

Things 'Down Under' Slow To a Walk Over Troubles

By GORDON TAIT

Sydney, June 21 (AP)—Australia is no land of plenty on this mid-winter's day down under. Take a look at Sydney, a city of 1,500,000—one-fifth of all the people in Australia.

There is no household gas for cooking or heating. Electric power is on only part of the time. You can't buy coal or coke to heat your house.

You get only one-third of your normal order of milk.

Fresh vegetables are scarce. Later in the week it's going to be just about impossible to buy all the bread and meat you want.

Hundreds of factories are closing. Tens of thousands of men are being paid off.

Train service is running at half schedule or less.

The position is much the same in other big towns of New South Wales. Cities in other states will be affected almost at once.

In Melbourne, for instance, gas can be used only for cooking and only for three and a half hours a day.

There are three reasons for these shortages: not enough coal, too much rain, too much wind.

Australia's coal shortage is a long story. There is plenty underground, but for years there has not been enough to go around up top.

Miners' policy is to prevent

stockpiling of coal on the surface. They reason that lack of reserves strengthens their bargaining position, and it does.

Result is that one day's stoppage at the mines sometimes brings rationing of gas and electricity to eke out available coal.

Last Thursday coal miners all over Australia stopped work for a day. They decided at meetings to begin a general strike June 27 if their claim for more pay and less work is not granted.

They seek 30 shillings (7.80) a week more pay and cut in working hours from 40 to 35 a week.

On top of that, heavy rain flooded coal fields and there was a big production loss on Friday. Gales stopped colliers taking coal to Sydney and Melbourne from fields.

The government, trying to conserve coal, ordered transport and public utilities to cut consumption by 50 per cent. Industry using coal was given a 75 per cent cut.

But wind and rain have prevented utilities getting enough coal to operate at even half output.

Today the New South Wales cabinet ordered drastic gas cuts. It banned the use of electricity for industry and for public lighting and amusement.

It rationed gas and electricity to houses. Only two lights in each house are permitted at night and heating is banned.

Cooking by gas (if there is any) and electricity is restricted to two periods in the morning and evening, totalling three hours.

Effect of the restrictions will be to bring almost all industry to a standstill. This will throw 250 to 300 thousand men out of work.

At the same time, housewives will blame floods for a short-

age of milk and vegetables.

Bread will be short because some bakers rely on gas. Meat will be short because of a strike at killing works.

All in all, Australians are unhappy today.

Summer Arrived at 9:03 This Morning

Summer arrived Tuesday morning.

At exactly 9:03 o'clock, standard time, it came.

At that moment the northern

axis of the earth, or the north end of the imaginary line running through the earth from pole to pole, was slanted as far toward the sun as it ever gets.

And that meant the longest day of the year for people in the northern hemisphere. The summer solstice, it's called.

Master Contract Signed

Santa Barbara, Calif., June 21 (AP)—Management and union representatives have negotiated a new west coast master contract on ship repair work. The pact calls for no increase in wages.

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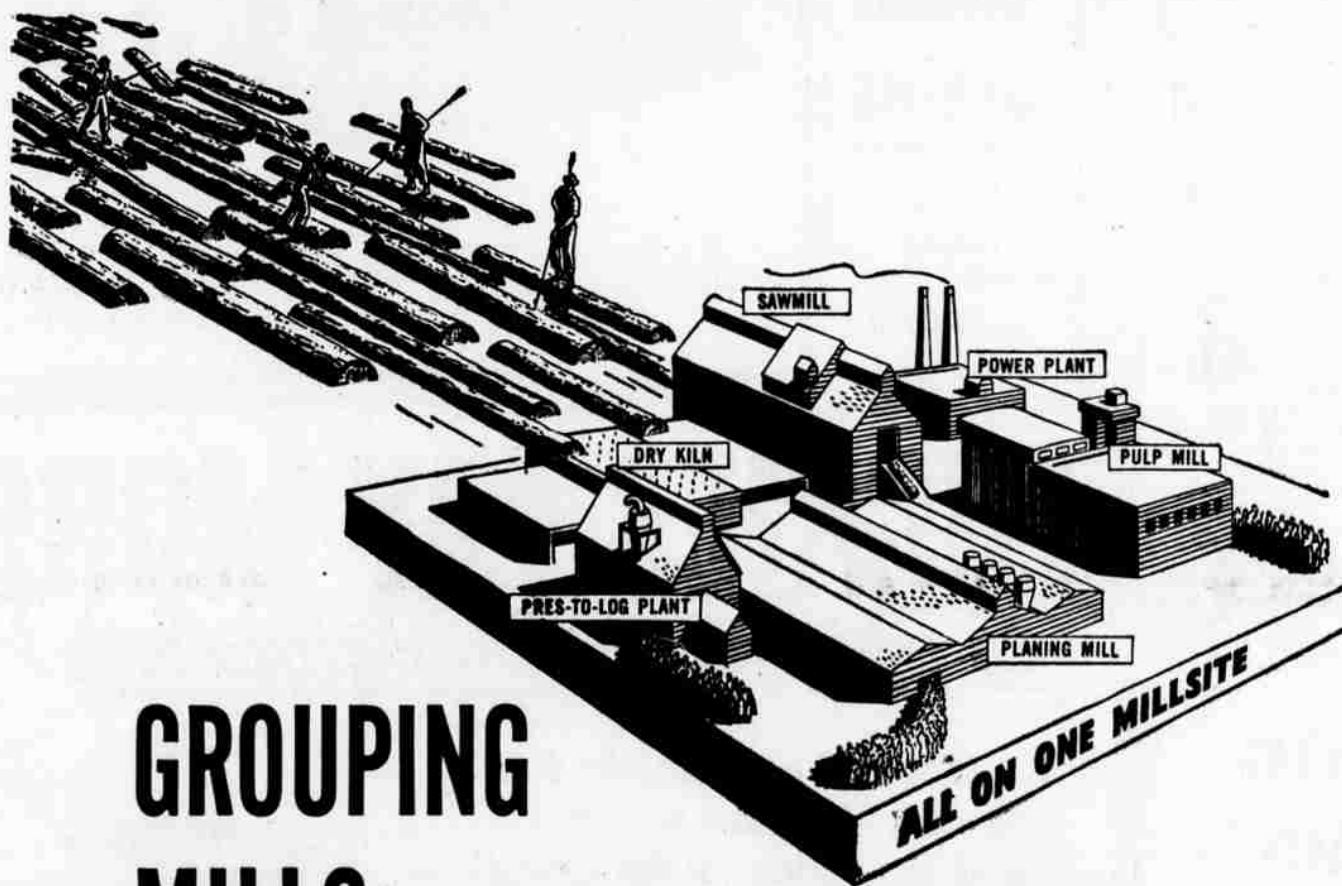


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YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME! Weyerhaeuser extends a cordial invitation to the public to visit our mills. Trained guides will gladly show you through. Tours: Morning and afternoon, Monday through Friday. Plants located: In Washington: Everett, Longview, Snoqualmie Falls. In Oregon: Klamath Falls, Springfield.

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