, and stopwatches. This unhappy resolution spoke of the complexities of the labor process, gender relations, and intra-union organizational politics.[30] The triumph of the pressers (and of pragmatism) would have a sorry sequel in 1957 when the in-

dustry's employers persuaded the Arbitration Commission to remove all remaining limitations on timing and work measurement.[31]

Equal pay was of course the most obvious way to build on wartime gains and deliver significant wage increases to women. More than this, it would signify a challenge to the social order which went far beyond labor relations, as activists on both sides knew only too well. We will examine the trajectory of this struggle in each union along with the general progress of women's wages as bitter debates were aroused between and within branches.

In both the Clothing and Clerks Unions, the left-wing leaders had been prominent in the establishment of the country's foremost agitating body, the Council of Action for Equal Pay, formed in the 1930s. Admittedly the left-wing position on equal pay and indeed the Council itself had contradictory elements, but they represented a considerable advance compared to the traditional craft position of seeking equal pay, if at all, merely to try to exclude women from certain areas of work.[32] Differences over equal pay policy should not be exaggerated as no major union had equal pay as a first priority in the early 1950s, but it is possible to discern some important tensions between the positions of the factions in all three unions. In the immediate postwar years, equal pay campaigning was threatened by broad concerns over the return to a "normal" gender division of labor and what were called "Rehabilitation Schemes" for exservicemen which would include "preference in employment" over other jobseekers. In this difficult context, the Council of Action for Equal Pay, women activists, and some male left-wingers looked at ways to "intensify" the struggle, as the Clerks leadership put it.[33]

The leading women activists in the Clerks Union clearly felt that this renewal of the commitment to equal pay was necessary. They told their State Council in New South Wales in April 1950 that they "did not think that all councilors were convinced on the importance of the campaign" and moved successfully for the establishment of an equal pay committee in their union.[34] Evidently, apathy undermined their efforts, as the next council meeting in October heard that few of the union's sections had sent any delegates.[35]

In their last year or so in control of the union, the communist women made genuine attempts to advance the claims of women workers. At a council meeting in April 1951, a rather vague affirmation of the need for equal pay was set aside for an amendment by two communist women, Carmen Coleman and June Mills, which directed that a committee be established and a campaign be inaugurated across all sections of the union. In October of the same year, Hughes argued that loopholes in the New South Wales arbitration system allowed for equal pay and that the union should investigate these with a view to putting the matter back on the agenda of formal wage-fixing.[36]

At the height of the union's internal crisis, equal pay was of central concern to the left-wing women. The recorded reaction of women communists at the meeting which dismissed the leadership is significant: Coleman questioned the commitment of the Groupers to equal pay for women. The new secretary,

O'Toole, was unconcerned: Members could look forward to increases in their rates of pay and a generally more efficient union.[37] At this decisive moment, then, quite explicit claims were made about the implication of changes in leadership for women's interests.

How, then, did the commitment to equal pay develop under the anticommunist leadership after 1952? The first signs were not encouraging. A leading Grouper, Reg Coady, told the council in October 1952 that the real issue in thinking about equal pay was in fact jobs for men: If the female wage reverted to prewar levels, he said, "male clerks will gradually disappear and the females will take their places." This was of course not an uncommon view, but he went on to make some unusually frank admissions about the underlying values in such a position: "We have a certain ratio of males and females each fulfilling their calling in positions that *suit both classes*."[38] On the other hand, Mills was alarmed that postwar threats to "the women's standard . . . may be overlooked" and that the union had not had any representation for women on the Australian Council of Trade Union's panel at the federal basic wage case.[39]

Thereafter the leadership effectively left the equal pay question to the Australian Council of Trade Unions, which at this stage of its history was a peak body with relatively few resources and little authority.[40] From 1952 this union did not have its own position on equal pay, nor did it associate with other unions or women's groups to advance the issue. In 1955 when some rank-and-file members attempted to get the union to cooperate with public sector unions they were defeated and, in 1957, the matter was set aside to expedite other general wage claims.[41] Any real intention of pursuing the matter, or even agitating for it, had clearly been dropped. Throughout the 1950s, women's "margins" (payments for skill over and above the basic wage) would languish. In 1955, the New South Wales Industrial Commission rejected the union's claims on the stated grounds that there had been substantial increases in margins between 1947 and 1953.[42] In the next major award, handed down in 1958, margins were still unsatisfactory and the basic rate for clerks over twenty-three years of age was stuck at seventy-three percent of their male equivalents.[43]

The same path and similar outcomes can be discerned in the other two unions, although the precise nature of the processes was different. In the Clothing Trades Union, the longstanding craft control of one state branch of the union reached out to dominate national policy, whilst women's grassroots activities were either ignored or closed down. In the Boot Trades Union, none of the leaders were sympathetic to women's concerns; instead they fell in with employers' demands for new work practices and all too easily pointed to the increasingly unpalatable fact that it was communists who seemed to be the advocates of women's demands.

Over the summer of 1943–1944, women in many major Victorian clothing factories were quick to stop work when there were delays in paying the new seventy-five percent rate. They were supported by their state branch officers, who consistently saw their branch as the militant heart of the union. They commented that the actions of these women (in what were often technically wildcat

strikes) had "carried" the whole union.[44] There remains a very direct sense of energy and mobilization in the accounts of these stoppages. The union's journal held up one of these strikers as typical: "We just went out [on strike], the boss nearly had a fit. By gee, it was good." The enthusiasm led to more sustained action with workplace meetings being set up thereafter.[45] The claim that women in the Victoria branch had "carried" the national union may have had an element of regional competitiveness to it, but it was not entirely without foundation. There were far more such strikes in that state than elsewhere. By contrast, when the New South Wales branch took direct action, it was by and for the male craft workers in the pressing section of the trade.

These differences should not be overstated. Even in Victoria, after a series of disputes in 1948, the branch executive moved to control the membership (male and female alike), arguing that collective bargaining without recourse to strike action had secured good results in many workplaces. In New South Wales, the executive adopted the same approach in disputes over conditions and "timing systems" but the leadership was certainly more restrictive than in Victoria, sending women back to work on prestrike conditions. Indeed, in other instances in 1947 the male pressers scabbed, staying at work while the female machinists were on strike. There was no censure from the leaders, many of whom were beginning to fear that communism was at work amongst the rank and file.[46]

There was, then, a significant groundswell of action from women on the factory floor. Would—or could—this be turned to postwar wage demands and to equal pay campaigning? These issues became more complex and divisive as the war closed. The Victorian leadership of the union saw itself (like the Left in the Clerks Union) as amongst the "vanguard" forces in the struggle for equal pay and had, since the 1930s, argued that their union should be a central player in this struggle at the national level. Their voices, however, would grow more isolated and the prominence of women activists in all the branches would diminish as against the more conservative voices advancing the primacy of male concerns after the war.

Although most delegates involved in planning postwar wage strategies were much more concerned about male than female rates, the union was able to present a strong case for improvements in women's payments for skilled work. As usual, the New South Wales branch showed most concern about its male pressers, but the war had created anomalies through the women's flat rate which the union could now exploit, arguing the case for a restoration of women's margins for skill. Between 1946 and 1948, the union did manage to win the most significant advances in margins since the union's establishment, in both absolute and relative terms.[47] However, the union's national body spent much more time on male matters, largely at the behest of the New South Wales branch.[48]

Equal pay for women, with its guaranteed increase in the *basic* rate of pay, remained the most obvious way in which to improve women's earnings—and it remained the most contentious element of all in the union's postwar strategies. The ambivalence about equal pay displayed by the leadership at the national level was reflected in most branches. Once again, only the Victorians pushed for a

more expansive policy, working through the Labor party in that state to try to effect legislative redress while maintaining within the union the only branch executive in the country with a majority of women. Outnumbered at the federal council, the left-wing Victorians could only watch as any vestige of equal pay campaigning disappeared.[49] Aside from successes over margins, there was a noticeable loss of impetus in women's wage campaigns after 1945. As we shall see in the next section, the reasons for this were not located simply in the wage strategy itself. In this union—and in somewhat different ways in the other two—the equal pay issue had become enmeshed with arguments over women's rights to paid work.

The boot trades militants had briefly overcome the officials' inertia on women's wages in the middle of 1944, arguing that the union should seek a ninety percent rate of the male rate as against the seventy-five percent. The union even had a formal commitment to equal pay "irrespective of the work performed," but this was not backed up with any action despite calls from many in the rank and file for special meetings.[50] As in clothing, employers were worried about the shortage of female labor after the war. Indeed, they were anxious that the female rate should not fall below seventy-five percent when the wartime regulations ended because the industry would never be able to attract labor should that happen.[51] This market-driven concession was significant because the federal authorities had insisted that wartime wage rates for women were to be "for the duration" only.[52]

Delays in the implementation of National Wage Cases (by which the federal Arbitration Court settled wage claims for most federal unions and their industries) irritated all workers, but procrastination over women's margins was particularly galling. Once again it brought conflict between the rank-and-file militants and the leadership. The 1946 award barely dealt with any aspect of women's wages. When the union raised those parts of the claim, the judge presiding over the case was dismissive: "Skip them," he instructed the union's representatives.[53] After much delay, increases were handed down to men in 1947 but women received nothing. There was no discussion of this by the union's officers until a year later although the militants had been arguing that the "drastic" situation would have "a serious effect in the female section" of the union.[54] Women had been rendered invisible. Their margins were doubly derivative: The men's followed the skilled workers in the highly unionized metal trades and, if they moved at all, women's followed men's. The lack of female labor—bemoaned in every issue of the employers' journal in 1945–1946—elicited no strategic response in the union. As early as 1949 when a new set of claims was being drawn up women's margins seemed to be a minor addition, almost an afterthought.[55]

As to equal pay, there was but a poignant epilogue. After many instances of officials fobbing women off with procedural points or arbitration technicalities whenever the issue was raised,[56] the Victorians finally did send representatives to an equal pay conference in 1955. But half of them were male officials and none of those who had struggled for a genuine campaign over the ten years since the war were elected to the delegation.[57]

The industrial strategies of the different factions and union branches in relation to women's strike actions, working conditions, wages, and equal pay can be understood quite readily in terms of the traditional concerns of both institutional labor history and industrial relations. Nevertheless, we can situate these in a broader context than is sometimes the case: The generally prolabor governments in the postwar social democracies felt that, given the promise of full employment for males, wages and union militancy needed to be controlled. However, this created a dilemma for women workers as well as for those in the more obvious strategic high points in transport, mining and iron, and steel. Women's demands could fall afoul of this compact not least because of the enormity of the economic and social impact of closing the wages' gender gap. Indeed, without strategic bargaining power *and* without unionists willing to take these concerns seriously, women were largely ignored; however, as this section shows, this was not uncontested. The marginalization of women was central to the resolution of the union movement's struggles with the state and employers because it was possible to build alliances which encouraged women to return to the home. The goal was to limit the wage pressure from those women who were in well-organized unions. That outcome is at least partly explained by the rise of a "new Right" in that labor movement, a force comfortable with women neither as paid workers nor as active militants.

Women's Rights

There are other ways in which gender issues were central to postwar unionism. As the literature on this period has long recognized, wartime changes to the gender division of labor challenged ideas and practices of unions and employers alike.[58] Even within the confines of trade union history we can discern conflicts over this in which different positions were articulated by the major factions of the trade union movement. In the unions discussed here the tensions between factions were very clear in relation to women's rights. There were three main elements which informed and distinguished union practice: the role of women as activists in their unions, women's rights to paid work, and the gendered nature of social relations more generally. All three elements underpinned the debates over wages and conditions which we have just examined.

In the Clerks Union, which had less recourse to industrial action than the other two unions, the main focus of these rights issues was within the organization itself and in some of the political issues which the leadership took up. Once again, there were clear differences in relation to these matters as the new right-wing leadership took over from the communists and their allies. We will briefly explore these issues before turning to the two manufacturing unions.

The policies of the union in part reflected changes in the union's structure. Although the union was becoming more "feminized" in terms of its membership base, women would be much less active in decision-making forums after the Right took over in 1952. The low profile of equal pay campaigning was perhaps not surprising given these changes. The gendered nature of factional support was

particularly clear. Many of Hughes's supporters were women; few of his opponents were. In the meeting which ended Hughes's tenure in 1952, for example, six of the eighteen to vote for Hughes were women; none of the twenty-five against him were. Thereafter, apart from the all-male Shipping Section (comprised of waterfront clerks), the major opponents of the Groupers were women.[59]

That the new leadership had a very restrictive conception of women as citizens became clear in such contexts as the union's campaign to restrict the opening hours of shops and businesses. This was allied to one of the favored social strategies of those closest to the Social Studies Movement in the form of "decentralization," a policy designed, in concert with large-scale immigration of rural workers, to halt Australia's urban sprawl and to regenerate outlying areas. The Clerks leaders favored such a program and when discussing it as a likely Labor party policy they argued that it would drive the businesses to the suburbs and beyond. This would increase jobs and wages in these areas as well as freeing up the congested inner city. Although shops would then be nearer the population, there still remained the problem of *when* the family shopping would be done, especially if the shops were closed on Saturdays. The gender implications were clear enough to the union's new leaders: As long as "some housewifes have only Saturday to do the weekend shopping," union claims for closing shops on that day would fail.[60] Rarely was there such a clear statement of the way in which gender assumptions suffused union practice: In short, any union campaign to close shops would only succeed if fewer housewives were in the paid work force. This was hardly suggestive of an active campaign for women's rights to secure jobs and independence.

If the inertia in the equal pay campaign was an effect of women's declining activism and the defeat of the Left, there were other problems which undermined the campaign. Inaction on equal pay also seems to have been due to fear of social engineering, if not communism. Thus the Groupers suggested that the communists' apparent support for equal pay was simply a cover for their pursuit of influence, in this case by reaching into workplaces through equal pay committees.[61] Deeper concerns can be seen by casting back to 1937 when Hughes had been one of the opening speakers at the founding of the Council of Action for Equal Pay. Drawing on Friedrich Engels, he had told the audience that equal pay meant "the establishment of economic independence for women" and that it could lead to "full equality."[62] No doubt this was the unstated reason for opposition to, or at least apprehension about, advancing the claims of women.

In the two manufacturing unions, the major issues were the role of women as activists in the Boot Trades Union and the right to work in the Clothing Trades. Both issues were central to the differences between branch factions and politically opposed branches, respectively.

In the Boot Trades Union, the neglect of women led Thompson into almost ceaseless conflict with the officers. As the only woman to speak at meetings, she led the call not only for equal pay but for a thorough reassessment of wage-fixing principles, implying that the industry's prior gender division of labor

should be critically examined by the union.[63] In the union itself, supported by a handful of persistent leftists, she moved that there be "equality of women in union positions" and that there be no "discrimination on grounds of sex." The matter was then discussed at the (all-male) federal council in 1949. The right-wing officials responded quickly: One declared that "we do not discriminate between the sexes but the duties of Shop President could best be carried out by a male," and the federal president ruled that there was no discrimination under rule seventy-five which covered shop presidents' duties. This was certainly so. However, as one of the other delegates was brave enough to point out, Victoria branch bylaw 4, which defined the shop president as "a male," was perhaps the real issue.[64] Faced with all this pedantry, Thompson tried again. At another branch meeting, she sought to change the union's rule to define the shop president as "either male or female" only to encounter the federal secretary himself, who explained "that males could give greater service in that capacity than females." Her motion was lost. As she said later, "there was no cheer squad in there."[65]

Thereafter, women's participation in the union would be as far from equal as was their pay. There was no attention to the division of labor or equal pay itself; no attempt to marshal the "female section." When women were mobilized it was as wives and daughters—for example, to attend a meeting of families to support a steel strike in 1945, or in a starkly patriarchal way with "some plain speaking to the girls" about paying up for strike levies. The majority of men had long ignored any calls for action with women's groups—be it for International Women's Day, a women's conference, the United Associations of Women's Charter, or a Labor party women's organizing fund.[66] Underlying assumptions about gender were made clear in other ways, such as the tremendous excitement that the "Queen of the Shoe Industry" had won the competition for queen of the trade union movement for work in charity fund raising. Similarly, when the branch finally elected a delegate to the Labor party's Women's Organizing Committee in 1954, the officials' self-satisfaction was palpable.[67]

Of the three unions reviewed here, it was in clothing that the issue of women's rights was most clear because of mooted and then actual changes in the employment of men in the trade. The union's concerns about postwar strategies began to develop in 1943, amidst wider public policymaking issues surrounding the employment of "returned servicemen." The union's federal council first discussed these proposals in April of that year with Victorian left-winger (and federal secretary) Alf Wallis denouncing schemes to give preference to ex-servicemen in an industry comprised overwhelmingly of women: Proponents of such schemes, he said, "are supporting the Hitler idea. They fall into the trap and say women's place is in the home; the Nazi trinity, the church, the home and the kitchen."[68] This equated some rather more standard views with Nazism, but it may well have been a good way to win a political argument in a union in that year. Wallis's line did prevail and the council agreed to support women's right to work, whilst at the branch level the Victorians insisted that this right should be underwritten by the provision of day nurseries.[69]

All this seemed to be shifting the union a long way from the traditional craft demands favoring equal pay solely as a means of exclusion. However, the new direction was soon challenged by the more conservative branches, with the Queenslanders arguing that there should be no further "encroachment . . . of females" and the South Australians becoming concerned at women "holding positions to the detriment of males."[70] Thus divided, the union offered neither resistance nor any alternative policy to preference for males. Government-funded "Rehabilitation Schemes" had introduced over three hundred ex-servicemen into the industry's major center, the Victorian city of Melbourne, by the end of 1946, with quite extraordinary effects on industry and union alike. The government was now publicizing clothing, so long a low-status if not "sweated" trade, as "a career with a future"—for men.[71] The union's own journal picked this up: "Union Welcomes Ex-Servicemen, To Congenial Lifetime Trade." Articles described how women favored this and how they favored equal pay as a means to this end.[72] Below the surface there was in fact much less agreement, as became apparent when the national leadership met to put their branch positions. With only very qualified statements now being made about women's rights to a job, some moved for a quota of women to men. One Victorian delegate, now the federal leader following Wallis's resignation, argued that allowing returned servicemen to "dictate the policy of the Union was very much akin to the tail wagging the dog." Demands for a quota were "wrong, unreal and dangerous."[73] However, at both this meeting and at one the following year, the union's leadership could not produce any effective policy at all. Thus, as early as 1946–1947, the right-wing forces coalesced in opposition to the Victorians and the union slipped back from the more progressive policies articulated only three or four years before.

Opposition to or simple neglect of equal pay was then built upon (and perhaps confirmed) a small and declining role for women as activists in most of these unions and built upon their unions' unwillingness to campaign for job opportunity. The reconstruction of "women's roles" and the workplace after the war was not uncomplicated: It was the occasion of considerable discussion in all three unions. The broader debates which this section has analyzed are perhaps not discussed as often as wage issues and equal pay but they were as important as and in a sense logically prior to the obvious landmarks of wage cases and equal pay policies. There seems little doubt that women's rights were set back in the late 1940s by internal factional disputes and the external Cold War context.

Conclusion

The absence of women from the formal decision-making structures of most branches of these unions and therefore from much of the written record does not mean that women workers or gender relations more broadly were unimportant in this period of intense labor-movement division and adjustment. On the contrary, the work and activity of women, along with women's wage demands, were central to the practices of these three unions and to the vision of unionism which the competing factions advanced.

Maier's speculative comments about these issues are a useful reference point. He notes that social compacts require perimeters and that perimeters "exclude as well as include. Those excluded are social actors who have not yet organized or insisted with enough militancy on their collective agendas."[74] Here it has been suggested that still more occurred: In some cases, union leaders went out of their way to "unorganize" or demobilize women as activists, not least in those industries where they had shown as much willingness to undertake direct industrial action as their brothers in the postwar strike wave so common in the social democracies.

Two key points emerge. First, the social agenda of the more conservative union leaders, driven in part by anticommunism, overlapped with (1) the economic agenda of employers and governments (upon which many contributors to this journal have recently remarked) of containing wage increases and union militancy and (2) the ideological struggles associated with the intensification of the Cold War. Second, gender relations were central to these conflicts. As these unions confronted the issues of women's right to work and to equal pay, quite clear and consistent factional positions developed in which women's rights were central. Indeed, apart from the "high politics" of declarations about international affairs and local party matters which also characterized conflicts in all these unions, this was the ground on which these factional differences were clearest—and certainly of the most immediate impact on the female membership. Those who saw industrial relations and union purpose in terms of class were in fact those more likely to advance women's material interests at work. They were not of course immune to gender blindness but their view of class allowed women a space which had no equivalent amongst their opponents who were more thoroughly masculinist.

In Australia, as in other industrialized countries, the number of women in the paid work force began to grow quite soon after the war, despite the rhetoric and the pressures to the contrary.[75] This was of course impelled in large degree by the demands of employers. It is certainly arguable that the failure of unions to take advantage of this tight labor market would be amongst the most enduring of the legacies of labor movement division; more particularly so too was the marginalization of women as workers and full citizens that the postwar factional struggles generated.

NOTES

Note on Sources and Union Nomenclature

The primary material on which this research is based is in the collections of the various unions' holdings at the University of Melbourne Archives, the Noel Butlin Archives of Business and Labour at the Australian National University in Canberra (all three unions), and at the Mitchell Library in Sydney (some of the Clerks material). I am grateful to the staff in all three institutions for their help

and to the unions for allowing unconditional access. Copies of all taped interviews are in the author's possession.

The Clothing and Allied Trades Union was known as the Amalgamated Clothing and Allied Trades Union for some of this period but I have used a shorter name for simplicity's sake; the full title of the Boot Trades Union was the Australian Boot Trade Employees' Federation but, again, I have used a simpler contraction.

1. Charles S. Maier, "The Postwar Social Contract: Comment," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 50 (1996):150.

2. Tom Sheridan, "The Trade Unions and Postwar Reconstruction," in *Better Dead Than Red: Australia's First Cold War: Volume 2,* eds. Ann Curthoys and John Merritt (Sydney, 1986), 3–17; also Tom Sheridan, *Division of Labour: Industrial Relations in the Chifley Years 1945–1949* (Oxford, 1989), 38–41, 124, 318–20.

3. Stephen Alomes, Mark Dober, and Donna Hellier, "The Social Context of Postwar Conservatism," in *Australia's First Cold War: Volume 1, Society, Communism and Culture,* ed. Ann Curthoys and John Merritt (Sydney, 1984), 1–28.

4. The major account of this period remains Robert Murray, *The Split: Australian Labor in the Fifties* (Melbourne, 1970). Some of the protagonists have written about it, most notably Jim Macken, "Memories of a Grouper," *Southland* 8 (1995):19–20; Bartholemew A. Santamaria, *The Price of Freedom: The Movement—After Ten Years* (Melbourne, 1964); Bartholemew A. Santamaria, *Against the Tide* (Melbourne, 1981). See also Sean Scalmer, "The Affluent Worker or Divided Party? Explaining the Transformation of the ALP in the 1950s," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 32 (1997):401–18.

5. See for example, Ronald L. Filippelli and Mark D. McColloch, *Cold War in the Working Class: The Rise and Decline of the United Electrical Workers* (Albany, 1995); Steve Rosswurm, ed., *The CIO's Left-Led Unions* (New Brunswick, 1992); Ronald Schatz, *The Electrical Workers: A History of Labor at General Electric and Westinghouse, 1923–1960* (Urbana, 1983); Robert H. Zeiger, *The CIO, 1935–1955* (Chapel Hill, 1995). There is still a great deal of scope for comparative work in this area. Much of the work thus far concentrates on *relations between* the United States and Europe but there are rich fields for proper *comparison* and for those comparisons to include the United States, Britain, and the Commonwealth countries.

6. Naturally there is a massive literature on this topic. The best set of essays on the introduction of arbitration is Stuart Macintyre and Richard Mitchell, eds., *Foundations of Arbitration: The Origins and Effects of State Compulsory Arbitration, 1890–1914* (Melbourne, 1989).

7. The Victoria Branch was also the scene of a major factional fight which had been won by the anticommunists by 1948. Unfortunately, few of these records have survived. For a discussion of subsequent developments in this branch, see Lindsay Tanner, *The Last Battle* (Carlton, 1996).

8. The first major overview of these questions was Edna Ryan and Anne Conlon, *Gentle Invaders: Australian Women at Work, 1788–1974* (Sydney, 1975). See also Laura Bennett, "Legal Intervention and the Female Work Force: The Conciliation and Arbitration Court, 1907–21," *International Journal of the Sociology of Law* 12 (1984):23–36; Laura Bennett, "Job Classification and Women Workers: Institutional Practices, Technological Change and the Conciliation and Arbitration System," *Labour History* 51 (1986):11–23; Raelene Frances, *The Politics of Work: Gender and Labour in Victoria, 1880–1939* (Cambridge, 1993).

9. *Australian Clothing Trades Journal,* September 1944, 1; CATU, Queensland Branch Minutes, June 13, 1944; see also Volume 51 of *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports,* number 632 at page 635 (hereafter *CAR*). For a wider discussion of this, see Lynn Beaton, "The Importance of Women's Paid Labour: Women at Work in World War II," in *Worth Her Salt: Women at Work in Australia,* ed. Margaret Bevege, Margaret James, and Carmel Shute (Sydney, 1982), 84–98.

10. Geoffrey F. Walsh, "The Federated Clerks Union of Australia: A Study of Government and Unionism in the Twentieth Century" (Ph.D. diss., Monash University, 1984), 143.

11. Ibid., 136–41; Jim Macken, "The Clerks Union," in *The Great Labour Movement Split in New South Wales: Inside Stories,* ed. Bradon Ellem (Sydney, 1998), 19–22.

12. Murray, *The Split,* 14–16.

13. Federated Clerks Union, New South Wales Branch, Central Council Minutes, July 27, 1952 (hereafter FCU-CCM).

14. *Census of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1947, 1955*; *New South Wales Statistical Register, Victoria Year Book*; see also *Australian Leather Journal,* passim (hereafter *ALJ*); see Clause 29, 44 *CAR* 771 at 785 and Clauses 35, 57 *CAR,* 482 at 505 for payment systems.

15. *Victoria Year Book,* 1950–51, 1952–3/53–4 for imports; *ALJ,* June 1946 on Bata, May 1946 on incentives, February 1948 on hours. The new working week was to operate from January 1948.

16. Frances, *The Politics of Work,* 108, 162–63.

17. *ALJ,* July 1945; see also *ALJ,* May 1945, June 1945; *Census,* 1947.

18. See, for example, Clothing and Allied Trades Union, New South Wales Branch Minutes, April 19, June 28, 1938; April 12, 1943 (hereafter CATU-NSWBM); CATU-Federal Council Minutes, February 21, 1938 (hereafter CATU-FCM).

19. CATU-FCM, February 21, 1938.

20. Ibid., April 12, 1943.

21. Australian Boot Trade Employees Federation (hereafter ABTEF), Correspondence File, undated.

22. ABTEF, Victorian Branch Minutes, October 25, 1948 for Hewett, December 6, 1948 for Thompson; see also September 12 and 13, 1949 (hereafter ABTEF-VBM).

23. Author's taped interview with Ivy Hart (formerly Ivy Thompson), February 10, 1995; for Hobourn see Federal President Report, February 1949.

24. ABTEF-VBM, December 14, 1953; March 21, 1955.

25. Ibid., September 11, 1950; March 13, 1951; September 8, 1952; ABTEF, Correspondence File, undated.

26. ABTEF-VBM, September 1, 1954; September 5, 1955; see also September 8 and October 4, 1954; September 3, 1956; January 21, 1957; ABTEF, New South Wales Branch Minutes, August 10 and October 5, 1954; June 12, 1956; September 3, 1957 (hereafter ABTEF-NSWBM).

27. CATU, Victorian Branch Minutes, February 23, 1948; February 28, October 31, and November 7, 1949 (hereafter CATU-VBM); CATU, New South Wales Branch Minutes, January 14 and 20, 1947; February 28 and March 28, 1949 (hereafter CATU-NSWBM).

28. 87 *CAR* 327.

29. For example, CATU-FCM, February 27, 1925.

30. CATU-FCM, April 29 and May 3, 1949.

31. 87 *CAR* 327 at 328.

32. Penelope Johnson, "Gender, Class and Work: The Council of Action for Equal Pay and the Equal Pay Campaign in Australia During World War Two," *Labour History* 50 (1986):132–46.

33. FCU-CCM, April 10, 1949.

34. Ibid., April 29, 1950.

35. Ibid., October 28, 1950.

36. Ibid., April 29 and October 27, 1951.

37. Ibid., July 27, 1952.

38. Ibid., September 18, 1952, emphasis added.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid., October 11, 1953. For the ACTU see, Jim Hagan, *The History of the ACTU* (Melbourne, 1981) and Gerard Griffin, "The Authority of the ACTU," *The Economics and Labour Relations Review* 5 (1994):81–103.

41. FCU-CCM, June 25, 1955; Secretary's Report, November 1957.

42. 54 *New South Wales Arbitration Report* at 153–56.

43. Ibid., 57 at 8–23; 129 *New South Wales Industrial Gazette* at 908.

44. CATU-VBM, March 20, 1944.

45. *Australian Clothing Trades Journal,* April 1944, 9; CATU-VBM, March 20, 1944

46. CATU-VBM, February–April 1948, passim; CATU-NSWBM, January 14 and 20, February 28, 1947; March 28, 1949.

47. 60 *CAR* 695, 66 *CAR* 481.

48. CATU-FCM, October 1946, passim, April 12 and 23, 1948; CATU-NSWBM, July 5, September 9, 1948.

49. CATU-FCM, October 21, 1946; April 22, 1947; compare CATU-VBM, March–November 1955 passim.

50. *ALJ,* September 1946; see also ABTEF-NSWBM, June 27, 1944.

51. ABTEF-NSWBM, September 19, 1944; April 3, 1945; September 20, 1946.

52. Thus Mr. Justice Drake-Brockman's insistence in the clothing trade's case recorded in 51 *CAR* 632 at 635. This was—publicly anyway—the Labor government's position too.

53. Quoted in *ALJ,* March 1946.

54. ABTEF-NSWBM, September 24, 1947, for women; September 14, 1948, for the "female section."

55. ABTEF-NSWBM, October 11, 1949.

56. ABTEF-VBM, September 10, 1951; see November 30, 1953; April 18, 1955; and ABTEF-NSWBM, May 9, 1950 and March 11, 1952 for other instances.

57. ABTEF-VBM, August 8 and September 5, 1955.

58. See the sources cited in note 8.

59. FCU-CCM, throughout the 1950s for the running battle with the Shipping Section and the small but persistent group of women opposed to the Groupers; also author's taped interview with former FCU secretary Jack Hughes, August 25, 1995.

60. FCU-CCM, November 14, 1954.

61. Author's taped interview with former FCU activist and Grouper Jim Macken, August 29, 1995.

62. In Johnson, "Gender, Class and Work," 132; see Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (Moscow, 1948, 1977), 81–82.

63. ABTEF-VBM, September 27 and October 11, 1948; April 11, June 6, and October 24, 1949; ABTEF-Victorian Executive Minutes, April 6, 1949.

64. ABTEF-VBM, November 22 and December 6, 1948 for Thompson; ABTEF-Federal Council Minutes, February 28, 1949; ABTEF, Rule Book, 1946.

65. ABTEF-VBM, August 15, 1949; author's interview with Ivy Hart, February 10, 1995.

66. ABTEF, NSW Executive Minutes, May 24, 1945; see also July 24, 1945, for "men's work" and August 5, 1946, for levies; ABTEF-NSWBM, November 27, 1945, for the steel strike, February 22, 1944; June 11, 1946; May 13, 1947; and September 28, 1948, for women's groups.

67. ABTEF-VBM, August 10, 1953.

68. CATU-FCM, April 14, 1943.

69. CATU-VBM, September 20, 1943.

70. CATU, Queensland Branch Minutes, November 17, 1944; CATU, South Australian Branch Minutes, August 12, 1946.

71. Minister for Labour quoted in Beaton, "The Importance of Women's Paid Labour," 96.

72. *Australian Clothing Trades Journal,* June 1946, 1.

73. CATU-FCM, October 21, 1946.

74. Maier, "The Postwar Social Contract: Comment," 150.

75. The total was rising by 1947; the proportion of women in paid work was fairly stable until the early 1950s, when it began to rise. See Michael Keating, *The Australian Work Force, 1910–11 to 1960–61* (Canberra, 1973) especially Table 19.19.