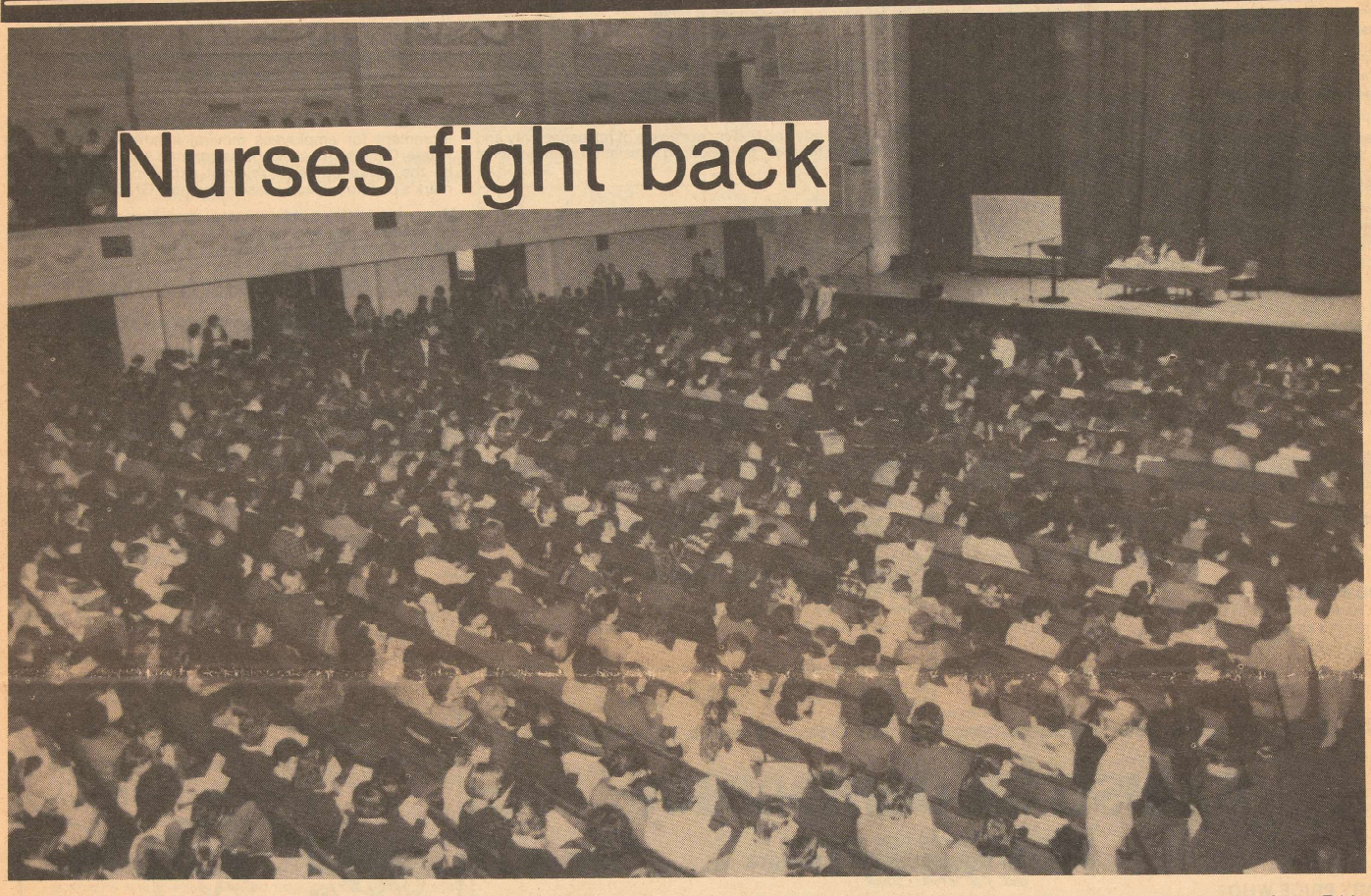
NURSES ACTION

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Nurses fight back

An estimated 3,000 members of RANF (Vic. Branch) packed the Melbourne Town Hall to attend a stop work meeting on Thursday 14th August.

Members met to protest over recent cuts in their qualification allowances, the absence of any pay rise for students and first year R.N.S. and anomalies and inequities in the new Career Structure for nurses.

John Kotsifas, Senior Industrial Officer of the Branch, informed the meeting of the many ways in which Mr. White had sought to change the new award to decrease recently achieved pay rises (refer articles: Why we are angry and Renewed Government attempts to sabotage nurses decision).

John said Mr. White had finally succeeded by having qualification allowances substantially depleted. He described Mr. White's actions as repugnant and contemptuous of nurses.

Irene Bolger, State Secretary, informed the meeting that the Government has seriously tried to undermine nurses and that the current problems faced by members were severe. She said any action by nurses would need to be unified and sustained.

A resolution for a campaign by RANF (Vic. Branch) members was given overwhelming support when put to the meeting after debate.

The resolution, printed hereafter, endorses a campaign to assert pressure on the Government and private employers in order to gain wage justice for nurses.

Strict enforcement of the admission and discharge policy and refusal to wear uniform will take effect on Friday 15th August and indefinite bans on all elective admissions take effect on Wednesday 20th August.

Further resolutions to levy members to create a fighting fund, a condemnation of the Cain Government for its treatment of nurses in Victoria and a vote of confidence in the union leadership were passed.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE STOP WORK MEETING ON THURSDAY 14th AUGUST

RESOLUTION ONE

"That this meeting of RANF members directs RANF (Vic. Branch) to implement a campaign in order to achieve the following aims:—

- Increase the rate for Grade 1 first year Registered Nurse classification.
- Abolish the distinction between Junior and Adult Student Nurses.
- Student rates to reflect 70%, 80% and 90% of the first year RN rate.
- Restore qualification allowances to their previous level.
- Hospital wards be classified consistent with "Major Teaching Hospitals".
- Inclusion of Registered Nurse (Grade 2 Duties) in the Grade 2 Benchmark Classification.
- Registered Nurses who are directly and continuously supervised by an RN other than an Associate Charge Nurse or above will be classified as Grade 1.
- Extended care areas classified consistent with acute care settings.

Therefore this meeting resolves as from Friday August 15th, 1986 to:—

- strictly enforce the admission and discharge policy
- refuse to wear uniform

and as from Wednesday 20th August 1986:—

- place indefinite bans on all elective admissions.

This meeting further directs RANF (Vic. Branch) to convene a meeting of members at a date to be fixed to report back on negotiations with employers".

RESOLUTION TWO

"That this meeting of RANF members direct RANF (Vic. Branch) Council to levy all members a one off amount of $10 for those paying full subscriptions and $5 for those paying less than the full subscription which shall be deposited in an account to be used to fund our current campaign."

RESOLUTION THREE

"That this meeting of RANF members condemns the Cain Government and in particular the Minister of Health, David White, for their failure to enter into genuine and unconditional negotiations. This meeting expresses alarm that the Government and its representatives conducted a media campaign against us.

Further, the members express their confidence in their union leadership and their aims to improve wages and working conditions."

As a result of the resolution to levy members for a Campaign Fund, members can expect an account from the Branch within the next month.

"Fight back": see centre pages

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