



tenant news

TENANTS UNION OF NSW
 CO-OP LTD
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N.S.W.

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INDEX

	PAGE
1. Recording the condition of premises	2
2. A.L.P. housing reforms	2
3. Penalties for late rent	3
4. The Tenants' Union's new Project Officer	3
5. The Hotline	4
6. Community conference	4
7. Annual General Meeting, coming up soon	5
8. The inner city real estate boom	7
9. Questionnaire	8

LEAFLETS ARE AVAILABLE AGAIN!!

The Tenants' Union's leaflets have been updated and reprinted. Copies are now available. NB If organisations are interested in obtaining large numbers of these leaflets, they may be obtained for the nominal fee of 50c per set; from 118 Regent Street, Redfern. 2016.

URGENT

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

URGENT

PLACE -

REDFERN TENANTS' ADVICE SERVICE
 118 REGENT ST., REDFERN, 2016

TIME -

EVERY SECOND WEDNESDAY 5.30 PM - 9.00 PM

YOU DON'T NEED ANY SPECIAL SKILLS, JUST AN INTEREST
 IN HELPING TENANTS. WE WILL HELP TO TRAIN YOU

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION RING 6994741 ON WED. 5.30-9.00pm.

SOME COMMENTS ON TAKING A RECORD OF THE CONDITION OF PREMISES ON MOVING INTO ACCOMMODATION

I would like to bring up a few points about renting a flat that might be worthwhile to bring to your attention.

It is about the inspection list in connection with the condition of the flat, fittings and furniture, which made me wonder whether the word "clean" could cause any future hassles.

After all an old bachelor would probably have a different opinion about "clean" than an experienced housewife.

Furthermore there is a lot of difference of a clean brandnew flat or a clean flat which has been occupied for 10 or more years.

If this matter in practice does cause hassles would it then not be appropriate to have the inspection of the flat also be handled by a third party like the rental bond money? After all it would be very difficult for someone burdened already with the worries of flat-hunting, to detect all imperfections of the flat and its contents.

If it could be established that the inspection could be overseen or handled by a third party, it would limit misunderstandings and therefore would contribute to a better relationship between landlord and tenant, which is very important.

In my opinion an experienced inspector (he could be paid from rental bond interests) could inspect a small flat in about 10 or 20 min., while others (an old bachelor e.g.) could never do it properly.

Furthermore I think, there should be allowed one or two weeks for the tenant after moving in, to settle any differences he might have overlooked the first time.

I agree that much of this business all depends on commonsense, yet I feel, for the sake of a better relationship between tenant and landlord, that everything should be done to reduce the chances that could cause misunderstandings and hassles.

Henk Hout

let's change the laws

N.S.W. LABOUR ADMITS NO MAJOR REFORMS IN THE AREA OF HOUSING

In early November 1979, the Premier of New South Wales wrote to branch members of the ALP listing some of the major reforms by our Labour Government during its 3½ years in office.

It is significant that this document makes only one small reference to achievements in the area of housing. This is the establishment of the Rental Bond Board *"which has offered protection to tenants and landlords and provided funds for low-cost housing"*.

Unfortunately this reflects the low priority given to housing by our Labour Government.

PENALTY CLAUSE IN LEASE FOR LATE PAYMENT OF RENT

Following a number of complaints, the Tenants' Union took up with the Rental Bond Board the matter of penalty clauses in leases for late payment of rent.

It received the following advice:

Where the penalty clause takes the form of an increase in rent for late payment of rent, such a clause is "objectionable...inequitable and consequently, not enforceable".

However, where the penalty clause takes the form of a reduction in rent if it is paid on time, this "is not objectionable as a matter of law. It has almost universal application in payment clauses in mortgages."



BONDS:
All bonds received on residential premises must be deposited with the Board together with the prescribed lodgment form within 7 days of receipt. Tenants whose bonds have been deposited with the Board will have received an 'Advice of Lodgment' showing a cash register impression of the amount lodged.
All claims for rental bonds must be on the Board's prescribed form, which must not be signed by landlords and tenants until all details and instructions for payment appearing on the form have been completed.
Forms for depositing and withdrawing bonds together with information pamphlets are available from any branch of the RURAL BANK or from the Board's offices below.
RENTAL BOND BOARD,
12th Floor, 1 Oxford Street,
DARLINGHURST, N.S.W. 2010.
Telephone 258 8111.

Sydney Morning Herald,
"Flats to Let",
8th December 1979. pp81



AND ITS ABOUT TIME TOO !!!



"It will be a car park for people who have to drive to work because there aren't any houses left to rent"

The Tenants Union has been given a 6 month grant from the Commonwealth Legal Aid Commission to employ a Project Officer to service the needs of Tenants' Advice Services and to hopefully expand this network to new areas where tenancy advice is needed but currently unavailable.

Reyna Dight commenced duties on 14/1/80 and is eager to offer any assistance which will help consolidate and expand our Tenants' Advice network. She can be contacted on

Ph. 698 8033 - up till 1 p.m.
699 4741 - from 1-5 pm.

She will be visiting T.A.S.'s over the next few weeks to help with any problems and would appreciate suggestions and ideas from volunteers as to how services can be improved and extended.

TENANTS' HOTLINE

The Tenants' Hotline commenced last September and is now well established. The Hotline telephone number has been added to our new Information Series pamphlet entitled "Where you can get help - a list of legal and tenants' services" which will be available by the time we go to press.

The Hotline is staffed by the network of Tenants' Advice Services and operates:

Mon - Fri. 1-9 p.m.

Sat. 9.30 - 12.30 pm.

However, there are still some gaps in the service during these hours which cannot be currently filled by T.A.S.'s.

MEMBERS - WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The Tenants' Union is looking for VOLUNTEERS who are willing to give tenancy advice from the comfort of their home, for just a few hours each week or fortnight.

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY.

The Tenants' Union is willing to train you. We run regular workshops for volunteers.

If you are interested please contact:

Reyna Dight, our new Project Officer

on 698 8033 before 1 p.m. or

699 4741 between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.

THE COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

The conference held in October last year, passed several motions and the Tenants' Union is attempting to incorporate some of these resolutions into its' own Landlord/Tenant policy. So far we have had one all-day meeting for this purpose.

The second meeting is coming up soon:-

DATE - 24th February, 1980.

TIME - 11.00am to 4.00pm.

PLACE- 126 Roscoe Street,
BONDI. 2026.

Everyone is welcome to attend and give their opinions!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT J. MATTHEWS ON 3091607
or D. OWEN ON 6988216.



- 5 -

ITS THAT TIME OF THE YEAR AGAIN
THE TENANTS' UNION'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IS
COMING UP SOON.

DATE - TUESDAY, 18TH MARCH, 1980
AT 7.30 PM.

PLACE - ST LUKES CHURCH HALL,
118 REGENT STREET,
REDFERN. 2016

THE AGENDA WILL INCLUDE THE ELECTION OF NEW OFFICE
BEARERS - SECRETARY, DIRECTORS, EDITOR OF NEWSLETTER ETC.
IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING MORE INVOLVED WITH THE
UNION'S ACTIVITIES THIS IS THE TIME!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION RING 698 8033 WEDNESDAYS,
5.30 - 9.00 PM.

WHAT IS THE TENANTS' UNION?

The Tenants' Union is an organisation of tenants fighting for a better deal.

The main principle of the Tenants' Union is that good quality housing is a basic human right. The Union believes that tenants must have SECURITY OF TENURE, HOUSES IN GOOD REPAIR, and PROTECTION FROM DEMANDS FOR EXCESSIVE RENTS.

The Tenants' Union represents tenants against land owners who are causing tenants stress or abusing their rights. Towards this end, the Tenants' Union supports a number of Tenants' Advice Services around Sydney and is extending into the country.

HOW IT HELPS YOU

For a long time tenants have been on the whipping end of the housing stick. The Tenants' Union is helping tenants to work TOGETHER to bring about changes.

SOLIDARITY in numbers and thought is the only way that our rights can be fought and won.

The Tenants' Union supports tenants (a) through the Tenants' Advice Services;

(b) by making representations to the State Government on Landlord-Tenant Law;

(c) by keeping the public informed about tenants' problems and tenants' rights.

JOIN NOW!!

HELP THE TENANTS' UNION to
HELP YOU AND OTHERS!

APPLICATION TO JOIN TENANTS' UNION

Name.....

Address.....

.....Postcode

Telephone

Occupation.....

Are you a tenant?.....

Are you a home-owner.....
(please tick)

Cost: Pensioners,)
Unemployed,)\$2
Students)

Workers\$4

Organisations.....\$10

This covers purchase of shares and a service fee.

I enclose joining fee.

I declare that I am over 18 years of age.

Signature.....

Witness.....

Date

Cut along dotted line and return to:

Tenants' Union of N.S.W.,
118 Regent Street,
Redfern, 2016.



On the 27th July, 1979 the Complainants Graham Mooney and Lesley Leo lodged a complaint with the Counsellor for Equal Opportunity. The complaint alleged that the Respondent P. Flannery & Associates Pty. Ltd. had discriminated against them by refusing accommodation to them on the basis of their race. On 3rd August, 1979 the Acting Counsellor for Equal Opportunity referred the complaint to the Anti-Discrimination Board in accordance with Section 94(1) of the Anti-Discrimination Act, 1977. At the outset of the hearing the Board endeavoured to resolve the complaint pursuant to Section 106 of the Act but without success. The Board then embarked on the Inquiry and heard the evidence presented by the parties.

The Complainants contention was that the Respondent, a real estate agent, had discriminated against them on the ground of their race in that it had, but its servants or agents, refused their application for accommodation.

The Board made the following orders:-

1. The complaint is substantiated.
2. It declines to take any further action on the complaint.
3. Each party shall pay its own or their own costs.
The exhibits may be returned.

HOW STATE LABOR WILL SPEND \$50 MILLION ON STATE HOUSING



The State Government has taken the unprecedented step of allocating \$50 million from the Budget to assist the Government's housing programme. The \$50 million will be used as follows:

\$33.6 million will be available for the normal building programme of the Housing Commission. It is expected that this will enable the Commission to commence a further 2000 dwelling units during the year.

\$14.4 million is to be allocated to Terminating Building Societies to allow the provisions of housing loans for the many people who require financial assistance from them.

The remaining \$2 million will be allocated to the Minister for Housing for the introduction of new initiatives in the housing area including the development of surplus governmentland for housing purposes.

This year the Federal Govern-

ment allocated only \$75 million for welfare housing in New South Wales.

Last year the figure was \$104 million. The year before it was \$128 million.

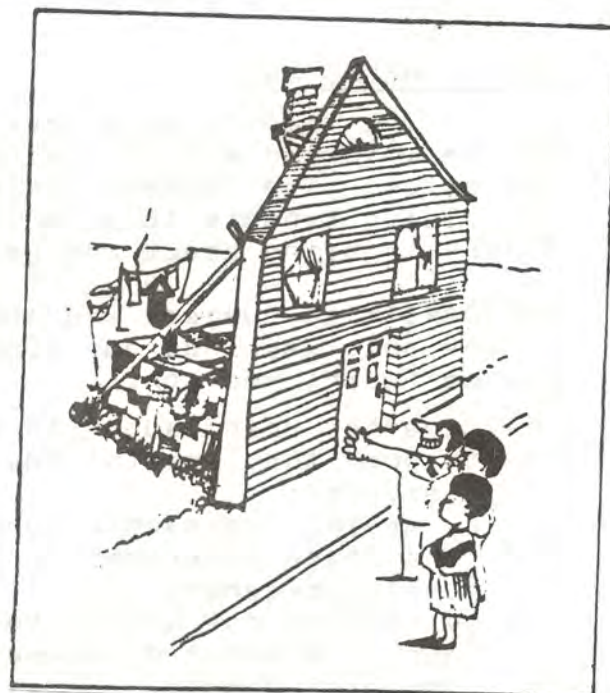
In real terms. Federal Government allocations to the State's welfare housing programme have been cut by more than half over three years.

The Treasurer, Mr Renshaw, said the Government could not ignore the severity of these cuts whilst there are still 29,000 persons who qualify for welfare housing on the waiting list.

Accordingly, the government decided to allocate \$50 million in the Budget in order to maintain the welfare housing programme.

By tight budgeting \$20 million was made available by re-arranging and reducing certain other Government programmes and the remaining \$30 million by deferring, by one year, the original timetable for death duty abolition.

The Radical, October 1979.



SPECULATOR ATTACKED CHURCH MODERATOR ROASTS LANDLORDS

The Uniting Church and other community bodies have launched a stinging attack on landlords, speculators and the City Council over the current inner-city real estate boom.

Moderator of the Church in Australia, the Rev. Mr Peter Davis, says they are contributing to the present low-income housing crisis, helping destroy the lives of the city's poor and increasing crime and mental illness rates.

"The housing crisis, particularly in Pyrmont and Ultimo, is causing serious community breakdown," he said.

"Family and supportive networks are being destroyed across the whole of the inner-city.

"This last bastion of cheap housing is being breached with prices for modest cottages reaching \$80,000 and rents more than doubling during the past six months.

The Glebe,

5th December 1979. pp40.

"A home owners' association formed in Pyrmont with the presumable intention of 'improving' the area and maintaining housing values, will accelerate price and rent increases and cause further hardship to traditional residents."

Mr Davis said the Ultimo-Pyrmont Residents' Action Group, not to be confused with the home owners' association in Pyrmont which he criticised, was trying to help the situation.

"The invasion of the more well-to-do, both home owners and property speculators, is resulting in an angry, divided, violent community in the city."

"This is coupled with an alienated fragmented lonely group of the dispossessed living in outer suburbs bereft of usual family supports and community networks.

"Both take their toll in terms of rising levels of misery, crime and mental illness."

Rev. Davis said the recent \$4 70 pension increase was followed by a \$5 rent increase for many Ultimo residents and the City Council's policy of following market rentals has resulted in 50 per cent increases during the year.

There is the possibility of renovated the council-owned dwellings being relet at rents higher than pensions.

Social worker Ann McCallum from the Harris Centre (Ultimo) said, "It's not the genuine residential buyer that's causing the trouble but the speculators who buy up a batch and sell at thoroughly unreasonable profits."

"A fire-gutted house in Ultimo was bought for \$10,000 and is now on the market after renovation for \$85,000.

"Another bought for \$18,000 went for \$52,000 after

being painted.

"Some are resold untouched after the tenants are evicted.

"It's not enhancing the area just making an outsider rich.

"Housing Commission action or housing co-operatives for people who can't afford the sky-rocketing rents are needed now.

"Some pensioners are paying more than their pensions for rent and needing food assistance to survive."

UPRAG president Michael Matthews said he was threatened with police action by a real estate agent when he issued letters at an auction of five Ultimo houses recently.

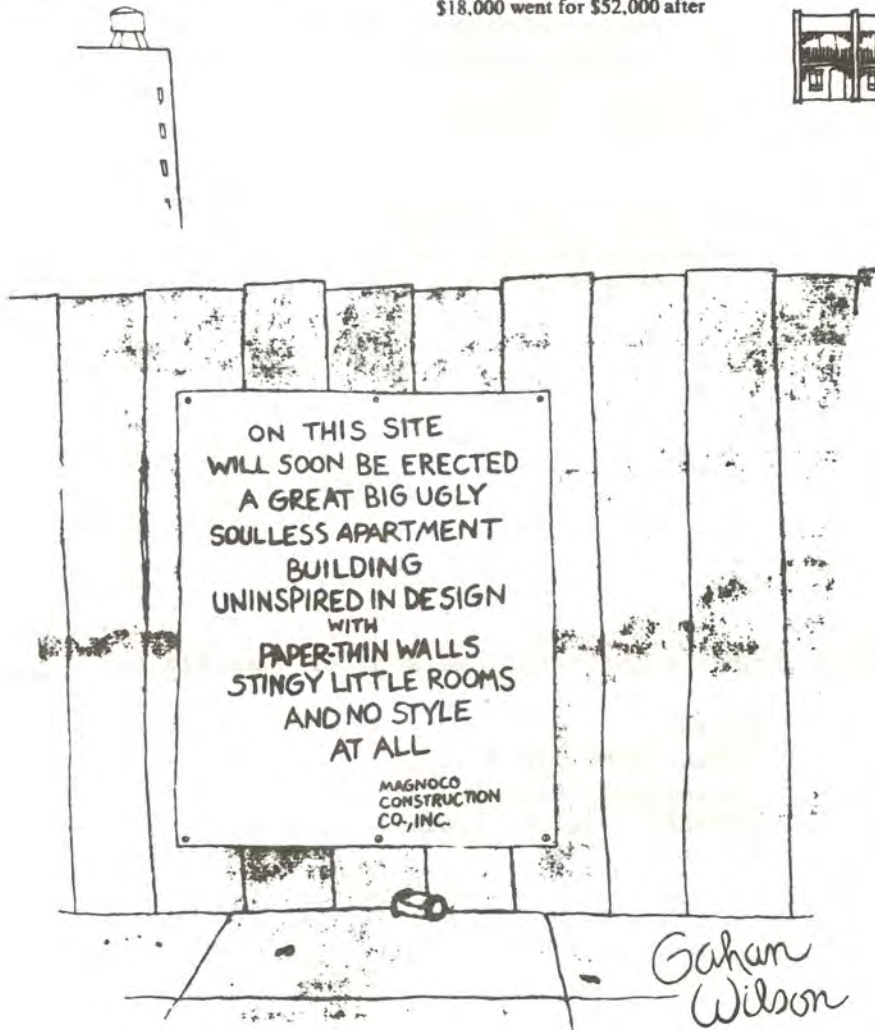
The letters asked prospective buyers to allow the tenants to remain at present rents and appraised them of the group's "growing alarm" at the displacement of traditional tenants through the inconsiderate buying and selling of the area's houses.

The houses went from \$33,000 to \$55,000 which Matthews said were grossly overpriced.

"The real estate agent tried to physically eject me from the auction room but desisted when I threatened him with an assault summons," he said.



Sorry, we can't help with Agent



Graham Wilson



QUESTIONNAIRE ON NEWSLETTER

The Tenants' Union wants to get some feedback on whether its newsletter is read by members and whether they find it valuable.

A questionnaire follows. A poor response may result in discontinuing this newsletter.

<u>Whole</u>	<u>Parts</u>	<u>Not at all.</u>
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1. Do you read newsletter

2. What parts of the newsletter do you read

- news information about T.U.
- newspaper clippings
- cartoons
- case studies
- other (specify)

3. What things should newsletters cover.

4. Would you prefer the newsletter to be replaced by:-

- i. radio programme
- ii. smaller newsheet more regularly
- iii. other (specify)

5. In what ways can the Tenants' Union provide a better service for its members.

Please complete and return as soon as possible to:

Editor,
Tenant News N.S.W.,
118 Regent St.,
REDFERN N.S.W. 2016