



Disposal decision puts Glebe Estate in limbo

By RICHARD ECKERSLEY

The Glebe housing estate appeared to have been consigned to limbo yesterday with the Federal Government's decision to dispose of it.

The question remained, to whom?

The Federal Minister for Housing and Construction, Mr McVeigh, said yesterday the low-cost housing estate would be transferred to the NSW Government at market value.

The Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, said much the same thing, adding that if NSW rejected the transfer, the estate would be disposed of otherwise.

Mr McVeigh said in a letter delivered yesterday afternoon to the Federal Labor Member for Sydney, Mr Les McMahon, that if a satisfactory arrangement was not reached between the Federal and NSW governments, the estate would be offered first to local government and then to private enterprise.

Mr McMahon said neither the State Government nor local government could afford the estate.

He said private developers would probably love to buy it, but other sources indicated many would be deterred by controlled rents and the problems of selling houses in six to eight months' time. There is also the 3,000 residents' opposition to such a move.

The NSW Minister for Housing, Mr Sheahan, said yesterday: "I've never had a proposition put to me on the Glebe Estate by the Commonwealth Government."

"All I've heard is a lot of huff and puff about NSW taking it over."

Even if such an offer was made, "I don't know what we're going to use for money," he said.

The Federal Labor Government bought the estate, of about 730 old houses on 19 hectares between St John's Road and Wentworth Park Road, for \$17.5 million in 1974.

The estate was owned previously by the Anglican Church, which could no longer afford to maintain the houses.

Restoration of the houses for the low-income families, many of whom have lived there all their lives, has been slow because of cuts in Government funds. Only about 200 are now fully or largely renovated.

The estate is now estimated to be worth, conservatively \$30 million to \$45 million.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 1/5/81

S.M.H. 19/5/81

Glebe Estate offer

The NSW Government has offered to take over the Glebe Estate from the Federal Government, providing that it does not cost anything and that Canberra funds the outstanding rehabilitation works. The Commonwealth announced disposal of the estate as part of the Razor Gang's report.

KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED
"LIMBO" IS THE WORD!

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PUBLIC MEETING

to discuss the

HOUSING CRISIS in NSW



HELP FORMULATE A PLAN OF
ACTION REGARDING HOUSING
ISSUES FOR THE FORTHCOMING
STATE ELECTION.

WEDNESDAY 27th MAY
at Redfern Town Hall
71 Pitt St.
Redfern 7:30pm

INTERESTED IN HELPING FORMULATE HOUSING POLICY FOR THE COMING STATE ELECTIONS? THEN COME ALONG!!

At 7.30pm on Wednesday 27th May, at Redfern Town Hall, there will be a public meeting on Housing in N.S.W. This public meeting is an initial step towards ensuring that housing is a priority issue in the forthcoming State Elections.

There will be three speakers at the meeting and time for questions.

From this meeting an action group will be formed to prepare a submission on action to be taken for the various kinds of housing (public, rental, emergency, ownership, etc.) and housing initiatives, (for example, ways of financing housing co-operatives, local government involvement, mobile homes). The group will then present their submission to the State Government and organise other groups to similarly submit and support the thrust for a state housing policy.

Following is an open letter which introduces, again, the public meeting.

Dear Friends,

The Housing Crisis is having and will continue to have disastrous effects on the people of New South Wales. At a time when more resources should be allocated to housing, we are faced with a situation where housing is being given a very low priority - not only by the Federal Government but also by the New South Wales Government. Concerned people must let their voices be heard - Housing must be seen as a priority issue in the forthcoming State election.

THE HOUSING PROBLEM IN N.S.W.

There are many indicators which clearly pinpoint the very serious state of the N.S.W. housing market. Firstly, the number of people who would be classified as "homeless" in New South Wales could be higher than 40,000.

A study carried out in 1978 estimated that 1% of the N.S.W. population was homeless). The demand for emergency housing has increased dramatically over the last 3 years. Youth, Women, Family and Single persons' Refuges are extremely overcrowded and are unable to cope with the increasing demands being placed on their services because of lack of resources.

PRIVATE RENTAL MARKET

Access to reasonably-priced rental accommodation is virtually impossible in most areas of the State. Rentals have risen by approximately 20% p.a. across the board, over the last three years. In some areas, the increase has been well over 100% p.a. Families and individuals relying on pensions and benefits, or on low salaries, cannot afford the costs involved in renting a premises appropriate to their needs. Security of tenure is unavailable to all private tenants, and problems with evictions are increasing dramatically. The Tenants' Advice Services established throughout Sydney have seen a 300% increase in their workload over the last three years,

PUBLIC HOUSING

Even though the private market is beyond the reach of a large section of our population, the alternative - public housing - is just as inaccessible. Funds from the Federal Government have been drastically and continually cut over the last three years. The future existence of the Housing Commission may be in doubt if the Federal Government continues on its present course, as seems very likely. There are presently over 40,000 families on the waiting list for public housing. The list is increasing at a remarkable rate of over 1,000 per month. These people need to be housed immediately, not in ten years' time. The situation is far worse when one considers the waiting list does not indicate the demand for public housing. Many people in need are excluded because they are not eligible (single people, youth, etc.), or give up when they are told of the waiting times and numbers of families involved.

The great Australian dream of home ownership has become impossible for most and a nightmare for some. On the one hand, the price of houses in Sydney precludes low and middle-income earners from taking up this option. On the other, those 'lucky' enough to get finance, often themselves up to their ears in debt, and often unable to repay their commitments. Nationally, the rate of foreclosure of loans has increased from 1 in 950 in 1973 to 1 in 70 in 1979.

The latest Real Estate Institute of Australia survey of housing prices (published April 5, 1981, National Times), clearly shows that Sydney has remained Australia's most expensive capital city for buying established housing.

The average price for an established house sold in February, was \$82,700 in Sydney, \$48,300 in Melbourne and \$37,800 in Brisbane. The Sydney market has become inaccessible for the great majority of wage and salary earners. In 1978, (only 3 years ago), the average price of an established house in Sydney was \$41,700. This, of course, represents a 98% increase in housing costs over a 3 year period. Compare this with a 20% increase in Melbourne and a 19% increase in Brisbane over the corresponding period.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

The Federal Government must take a large part of the responsibility for the mess in which we find ourselves. But the N.S.W. Government can't continue to hide behind an illusion that 'there's little we can do - it's all their fault!' It's time to tackle the issue head on at a State level. A comprehensive housing policy must be developed, to begin to tackle the issues previously mentioned in this letter. It would seem that neither of the major political parties want to 'rock the housing boat'; both seem to have put the issue in the 'too hard' basket.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Unless concerned people such as ourselves get together, it is likely that housing will remain as one of the bottom priorities of any N.S.W. Government. Housing must be seen to be one of the major issues in the forthcoming issues in the forthcoming State election. The newly-elected Government must have a commitment to developing realistic solutions to the housing crisis.

To this end, a few people representing a small cross-section of concerned groups in South Sydney, have been meeting for a month, to try and do something about the housing situation and its effects on our community. But very early in the piece, we came to the realisation that there was very little we could achieve by ourselves, faced with the massive issues involved. We believe that a campaign should be organised to let the politicians know our feelings about the housing crisis. To this end, we have organised a Public Meeting at 7.30pm, on Wednesday 27th May, at Redfern Town Hall, 71 Pitt Street, Redfern to discuss the formulation of an action campaign on housing issues for the forthcoming State election.

It is vital that you come along to the Public Meeting - and bring other concerned people along with you. Hopefully, together we can start to do something constructive about the major housing problems faced by so many people in our community.

AUTHORISED BY

Liz Faunce	-	Housing Commission Tenants Association
Julie Melbourne	-	Inner City Women's Housing Group
Ken Smith	-	South Sydney Committee of the Australian Assistance Plan
Harvey Volke	-	Tenants' Union of N.S.W.
Reyna Dight	-	" " "
Helen Conway	-	Redfern Legal Centre
Louise Trunbull	-	Chippendale Housing Action Group



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REPORT OF TENANTS' UNION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD 17TH MARCH, 1981 AT 7.30PM
AT SOUTH SYDNEY COMMUNITY AID, 118 REGENT ST., REDFERN

The Tenants' Union Annual meeting in March was well attended. After successfully going through the business, many people stayed on to enjoy refreshments and renew acquaintances.

For the forthcoming year our directors are: Charlie Begg, Kathryn Bradshaw, Jack Carnegie, Ian Close, David Geraghty, Julie Melbourne, Petra Playfair and Nada Spasoejvic. The alternate directors are Julie Matthews and Gary Moore and there remained a vacancy for an alternate director. The Board can appoint a director for the normal term of one year. Are you interested in this position?

The other office bearers are Regina Heartsch, Secretary; Julie Melbourne, Treasurer; and Cliff Holden, Publicity Officer.

Reports were presented to the meeting by the Secretary, Treasurer, Project Officer, Landlord/Tenant Act Campaign helper and the Tenants' Union Representative on the Landlord/Tenant Act Reform Committee. These reports follow.

SECRETARY'S REPORT TO TENANTS' UNION OF N.S.W.
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 17/3/81

My year at the Tenants' Union could have been more difficult had not Robert Mowbray been helmsman of South Sydney Community Aid in the earlier stages. Day in, day out he processed our mail into its file pyramid. One day then Robert went overseas so we could practice Tenants' Union without him, because soon after he returned he left the premises altogether.

Without his attentions here and there, Reyna started to sink. We nearly lost her completely when the very hot potato of a Landlord/Tenants Act Reform Campaign Report arrived.

Fortunately, we were very financial at this stage with CLAC monies which I know Martyn must report on. A dastardly report on the one hand, money to spare on the other, suggested we hire Harvey Volke. Thus our staff was two, with two very different job descriptions.

As I was saying, Harvey came in to help effectively dispense the critique of the Landlord/Tenant Act Reform Campaign Report which was substantially written by Reyna and Jon Clark. The effect of the mail-out and phone calls, speeches and publicity was the Tenants' Union Hotline being listed in the front of the telephone book, and we are still reeling under the successful publicity of the Union's existence, if not its stance. "Can you help me?"... "Look, it's just a quick problem....."..."My landlord said....."..."What's the Bond Board?"..."Manual! Pamphlets!"....

Our enormous current presence among other things moved the staff to evaluate the Union. This interesting topic is probably featured in their report.

What else can a secretary say? South Sydney Community Aid and Tenants' Union are still great mates. Some T.A.S.'s love us and some T.A.S.'s hate us. Membership is increasing. With growing publicity more tenants are clamouring to sign up. I think this year will be a very good year if we get funding again. Some of our hot advisors are fading, but I think a new team is in the making.

For their goodwill and help I would like to thank Jean Currell; Thank you Robert Mowbray, David Owen, Julie Matthews, Beth Mitchell. Thank you volunteers, especially Nada, Stephen and Peter Borrell who mailed out their lives.

In advance, thanks to the students, Matt Isaacs and Megan McMahon, who are working on fabulous projects

And to our dear Project Officers and well-known good sports, the heartiest thanks.

Regina Haertsch
17th March, 1981

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TENANTS' UNION OF N.S.W. CO-OP LTD.
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/12/80

	General	Project	Landlord/Tenant Campaign	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<u>Income</u>				
<u>Grants</u>				
- Commonwealth Legal Aid Commission		17,500 *		17,500
- Department of Youth & Community Services		17,152		17,152
- N.S.W. Shelter		936	1,500	2,436
Service Fees	403			403
Donations	78			78
Proceeds from Stalls	353.68			353.68
Sale of Leaflets	313.90			313.90
Tenants' Rights Manual	239.20			239.20
Sale of Car Stickers	0.90			0.90
Lecture Fee	10			10
Other	25			25
TOTAL:	1,910.20	35,588	1,500	38,998.20
	=====	=====	=====	=====

Expenditure

Salaries		13,493.26		13,493.26
Consultancy Fees			1,000.00	1,000.00
Travel		263.10		263.10
Printing				
- Newsletter	209.70			209.70
- Other	178.29	971.85	22.07	1,172.21
Postage	340.47	102.44	198.06	640.97
Stationery	39.10	90.44	9.60	139.14
Telephone (inc. 'Hotline')		663.41	3.00	666.41
Hotline Equipment		350.00		350.00
Manual		453.00		453.00
Photocopying	12.61	21.38	56.26	90.25
Secretarial		1,000.00	125.32	1,125.32
Furniture & Equipment		272.41		272.41
Publicity		135.95		135.95
Insurance		36.25		36.25
Workshops		28.67		28.67
Subscriptions	6.00			6.00
Miscellaneous	42.39	27.67		70.06
TOTAL:	828.56	17,909.83	1,414.31	20,152.70
	=====	=====	=====	=====

* Covers grants of \$6,500 for 6 months ending 30/6/80 and \$11,000 for 12 months ending 30/6/81.



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PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT
TO TENANTS' UNION OF N.S.W.
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 17/3/81

Most of our members will be aware that the 'Project' essentially involved resourcing, consolidating and expanding the voluntary Tenants' Advice network so that we can better assist tenants with their problems. During the year concerted efforts have been made to work towards this goal.

I will outline some of the activities, problems and achievements of the Project and then briefly make some recommendations for improvements to the service the Union offers.

1. TENANTS' ADVICE SERVICES

During the year T.A.S.'s have commenced operation at Gosford, Lismore, Manly, North Sydney, Parramatta, Prumont and Springwood.

Some of these utilise volunteers and are open only in the evenings; others have taken on tenancy advice as part of the general service provided by the agency involved.

We currently resource 24 Tenants' Advice Services, however, the quality and quantity of service offered varies considerably.

A few of the factors influencing this are:

- a) Commitment to housing issues and awareness of housing stresses by both volunteers and host agency.
- b) Degree of integration between T.A.S. and other services provided by the agency.
- c) Level of expertise in handling tenancy cases (especially follow-up).
- d) Amount of time available for tenancy advice and follow-up, including times of opening.
- e) Availability of legal assistance as part of proper follow-up.

The major problem is that most services are not available to give tenancy advice when it is most needed - during office hours. This is because the network relies almost entirely on volunteers who are more often available at night. Unfortunately their enthusiasm is often dampened by lack of demand in the evening. Consequently, there is a high turnover of volunteers and a continual need for recruitment, training and administration of these aspects of the project.

The volunteer system itself, although desirable, is fraught with problems. Too much of the project's time is spent maintaining rosters, filling continual gaps at T.A.S.'s and on the Hotline, encouraging uniform quality of service and record keeping, etc.

At the same time, the demand for tenancy advice during office hours continues to grow with the inevitable result that project officers become involved with direct service provision - which is not their role.

2. VOLUNTEER TRAINING

It became obvious fairly early on that the ad hoc methods of training people to give tenancy advice were not satisfactory. We have developed a 5 session workshop training programme together with lecture notes to improve the quality of training and give new volunteers more confidence. This programme has been utilised since November, 1980 and we are already witnessing positive results.

During the year we have been invited to give talks on tenants' rights and the Tenants' Union at a variety of community agencies and institutions, e.g. Migrant Hostels, C.A.E.'s and Tech. Welfare Courses, adult education seminars, housing seminars, etc.

A total of 24 workshops and 11 talks have been given by both project officers and experienced members of the Union.

However, despite efforts to train more and more people, the perennial problem of volunteers - i.e. they move on, are unavailable when required, etc. remains. There is a general feeling that too much staff time is required fostering and maintaining commitment of volunteers and ensuring continuity of service.

3. TENANTS' HOTLINE

Some of the above problems are highlighted when we look at the hotline and its recent history. The volume of tenancy queries received by the hotline has steadily increased during office hours when the network is unable to fully service them. Conversely, volunteers sit around at night willing to offer assistance and the phone rarely rings. The hotline telephone number is advertised in the Help Reference Page at the front of the Telephone Directory which partly explains the increase in queries. Up until recently we were receiving a large volume of calls in the mornings when the Hotline is not staffed. the purchase of an answering service machine to deflect these calls until after 1pm has freed us to do other work.

Project Officers must inevitably fill gaps in the Hotline during the day as well as assist tenants who come into the office. This is time consuming.

Technical problems with the equipment which diverts Hotline calls to those in duty seem unresolvable as we have had constant servicing from the manufacturers with little result. These operating problems try the patience of T.A.S.'s and tenants trying to gain assistance.

A conservative estimate of numbers of hotline calls received from Jan - Dec, 1980 is 2,484. The monthly average in the first 6 months was 179 calls. This increased to 235 calls per month during the second half of the year, an increase of 32%.

4. RESOURCE MATERIAL

The Tenants' Rights Manual has been a huge success. Almost 600 copies have been distributed. On behalf of all members of the Tenants' Union, I would like to thank Robert Mowbray for his contributions to the ongoing research and development which has gone into the production of the manual. We are planning to update the manual as soon as legislative changes are implemented. It is a working tool which relies on constructive feedback from users, so please send in your comments and criticisms.

Posters advertising T.A.S.'s have been made available and our information series of pamphlets have been reprinted and updated several times during the year to keep up with demand.

Multi-lingual tenancy information has now been translated into 13 languages. The cost of printing is rather prohibitive but we are currently working on funding submissions so that this project can be completed.

5. STAFF INCREASE

The increase in funding for the second half of the year enabled us to employ Harvey Volke as a part-time Project Officer in October, 1980. Harvey had previously been working for a couple of months on a consultancy basis with the Landlord and Tenancy Act Campaign.

We are extremely lucky to have Harvey. His considerable journalistic and liaison skills are well known among inner city activists.

Initially, it was thought that Harvey would be able to concentrate on T.A.S. promotion, publicity and resourcing of tenancy struggles as well as generally assisting with the project. The idea was to free me to

work more in the field. In practice this has not eventuated because of pressures of other demands. Harvey's input is already evident. We are far more visible in the media and can now directly resource more groups of tenants. His research skills have also been put to good use in assisting policy formulation.

6. During the year the Union unfortunately lost the services of some of its most experienced people. Others have been forced to cut back their involvement due to other commitments.

Robert Mowbray resigned his position as Co-ordinator of South Sydney Community Aid, this leaving an irreplaceable gap in the agency's Tenants' Rights Project. Robert has been with the Union since its inception and through this project was able to donate considerable time to the Tenants' Advice Network.

Dave Owen is another tireless worker who has recently resigned due to academic commitments. His knowledge of housing and tenancy issues has been invaluable. We will definitely miss his talents as T.U. spokesperson, a role he took on willingly.

Martyn Jones retires as T.U. Treasurer. For the past two years, Martyn has worked dedicatedly to ensure that all our financial affairs run smoothly.

I would also like to thank Julie Matthews and Regina Haertsch for their work and presence on the Board.

These changes have resulted in the project staff taking on a wider role e.g. running workshops, talking to the press on tenants' rights, writing submissions and representing the T.U. at public forums, etc. In short, being available as anchor people to cope with whatever crops up.

Harvey and I made some recommendations to the Board which we hope will enable us to cope with the demand for tenancy advice during daytime hours.

We are hoping to encourage local community agencies to undertake tenancy advice as a recognised part of the services they provide to clients. We will continue to utilise volunteers to supplement this more thoroughgoing service, but hope to foster more volunteer involvement with housing actions. We believe that this will be more satisfying for volunteers and provide a stronger catalyst for actions around housing issues at a local level.

This policy is in the process of evolution. We invite members to attend Board and Committee meetings so that any new direction which the Project takes is a result of collective endeavour.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank all T.A.S. volunteers for the dedicated work they have undertaken on behalf of tenants in N.S.W. and for their cheerful co-operation throughout the year.

REYNA DIGHT



REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVE ON THE LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT REFORM COMMITTEE

Members will recall that the Reform Committee was set up by Mr. Einfeld, Minister for Consumer Affairs, to make recommendations for substantial reform to landlord and tenant legislation in N.S.W. It comprised the Rent Controller as chairperson, one representative of each of the Real Estate Institute, Flat and Property Owners Association, Tenants' Union and Redfern Legal Centre and three lawyers - one each from private practice, Public Solicitor's Office and the Law School at Macquarie University. The Reform Committee met on 42 occasions between 8th February, 1979 and 23rd February, 1981.

Monica MacRae was the Tenants' Union's representative on the Reform Committee up until 18th November, 1980 when she resigned. Robert Mowbray was our alternate representative, attending when Monica was on holidays and after her resignation.

On 28th July, 1980 the Minister released an interim report for public consideration and comment. Written submissions were sought by 30th September, 1980. This date was subsequently extended to 31st October, 1980.

The Tenants' Union launched a vigorous campaign including community groups, unions and A.L.P. branches against many of the recommendations in the interim report, the whole thrust of which was seen to favour landlords at considerable disadvantage to tenants. A summary and criticism of the recommendations in the interim report was detailed in Tenant News, N.S.W., No. 11 September, 1980. The Tenants' Union also made a very detailed submission to the Reform Committee.

The Reform Committee reconvened on 7th October, 1980 to review the interim report in the light of submissions received. Its final meeting was on 23rd February, 1981. After some necessary editing, a final report will be forwarded to the Minister by the end of March, 1981.

The Reform Committee's interim report gave a false impression of the Tenants' Union's position on many of its recommendations because it aimed at consensus. The final report recognises that consensus on landlord and tenant issues is not possible and takes the form of majority and dissenting recommendations. This allows the Tenants' Union and others' positions to be clearly stated throughout the report.

The Minister, Mr. Einfeld, has insisted that all members of the Reform Committee treat its deliberations (and recommendations) as confidential, until such time as he releases it publicly or tables draft legislation in parliament. Therefore, I am unable to inform members of its final recommendations. However, I continuously consulted members of the Tenants' Union's Policy Committee and will report to the Board on this.

Where to from here? This is only the beginning of a long battle for just landlord and tenant legislation in N.S.W. I do not believe any draft legislation will come before Parliament till after the next State elections (when we will have a new Minister responsible for landlord and tenant matters, as Mr. Einfeld is retiring). I would propose that we do the following:

1. request that the Minister immediately release publicly the Reform Committee's final report;
2. move recommendations through our ALP Branches and Party Conferences to incorporate Tenants' Union policy into the platform of the ALP in N.S.W., and also take up the issue within our unions; and,
3. lobby politicians and make landlord and tenant legislation (and the housing crisis generally) an issue in the forthcoming State elections.

ROBERT MOWBRAY
17th March, 1981

REPORT OF T.U. CAMPAIGN AGAINST RECOMMENDATIONS OF LANDLORD/TENANT ACT REFORM COMMITTEE

While the Tenants' Union participated in the deliberations of the State Government's Landlord-Tenant Act Reform Committee, it did so with some hesitation, and in the hope that its viewpoint could be reflected in the Report. This was not to be. When the Committee's interim report was brought down, it was clear that it did not represent the interests of tenants.

Accordingly, we decided to campaign against adoption of the report. We were critical on a number of grounds, including: lack of time for public discussion; constitution of the committee and its narrow terms of reference; unnecessary secrecy; lack of public participation; streamlining of evictions; no action on retaliatory evictions; phasing out of protected tenancies; threats of tenants' privacy; discrimination against de facto partners, as well as against groups; six-monthly rent increases; continuing inequality of relations between landlord and tenant; and the fact the proposals for a Residential Tenancies Tribunal (good in themselves) were vague and undefined.

Our campaign covered several phases:

1. Extensive phone and personal contact with a broad-ranging community network to ensure pressure for a delay in the deadline for submissions, and to encourage the making of submissions from sympathetic groups. We conferred with community inter-agencies, and contacted groups like Youth and Community Services, the Office of Equal Opportunity, the Council for Civil Liberties, Housing Commission, Combined Pensioners' Association and legal and consumer groups generally.
2. Lobbying - e.g. ALP branches, the N.S.W. Trades and Labor Council, building trades unions, Union of Australian Women, members of key ALP policy committees, etc.
3. Publicity - we gained a fair measure of coverage in the print and electronic media.
4. We submitted our own critique of the committee's report, which was certainly one of the most comprehensive of the submission.

There were some weaknesses in the campaign we ran:

1. The most serious was our failure to provide specific policy alternatives that could be embodied in legislation, apart from general principles like statutory leases, guarantees of security of tenure, and some form of justification for rent increases. This weighed heavily against us, and if in fact the LTARC Report is rejected means we have to start from scratch again.
2. More effort could have been put into lobbying of key government agencies, committees, Members of Parliament, etc. Our resources were, of course, very limited, and we operated on a shoestring budget, so far as such campaigns go.
3. While our own critique - widely circulated as it was - formed the basis for prompting a wide range of community groups to make their own submissions, on the whole many groups simply indicated they supported our submission instead of making independent submissions. While this was useful in terms of displaying widespread support, it also enabled many of these submissions to be ignored.

We did succeed in gaining an extension of time for submissions, but we did not succeed in broadening the base of public participation or in having the committee re-constituted. Nor did we succeed in having major changes at the committee's report.

Nevertheless, it was on the whole a most effective campaign, and demonstrated what could be achieved by a small group with limited funds. Our achievements include:

1. It seems likely - especially in view of the Minister's recent statement - that the major recommendations of the committee, e.g. with regard to protected tenancies and streamlined evictions, will be buried.

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1. We attracted a very wide range of support from the general community and from key interest groups; at the same time we succeeded in sharpening public awareness of tenancy issues. This could be most useful in the future.

3. Our campaign is surely one factor in helping to create housing as a major issue confronting the political parties in the forthcoming State election; and it will also help ensure that fairer tenancy laws will be on the agenda.

If, in fact, the LTARC Report is buried, the question remains: what next?

THE MINISTER IS STILL TO RELEASE THE REFORM COMMITTEE'S FINAL REPORT, BUT HE HAS STATED

Protected rents: no rise

By CATHERINE HARPER,
State Political Correspondent

The Minister for Consumer Affairs, Mr Einfeld, has rejected a recommendation for rent increases for the State's estimated 30,000 protected tenants.

The recommendation, made by a reform committee set up in 1979 by the State Government, to examine the Landlord and Tenant Act, proposed increasing the rents of protected tenants by 25 per cent over four years.

Protected tenants are mainly low-income earners living in inner-city premises that were rent-controlled before 1954.

When rent control was lifted the protected tenants were allowed to stay at a nominal rent and can not be evicted.

Mr Einfeld told the Herald yesterday that the Government would do nothing to disadvantage protected tenants.

He said that the number of protected tenancies was decreasing continually. There had been about 300,000 in the mid-50s and at the most there would now be about 30,000.

The majority of premises involved had been bought since the mid-50s by people hoping to gain vacant possession, and in many cases they had.

Mr Einfeld said the Government was opposed to any reintroduction of rent control.

It did not want to discourage investment in rental accommodation at a time of a serious housing shortage.

Mr Einfeld has also rejected the committee's recommendation for easier eviction.



Extras.

PROJECT OFFICER RETIRING

Reyna Dight, our Project Officer, is retiring. She has worked tirelessly resourcing the Tenants' Advice Service Network and helping the Tenants' Union since January, 1980. Her invaluable skills will be really missed and the Tenants' Union wishes her the very best for the future.

SQUATTING

If anyone is interested in squatting or wants information on squatting, then contact the Tenants' Union. We might be able to put you in touch with others who are interested and give helpful information.

NEW PROJECT OFFICER

Our new Project Officer is Mary Perkins. She will begin working for the Tenants' Union in mid-June.

GOOD LUCK MARY !!



We could have done a beautiful job