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# Pamphlets at the Archives of Business and Labour

**Author: Ewan Maidment**

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As well as original records, there are many pamphlets in the personal and organisational collections held by the Noel Butlin Archives Centre. Most of the unions and many of the personal depositors were not only readers and collectors of pamphlets, but also producers of them.

Pamphlets may be defined as printed documents of more than five and less than one hundred pages, sewn or stapled rather than bound. A strict definition of the literary form of the pamphlet (especially the political pamphlet) might be a treatise or polemic tackling a contemporary public issue. The Communist Manifesto was perhaps the most potent of pamphlets. Even so, most pamphlet literature resists such a precise definition. Songbooks, commemorative and souvenir publications, rulebooks and constitutions, awards and agreements, reports to and of meetings, and annual and financial reports are regularly included in the collections of pamphlets at NBAC.

**Private collections**

There are six medium to large private collections of pamphlets at the NBAC. These are the collections of:

James Normington Rawling: Communist Party of Australia (CPA) functionary in the 1930s and historian;

Harry Holland: militant socialist and leader of the New Zealand Labour Party;

Tom Wright: NSW Branch Secretary of the Sheet Metal Working Agricultural Implement and Stovemaking Industrial Union from 1936 - 1972 and Federal President of the union, 1940 - 1972;

Ian Turner and John Playford: leftist academics; and

Geoff McDonald: a trade union industrial officer since the 1960s.

In a number of cases the pamphlets are accompanied by extensive supporting documents, such as correspondence, press cuttings, leaflets, serials and illustrations - the scope of these private collections is enormous.

The Rawling papers are the most systematic of the large pamphlet collections. James Normington Rawling obtained publications of almost every radical group in Australia, from the Manifesto of the Australian Socialist League in 1887 to the transitional programme of the Communist League of Australia in 1940. The collection includes pamphlets published by the Victorian Socialist Party, Henry George societies, One Big Union, CPA and fraternals, the peace and anti-conscription movement, and Trotskyist groups, to name but a few.

Harry Holland's papers are also a substantial collection of manuscripts and pamphlets. The pamphlets cover the same period as the Rawling collection, but not the same ground. There are reports of Australian Labor Party (ALP) Commonwealth Conferences 1913 - 1919, pamphlets of the Broken Hill lockout in 1909, and publications of the Queensland Labor governments, but overall relatively little Australian material. The strengths are in the holdings of New Zealand and Pacific pamphlets from the 1880s - 1930s, a comprehensive set of Holland's own publications, English, Scottish, and Irish socialist material, and a number of English feminist publications.

The pamphlets in Tom Wright's collection span his years in the CPA, from 1923 -1971, most of them on its Central Committee. The pamphlets include a great deal of Soviet material, such as works of Lenin, Molotov and Stalin, including some published in Australia. There are also comprehensive collections of the major CPA pamphleteers - R Dixon, Len Fox, Rupert Lockwood, Lance Sharkey and Ernest Thornton - and many other CPA publications. A small number of pamphlets on the rights of Aborigines are of interest, including Wright's own A new deal for Aborigines, published by the Labor Council of New South Wales in 1939. A fair number of trade union pamphlets are also held in the deposit.

Turner and Playford mainly collected pamphlets produced after World War II. Ian Turner's and Tom Wright's collections complement each other, as they have a common focus on political pamphlets published by the CPA. Both the Turner and Playford papers include publications of the peace movement. Playford's deposits are particularly strong in this area, and include many pamphlets relating to conscription and the Vietnam War. Playford also collected a good deal of material produced by student organisations in the 1960s.

Geoff McDonald's papers include many overseas publications, particularly Chinese. There are also good holdings of recent industrial and ALP pamphlets, again mainly produced since World War II.

There are more than 30 other deposits of personal papers at the Noel Butlin Archives Centre that hold smaller collections of pamphlets. In many of these deposits, such as the papers of Jack Kavanagh, Phil Thorne, Robin Gollan and Joe Owens, the pamphlets are integrated with archival material derived from the depositor's political, industrial or research activities.

**Organisational collections**

Substantial pamphlet collections can be found within the holdings of several organisational collections, including, but not limited to: the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Postal Workers' Union, the Australian Railways Union, the Seamen's Union of Australia, the Waterside Workers' Federation, and the Federal Office of the Printing and Kindred Industries Union. They illustrate such themes as the campaign for an eight-hour day, and the strikes of the 1890s.

Among the very early pamphlets published by trade unions is a copy of the 32 page Statement of Facts In Reference to the Masons and the Railway Contractors, produced by the Operative Stonemasons of Victoria in 1860, whilst the very earliest pamphlets published by unions and in the custody of the Archives are rules books.