



THE GOVERNMENT SAYS:

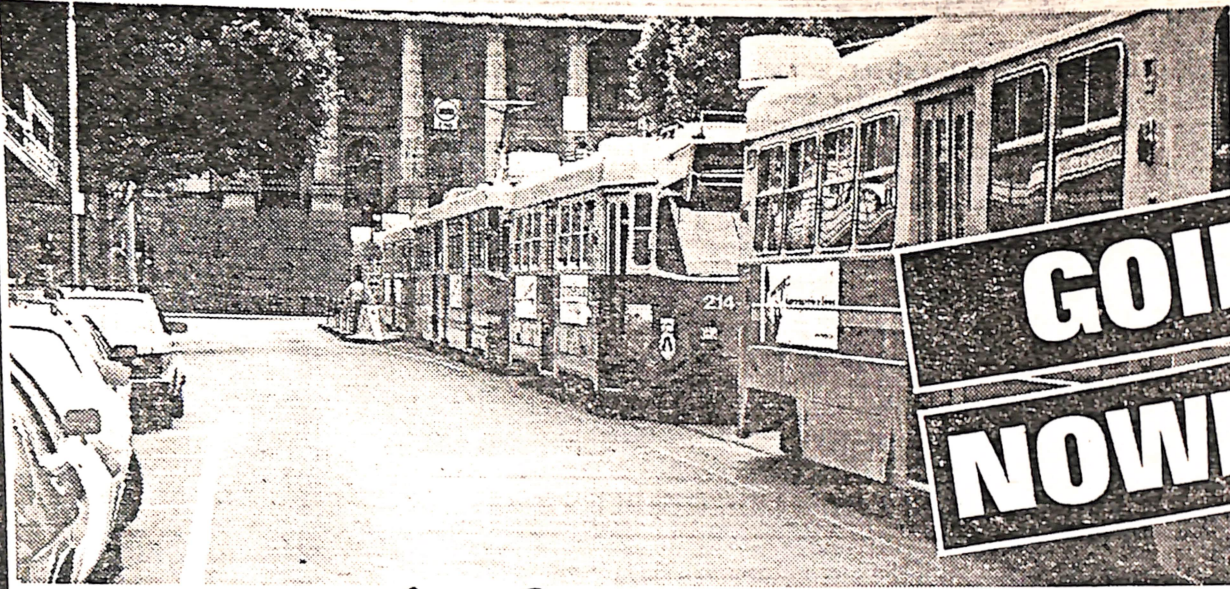
We are not interested in short-term solutions.

THE UNION SAYS:

Phasing out conductors is not negotiable.

AND IT'S ALL ...

GOING NOWHERE



The Sun 10.1.90. P.2

It's your turn

EIGHT days ago, Melbourne's trams were stopped dead in their tracks — and our streets.

It was a dramatic moment in the row that began last October, but did it get us anywhere? Not likely!

Not only has action been replaced by talk, even that has almost ground to a halt.

Why is it so hard to break the deadlock?

The Government says it is going to introduce the "scratch" MetTicket and phase out conductors — or else.

Tram hotline: 6522399

The union says the tickets go and the conductors stay — or else.

YOU are still walking, and it's about time YOU had a say. Perhaps YOU can get things moving.

The fundamental question is: do you want to see conductors on all trams?

But there are other things you might like to be heard on.

● Is the "scratch" ticket progress, or a waste of time?

● Should the Transport Minister, Mr Kennan, play it so tough, saying he has to save money and MetTicket will achieve that without costing anyone a job?

● Should tram union chief Lou Di Gregorio play it so tough, saying the work of his members comes above all else?

● Should the Premier, Mr

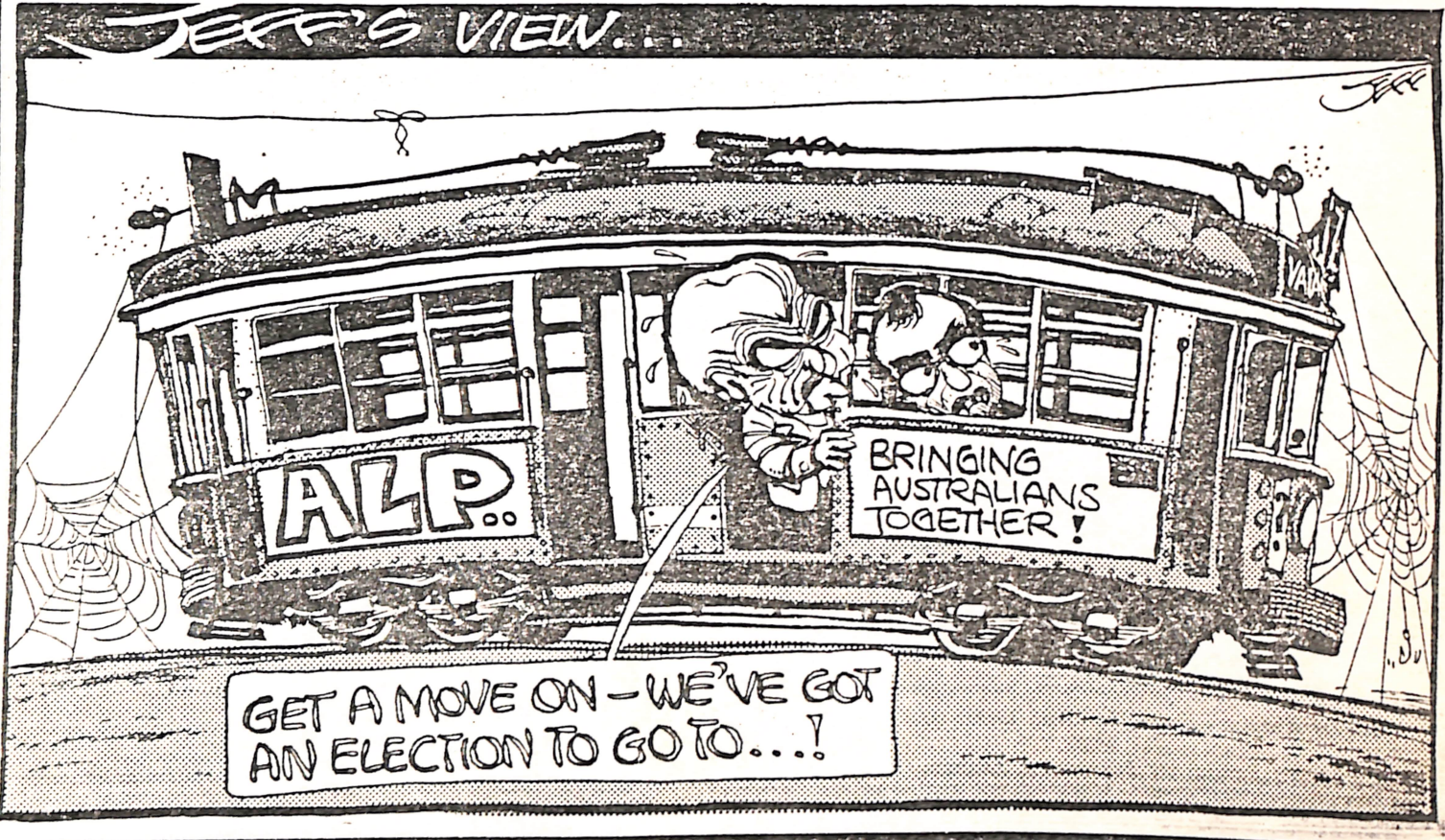
Cain, abandon his holiday to lead us out of this mess?

● Is it time, as the Opposition says, to invoke the Essential Services Act, enabling all sorts of drastic moves to get the trams rolling?

Maybe both parties think this is not too big a deal because half the community is on holiday. Here's your chance to let them know.

The Sun's Tram Hotline opens at 6 am today, and will stay open until 1 pm. And we'll publish your views tomorrow.

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Cain threatens to change industry

Union told: go back or suffer

Age
19-1-90
P.1

By ROBYN DIXON,
state political reporter,
and MARK DAVIS,
chief industrial reporter

Age 1/1/90
P.1

The State Government yesterday threatened to replace about 540 conductors with ticket vending machines if tramways union members do not go back to work.

The threat was one of several measures disclosed by the Government yesterday in a strategy designed to shock the tramways workers into voting for a return to work.

The developments came on the eve of today's mass meeting of tramways workers. The threatened steps, announced by the Premier, Mr Cain, would undermine the career structure of tram workers and open the industry to outsiders.

Mr Cain warned that unless workers voted to return to work, tough changes would be introduced in the tramways industry.

His measures drew immediate criticism from the secretary of the Trades Hall Council, Mr John Halfpenny, who said: "I'm absolutely flabbergasted. It's a pathetic load of nonsense.

"They (the threats) mean absolutely nothing and they certainly won't help to get the trams running again," Mr Halfpenny said.

The acting president of the Australian Tramways and Motor Omnibus Employees Association, Mr Sam Branciaforte, said last night that the measures were laughable. "Psychological warfare doesn't work with us," he said.

The measures were decided at a meeting of the Government's industrial relations taskforce, which includes senior ministers. Mr Cain and the Transport Minister, Mr Kennan, were present.

The meeting decided that under the tougher measures:

- Seniority would no longer be the basis of promotion, undermining the existing career path in the trams industry.

- Conductors on the old W-class trams would be replaced by ticket vending machines at a cost of more than \$5 million. Previously, the Government had agreed to retain conductors on these trams.

- Tram and bus drivers would be recruited from outside the industry, undermining the members' job security. At present, tram drivers are selected from among conductors, and bus drivers are taken from the ranks of tram drivers.

- Part-time jobs would be offered.

- Outside contractors would be brought in for some work.

Mr Cain said there would be no sackings, even if workers decided to continue their strike. "Nobody's going to be sacked. We're not forcing anyone out, we'll find something for them to do. But it's going to be a very different industry," he said.

"The tram workers are voting on their future. I think that should be made clear. We've offered the tram workers, I believe, a bloody good deal," Mr Cain said.

Government bus services will begin winding down after this morning's peak hour, as bus driver members of the tramways union stop to attend the mass meeting. Services are expected to resume before the afternoon peak.

This morning's meeting has been called by the union's executive to consider the 33-point peace proposal thrashed out in talks with the Government earlier this week but rejected by the executive on Wednesday.

It is believed that rank-and-file tramway workers from some depots, including the Camberwell depot, are eager for a return to work.

The Met has arranged for bus services to take tramways union members from all tram and bus depots to the meeting.

PAGE 4: Victorian Government attacks coalition economic plan.
PAGE 7: More reports.

**Angry Cain
will try to
split union**

*Agc 18.1.90
P1*

EDITORIAL OPINION

Thursday 18 January 1990

P.13

Trammies should accept offer

IS the increasingly isolated and unrepresentative leadership clique of the tramways union at all interested in negotiating an early end to the crippling transport dispute? It seems not. After more than 10 hours of talks between union officials, senior ministers and the Trades Hall Council secretary, Mr Halfpenny, over two days, the Government's remarkably generous response to the legitimate concerns of tramway workers was given scant consideration, if any, by the union's executive. The officials' self-deluding — or deliberately deceptive — attitude is that they have the

Government over a barrel because of the dangers of jeopardising Melbourne's Olympic Games chances and Labor's prospects in the coming federal election. They were still determined to resist as long as they could the introduction of driver-only tram services, if not also the new scratch-ticket system, retail sales of tickets, and the likelihood of ticket-vending machines. Their tactics seem to be aimed at prolonging discussions on the pretence that the Government would soon surrender, and at discouraging their rank and file from calling depot meetings that might vote for a negotiated settlement.

The best hope now for a return to work lies with a mass meeting of tramway employees tomorrow. The workers should realise that they have nothing to gain and only more to lose by continuing to support their leaders' intransigence. The Government is adamant that the new ticketing system will stay all but the old W-class trams. However, it has agreed to pay tram drivers without conductors the same rate as bus drivers, subject to Industrial Relations Commission approval and a guarantee of no flow-on claims. This would mean an immediate pay rise of \$57 a week, or 15 per cent, for a tram driver with added responsibilities. There would also be a generous relocation allowance for any drivers or conductors transferred to other depots. As repeatedly pledged, no one need be retrenched, and any displaced conductors would be moved to new, higher-paid duties or jobs on the old trams.

After its deplorable failures of public and industrial relations earlier in the dispute, the Government has now made its position clear and gone as far as it can to solve the dispute. The tramways union is rapidly losing public sympathy and, more important, the support of other unions. Ordinary tramway workers have nowhere to go — except back to work on the very fair and reasonable conditions offered to them.

Age 5.1.90 P.7

VICTORIA TRANSPORT

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4 January 1990

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An open letter to
tramways employees

A GUARANTEE: TO CONDUCTORS

JOBS

We give a guarantee that no tram conductor will be sacked.
All current employees will be guaranteed a job in Tram or
Bus operations.

CAREER PATH

We offer an improved career structure which will provide
higher paid jobs for the new classification of roving
conductor and driver only tram driver (single vehicle and
articulated vehicle).

REDEPLOYMENT

Conductors other than those required on W class vehicles
will be offered new careers or redeployment within tram and
bus operations bearing in mind their personal circumstances.

A streetcar they'll retire

Sunday Age 17.12.89 P.1

By Barbara Hutton

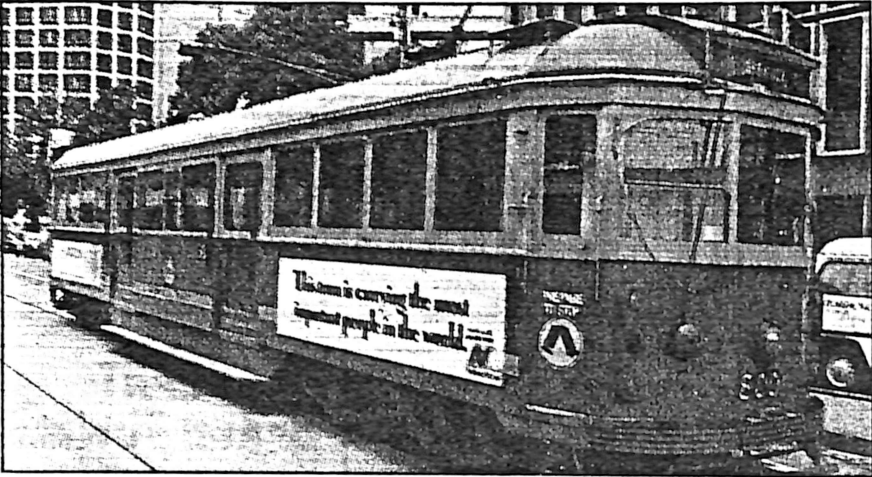
WHILE the State Government continues its running brawl with transport unions over whether Melbourne's trams should keep conductors, the Minister of Transport has confirmed it will remove 148 of the oldest trams.

The ministry says it will phase out the wood-panelled W class trams by 1994, despite a move to have them classified by the National Trust.

A ministry spokesman, Mr Gary Tippet, said the aim was to "modernise the fleet" by replacing the old trams with articulated ones that cost about \$1.5 million each, a total cost of about \$200 million over four years.

Mr Tippet said the W Class trams were old and nearing the end of their useful lives. He said there was "anecdotal evidence" that people wanted comfort and better lighting.

But Mr Patrick O'Connor, a spokesman for the Public Transport Users Association, said Melbourne would live to regret the decision.



Scratched: A W class tram heads for the end of the line.

He said the old trams were safer, more mechanically reliable and more appealing to tourists.

The association filed an application to the National Trust last month to classify the old W class trams, built between 1924 and 1956, as part of Melbourne's heritage.

But a Trust spokesman said a moving object had never before been classified, and it would take several months to conduct research and decide whether to classify the trams.

► Should conductors stay? **P5** The battle for our trams **Agenda 2**

THE MET IN A MESS

Deadlock continues as both sides stand their ground

By LYNNE COSSAR
and LEONIE LAMONT

Trams were towed from the Bourke Street mall late yesterday because of fears that they would obstruct firefighters in an emergency, but this remained the only movement in the deadlocked Met-Ticket dispute.

There are signs that commuters could be without trams and Government buses until the end of next week.

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade and police met public transport unions yesterday over concerns about left in the mall on Monday night by protesting tramways union members.

The assistant chief fire officer (operations), Mr Bob Wright, said the trams would have prevented emergency vehicle access to the area, jeopardising public safety.

At a meeting between the Minister for Transport, Mr Kennan, public transport unions, the Minister for Labor, Mr Pope, and the Trades Hall Council, unions asked that power be restored so that

trams could be driven out.

Mr Kennan said yesterday that power for the trams would not be turned on until the tramways union agreed to work the new ticketing system. He agreed to allow six trams on one track to be moved by tow truck. The other trams parked in city streets would remain there.

The Australian Tramway and Motor Omnibus Employees Association said yesterday that its members were willing and waiting to work. However, it wants the introduction of the ticketing system postponed to allow further talks.

The acting Premier, Mrs Kirner, said yesterday that the industrial action was being driven by concern about union numbers rather than services.

Mrs Kirner gave details of areas of the ticketing system's implementation that were still open for discussion, and called on the union to show some common sense and negotiate.

The Government was prepared to discuss safety issues, wage

rates and special help for the disabled. However, the introduction of the scratch-ticket and redeployment of conductors was non-negotiable, she said.

The Leader of the Opposition, Mr Brown, yesterday called on the Premier, Mr Cain, to interrupt his holidays and return to work to solve the dispute. Mr Cain is due to return from a month's leave on 14 January.

Mr Brown demanded that Mr Kennan issue an ultimatum to tram workers to return to work within 24 hours and work as directed or be sacked. He rejected a suggestion that such action — which he pledged a Liberal government would take — would inflame the dispute, saying it had reached such a stage that tough action was the only alternative.

With no formal talks planned today, more attention is likely to focus on union solidarity. The Government is hoping privately that splits in the rank and file may start to emerge as early as this morning among bus drivers, who voted on Tuesday for an indefinite

strike in support of their colleagues.

The union's state secretary, Mr Lou Di Gregorio, said yesterday that the members were united. "There are no splits. If Mr Kennan thinks he is going to starve my members back to work then he has another think coming."

An industrial officer with the THC, Mr Peter Parkinson, said yesterday that it was the Government's fault that there were no trams or Government buses running. He said he would consider involving other unions in the campaign.

Members of the Australian Railways Union are meeting over the next two days. The guards meet today to consider their position, with the station staff scheduled to meet tomorrow.

The union's assistant state secretary, Mr Russell O'Brien, said it was unlikely that there would be any disruption to suburban train services during the next two weeks. But he did not rule out industrial action later in the month.

Row blamed for rise in absenteeism

By DAVID THOMSON

Employers had reported at least 10 per cent more absenteeism because of the tram strike, a spokesman for the State Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr Michael Pointer, said yesterday.

He said the chamber supported the Minister for Transport, Mr Kennan, in restructuring public transport. "We have got to keep up with the rest of the world and try to increase productivity in our own transport system."

Mr Pointer said the dispute had made people uncertain whether they could travel to the city, and business incomes had suffered. "Clearly, in December, the central business district suffered very badly from the tram dispute."

"There are international visitors in the city, and what they see is a continuing dispute. We have an on-going industrial problem in this city that we seem to have difficulty in solving."

The executive director of the Victorian Employers Federation, Mr David Edwards, said city retailers expected higher sales at this time of year. The tram dispute had severely disrupted city businesses before Christmas.



The Bourke Street Mall is more like the Bourke Street maze as shoppers file between and through the banked-up trams to get to the other side of the street.

Melbourne trams helped the city to blossom

By JO CHANDLER

Our capacity to appreciate the humble tram for its aesthetic, social and historical value is a bit strained at the moment.

Melbourne's tram fleet, barricaded and dormant in the city centre, has become the subject of malicious exchanges between jilted passengers who curse the contraptions and their own reliance on them.

But it is timely to reflect on all that Melburnians owe the tram.

One unapologetic tram fan is Victoria's state historian, Dr Bernard Barrett.

Last year Dr Barrett was asked by a committee looking at promoting the city in the 1990s to name six "signature images" for Melbourne. "Number one on my list was the tram," Dr Barrett said.

"But our trams are more appreciated by visitors than by locals," he said.

"For more than 100 years, Melbourne's trams have been the envy of the world, despite the unfortunate events at the moment." (Note to angry commuters: read on before declaring that history is bunk).

The first two generations of Melburnians were pedestrians. People lived, worked and played in the central business district, or in the outposts of Fitzroy and Collingwood.

"Trams changed this in the 1870s with horse-drawn trams helping establish Hawthorn and Fairfield into the 1880s," Dr Barrett said.

"Then in 1885 came the cable trams, a network which opened up North Carlton and North Fitzroy as residential areas . . . Down the other end in St Kilda and Prahran, where there were just a few people, the cable trams enabled much denser settlement."

The cable network was the first

such coordinated route system in the world.

Melbourne's legion of football fans can thank trams for the growth of the sport. When Australian Rules was evolving, trams allowed people to follow their teams, playing a big part in the city's development as a sporting capital with the capacity to gather huge crowds.

Then the first electric tram in the country hit the tracks in 1889.

By 1919 the Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust was servicing new neighborhoods in Malvern and Toorak roads and High Street.

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board took over all the cable systems from the trust and private companies. It began expanding the electric trams through the '20s and '30s, allowing the new generation and post-war migrants to live in other eastern suburbs and the northern parts of Coburg and Preston.

"Though the railways provided the main spokes for development, the trams filled the bits in between," Dr Barrett said. By 1940, the last cable tram was off the tracks, and the all-electric system continued to grow.

During the 1950s people were encouraged to buy cars and other cities began to lose faith in their tramways systems. The feeling caught on in Melbourne, fuelled by editorials of the day.

By 1961, many overseas cities had scrapped their trams, as had Sydney. But Melbourne's tramways, largely thanks to stubborn management, continued to strengthen a system that was already superior to many.

"The result is that Melbourne still has one of the world's most extensive, and by and large most successful, tramways systems, and always has had," Dr Barrett said.

Met to switch off the rebels

Age 2.1.90
By MARK DAVIS and LYNNE COSSAR P.1

Melbourne's trams are unlikely to run today. The Met prepared last night to restrict power to halt all services.

The Met wants to stop trams from running because it says it cannot guarantee the safety of the system.

The development late last night follows a collision yesterday between two trams that the Met says were being operated by tramways union members without authorisation.

Senior Met management last night advised the union covering the Met's technical officers, the Municipal Officers Association, that it wanted to reduce the power available in the tram system today so that no trams could be driven from the depots.

Buses and trains would run normally today, the Met said.

Yesterday's collision happened during a day of confusion and chaos on Melbourne's tram system.

In other developments:

- Police were called to three tram depots to protect management when threats were made and scuffles broke out.

- The union faced internal problems when its bus driver members and tramways members from one depot broke ranks and agreed to cooperate with the new system.

- A Public Transport Corporation spokesman said union members had tipped buckets of water and turned fire hoses on management staff at the Essendon, Glenhuntly and East Preston tram depots.

The disruptions began soon after the Public Transport Corporation asked tramway workers to sign undertakings that they would cooperate with the State Government's new ticketing system.

At the beginning of the first shift yesterday the workers, members of the Australian Tramways and Motor Omnibus Employees Association, refused to sign the undertakings.

At several depots workers who

WHAT THEY ARE ARGUING ABOUT

The dispute is about the Government's plans to save \$24 million a year by introducing a scratch-style ticket system and cutting about 550 tram conductor jobs and a similar number at railway stations.

The job cuts will be achieved through attrition and redeployment of staff during the next three years. Under the Government's plans, most of the tram conductors who are redeployed will move into higher-paid jobs while tram drivers will receive pay rises to reflect increased work value.

The PTC plans to have driver-only trams operating by March except on the old W-class trams.

Under the Government's plans about 300 of about 1100 existing conductors will be retained for the W-class trams while about 300 will be redeployed and trained as roving conductors.

had not been issued with ticket kits took over trams and ran free services. The Met says about 35 trams were operated without authority, but the union says its members operated about 70 trams.

The executive of the tramways union, which met last night, decided to continue operating tram services today without management authority.

But the state secretary of the Municipal Officers Association, Mr Neil Campbell, said last night that he had been advised that technicians in the Met's Carlton control centre would be asked to reduce the power in the system today.

He said there were some technical doubts about whether this could be done.

Continued: PAGE 4
PAGE 4: More reports.