

## Dear Friends of the Brotherhood,

By the time this edition of **Action** comes to you, the federal election will have been completed and a new government will have assumed office.

It is a matter of great disappointment that the issues of poverty and unemployment have not been properly addressed in the election campaign by either of the major political parties. Such issues seem to have been left to groups like the Australian Democrats, the churches and welfare organisations.

The hard truth of the matter is that poverty is simply not a matter of votes to enhance the position of either of the major parties. Furthermore they do not believe that the electorate is much interested in mounting a war on poverty, especially if it will cost more money.

On a more positive note, however, I have had correspondence with the Prime Minister who assures me that the government is committed to a comprehensive strategy aimed at tackling poverty although it is not clear precisely what that strategy is. The main thrust is an economic one, which focuses on economic growth. Furthermore, an election promise was made that the rate of expenditure by the Commonwealth Government would not be increased beyond the rate of growth and that there will be no increases in taxation.

Whilst it is not clear exactly what this means, it does not seem to augur well for the poor, the marginal and the unemployed.

With a new government in office, our next challenge will be to sustain our energies in the lead up to the bicentenary in 1988. Surely this represents an opportunity to address issues of national importance where more Australians will be in a sober and reflective mood about the future of our nation.

The message for us all is that the eradication of poverty is a question of political will. Plainly, it must come from political leadership — but it also needs the support of the people, you and me.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you all a very happy Christmas and to thank you for your generous and continuing support.

Peter Hollingworth,  
Executive Director

## Unemployment Video

"Unemployment Isn't Working" is the title of a new video produced by the Brotherhood in an attempt to increase community awareness of the issues surrounding unemployment in Australia today.

'It is hoped that the video will enable people to reflect on the structural causes of unemployment, rather than blaming themselves,' said Ben Witham, Community Education Officer with the Brotherhood. 'The whole of the community, and in particular school students should have the opportunity to understand the causes of unemployment and to explore the possible solutions.'

The video has been produced expressly to meet these aims and will be geared towards senior secondary students, many of whom will be facing the prospect of unemployment themselves. The main thrust of the video will be examining the questions — Why is there unemployment? and, What can we do about it?

'We wanted to produce a documentary that really challenged some of the ideas that many students and some teachers have about unemployment,' Ben said. 'For example we've really hammered the myth that anyone can get a job if they really want to and the myth that you can "live it up" on the dole.'

The documentary canvasses a wide range of opinions on the causes, social and economic costs of, and possible solutions for, unemployment. A broad cross-section of interviews were conducted with politicians, teachers, people from the business sector and representatives from groups such as the National Youth Council of Australia and the Coalition Against Poverty and Unemployment and these interviews form a major part of the video.

In addition to school students, much interest has been expressed in the video from the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations for use through its Commonwealth Employment Service programmes, for use as a tool in training people working with the unemployed, and also from unemployed people themselves.

The video which runs for approximately 20 minutes is available for loan free of charge to interested groups and individuals and has been produced with the Media Group of EMPLOY, a self-help job creation organisation based in St. Kilda. Funding for the video has come from the Reichstein Charitable Foundation.

For further information about the video please contact Neil Foster on 419 7055.

