

Australian Workers' Union Archive

This Australian Workers' Union (AWU) collection dates mainly from 1963-1965 and consists overwhelmingly of union correspondence, union welfare for members, publications, newspaper articles, leaflets, booklets, etc. regarding the 1964-65 Mount Isa Mines (MIM) Strike. This was an eight month industrial dispute between miners and management. Previously, a 1961 strike at MIM was precipitated by legislation threatening workers' contract bonuses. The dispute erupted again in August 1964 when the State Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission rejected a proposal for a £4 weekly pay rise in lieu of increased bonuses. Led by Pat Mackie the miners initiated a go-slow rule that decreased mine output. Tensions developed within union ranks regarding what direction this dispute should take, with AWU leaders not agreeing to expand the strike beyond Mount Isa. A state of emergency was declared by Premier Nicklin on 27 January 1965, which permitted police to cordon off Mount Isa, enter homes without warrants and seize strike materials. By February and March 1965 the dispute was petering out and a substantial number of workers' demands were met in the MIM Award of June 1965.

This material on the Mount Isa dispute should be read in conjunction with the E. Stannett Papers, which are at Location 141.

Archive Location: 504R

Detailed Listing

AWU/Accounts/1/ Table 1 book keeping accounts book for period 2 March 1965 to 4 May 1965 – A-G 1-400

AWU/Accounts/2/ Table 2 book keeping accounts book - 9 March 1965 to 20 May 1965
[cover damaged]

AWU/Accounts/3/ Table 3 book keeping accounts book - 2 March 1965 to 13 April 1965 – N-V 811-1214

AWU/Accounts/4/ Table 4 book keeping accounts book - 9 March 1965 to 4 May 1965 – W-Z 1215-1700

AWU/Accounts/5/ Mt. Isa Trades and Labour Council Distress Fund Finance Committee
- 1964 to 1965

AWU/Accounts/6/ Front Immediate Relief Distress Committee - December 1964 to May
1965

AWU/Accounts/7/ A. Payments at Henderson Hall Commencing 26th Jan to 2nd Feb
1965 [fragile, water damage]

AWU/Accounts/8/ T & L Rough Minutes [very fragile, extreme water damage]

AWU/Accounts/9/ Payment of Relief at Henderson Hall [very fragile, water damage]

AWU/Accounts/10/ Exercise book headed Check Table Pay Out Table 1 - 27 April 1965
to 1 June 1965

AWU/Accounts/11/ Check Book 1965 [front cover missing]

AWU/Accounts/12/ Exercise book headed Check [Check Book?] with AWU members'
names for starters, deferred or refused

AWU/Accounts/13/ Pay-out Table 2, April-May 1965

AWU/Accounts/14/ Exercise book headed AWU with members' names and addresses

AWU/Accounts/15/ Deferment Refusal Pay Out [damaged]

AWU/Accounts/16/ Payment List 1-809, 812-1426

AWU/Accounts/17/ Bank Statements: (i) Mount Isa Trades and Labour Council Distress
Fund; (ii) Mount Isa Trades and Labour Council Relief Committee; (iii) Mount Isa
and District Provincial Trades and Labour Council Women's Auxilliary

AWU/Accounts/18/ Mt. Isa Lock-Out 1961: In the course of Mt. Isa Workers' Struggle
for Increased Bonus - Financial Statement

AWU/Correspondence/1/ Trades & Labor Council of Queensland

AWU/Correspondence/2/ Mount Isa Trades and Labor Council

AWU/Correspondence/3/ Various other unions' letters

AWU/Correspondence/4/ Particulars concerning Mr. Bevan A. Foot

AWU/Correspondence/5/ Handwritten letters [written at time of 1964-65 strike,
mostly in poor condition, fragile]

AWU/Correspondence/6/ Legal and contractual matters

AWU/Publications/1/ Mount Isa dispute leaflets, opinion pieces, notes, etc.

AWU/Publications/2/ One Big Union (1965) [newspaper, 4 copies]

AWU/Publications/3/ Australian Message, editions for October-December 1966 (nos. 12, 13, 16-19) [newspaper]

AWU/Publications/4/ Mount Isa dispute-related works:

Alan Stewart, Mt. Isa: In Search of a Culprit (Melbourne, 1965)

Pete Thomas, Storm in the Tropics: The Historic Mt. Isa Struggle 1964-65 (1965) (4 copies)

The Worker Newspaper Pty Ltd., Mount Isa Mines: Real Facts associated with the Mount Isa Dispute (Brisbane, 1965?)

Extracts from Speeches made in Parliament by Mr. A.J. Inch, M.L.A. on the 1961 State Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act

Council for Membership Control of AWU, Disallowance of A.W.U. Rules and Mr. Dougherty's Strange Silence. Great Victory for Rank and File (n.d.)

Labour History, No. 11 (November, 1966)

Queensland Parliament, No. 1 of 1965. An Act to Make Further Provision for Upholding the Industrial Law (1965)

The Melbourne Partisan, no. 2 (August, 1965)

AWU/Publications/5/ Newspaper cuttings on the 1964-65 strike [fragile]

AWU/Publications/6/ John Reynolds, An Examination of Rank and File Militancy in Mount Isa in 1964-65. Honours thesis, Department of History, Australian National University [draft version, unbound] 1988

AWU/Conciliation and Arbitration Commission/1/ Material concerning judgements of Justice Staples - 1979 to 1989

AWU/Miscellaneous/1/ Two sets of b/w photographs in very good to excellent condition illustrating interior and exterior mining scenes, possibly operations at Mount Isa

AWU/Miscellaneous/2/ A collection of 22 spiral-bound note books regarding union business [undated, mostly in poor condition, fragile]