

Media Release

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Bill Kelty to speak on redistributing work

ACTU Secretary Mr Bill Kelty will be a keynote speaker next Monday at a seminar on flexible work schemes as a solution to unemployment. Mr Kelty has recently endorsed flexible work schemes as part of a new approach to tackling the apparently intractable problem of mass unemployment.

To be held at Parliament House, the seminar is convened by the Jamieson House Employment Group, a group drawn from professional and community organisations. The seminar will also be addressed by Professor Belinda Probert, a labour market academic at RMIT, Ms Avril Henry who was responsible for innovative work sharing schemes while an executive at Westac Bank, Mr Michael Stevens, a senior executive in the Tasmanian Premiers Department which is introducing radical new employment schemes for Tasmanian public servants, and Dr Clive Hamilton, Executive Director of Canberra think tank The Australia Institute.

Speaking for the Jamieson House Group, Dr Hamilton said: *"It is obvious to everyone that economic growth alone simply will not reduce the rate of unemployment. And despite its public statements, not even the Government believes that labour market deregulation will put a dent in the figures. We either try some creative new approaches to the problem or consign a large proportion of the labour force to indefinite idleness."*

Bishop Richard Randerson, who will chair the morning session of the seminar, said: *"The discussion paper on 'redistributing work' published by the Jamieson House Group elicited an enormous response. It is gratifying that many people - including some trade unionists, business people and political leaders - are reconsidering entrenched views on how to solve the unemployment problem."*

The Discussion Paper – entitled *Redistributing Work: Solutions to the paradox of unemployment and overwork* – reported survey evidence indicating that a large proportion of the work-force would like to work fewer hours for less pay if circumstances permitted. It also described moves to introduce flexible work schemes in several European countries and Canada.

The seminar will be held in the Main Committee Room at Parliament House starting at 9.30 am. For further information and comment please contact:

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