

brotherhood action

The Journal of the Brotherhood of St Laurence

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The suicide seat for Christmas

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In observing the mass media, particularly the press, over the last few years one could be pardoned for thinking that most of the teen-age and early twenty part of our community had quite suddenly and disastrously taken to drugs. This of course is absolute nonsense, for while there are a few very disturbed or inadequate young people taking drugs the main Australian problem is the middle aged person hooked on bromides or legally prescribed drugs plus that most socially acceptable and popular drug, alcohol. Indeed the consumption of 25 gallons of beer for every man, woman and child per year in Australia indicates a very large consumption by relatively few people.

By Dr J.H.W. Birrell, Victorian Police Surgeon

It might be added that before this incredible burst of publicity about drugs, many of the disturbed young people would probably have been at least problem drinkers. The publicity is so much out of proportion (I'm not sure whether the fact that Jane Fonda has been arrested for possessing drugs is either newsworthy or important) that a much more disastrous situation of absolute anarchy which is facing us on the roads is being almost ignored. This seems to be only really noted when nearly a score of people die over a couple of days or a rather spectacular individual crash occurs killing five or six people. Even here, the standard of reporting is atrocious — applied to a large jet crash such reporting would simply be — 'the plane fell out of the sky.'

Orphans by the score

Road traffic crashes are filling our hospitals with long-stay head injury and multiple fracture

In the coming festive season, quite inappropriately for a season of alleged good will, scores of people in Australia will be killed and hundreds injured by drivers drinking heavily. Many such drivers will kill themselves, their friends and relatives in single vehicle crashes . . .

victims; they provide at least 10 per cent of our new epileptics and 50 per cent of our paraplegics; they are providing numerous facial scars in women and girls who commonly occupy the front passenger seat, the suicide seat. Many victims are having their personalities changed by head injury and are ending up in mental hospitals. Wives are being widowed and orphans created by the score, all this in an

The economic costs of prolonged medical and hospital treatment and compensation, legal and funeral expenses and other costs are quite astronomical — and almost incredible for a community of supposedly intelligent people whose automatic answer to any and all problems is 'no money.'

In the absence of rational and scientifically based countermeasures and indeed in the absence of even recognition of the part played by alcohol as an important crash factor by government, press, automobile clubs, coroners and so on, the only

age of technology which allows us to walk on the moon.

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IF YOU DON'T WANT IT, WE DO.
RING 41-3181 AND A VAN WILL CALL.

The last year has seen the emergence of a vigorous residents' association in Fitzroy. Dedicated to the task of increasing the level of citizen participation in public affairs, the Fitzroy Residents' Association has been involved in almost every aspect of Fitzroy's life over the past twelve months.

The Residents' Association and the Fitzroy Social Services Council were two new organisations formed as a result of the publication of the Victorian Council of Social Service Fitzroy Planning Committee report, 'Community and Welfare facilities in Fitzroy' (June 1969). The planning committee recognised that while there was an urgent need for co-ordinated social planning, such planning could only be effective if it involved significant numbers of Fitzroy residents. The Association has therefore concentrated on the long-term task of attempting to build structures of citizen participation in the municipality.

As well it has been concerned in its first year with questions of urban renewal and it has begun to produce a social history of the municipality which promises to teach much about the background to present problems. It has formed committees on questions ranging

Collective action in Fitzroy

By BRIAN HOWE

from education to the availability of open space in Fitzroy.

The implications of 'amalgamation' for the municipality have been considered. The FRA has not yet defined a position on this question. The record of the Melbourne City Council in the area of social planning is a sorry one. In terms of the Association's overall aim of increasing citizen participation, a new, re-constituted council is likely to be less accessible. It is also to be doubted whether any municipal council will be able to cope with new areas of responsibility in either the physical or social planning area without new forms of State and Federal aid. It is unlikely that an enlarged M.C.C. would have the political structure necessary to enable the transfer of significant resources from the golden mile to Fitzroy.

Herbert Gans, the American sociologist, has distinguished between a slum and a low-income area in his book 'The Urban Villagers.' The Fitzroy Residents' Association believes that while Fitzroy's residents may be predominantly low-income, they do not live in a slum, in either a physical or a social sense. We hope that if the Brooks Crescent campaign achieves nothing more, that it will remind the government of that important distinction.

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1840 First settler in Fitzroy, William Emery, bought a peice of land on the site of Surrey Gardens.

1858 It became a municipality.

1859 First Court of Petty Sessions.

1870 It became a town and a popular residential area particularly for politicians.

1874 Opening of the Town Hall.

1876 Building boom.

1877 Opening of the first Fitzroy library.

1878 Proclaimed the City of Fitzroy.

1886 First tram line completed.

1889 Opening of the Cyclorama on the corner of Fitzroy Street and Victoria Parade. It was one of Melbourne's great attractions for many years. In 1904 the building was leased by the late John Wren and it became the Olympic Athletic Club and then the Melbourne Athletic Pavilion. It was demolished in 1928.

1893 Opening of St Vincent's Hospital.

1908 Opening of the Municipal Baths.

1925 The Melbourne City Council was approached to discuss the question of amalgamation.

1927 After several favourable polls the question was dropped when the Melbourne City Council insisted that if Fitzroy were accepted it should be represented as one ward.



Above: The old Belvidere Hotel on the corner of Victoria Parade and Brunswick Street, one of the landmarks of Victorian Fitzroy. It is now the Eastern Hill Hotel, and still there.

Left: An old photograph from the Fitzroy Residents' Association files shows the quaint scene at the opening of the original Fitzroy Baths.

The Fitzroy Residents' Association would like to hear from anyone who can supply them with historical information or photographs. — Ed.

People in poverty

by R.F. Henderson, A. Harcourt and R.J.A. Harper.

\$2.50

Reviewed by
Alan Hughes
Lecturer in Political Sociology
University of Melbourne

A few years ago, during a chat with some interviewees after a survey on political attitudes, one of them suddenly asked me "And what about you, Mr Hughes? When are we going to get some political leadership from the Universities? Are you just going to do surveys all your life?"

This rather unnerved me at the time, since I had always thought of carrying out surveys as a rather elevated activity and felt that one's own political views, on the whole should be kept dark.

The refinement of social knowledge which does go on at universities, is, in fact, usually rather remote from the larger public: It filters down through journalists and school text books. Presently, however, we have a new and stimulating experience; a book directly addressed to a major social problem "poverty" which presents information which can readily be used by policy makers and, indeed, makes recommendations on policy. It is an important book and interesting enough to buy. (The authors have foregone royalties to ensure that it is priced as to be widely available).

It is essentially an answer to the questions; "Who are Melbourne's poor?" and "How are they to be rescued?" The answer is based on a large survey of 4000 Melbourne households. For considering the further question "What is poverty?" the researchers adopted income as a criterion and defined as poor, those who receive less than the equivalent of the basic wage plus child endowment for a family of four (two adults, two children). Today, this poverty line for such a family stands at \$43.00 per week. The book, therefore, is not about people who waste their



money and so have little for necessities; it is about those whose income does not even cover bare necessities.

5% must go hungry or cold

Using what the authors stress to be a very austere poverty line, it appears that about 5 per cent of Melbourne's population live in poverty. It should be emphasised that this state means more than mere deprivation; these people are so poor that they cannot, even with the maximum applied skill in home management, contrive a life which meets absolute requirements; that is, they must go hungry, or cold, or live in sub-standard dwellings, or let their health deteriorate through lack of means for medical attention. If they have children, they will suffer too. This is a shocking thing in a relatively affluent city such as ours. It is all the more so when it is discovered using Henderson's findings, that most of the poor are reliant upon Commonwealth social service payments. An earlier paper that he presented to the Australian Institute of Political Science showed that 46.1 per cent of those found to be poor were aged; 4.3 per cent were on sickness, accident and unemployment benefit; 6.5 per cent were females with dependent children; and 6.3 per cent were large families (that is, those with four or more children). Of the remaining, 36.8 per cent were migrants working for low wages.

One particular finding is notable. Some large families were in poverty, but apart from these they found hardly any other family headed

by a male bread-winner in regular work to be poor!

Indifference to misery

Henderson and his fellow researchers make an estimate of what it would cost in social service payments to eliminate poverty. It is a surprisingly modest amount: \$189 million, or 0.7 per cent of the gross National Product (as of 1968-69). This is something we can surely afford. We should also, at the State level, be able to do something for Melbourne's population of semi-homeless men, estimated to be in the order of 1000-2000. These are often sickness and accident victims, or alcoholics in some cases, who through some unhappy conjunction of circumstances, are without supportive friends or family. A measure of Governmental indifference to their misery, is the current weekly rate of unemployment benefit to a single man; \$10. This is a derisory sum, perhaps even punitive.

It is much to be hoped that this book is of value in promoting the issue of poverty as one of conscience, by giving the hard facts. But measures for the elimination of poverty will require vigorous political leadership, since Australian society occasionally, alongside some charitable paternalism, displays a positive dislike and intolerance of the poor. In the words of one homeless man, interviewed by the writer: "People glare at you. That's what happens at present. There are whispers behind your back. That man depends on charity! That man has to sleep out at times."

What we've been doing

Last month the Brotherhood published its annual report for 1969-70. In it the Executive Director, David Scott, drew particular attention to the two sided nature of the work of the organisation — our services for families, children and elderly people, and our participation in the community by serving on committees concerned with various social problems and exciting social developments. The new Collingwood Education Centre, for instance, the National Capital Development Commission in Canberra, and the Committee for the replacement of Gordon House. He emphasised the importance of these activities in helping to create an awareness in the community of

social problems and in helping to build a better future for large numbers of people.

Developments in our services for families, the elderly and children during this period were limited in general to the consolidation and improvement of existing services and facilities. Additional support from the community, combined with careful budgeting by all departments resulted in the Brotherhood finishing the year with a small surplus of \$2,883 . . .

The research study of the families who use our social work service is now reaching completion and it is anticipated that the final results will be invaluable in planning future policy and services. Another current research project is a study of patterns of school leaving and achievement in inner suburban areas. This study which is financed by the Leith Trust, is being conducted by Miss Margaret Tinney and is aimed at discovering the possible role of education centres in these areas. A previous study financed by the Leith Trust on the schooling problems of migrant children was completed during the year and the report is now in the hands of the publishers . . .

Judith O'Neill is working with a VICOSS Committee on Urban Redevelopment which has been concerned with the Urban Renewal Bill. The Committee which is chaired by Mrs Louise Arnold of

the Social Services Department of the University of Melbourne includes planners, social workers and academics . . .

The Associate Director of Social Services, Peter Hollingworth, was instituted as parish priest of St Mark's, Fitzroy, on November 13 and three Sisters of the Mission to Streets and Lanes were commissioned for work in the parish. For a period of three years, Peter will live at the Vicarage and lead the parish team in a ministry concerned to build up a sense of community in a rapidly changing local area. At the same time he will continue all his B.S.L. work . . .

In Fitzroy, Peter Hollingworth and Graeme Bull have been holding discussions with the Fitzroy Youth Club to plan for the co-ordination of Youth services in the area. More families will soon be moving into the Housing Commission flats and ultimately there will be in the vicinity of 1,600 school age children in the flats alone . . .

Following a meeting of interested Brotherhood staff a steering committee has been appointed to establish a Credit Union. As well as benefiting staff this is seen as a means of learning how to run a Credit Union as we hope in the future to explore the possibility of establishing community credit unions.

What's happening in welfare

The redistribution of assistance undertaken by the State and Commonwealth Governments following the introduction of the State Grants (Deserted Wives) Act 1968, which was implemented in the Budget of October 1969, has on the whole improved the situation in that groups of people who were in very disadvantaged circumstances under the earlier system are now eligible for assistance which is more realistic in terms of their needs (e.g. unmarried mothers, deserted de-facto wives and wives of prisoners). This changover was introduced in stages which reached completion by the end of October 1970.

However, under this present system some families are no longer eligible for supplementary Family Assistance from the Social Welfare Department (State) and are therefore unable to obtain an Emergency Grant. Up until November 9, the two groups affected were — (a) applicants for Widows', Aged and Invalid Pensions (b) applicants for Sickness and Unemployment Benefits where there are more than six children.

On November 9, the Social Welfare Department further restricted the availability of the

Emergency Grant by declaring all applicants for a Sickness Benefit, ineligible for Family Assistance.

These groups are now entirely dependent on voluntary agencies to cover their financial needs while waiting to receive their first payment from the Commonwealth Social Department. This period without any income at all can be two to three weeks and in some cases may even be longer.

This is yet another example of action being taken by governments without any prior consultation with the voluntary welfare organisations. Such a decision will seriously affect their already precarious financial situation as they will be expected to fill this gap in statutory income maintenance provisions . . .

The first official meeting of the Victorian Municipal Welfare Conference consisting of social workers, welfare officers and youth workers employed by municipalities, was held in October.

The conference, which plans to meet quarterly,

aims to integrate the work of municipalities, by providing an opportunity for the sharing of ideas generally and an avenue through which people can use their considerable knowledge and experience to help determine welfare policy. It will also combat isolationism, provide support for individual members and encourage the development of the fullest possible training . . .

Another new group is the Victorian Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux. With Mrs Marie Breen as Chairman, Dr J. Kessel, Vice-President and Mr A.W. Boyne as Secretary, the Association will assist in the standardisation of services and provide a central body through which Citizens Advice Bureaux will be able to feed information . . .

A seminar was held recently at Doncaster on Community Needs and Council Responsibilities. The seminar drew together representatives from Melbourne councils and the lively discussion indicated that people appreciated the need to do more about welfare at a local level . . .

At the end of October, for the first time ever, many of the organisations involved in the care of lone men met together over a two-day seminar. The main paper was given by Mr Alan Jordan, an acknowledged expert in the field. Supporting papers were given by Dr J. Santamaria, Director of Community Medicine at St Vincent's Hospital and the Revd P. Hollingworth, Director of Social Services at the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

The scene is grim for adolescence

There is a common tendency in any developing community to see services more in terms of an answer to a problem or a crisis of some kind rather than a necessary part of life. In Australia we see day care as necessary for the children of lone parents or low income families where both parents must work. We don't think of providing a service so that a mother can have a day off occasionally. Similarly youth clubs are considered a cure-all for delinquency when they should be an accepted part of the normal process of growing up.

According to Mr Elery Hamilton-Smith, the Development Officer for the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs, the situation in Melbourne is pretty inadequate where clubs for teenagers are concerned. Most Melbourne suburbs it seems are prepared to spend large amounts of money providing club activities for children up to 13 and 14 years but when it comes to the adolescents the scene is grim.

This is partly because there is a lot of confusion about the different kinds of clubs and many of us are not able to distinguish between boys and girls clubs and teenage, or Keystone clubs as the V.A.Y.C. prefers to call them. The clubs for the younger ones are often based on programmes that would have been popular in the 1940's although some are very progressive and creative. But competition between clubs for this age group often leads to the age range being dropped extremely low simply to attract more children and results in more money being expended on the group than is warranted.

Mr Hamilton-Smith points out that, although one hears the suggestion that the concept of clubs is not acceptable to today's teenagers, this is mainly because they are not interested in a Club that is based on a programme that is 25 years out of date. Adolescence is a time of uncertainty for many young people. They are preoccupied with themselves and their relationships with others and they need the experience of group activity and companionship. He firmly believes that one of the biggest issues in marriage breakdowns is that people get married without adequate growing up experience in getting along with other people and learning to be both sensitive and responsible to other people. This, he says, is where a really good club programme for adolescents is so valuable.

Standards are important

The typical situation for most of Melbourne's teenagers is some sporting activities, which only attract a minority, and occasionally one or two clubs. Ideally, what do they need? In Mr Hamilton-Smith's opinion, there are three requirements in any community for the teenage group.

● Clubs aimed specifically at catering for the adolescent. These clubs should be set up by the teenagers themselves with the help of trained adults. They'll do it better themselves, he says. They are well on their way to being grown up and don't need paternalism. Setting



Pottery is one of the special interest activities at the Brotherhood Youth Centre in Fitzroy which is open four nights a week.

up their own club gives them a chance to experiment and to accept responsibility. If a club is set up by adults, it is very often out of keeping with the needs of the people it is intended for.

● There should be a range of special interest and hobby groups — skin diving, folk music, surfing, gem stone polishing, photography, pottery or what you will.

● There should be commercial entertainment of a good standard. Coffee lounges should serve good coffee, not second rate and the kitchens should be clean. Dances should be well run with good music and in a suitable building. Mr Elery Hamilton-Smith is convinced that it is this serving up of the second rate to the young which is responsible for irresponsible behaviour. Dances, he says are all too often broken up by gangs or become a place where drugs and drinks are passed around. If this happens then the people running the show are just not competent to do it. Second rate products get second rate treatment. The atmos-

phere of a place can set the standard and it is up to the community to see that the bowling alleys, ice stadia, fitness centres, coffee lounges and dances in their area are well run by competent people of integrity.

As well as these three requirements, adolescents need the things which give diversity, variety, and richness to life. Short run programmes, special events and programmes that will give individuals a chance to act as individuals, and we are not good at this it seems. As an example he quotes the Zellidja Scholarship Scheme in France. Each adolescent who wins a Zellidja Scholarship is given \$40. With this they each go off on their own for 30 days. They must remain out of contact with home and see how far they can go and back again. Some have got as far as Central Africa, South-East Asia and even Canada. The big thing about this scheme is that it has led to lots of similar schemes at the local level. As Mr Hamilton-Smith pointed out, lots of Australians do things of this kind on their own initiative in

nts

their early twenties but others need encouragement.

More clubs needed

In Melbourne we have a lot to do if we want to avoid producing generations of bored, apathetic, pretty uninvolved people. One of the first things we have to do is take a good look

at our own community and what is has for adolescents.

Last year the V.A.Y.C. published 'Plans and Programmes', a prospect for the future development of the Community Youth Club Movement in Victoria. In it they point out that there should be the widest possible range of services available in each community, so that every young person is able to find an organisation appropriate to his or her individual interest and stage of development. The overall view of the existing services in Victoria, they say, shows that although almost every aspect of our recreational services requires further development, the section of

our population for which there is the least adequate provision is that of adolescents.

If the needs of adolescents are to be met it is obvious that more clubs are needed, but the present growth of clubs is limited primarily by the problems of training club workers. Once established, one of the most important tasks a club has is getting rid of old members. A Youth Club is a positive experience which is passed through whilst growing up. If club members hang on beyond the accepted age range of 21 years they jeopardise the natural membership cycle and new members are often diffident about joining a club which they feel is dominated by old established members.

'It's not just club activities!'

As we were feeling a bit confused ourselves about the different kinds of youth clubs, we spent a couple of hours one Monday evening at the Avondale Heights Youth Club, one of 48 Keystone Clubs in Victoria.

It was a quiet night but the members there did not leave you in any doubt that it was their club and they had very definite ideas about its aim and purpose.

'This would be the only straight teenage club in the Western suburbs, most clubs let the young ones in and the teenagers stay away.'

'If it wasn't here we'd just be walking around with our hands in our pockets during the holidays.'

'It gives you a chance to get away from home and there is a quiet room if you want to study.'

'It's not just youth club activities, you get the opportunity to talk about all sorts of things.'

'I've been in it two years and I have never enjoyed myself so much. Before I had a pretty dull life, just played a guitar with the group. I've wasted 17 years.'

They were concerned about the reputation Youth Clubs have for roughness.

'Some mothers say to their children, don't go up there or you'll get punched up.'

'Most of them won't come up and see for themselves when we ask them to. When they do they get really enthusiastic.'

'Some people think children should only go to Church Youth Clubs where there is a minister to keep an eye on them.'

In fact the only rules they do have at Avondale Heights are 'not to play too rough' and 'look after the building.' If the going gets rough in a game of indoor soccer then there is a fifteen minute break to allow people to cool down.

Projects are planned by members

The club started off in three old shops and the first \$5,000 needed to build the present club was raised by the members themselves in two years, the Council put up the rest. It is managed by a committee of 12 adults, four of whom are ex-club members and there is a programming committee of 12 members. This committee is entirely responsible for all the programming and projects already on the books for next year include a trip to Adelaide by bus and back by ocean liner and a gliding weekend.

As a member of the Management Committee pointed out, if the members really want to do something they can do it as a club. But they couldn't do it as individuals.

Things have not always been easy for the Club. They met with a lot of local opposition in the early days and membership has fluctuated considerably as the club has progressed. When the new club was first opened they were inclined to stay away because it was all so clean and new they felt they couldn't relax.

At present it has a membership of 140 and it is estimated that there would probably be another 100 using the club as unfinancial members.



Mobile camping is a popular activity amongst youth attending the Brotherhood Youth Centre. Up to 25 camps are held each year.



Brookes Crescent, Fitzroy: These houses are to be demolished.

COLLECTIVE ACTION IN FITZROY

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The most publicised example of the Association's attempt to achieve Citizen participation is the campaign to save the Brooks Crescent area in North Fitzroy from block clearance by the Victorian Housing Commission. The FRA, after conducting a preliminary land use survey of the municipality decided that the Brooks Crescent area (a mixed residential and industrial neighbourhood bounded by Church, Nicholson, Reid and Rae Streets) required

urgent study in the light of the Housing Commission's clear intention to declare it a slum reclamation area. Preliminary interviews of most of the families in the neighbourhood revealed the seeds of strong opposition to the Housing Commission plans. Our survey team also discovered the existence of strong ties to the neighbourhood on the part of most of the residents. Many had lived in the locality for a long time and the

availability of employment for women in the block was mentioned as of value to low-income migrant families. While the FRA survey team found most houses to be in sound physical condition, it concluded that the most obvious arguments against razing the area were social rather than physical.

It was decided to call a public meeting in a local hall and report the survey findings. This meeting was attended by approximately 250 local residents who clearly evinced a desire to fight the Commission. They appointed their own committee, the North Fitzroy Residents' Action Committee, made up of two representatives from Australians, Greeks, Italians and Maltese present, plus two women.

The suicide seat for Christmas

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certainty is that the problem will worsen. This will particularly apply when the present powerful 100 m.p.h. plus cars reach the used car lots and are snapped up by immature psychopaths and problem drinkers.

Drink is a killer

Where any adequate research has been done, at least 50 per cent of the traffic deaths and serious injuries has been attributed to alcohol in large quantities in heavy or problem drinkers and alcoholics. Again this is ignored by the media — almost as if the emphasis on drugs and young people is to take the heat off the 'Oldies' and their drug — alcohol.

The use of the chemical test for alcohol, in particular the use of the Breathalyzer, has been extraordinarily successful in delineating our problem.

We now know that true moderate social drinking in responsible individuals seldom produces blood alcohol levels higher than .05 per cent (approximately 5-6 ozs of whisky or 5-6 seven ounce glasses of beer in one hour). We also know from overseas work that only some 4 per cent of drinking drivers have levels above .05 per cent, yet this 4 per cent is producing close to 50 per cent of the serious crashes.

Recent Australian work has shown most importantly, that the drinking driver with levels



above .1 per cent — and certainly above .15 per cent — is either an alcoholic or someone with a serious drinking problem producing complications in all aspects of his life, not just that of driving. Indeed 40 per cent of charged drinking drivers have criminal records.

In the coming festive season, quite inappropriately for a season of alleged good will, scores of people in Australia will be killed and hundreds injured by drivers drinking heavily. Many such drivers will kill themselves, their friends and relatives in single vehicle crashes — a common type of crash for heavy drinkers and alcoholics. Research is now showing most, but not quite all, alcohol associated highway fatalities throughout the year, and during the Christmas festivities, involve problem drinking.

In the light of this grim situation the only advice to be given to a responsible driver this Christmas is to 'Belt up!'

Counter proposal to Commission

The Brooks Crescent campaign has since been conducted by the Action Committee. Liaison with the FRA has been maintained via a special planning committee. This committee has in particular helped to draft an alternative plan for rehabilitation in close consultation with the Action Committee. The plan prepared by the group was adopted by a public meeting in the Brooks Crescent area and is now the substance of a counter-proposal being made to the Housing Commission.

A special feature of the Brooks Crescent campaign has been the co-operation between residents and the factories in the area. In particular this has made possible the taking out of a writ, which if successful, would prevent the Housing Commission proclaiming it a slum reclamation area.

The FRA has learned much from this campaign. We have learned that people will become involved in collective action when their direct interests are threatened. We have learned of leadership resources which are available in Fitzroy and are being under-utilised. We have learned how to work in a neighbourhood in which different languages are spoken and different cultural traditions co-exist. We have also experimented with developing plans in consultation with a local group of people and found it to be possible and worthwhile.

Auxilliarities' annual meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Brotherhood Auxiliaries for 1970 was held on November 23 in the Masonic Centre, Albert Street, East Melbourne. Nearly 300 auxiliary members were present at the meeting chaired by Mr David Scott, Executive Director of the Brotherhood. Mr Scott thanked the Auxiliaries for an excellent year's work and pointed out how much the Brotherhood depended on their support both financially and for voluntary help in the Brotherhood shops and numerous welfare projects. Mr Neville Brooke, Director of Services for the Aged, spoke on the need for personal care for the elderly and guests were able to examine a model of the new hostel which is to be built at St Laurence Park, Lara.

Talk about
AUXILIARIES
with Dyranda Prevost

Two new auxilliarities

Two new auxiliaries have been formed recently, bringing our total number to 29. At the inaugural meeting of The Sandpipers (Sandringham-Beaumaris) in October, Mrs Judy Wearne was elected President and Mrs F. Eidlitz, Secretary. (phone 99 1059). The Baymont group (Vermont-Bayswater) held their first meeting on November 12 when Mrs Cheryl Cooper was elected President, and Mrs Ann Kayes Secretary (phone 874 4167). Both groups would welcome any 'Action' readers who would like to join.

Sales aim - 1 mil. cards

The Combined Charities Christmas Card Shop run by the Victorian Council of Social Services has been doing a booming trade since opening on October 19, and it seems as though the sales target of one million cards will be reached. The shop, which this year is at Wentworth House, 203 Collins Street, is staffed by voluntary workers from more than 70 charities and 200 different cards are available.

Since starting in Melbourne four years ago, the idea has spread to other cities. Geelong's shop will be open from November 23 to December 5, in Heath's Motor Showrooms.

Brotherhood cards may be obtained from either of the card shops, from any of the Brotherhood Shops (see page 11), or from Miss Dyranda Prevost, 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, phone 41 4151.



Mrs Stapleton at work with her spinning wheel at the Market Fair in November.

Vibrant day at Town Hall

Not even a train strike could dampen the spirits at the Brotherhood's Annual Fair on November 6, when the record amount of \$3500 was raised. The Melbourne Town Hall, perhaps used to slightly more sedate occasions, really looked gay and with-it, ringed with stalls selling everything from bonsai to home-made bread. Mrs Leta Welch who has been doing bonsai for eighteen years, had a beautiful display of some of her early specimens. The Children's Art Exhibition made a vivid splash of colour in the centre of the hall and with over 400 paintings for sale, shoppers had a great variety from which to choose. The standard of work was extremely high and our thanks go to all the school children who gave not only their paintings, but also made cakes and other articles for the Fair.

The craft demonstrations were most popular. Mrs Bettie Campbell had an admiring crowd around her all day, watching her firing enamelled copper jewellery with a blow torch.

Mrs Pam Ewington, Secretary of the Hand-weavers and Spinners Guild of Victoria, demonstrated weaving with a loom made by her husband. She and Mrs Dee Stapleton with her spinning wheel, showed the full circle of production from sheep's back to the most beautiful men's jumpers and neck-ties . . . But though the Fair is for one day only, a year's work goes into the planning behind it and Mrs Thelma Tuxen the Fair Organiser is already working toward November 1971!



Helen Boyle and her friends from Coburg Teachers' College giving out leaflets advertising the Fair to lunchtime crowds in Collins Street.

Elections at St Laurence Park

A move towards greater resident participation has recently taken place at St Laurence Park, Lara.

At the beginning of August the residents went to the polls to elect a representative for each of the four wards, East, West, North and South. Interest amongst the residents was considerable and there were up to nine nominations in one ward. The four residents elected, Messrs F. Bishop, R. Headon, B. McKay and the Revd S. Greenham, now form the first St Laurence Park Representatives Committee and as such will meet regularly with members of the Park Committee of Management.

The aim of the committee is to provide a means of two-way communication between residents and council to be used in evaluating internal management policy rather than matters of a domestic nature.

Members of the committee point out that it is only in its infancy but they feel confident that

it will lead to improvements in the actual running and physical requirements of the settlement and to greater understanding between residents and council members and residents and staff.

The formation of the representatives Committee is the direct result of a request by residents for representation on the Council.

Mr Neville Brooke, Director of Services for the Aged, considers that the representatives council could be the initial step in eventually having a resident representative on the council but points out that there are difficulties.

The council, he says, often deals with special requests from residents of a confidential nature. Transfers are considered by the Council and additional support for individual residents. As well they are dealing with staff problems.

For these reasons the presence of a resident on the council could prove inhibiting and perhaps affect the functioning of the council.

Business is booming

Business is booming at the Brotherhood Shop in the Royal Arcade in the City.

A mere 2½ squares of selling space and it produced a profit of \$6,000 last year.

Talking to Mrs Agnes Hyde, who has managed the shop for the past six years, you become infected with her enthusiasm.

'If we have the goods we can sell them before they hit the window,' she says, 'and we have no trouble in getting the right price. In the last half-hour we've sold a silver tray and cream jug and a customer has just come in and paid for an antique German doll she had put a 'deposit on'.

Mrs Hyde receives the bulk of her stock from the Brotherhood's depot in Fitzroy but she also finds that a lot of saleable goods are brought direct to the shop. Two fur coats, a mink stole and an antique garnet brooch are just a few items she calls to mind and they helped to boost takings by over \$300. No time is wasted in guessing the value of the article, Mrs Hyde takes it straight off to the furrier, jeweller, or doll hospital in the arcade for valuation.

'It is amazing what some things are worth,' she says. 'A tiny doll about 3" long, like the ones they had 40 or 50 years ago, was brought in and the Doll Hospital valued it at \$3.'

The city shop was first opened in 1938 and for some years was run entirely with voluntary help. Mrs Kit Kimpton, who started helping about 1941, has seen many changes.

'We get more young people in now for grannie glasses and clothes,' she says, 'but some of our regular customers have been coming for years.'

About four years ago, management decided to open the whole shop up as a display window by giving it a new front. Takings doubled practically straight away.

The main lines are jewellery, ornaments, silverware, antiques, books, hand-knitted baby clothes and a limited amount of second-hand clothing.

Flowers and Plants

The shop has many good friends. For the last 30 years it has received a supply of freshly cut flowers every Wednesday from a supporter in Essendon; another one will be taking in plants twice a week from now until Christmas. Stamps are priced and prepared for sale by a philatelist and last year one supporter rethreaded 143 necklaces and repaired 199 others. She also knitted 118 tea cosies just for good measure.

The Brotherhood has nine shops in Melbourne, one in Bendigo and five in Geelong. The Geelong



Mrs Kimpton examines an antique French clock which was donated for sale. In the background are some of the hundreds of necklaces from which customers have to choose.

shops operate under independent management but the others all come under the care of Mr Graham Walker, Manager of the Salvage Division.

Supplies are delivered twice a week and barring smaller items, everything is already priced. Recently much more attention has been given to selecting the right goods for each shop and the benefit has been seen particularly in the Royal Arcade, Theatrical and Glenroy Shops.

The Brotherhood Salvage Division made a net profit of \$92,928 during the last financial year. This was almost 19% of the total income and an important contribution to our social service programmes.

Each shop has a paid manageress but the division and all shops depend heavily on voluntary help to function effectively.

The shops are:

- Bendigo — 202 Hargreaves Street.
- City — 51 Royal Arcade.
- Dandenong — 235 Thomas Street.
- Footscray — Cnr Nicholson & Dennis Streets.
- Furniture — 145 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.
- Geelong — 117A, Packington Street, (Headquarters)
- Glenroy — Cnr Pascoe Vale and Glenroy Roads.
- Fitzroy — 75 Westgarth Street.
- Malvern — 215 Glenferrie Road.
- Mornington — The Arcade, Main Street.
- Theatrical — 145 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.



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Democracy at a discount

The practice of democracy is far more than allowing people the right to vote in elections once every three years.

Implicit in the democratic process is the involvement of people in the exploration of issues and in the making of decisions.

It is not possible to do this literally, that is to have a referendum on every issue, but there is a balance that should be struck between this and unilateral action by Governments that do not bother to find out or take into account the views of organisations that represent considered opinion on special issues.

The Victorian Government's recent haste in pushing through two important bills, the Social Welfare Bill and the Urban Renewal legislation, are clear examples of how democracy should not operate.

Will this doll be all she has this Christmas?

There are thousands of children and adults for whom Christmas will be just another day.

It is not just toys and gifts that are needed, there are hampers to be packed to ensure that no pensioner goes hungry over the Christmas holiday period, day outing programmes to be arranged in January for children from the inner suburbs and holiday camps for children and teenagers who would otherwise have to go without holidays.

As well, many low income families will not have the resources to get through the holiday period and will be turning to the Brotherhood for help.

A gift to the Brotherhood Christmas Appeal will make sure that someone is better off this Christmas.

- * \$3 will provide a hamper for a pensioner.
- * \$4 will give four children a day outing in the country.
- * \$10 will provide the food for a child on a 10-day camp.

These two bills will have a greater influence over the next 10 or 20 years on the lives of more citizens than most legislation that passes through State Parliament.

It is a matter for concern that there was no consultation with interested organisations before these bills were prepared and that the Government only gave two or three weeks between first and second readings debates of the bills, so that even the few people or organisations fortunate enough to obtain a copy of each bill did not have time to thoroughly examine them and consult with their members.

The subject matter of these two bills has been under consideration for two years and there was no reason why the Government's ideas and its proposed legislations could not have been delayed for six months instead of being rushed through Parliament.

A great amount of resentment and opposition is generated by this disregard by the Government of views that may not be in accord with the advice of its own departmental advisors.

There should be a strong protest at the Government's refusal to give real democracy a chance to work.

brotherhood gift

Send to Brotherhood of St Laurence, 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, 3065.

Donations of \$2 and over to the Brotherhood are deductible for Income Tax purposes.

I enclose my gift of \$: towards

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|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Family Services | ☐ | Carrum Downs Village | ☐ |
| Services for the Aged | ☐ | St Laurence Court, Bendigo | ☐ |
| Youth Services | ☐ | St Laurence Park, Lara | ☐ |

If you would like a bag for used clothing for salvage, please tick this space. ☐

Name

Address

Postcode

CUT OUT AND MAIL YOUR GIFT

David Scott

Executive Director