

into the building industry, land deals, and the developers.

The Government consistently refused such an open inquiry, where not only allegations of violence could have been raised, but all of the activities of the developers, one of whom you may have noticed was reported recently to have increased their profit by 69 per cent on the previous year.

Once again I repeat that no physical violence was initiated by any member of this union and the only slight damage to property arose when foolish employers completely ignored the democratic expression of 10,000 striking builders' labourers and attempted to smash the strike with the use of scab labour.

Surely such folly on the part of these few employers was responsible for inflaming the situation, and that small group of employers must bear the heaviest responsibility.

What a strange double standard your newspaper has when it says nought about the Australian conscripts' blood being spilt in the futile Vietnam War but is prepared to cry tears of blood over the demolition of a few bricks erected by scab labour.

JACK MUNDEY,
Secretary,
Australian Builders
Labourers' Federation,
NSW Branch.

Sydney.

[The best comment on this is provided by Mr J. P. Ducker, assistant secretary, Labor Council of NSW, who, in a letter published by the "Herald" on August 17, said: "It would be well known to any serious student of industrial relations that the official trade-union movement has condemned violence unequivocally, whenever and by whomever. This applies to the tactics of the Builders' Labourers' Federation who, for practising these methods, were suspended from the Labor Council in May, 1971."—Editor, "SMH".]

SIR, — Your arguments (editorials, August 11 and 14) about the adverse effects of selective black bans, such as those imposed by builders' labourers, are inaccurate.

Your view that these bans cause unemployment assumes that earmarked funds for a banned development are not re-employed elsewhere and that available resources cannot be employed elsewhere. Neither of these assumptions is necessarily or even likely to be true, and especially so when Government full-employment policies are pursued.

If your views were true, it would make more apparent the selflessness of unions prepared to impose bans of this nature.

The paradox of the existing situation today in Sydney town-planning is that many responsible politicians, from both sides, tacitly welcome industrial action, when the authorities are faced with inadequate, unimaginative reports from professional consultants, and decisions pressed by rampaging developers.

Note the reaction of politicians themselves to the proposed Moore Park sporting complex, to Opera House parking and the Theatre Royal, quite apart from The Rocks controversy. In professional institutes as well, the low standards of Australian town planning and the relentless urban over-development are causing deep concern, and the authorities are not always able or willing to act.

Witness the recent abortive efforts by the City Council to prevent an Eastlakes-type fiasco occurring in Cook Road, Centennial Park. The developers' proposals are against not only the wishes of residents in two council plebiscites, an amenities survey, and opinion expressed at public meetings of residents, but are also against the election platform of Civic Reform itself. These same proposals are condemned in the Strategic Plan.

Unfortunately, ill-considered action by the City Commissioners and ineptitude in correcting the situation by the City Council have established precedents which developers apparently feel compelled to exploit, irrespective of social costs.

With authorities careless or intimidated or ill-advised, grave responsibility rests with the judgment of a few conscientious citizens. And berating Mr Munday, who has accepted this responsibility, does nothing to improve town planning, to strengthen councils, to stop reckless over-development, all of which are, after all, the bane of honest politicians and honest civic-minded developers.

Many citizens, Mr Munday included, must bemoan the demise of the Save Sydney Committee and the limited (but valuable) efforts of the National Trust. The absence of an effective town planning ombudsman is Mr Munday's problem. In the meantime, the black bans provide a breathing space to search for new ideas as the "belated" report of the Royal Institute of Planners on The Rocks shows.

NEIL RUNCIE,
PATRICK WHITE.

Centennial Park.

SMH 21.8.72