

CROW - BOX 33-27/28-0008 Draft.

HOPE (VIDEO)

SYNOPSIS + OUTLINE

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Ruth Crow is a 'Red Matildas' who does not appear in Trevor Graham's documentary of the same name. She is a lively, funny woman whose politics and philosophy were forged in the aftermath of the First World War and the Depression. Ruth was one among thousands who joined the Communist Party, united in the belief that they could change the world. Although Ruth's politics were outside the mainstream, her wide-ranging interests - from childcare and urban planning to environmental concerns - were resolutely practical and can now be seen to cover the fundamental, quality of life issues of our century. Ruth's commitment to finding better and fairer ways of living was shared by her husband, Maurie, as well as the many groups and individuals they worked together with on issues. In 1984 Ruth received an Order of Australia (AM), recognising a lifetime promoting 'participatory social and environmental planning' - words that ironically didn't even exist for much of her working life. Many would have considered her political beliefs 'unAustralian' - more likely it is her complete lack of apathy that qualifies her for this title. In reality, Ruth has been an inspiration and a model Australian citizen. Ruth's story as an Australian woman's story of the Left stands in marked contrast to the more conventional interpretations of the past century of Australian history. All this and a sense of humour as well.

423

49

WORK

9699-7144

(this Charles speaking)

NOTE:
VIDEO
NEVER
MADE

RUTH
BECAME ILL
IN OCT '95
& DIED IN
APRIL '99

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POSSIBLE KEY CHARACTERS:

Ruth Crow is 83 years old, a former Communist (she didn't leave, the Party disbanded), a mother, a widow, a warm, intelligent woman, with an infectious sense of humour. She lives in a newish block of Housing Commission flats in North Melbourne. After her husband, Maurie, died she donated their collected documents to the Victoria University of Technology and spends at least one day a week there helping researchers find their way around the collection. In her 'spare' time she compiles a newsletter called *ECOSO EXCHANGE*, and is always in demand for book launches, seminars and conferences. Ruth knows a surprising number of people.

Wendy Lowenstein is an extremely well-respected local oral historian. Her work *Weevils in the Flour*, about how Australians remembered the Depression has recently been book-ended by *Weevils at Work*, describing contemporary experiences of work. Wendy was also a member of the Eureka Youth League ^{and} in the Communist Party during the time that Ruth was one of the main co-ordinators.

Morag Loh is a leading Melbourne historian who has collaborated with Wendy Lowenstein and also produced a number of other works, including a history of Union of Australian Women. She has considerable knowledge about the role of women in championing cultural movements during the Cold War.

Stuart Macintyre recently published the first comprehensive account of Australian Communism, *The Reds. - The Communist Party of Australia from origins to illegality*. He is Ernest Scott Professor of History at the University of Melbourne and is a former Communist Party member.

Amirah Inglis wrote *The Hammer, the Sickle and the Washing Up* about her experience growing up in suburban Melbourne as the daughter of Eastern European migrants, who also happened to be communists. She specifically recounts how their neighbour, Ken Miller, (Ruth's brother) was framed on sexual abuse charges during the height of the Cold War. The charges were dismissed at his trial.

Winsome McCaughey is a former North Melbourne councillor and worked with Ruth in North Melbourne. She has recently been appointed the Director of the Australia Foundation for Culture and the Humanities.

Julie Higginbotham works as an Arts Officer at the Mechanics Institute in Brunswick. She is a member of the Brunswick History Group and has a great deal of local knowledge about Brunswick.

Sylvana Sgro is a young trade unionist. Her father, Giovanni Sgro, was an MLC and her mother, Anne, was the chair of the Union of Australian Women.

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Joan Kirner is the former Premier of Victoria and worked with Ruth on child care funding issues during the 1960s. ?

Rose Read is a member of the Conservation Council of Victoria/**Peter Durkin/John Dick** environmental issues? ?

Leckie Ord is a Melbourne planner and was the first woman to be Lord Mayor of Melbourne. ?

Sheila Byard is a lecturer in Urban Studies at the Victoria University of Technology and is a coordinator of the Crow Collection and contributor to *ECOSO EXCHANGE*..

Mark Riley helped form the People's Committee for Melbourne and... ?

Maurie Crow was Ruth's husband and partner for fifty-one years.

Victoria (and especially Melbourne)

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SCENE 1 Ballarat ARCHIVAL Day

A MONTAGE OF STREET SCENES FROM THE PERIOD. BALLARAT'S AFFLUENCE IS EVIDENT IN ITS PUBLIC BUILDINGS, MANSIONS AND THE WELL-DRESSED POPULATION.

RUTH CROW

I was born in 1916 and named Ruth Hope Crow, the fourth of five children. It was mid-war but my family was part of comfortable Ballarat society and my early childhood was, by and large, untroubled. Winsome, my mother, had been a teacher before marrying, and my father was a dentist. Our family lived in the same home that my mother had been born in and it remained very much the headquarters for visiting for visiting relations and friends.

SCENE 2 Title Sequence

MUSIC

ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE SLOWS TO STILL FRAME.

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SCENE 3 Ruth Crow INTERVIEW Int Day

RUTH IS IN THE LIVING ROOM OF HER 5TH FLOOR, HOUSING COMMISSION FLAT IN NORTH MELBOURNE. SPREAD ON THE TABLE IN FRONT OF HER ARE PHOTOGRAPHS - PARENTS, AUNTS, UNCLES, COUSINS AND A YOUNGER RUTH. THERE ARE PARTIES ON THE FRONT LAWN AND PICNICS BY LAKE WENDOUREE OVERFLOWING WITH RELATIVES AND EVEN FAMILY PETS.

RUTH CROW

I knew that not everyone in Ballarat lived like us - nearly everyday there would be some poor beggar having his lunch on the back verandah. As the Depression worsened whole families in tattered clothing walked up Sturt Street - some pushing their possessions in prams and others with wheelbarrows.

Early in 1931 my cousins had to walk off their farm in the Mallee and double up at Aunty Anna's house. Not long after we had to wave goodbye to the Painters, the family who had been our next-door-neighbours for many years, when the father was declared bankrupt. But, the Depression came right into our home in 1932 when my father died suddenly and left the family penniless. We had no idea that his business had

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been slowly failing through lack of paying customers. The proceeds from the sale of the house, the furniture, his dental equipment, photography equipment and the library were still not enough to cover the outstanding debts.

SCENE 4 Ballarat Avenue of Honour ARCHIVAL Ext Day

~~GANGS OF UNEMPLOYED 'SUSSO' MEN, YOUNG AND OLD, ARE WORKING PLANTING TREES ON~~ BALLARAT'S AVENUE OF HONOUR. FILM SPEEDS TO A BLUR.

SCENE 5 Ruth Crow INTERVIEW Int Day

RUTH IS SEATED IN THE LIVING ROOM OF HER FLAT NEXT TO THE KITCHEN. THE MIRROR BEHIND HER REVEALS A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE MELBOURNE SKYLINE. WE SEE COPIES OF THE FAMILY BUDGETS ITEMISING FOOD AND OTHER LIVING EXPENSES, AND EARLY PHOTOS OF EMILY MCPHERSON COLLEGE.

RUTH CROW

Fortunately, my brothers were working in Melbourne by that time so we shifted to be with them. We rented a small house (with a good address) and through prudent house-keeping the family managed to stay together. We saved fare money by walking and even then I was careful to walk on the grass to save my shoe leather.

As a child I had always helped the family cook prepare the meals and through my mother's contacts I began a three month course at Emily McPherson College and then was granted a scholarship for a three year Diploma course in Dietetics. Although my stipend contributed to the household income I was very much aware that the others contributed far more and I can remember trying to take up as little space as possible at home. Seeing my mother's dependence on her children made me determined to study hard. I was ambitious to break out of poverty.

SCENE 6 Morag Loh/Wendy Lowenstein INTERVIEW Ext Day

CAMERA PANS 360 DEGREES TO REVEAL EMILY MCPHERSON COLLEGE, TRADES HALL AND 8 HR DAY MEMORIAL.

MORAG LOH/WENDY LOWENSTEIN

Impact of the Depression, women and work, women and study and study being only really being affordable for those who were better off..

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SCENE 7 Newspaper Headlines Int Day

1934

MELBOURNE ARGUS

Stop War! Stop Nazism! Kisch must land etc.

RUTH CROW

On a hot sultry, early summer evening I was trying to study on the way to an exam but kept being interrupted by people on the train handing out pamphlets about Kisch. At the time I wasn't sure what fascism was and associated nazism with the tall, fair, young sailors all of Melbourne had welcomed the year before. Kisch's name dominated the headlines during his time in Australia and the questions being raised about fascism really affected me.

MELBOURNE ARGUS

Spanish Civil War Appeals

At first I wasn't looking for Left significance...I was just looking for some significance and I desperately wanted a better world and I was looking for ways to break out of the oppressive relationships of family life especially the subservient role imposed on women. I was inspired by Lenin's slogan 'Every cook must learn to govern the state'. In 1936 I joined the Communist Party at the age of 20. At the time fighting against fascism meant being involved with the Spanish Relief campaign. Ripples from the civil war in Spain were also being felt closer to home and students were bashed at the Melbourne University campus by Santamaria's thugs.

Shouts/Scuffles

SCENE 8 STUART MACINTYRE INTERVIEW Ext Day

WE SEE STUART SEATED AMIDST THE ARCHITECTURE AND MANICURED LAWNS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE. STUDENTS WALK PAST WITH ANYTHING BUT POLITICS ON THEIR MINDS.

STUART MACINTYRE

B.A. Santamaria student, other notable alumni, clashes on campus. Pre/post war.

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SCENE 9 Ruth Crow INTERVIEW Int Day

RUTH IS SEATED AT HER TYPEWRITER IN HER STUDY/BEDROOM. THE ROOM IS COSY AND FILLED WITH LIGHT. OVER HER SHOULDER WE SEE SKETCHES OF A MAN WITH A ~~BROAD~~ BARE BACK - MAURIE CROW.

?

RUTH CROW

Around this time I attended a student conference on war and fascism, 'Youth, What Next?' and met Maurie Crow who was also a CPA member and very active in the University Peace Group. Not long after our first meeting I summoned up the courage to ask Maurie to tea. He said 'yes' and when he arrived I presented him with a cake which was decorated with the words 'What Next'. ~~A year later~~ we decided to get married but we didn't want to leave my mother in the lurch financially. So Maurie painted my room to make it easier to let out to a boarder. We were married at the Registry Office and had just enough money to get to the Robur Tea Rooms afterwards for a cup of tea and biscuits - just Maurie and me and my mother. (Maurie had given me his mother's ring but I didn't wear it for years while I was working because married women couldn't work then. I had to secretly arrange leave from work when I got married otherwise I would have been sacked.)

(Wedding) Bells Ring

SCENE 10 Mount Dandenong Observatory Tea Rooms PHOTOS Int Day

RUTH AND MAURIE WITH VISITORS AT THE FRONT OF THE TEAROOMS. THERE IS A BELL NEXT TO THE FRONT DOOR. OTHERS SHOW GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH BACKPACKS IN HIKING CLOTHES.

SCENE 11 Ruth Crow INTERVIEW Int Day

STUDY/BEDROOM

RUTH CROW

From 1938/9 until 1942, Maurie and I ran the Observatory Tearooms at the very of ^{top} Mount Dandenong. Living there meant that we could work and study together. During this time our two daughters June and Julie were born. Maurie was studying Law and we were both actively involved in the CPA despite the party being outlawed. (Maurie used to deliver the Party paper around the Dandenong hills on his push bike and was once pulled over by the local policeman but managed to avoid any serious trouble.)

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SCENE 12 Newspaper Headlines Int Day

MELBOURNE ARGUS

Civil Liberties At Stake!

SCENE 13 Stuart Macintyre INTERVIEW Ext Day

UNIVERSITY GROUNDS.

STUART MACINTYRE

At the outbreak of the war the Commonwealth govt had assumed extensive powers to control people, organisations and expressions of opinions. By the National Security Act passed on 8 September, 1939 the government was empowered to make regulations 'on almost any subject which might plausibly be linked with the defence of the Commonwealth or the efficient prosecution of the war'.

SCENE 14 Newspaper Headlines Int Day

MELBOURNE ARGUS

Communist Party Outlawed!

STUART MACINTYRE

On Saturday afternoon, 15 June, ¹⁹⁴⁰ the govt gazetted regulations giving it power to declare any org. unlawful, confiscated its property, prevent its members from meeting, and prosecute anyone found in possession of any of its publications, even those which had been published legally and after censorship. the CPA, the League for Peace and Democracy, and a few other bodies were declared unlawful. Raids followed and the impounding of great quantities of assorted literature. The govt responded to criticisms by temporarily imposing a licensing system on the whole press under the control of Sir Keith Murdoch, For the next year numerous prosecutions occurred, with the usual penalty of 6 months imprisonment.

While there was little sympathy in the community generally with the communist stand as such, there was some fear that the process of suppression, once begun, might extend indefinitely. Left intellectuals hid their books and guarded their words, and trade unionists and other people who had co-operated with communists in unions and other organisations feared for their freedom.

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SCENE 15 Ruth Crow INTERVIEW Int Day

RUTH IS SEATED ON THE COUCH IN HER LIVING ROOM. ON THE WINDOW SILL BEHIND HER IS A FRIEZE OF FLOWERS IN THE DANDENONGS PAINTED BY
* ☆☆☆☆ - AS A GIFT. BEHIND HER IS THE MELBOURNE SKYLINE. ON THE
TABLE IN FRONT OF HER ARE PHOTOS AND PAMPHLETS FROM THE BRUNSWICK CHILDREN'S CENTRE.

Arthur Stueck

RUTH CROW

We left the Dandenongs in 1942 soon after Japan entered the war. After working with committees that established the first federally funded wartime child care centre, I was appointed secretary organiser of the Brunswick Children's Centre. (My diploma put me into the 'professional classes' and I realised that I could pursue a paid career eventhough I had young children.) It was extremely difficult to find accommodation during the war and we ended up living above a shop in Sydney Road...Crow's Nest. The Brunswick Party Branch had a bookshop opposite the Brunswick Town Hall which was a great hub of activity with women meeting during the day, a lending a library...all sorts of discussions and social functions.

SCENE 16 Julie Higginbotham INTERVIEW Ext Day

JULIE IS SEATED OUTSIDE THE BRUNSWICK MECHANICS INSTITUTE WHERE SHE NOW WORKS. THIS IS ~~THE SAME~~ PLACE THE UNEMPLOYED WORKERS LOCKED THEMSELVES IN A CAGE TO SPEAK ABOUT THEIR PLIGHT AND AVOID ARREST IN THE 1930S. OPPOSITE WE SEE THE BRUNSWICK TOWN HALL. WE SEE PHOTOS OF FACTORIES, INCLUDING THE HOLEPROOF FACTORY WHICH WAS A MAJOR EMPLOYER IN THE AREA. SOME MATCHED WITH EXISTING BUILDINGS.

JULIE HIGGINBOTHAM

There was a genuine need for childcare in Brunswick. As women were drafted into employment in the factories that produced rope, textiles, and clothing during the war years. Brunswick was a very working class suburb with a fairly long history of political awareness and activity...

SCENE 17 Newspaper Headlines Int Day

MELBOURNE ARGUS

The growing authority of the communists depended heavily on the new perception of the USSR. Press reporting of the Soviet changed almost overnight following the invasion of Russia (see the *Argus 9 Aug, 1941*). The Anglo-Soviet Twenty Years Alliance, a statement in general terms of the intention of Britain and the USSR to co-operate in war and peace was signed in London on 26

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May, 1942. In Australia an ambassador to Russia was seen as a decision of great importance (panegyric to Russia in **SMH 7 Nov, 1942**). The Soviet Union was integral to allied summits in Moscow and Teheran. Melbourne was the centre of the post-war intellectual radicalism which spread wide across the borders of party. Until the cold war threw up barriers between the communist and others, built by the adherence of the communists to the Soviet Union, there was a left community whose ideology comprised an amalgam of socialism and radical nationalism. One of the main centres of this community was the University of Melbourne.

Revolutionaries and Reformists.

SCENE 18 Ruth Crow INTERVIEW Int Day

RUTH IS SEATED ON THE COUCH IN HER LIVING ROOM. ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE OF MARGARET WALKER DANCE GROUP GIVING PERFORMANCES FOR FACTORY WORKERS IN JOLIMONT, EAST MELBOURNE AND AT AN INNER CITY TRAIN STATION.

—→ *Margaret's dance group 2nd vol 1948*

Despite the sympathy many people felt for the Soviet soldiers and citizens there was still considerable suspicion towards CPA members. In 1945 I lost my job in Brunswick. But after completing one year course in Youth Leadership at Melbourne University I began work at the Exhibition Youth Centre. During this time I was also involved with campaigns to continue childcare which was no longer being funded after the war ended.

a prominent member of the CPA (Ruth)

In May, 1949 my brother Ken Miller was framed on a sex charge and around the same time Maurie had to appear before the Royal Commission. Part of the reason I became so involved with the Junior Eureka League was wanting to protect children from the hatred of the Cold War. Although I was sceptical at first because I didn't think children should be politicised, the activities of the League tried to emphasise the positives of Australian culture through music and dance. Junior Eureka League children performed for the wharfies, miners in Wonthaggi, workers in Woolongong (and even to a football crowd once). Together with Audrey Blake I helped to organise support for the Unity Dance Group. No-one was paid and I worked at the Royal Melbourne Hospital in the kitchen to contribute to the family income.

SCENE 19 Wendy Lowenstein INTERVIEW Int Day

WENDY AND RUTH ARE SITTING TOGETHER ON THE COUCH WHILE WENDY RECOUNTS HER MEMORIES OF THE JUNIOR EUREKA LEAGUE. ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE EUREKA YOUTH LEAGUE CAMP C1943 AND 1951 HOME MOVIES/DOCUMENTARY INCLUDING SHOTS OF WENDY LOWENSTEIN.

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1948

WENDY LOWENSTEIN

Throughout 1848-9 art and literature were popular subjects of discussion in communist journals. In a two part article Emile Burns, a leading British communist theorist, expounded the significance of socialist realism in a language less rough than that of the Soviet exponents. He pointed to four characteristics. First, the positive aim of all cultural activity should be to assist in the forward movement of society, that is towards communism. This carries with it the rejection of notions of 'art for art's sake' and the elaboration of form without concern for content. Second, it should express man's ability to control his own destiny. It must be positive, confident and heroic. Third, it should be national, not a slavish imitation of past works but a creative development from them.

SCENE 20 Newspaper Headlines Int Day

MELBOURNE ARGUS

Communist Party Banned?

SCENE 21 Wendy Lowenstein INTERVIEW Int Day

WENDY AND RUTH ARE SITTING TOGETHER ON THE COUCH WHILE WENDY TALKS FURTHER ABOUT THE COLD WAR.

The first half of the 1950s was a severe testing time for the Communist Party. From being a generally unpopular minority political party, it became an allegedly seditious conspiracy on trial before the community and the courts. Menzies came to office following the elections on 10 December 1949 on a policy which included banning the Communist Party. On 27 April 1950 he introduced a Bill 'to outlaw and dissolve the Australian Communist Party'. There is no way of establishing whether or not Menzies' views were sincerely held. But there must be some doubt since his reiterated statement of the need to prepare for war was not matched by any serious attempt to prepare Australia for war either economically or militarily. At the same time there was evident advantages for him in his campaign against communism in creating an atmosphere of impending war in which communists would be the enemy. The peace movement was the positive response to the threat of war.

Revolutionaries and Reformists.

Scene 22 Democracy at Work: Government Wins Election ARCHIVAL Footage Day

AUSTRALIA GOES TO THE POLLS FOR THE 1954 FEDERAL ELECTION. A COMMUNIST PARTY STAND IS SHOWN. DR EVATT VOTES AND THEN SHAKES HANDS WITH POLLING OFFICIALS. MR MENZIES AND HIS WIFE VOTE IN HIS ELECTORATE OF KOOYONG. HE IS SHOWN SMILING AFTER HE HAS WON THE ELECTION.

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SCENE 23 Newspaper Headlines Int Day

MELBOURNE ARGUS
Red Dean Visits Melbourne!

The Australian Peace Council was formed in Melbourne in July 1949, following the World Peace Congress held in Paris earlier in the year. The founding members were clergymen, writers, intellectuals and some trade unionists, the great majority of whom were not communists although they were soon labelled by their opponents as dupes of the communists. The purposes of the council were to mobilise public opinion in support of the UN : to foster the idea of peaceful co-existence between different social systems; to seek to have atomic weapons banned; and to counter all forms of war propaganda and race hatred.

Revolutionaries and Reformists.

SCENE 24 Ruth Crow INTERVIEW Int Day

WENDY AND RUTH ARE SITTING TOGETHER ON THE COUCH. RUTH CONTINUES HER STORY. SHE SHOWS US A NEWSPAPER PHOTO OF MAURIE HOLDING A BANNER IN A PEACE RALLY. ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE?

RUTH CROW

Throughout the 1950s I was very much involved in combatting the Cold War locally, in Brunswick. During the Korean War anti-communism became particularly vicious - not like the public sentiment during the Vietnam War at all. Hiroshima Day began during the late 1950s and Maurie and I used to take part in the marches. (The first big public occasion was the peace congress held in April 1950 in Melbourne and its theme was the World Peace Committee's Stockholm declaration against the use of atomic weapons. The main drawcard for the congress was the Dean of Canterbury, Hewlett Johnson. He drew large crowds to hear him speak, often in the open air, because halls were denied to the congress by both public authorities and private owners. He attracted much unfavourable comment from the conservative press. The Melbourne congress was the beginning of an extensive campaign in support of the Stockholm declaration and of later conferences both in Australia and overseas.)

SCENE 26 Melbourne Trades Hall LOCATION Ext Day

FRAME IS FILLED BY THE SPIRES OF ST PATRICKS CATHEDRAL. CAMERA ZOOMS OUT TO THE MELBOURNE TRADES HALL IN THE FOREGROUND. ?

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SCENE 27 Ruth Crow INTERVIEW Int Day

SILVANA SGRO, A YOUNG TRADE UNIONIST IS SEATED IN ONE OF THE MELBOURNE TRADES HALL MEETING ROOMS. LIGHT SHINES INTO THE ROOM BEHIND THEM GIVING THE FAINT IMPRESSION OF A CHURCH. SILVANA SPEAKS FIRST THEN THE FRAME WIDENS TO REVEAL RUTH. WE SEE PAMPHLETS FROM THE LIVING STANDARDS CONVENTION AND RADICAL ECOLOGY CONFERENCE AND DOCUMENTS SUCH AS THE PLANNING STRATEGY PAPERS.

SILVANA SGRO — *Selva Gubina*

The Communist Party from 1950 onwards attached the greatest importance to the peace movement and made no secret of this, but it was not quite the cut and dried policy its opponents chose to see. Within the labour movement the source of the most consistent anti-communism was the Movement (B. A. Santamaria), operating through the Industrial Groups. Between 1951 and mid-1953 the Movement was in the ascendancy in the ALP. The members of the Movement became over-confident, generating an opposition from old-established members of the labour mvt who had been prepared to cooperate with them so long as the fight against the communists was the top priority but who found their ideology and methods unacceptable as the communist position weakened.

When Evatt, the ALP leader, launched an attack on the Movement it resulted in a major split in the ALP and the anti-communist group eventually became the DLP. With the split the Industrial Groups lost most of their support and by 1955 they were no longer the arm of the Labor Party in the unions. By 1955 the Communist Party had regained much of the strength in the unions it had lost in the previous five years. The price was that it had sought to assimilate itself as nearly as possible to the traditional Aust. labour movement.

especially
RUTH CROW

By the middle of the 1960s new political movements were emerging and change was taking place even in the churches, especially in the Roman Catholic Church after Vatican 2 and the Pope's call for world peace. At a clerk's union meeting about this time, Maurie, who had been a union organiser in the 1940s drew attention to this change by using the Pope's own words when he moved a resolution for peace. The DLP union members, who were mostly Roman Catholic, didn't recognise the Pope's words and dogmatically voted against the resolution simply because it had been moved by Maurie, a dreaded Communist.

In 1967, Maurie helped to organise the Living Standards Convention which brought together community groups and trade unionists to discuss emerging social issues.

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Maurie and I began to give more attention to urban issues rather than workplace or union issues, and consequently became involved in campaigns around State and Local government politics. From that time on he and I collaborated on preparing a number of reports which were published by the Communist Party of Australia. The series was called *Plan for Melbourne*. These publications presented alternative to the State government's plans for freeways and explored urban renewal strategies and community services. We also helped community organisations to prepare similar plans in their own neighbourhoods. Green bans date 11/11/71 Historical context?

all

Scene 28 Radical Ecology Conference 1975 ARCHIVAL Footage Day DOCUMENTARY

RUTH CROW

~~As a result of the Living Standards Convention, Maurie and I worked with a group of people to publish a newsletter which later became known as Ecoso Exchange. This publication initiated moves to hold the 1975 national Radical Ecology Conference bringing together unionists and others to discuss issues relating to the conservation of the world's scarce resources. One of the many outcomes of the conference was the publication of the book *Seeds for Change - Creatively Confronting the Energy Crisis*. Nearly a decade later, in the 1980s, this book was given a Victorian govt Energy Award.~~

SCENE 29 Montage of Errol Street, North Melbourne LOCATION Ext Day

MONTAGE OF SHOTS - NORTH MELBOURNE TOWN HALL, NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE, CARS, TRAMS, PEDESTRIANS AND SHOPFRONTS WITH FINAL SHOT PANNING DOWN FROM THE BUILDING PROFILE TO THE WINDOWS ABOVE THE LIBRARY ♪♫✦♣.

SCENE 30 Ruth Crow INTERVIEW Int Day

RUTH AND WINSOME MCCAUGHEY ARE SITTING TOGETHER ENJOYING A CUP OF TEA. THEY TAKE IT IN TURNS TO TELL THEIR STORIES, SOMETIMES SPEAKING OVER THE TOP OF EACH OTHER. WE SEE PHOTOS OF A YOUNGER RUTH AND WINSOME IN NORTH MELBOURNE AT STREET PARTIES ETC.

RUTH CROW

At the end of the 1960s I was again involved in campaigning for childcare, mainly through the unions. Then quite unexpectedly, a very young woman called Winsome McCaughey visited me and said, in effect, 'tell me about what you are doing now, but also tell me what you have done in the past.' So

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with Winsome and dozens of younger people I helped to pioneer the community childcare movement. During this process my ideas on women and society widened and widened and my methods of organising at a community level changed and changed.

WINSOME

Context of budding feminism. Women and work. Learning from someone else's experiences...

RUTH

Around this time Labour was elected Federally, *and locally* and there was an upsurge in interest and support for community issues. District Health Councils, Community Health Centres and Tenants Councils began to develop as well as new forms of 'grass roots democracy'. Maurie and I helped to establish the North Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre and the North Melbourne News - a community-based newspaper. The Cosy Cottage was set up as a house for country people who needed cheap, self-contained accommodation in Melbourne while a family member was in hospital. The Cottage was lent to us by the Food Preservers Union and was run with the support of the Children's Hospital, the Royal and the Womens.

The 4th Oct but was a hard task done by...

Scene 31 North Melbourne Community Organisations Footage LOCATION Day

MONTAGE OF FOOTAGE LIVE AND STILL. ZOOM OUT FROM CU STILL HELD IN RUTH'S HAND. RUTH IS AT HER DESK IN THE THE VUT LIBRARY CROW COLLECTION ROOM. SHE IS SURROUNDED BY BOOKS AND DOCUMENTS AND SEATED NEXT TO HER IS SHEILA BYARD. BEHIND HER WE CAN SEE OTHER GLASS FRONTED BUILDINGS WHERE STUDENTS SCURRY LIKE ANTS BACK AND FORWARD TO LECTURES ETC.

Towards the end of 1980

RUTH CROW

Towards the end of the 1980s Maurie and I were both involved in trying to find new directions for the Communist Party through the through the 'broad left' and the 'new left'. ~~Not long after~~ we decided to relinquish local involvement and help more as advisors for others, Maurie became ill and died in 1988. The newsletter *Ecoso* had finished in 1979/80 but was restarted in 1988 to help me decide what to do with our documents. These papers really represented many of the things Maurie and I had shared.

HOPE

PROOF THAT SUFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT TIME EXISTS BEFORE THE SHOOT

The only thing that I thought might wear out was Ruth's patience but she assures me that's not the case. Regardless of the next Federal government there will still be a case for an alternative look at Australian history and civics and the need for debate around childcare, the environment and urban planning will still be with us no doubt. Of course Ruth is not getting any younger and this is my only concern that her story might not get told.

HOPE

AWARENESS OF OTHER PROGRAMS OR FILMS ABOUT THE SUBJECT (IF ANY)

Red Matildas:

Ruth herself was interviewed for the *Red Matildas* documentary but was not included in the final film. This may have been because her interests covered so many issues and across such a long period of time. Trevor Graham's doco focuses on the different reasons the three women joined the Left and their main work up until the the Second World War.

Bread and Roses: ✓

Freda Brown: ✓

Edna Ryan: ✓

The Party's Over: ✓

Seeds for Change: — ✓

Bolton

UAW — Video — ask Anne Szyz if name