

By the way

THE Christmas "silly season" produced it — a UFO sighting! A former RAF pilot, his university-lecturer wife and their daughter (all sober) say they saw a pulsating orange light over Mount Taylor on Friday. It appeared suddenly, moved slowly for a few minutes then disappeared. The mystery cannot be explained by air-traffic control, the police or the fire brigade.

THE Moscow daily *Leninskoe Znamia* has warned citizens against celebrating the year's end with stolen fir trees. Illegally felling a tree brings a fine of \$A35 and felling five can bring a year in prison or in a camp of "re-education through work".

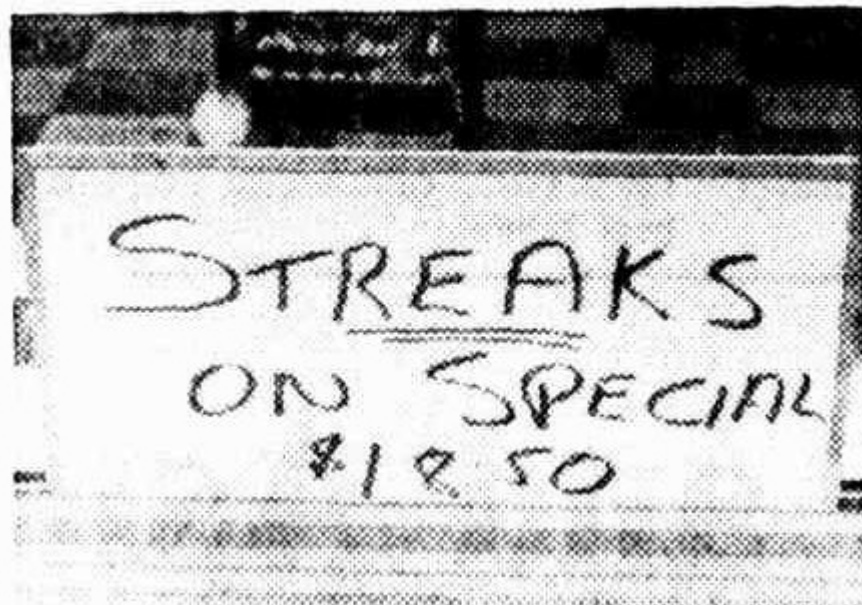
THE *Pope's Christmas tree won't be plastic. This assurance is given by Monsignor Bogumil Lewandowski, an official of the Polish Episcopal Conference. No one in Poland uses plastic trees, he said emphatically this week.*

BECAUSE of the slowness of the State-run postal system, private mail companies have proliferated in Italy. But those who were hoping to get their Christmas cards through on time by delivering them personally have

on time by delivering them personally have run foul of a new government regulation — it says no one can accept mail of any kind from anyone else it bears a stamp.

STROLLING past the security-shrouded Soviet Embassy compound in Canberra Avenue, on Friday, a 61-year-old man, inspired by a glass or three of Christmas cheer, waved to some children inside. The gate was open, he said, and 'twas the festive season. In he went. The Russians and Commonwealth Police apparently did not share his merriment.

FRUIT tingles, fairy bread, thousands of jelly beans and raspberry and lime cordial were the fare on offer to all those who took the adjournment from the rigours of office work for yet another of the law courts Christmas parties on Friday. Yet another? We counted it as the third in as many weeks.



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A GROUP of Brazilian Indians, refused an audience with President Ernesto Geisel because they were not wearing ties, have reacted by insisting that government officials visiting an Indian village must wear a cod piece, feathered headdress and body paint, AAP-Reuter reports.

A CANBERRA primary school teacher, who spent much of 1978 promoting 'Life. Be In It' to his students, arranged a walk from the school to the Botanic Gardens. It is understood the students enjoyed, and benefited from the walk. The teacher drove. Oh, by the way, the student who ratted on the teacher has left the school!.

JUST in case anybody is still confused, the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre (sewage works) spews its, ah, effluent, into the junction of the Molonglo River and the Murrumbidgee River, which then flows north. Sturt Island, Uriarra Crossing, Casuarina Sands and the Cotter are all safe for swimming. The Murrumbidgee downstream (or north) of the sewage works is not.

THERE is probably no political significance in the change of address of the Government's Industrial Relations Bureau but some unionists might hope for a change in mood from the bureau. It has moved into Mutual Acceptance House in Collins Street

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Melbourne.*