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PURSUING THE RADICAL OBJECTIVE.

DISCOURSE, IDEOLOGY AND THE TEXT:

A STUDY OF THE ARCHIVE OF THE AUSTRALIAN WATERSIDE WORKERS' FEDERATION

Faculty of Arts

Department of Communication,

Languages & Cultural Studies

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Andrew Gordon Walker
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DECLARATION

Except where otherwise
indicated this thesis is my own
work.

Andrew Walker
August 2002.

DEDICATION

During the period in which I was working on this investigation my mother Daphne Iris Walker passed away. She was my biggest supporter. This thesis is dedicated to her memory.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis has taken up a substantial part of my life for some time. I wish to acknowledge the support of my family in this process. These people have supported me enormously.

I would like to thank Fiona, whose love, patience and support has been phenomenal.

I would also like to thank Professor John Mclaren, Dr Paul Adams and Associate Professor Phillip Deery for their assistance and insight. I would also like to acknowledge the members of the Arts Faculty Post-Graduate Studies Committee at Victoria University for their tolerance.

Finally I would like to thank my brother Graeme Walker, whose trained eyes and ability for the seemingly infinite recall of a word or phrase was invaluable to the final product.

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ABSTRACT

The texts of the Waterside Workers' Federation offer a valuable insight into the beliefs and activities of one of Australia's more powerful and militant unions. This investigation focuses on the period following the end of the 1930s and the years of World War 2 when the WWF was going through a rebuilding phase under a strong Communist leadership. Seen as an essential tool for the organizational rebuilding of a battered and fragmented Federation, the leaders of the union saw the establishment of a journal as a priority. The product of this vision was the widely distributed, monthly *Maritime Worker*. This newspaper became the masthead of a politically re-awakening union and through it historians have been able to access the ideological directions the WWF took to achieve its industrial and political objectives.

This investigation places the texts of the Waterside Workers' Federation under the scrutiny of a post-structuralist analysis that has the work of Michel Foucault as one of its principal features. The object of this project is to develop a critique of the organising processes that inform historical knowledge. These processes are recognised as the constraints that discourse functions place on all meaning and understanding. By focussing on the texts of the Waterside Workers' Federation and interrogating the interpretative features that support the notions of text, ideology and discourse, this investigation introduces the need for a re-examination of the constitutive and organisational features that have constrained and limited historical knowledge in the modern period.

INTRODUCTION

> Has not the practice of revolutionary discourse and scientific discourse over the past two hundred years freed you from this idea that words are wind, an external whisper, a beating of wings that one has difficulty hearing in the serious matter of history?
>
> Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge: p 209

The progress and direction of much critical theory, particularly in the last thirty years, has come to focus on language, its regulation and its practice as the formative basis of how we understand and relate to society. The relationship between language and society is one that is constantly challenging the social sciences and the humanities; investigations range in scope from the study of conversational and speech acts to structural linguistics; from discourse analysis to deconstruction. Overall, the influence of these trends has had a substantial impact on modern methods of critical analysis. A significant element underlying this interest are those features of language, which as French theorist Roland Barthes has argued, ceaselessly call into question all origins.[1] These sorts of epistemological questions have shaken our assurances in fixed and immediately knowable meanings or in simple relationships between language and the world. In the matter of historical research this type of enquiry has been a source of much dispute, particularly as these concerns delve into the origins of the philosophical and epistemological processes that have hitherto formed the bedrock of historical understanding, such as the belief, that with proper interpretative analysis, the text offers a direct pathway into the origins of historical knowledge. These enquiries into origins have sought to undermine many of the well-trodden paths on which both the interpreter and the historical agent have so far travelled. The easy mastery of language for instance which is implied in much of our historical tradition is one such feature under challenge.

Despite these deep and searching influences many historians have been suspicious of models that attempt to explore and apply the analysis of language - particularly critical discourse analysis - to areas of historical research. Many historians will no doubt argue that many of these investigations, when followed to the extremes of their logical modelling, are seen to be denying the very relevance of history. An early critic of this trend was the influential British historian E.P. Thompson, whose criticism of the work of French Marxist Louis Althusser argued that the descent of history into theory loses sight of the ability for the evidence to speak for itself[2] A more recent critic of this movement (that some have claimed is the 'post-modern turn' in history) is historian Gertrude Himmelfarb. Himmelfarb argued that post-modernism in history:

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[1] Barthes, R. (1968) 'The Death of the Author' in Lodge, D. (1988) Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader, Longman, London, (1991 ed): p 170.

> is a denial of the fixity of the past, of the reality of the past apart from what the historian choses to make of it, and thus of any objective truth about the past.[3]

One of the principal underlying features of this 'post-modernist age' is an increasing scepticism toward the notion of 'truth', and this scepticism has extended itself to the role of 'truth' in historical understanding. These trends have ensured that the principal materials on and through which historians practise their profession - the documentary evidence - are being rigorously scrutinised by methods influenced by structuralist and post-structuralist textual analysis. Under these types of analyses the historical texts are argued to have an indeterminable relationship with the notion of an objective reality. These investigations question the idea of a direct and unmediated link between experience and understanding.

These issues have found expression in the work of theorists such as Michel Foucault. He observed that historical texts were not the outcome of a natural process of thought and action but were the result of those ordering and categorisation processes that are involved in the particular notions of the historical which have developed in the modern period.[4] Foucault saw these processes connected to certain techniques and practices that bound knowledge and power together in a particular type of discursive relationship and this he argued had a direct bearing on the way history was understood:

> The document. . . is no longer for history an inert material through which it tries to reconstitute what men have done or said, the events of which only the trace remains; history is now trying to define within the documentary material itself unities, totalities, series, relations. History must be detached from the image that satisfied it for so long, and through which it found its anthropological justification: that of an age-old collective consciousness that made use of material documents to refresh its memory; history is the work expended on material documentation (books, texts, accounts, registers, acts,

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[2] Thompson, E.P. (1978) *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays*, Merlin, London: pp 217-25.
[3] Himmelfarb, G. (1992), 'Telling it as you like it: Post-modernist History and the Flight From Fact', TLS, October 16: p 12.
[4] Foucault, M. (1970) *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Random House, New York.

> buildings, institutions, laws, techniques, objects, customs, etc.) that exist, in every time and place, in every society, either in a spontaneous or in a consciously organised form. The document is not the fortunate tool of a history that is primarily and fundamentally *memory*; history is one way in which a society recognises and develops a mass of documentation with which it is inextricably linked.[5]

Critics such as Gertrude Himmelfarb who claim that he in fact denies the existence of a real 'objective world', thereby denying the existence of the historical event, have stridently attacked Foucault's work and his status as a historian. While the debates surrounding this claim will always remain, Foucault's work nevertheless offers some challenging insights into the methods of historical enquiry and the embeddedness of those methods in the same power practices through which the objects of historical investigation are framed and delineated. Foucault sees these practices manifest in such things as the bodies of knowledge which organise and categorise our understanding, and sees these practices manifest in the modes of enquiry and the rules of qualification and competency which support them. Unlike those who would see these practices as the manifestation of ideology, Foucault argues they are a function of discourse rather than of constituting subjects - a function that is determined by its own internal rules and strategies.

While this work draws a broad interpretation on the nature of language, meaning and society, the work of Michel Foucault will be the point of focus in this investigation for a number of reasons. One is the historical nature of his work and his grasp of the historical project of modernity,[6] the other is his prominent position in the tradition of structuralist and post-structuralist thinkers and his recognition of the linguistic function underpinning every meaningful act and the discursive construction of understanding itself. His work is vitally important in highlighting the autonomous relations that language has within social forms, and subsequently has challenged the understanding and the practice of history in significant and meaningful ways.

The scope of Foucault's work can be grouped into two distinct but theoretically related periods that explore and combine various aspects of the discursive nature of all understanding. While in many ways Foucault's treatment has its common reference in broader, more generic understanding of discourse, (which will be discussed later) Foucault's importance to a critical notion of discourse is linked to his deep analysis of resistance within discourse itself to be recuperated to the projects of modernity such as Marxism.

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[5] Foucault, M. (1972) *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, translated by A.M. Sheridan Smith, Pantheon, New York: p 7.

In his earlier 'archaeological' period Foucault makes two claims of particular importance:

1. the constitutive nature of discourse - discourse constitutes the social, including 'objects' and social subjects;
2. the primacy of interdiscursivity and intertextuality - any discursive practice is defined by its relations with others, and draws upon others in complex ways.

From Foucault's later 'genealogical' work three further substantive points emerge:

1. the discursive nature of power - the practices and techniques of modern 'biopower' (eg. examination and confession are to a significant degree discursive);
2. the political nature of discourse - power struggle occurs both in and over discourse and;
3. the discursive nature of social change - changing discursive practices are an important element in social change.[7]

In relation to these claims, three working definitions of a critical discourse analysis can therefore be formulated and act as a springboard into this investigation. The first is the broadest:

- The notion of discourse is that it comprises all utterances or texts which have meaning and which have some effects in the real world. In its scope of meaning this definition allies itself most closely to the notion of an epistemological field (or episteme as Foucault calls it) because it speaks not just of a single discourse or a particular group of discourses but of everything that has meaning. It is a notion that Foucault uses when discussing the notion of discourse at its most abstract.

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[6] Merquior, J.G. (1985) *Foucault*, Fontana, London: pp 11-20.
[7] Fairclough, N. (1992) *Discourse and Social Change*, Polity Press, Cambridge UK: pp55-56.

- The second definition that can be drawn - one that is associated with the first but allows a far more specific application of the notion of discourse - is that of a regulated practice that accounts for a number of what Foucault has identified as statements. In this Foucault has shown less interest in the actual utterances and texts that are produced than in the rules and the structures that produce them.

- The third and more pragmatic definition of discourse is that of an individualised group of statements that are specifically related to the things that are talked about. The pragmatism of this definition lies in its application: as Foucault uses it, he is concerned to talk about the structures within discourse that identify them as such. Thus we can speak of a discourse of economic liberalism or a discourse of imperialism. It is recognition of a discourse by the groups of regulated utterances that have a particular coherence and a force in common.

Chronologically it was in the 'archaeological' period of his work that Foucault postulated a series of compelling arguments that concluded with the idea that the function of discourse was to act as a mechanism of epistemological enclosure, or a limit on knowledge such as we would find within the political tracts of the early 20th century which defined knowledge and the subsequent creation of subjectivity bound within a certain discourse of class relations. Foucault's investigations highlighted two critical insights into the nature of discourse. The first was the constitutive function that saw discourse as actively determining society at various levels: Foucault argued that it was through discourse that knowledge and the objects to which it refers are constituted, and that through discourse social subjectivities and notions of 'self' and social relationships are constructed and conceptual frameworks are fixed. The second was the notion of intertextuality in the discourse practices of a society or institution - that discourse always draw upon and transforms other contemporary and historically prior texts.

It is this notion of intertextuality that becomes a fruitful line of enquiry in the understanding of historical processes, because it hints at the existence of both an expressive and creative aspect within discourse as well as a constitutive effect that offers new ways of understanding historical knowledge and the situated-ness of the agents that act within it. Ultimately ambivalence between those active and creative features on the one hand, and the constitutive features of discourse formation and regulation on the other, is a condition to which the investigation in this thesis naturally leads because the nature of textual analysis will always offer a glimpse into existence of an alternative - even if this alternative can only be tantalisingly found in the fleeting, deconstructive differánce of Derridean analysis.[8] In the limitations of this analysis however the principal concerns are in the ways that historical notions are captured within the regulation of discursive structures.

Reacting against modernist notions of an actively engaging subject or a historical teleology, Foucault's notions of intertextuality were not those of ideas or semiotic units that are actively picked up and incorporated into new settings. Foucault saw intertextual relations as the basic and functional elements of discursive regulatory practices and he conceived these as crossing and criss-crossing knowledge formations which constituted the elements of know-ability - but did not refer back to a central organising principle of continuity beyond its own regulatory practices. One example of this theory of knowledge that Foucault illustrated was in the function of discipline and surveillance, which he argued became manifest across and within the various discourse practices of different social institutions in a particular period.[9]

A central organising principle of this intertextuality was the notion of the statement, which Foucault saw as:

> Neither a syntagma or a rule of construction, nor a canonic form of succession and permutation; it is that which enables such groups of signs to exist, and enables these rules or forms to become manifest. But although it enables them to exist, it does so in a special way – a way that must not be confused with the existence of signs as elements of a language (*langue*), or with the material existence of those marks that occupy a fragment of space or last for a variable length of time.[10]

Within the discourse of Australian socialism, for instance, these intertextual units - or statements - criss-cross various fields of meaning tying together seemingly disparate notions of politics, sociality and subjectivity into meaningful forms of knowledge. Elements of expression within these discourses, such as calls for 'socialist solidarity' or 'socialism in our time', are intertextual units that cross boundaries of meaning and application as well as chronologies, and are situated beyond their immediate political functionality as a rallying call for action. These instead make reference to those organising strategies that bring discourse into existence. In the case of this investigation, these organising strategies can be argued to place constraints on those attempts by a union to freely embody a sense of unity and political action around a particular notion of political identity and social subjectivity.

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[8] Norris, C. (1982), *Deconstruction: Theory and Practice*, Routledge, London, (1991ed): pp 46-48.
[9] Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Pantheon, New York.

Much of Foucault's archaeological work however raised many more questions - particularly regarding the notion of a political potential within the constraints of discourse.[11] These questions led Foucault into a second phase of investigation - the 'genealogical period'. The work from this period produced a number of contentious conclusions, particularly those regarding the nature of power that have become something of a *bete noire* amongst historians. His expansion on the notion of inter-textual exchange and his contention that these occurred between and within discourses, exclusive to the actions of a controlling subject or grounded in socially determined material relations, was one such issue. The passage of history, according to Foucault, had never contained a mechanism which allowed it to be actively directed or controlled, nor redeemed in an ultimate reclamation of an essential human identity: for Foucault, history was not the progress of reason nor the dialectical outcomes of contradictions inherent in the material relations of society - history was the product of a discourse about history. In the context of this thesis Foucault's contention places serious constraints on understanding the ideological program of one Australian union whose attempts to consciously direct the political program of its members was based on an interventionist form of Marxist/Leninism. In countering the notion of ideology as grounding historical knowledge, Foucault argued that historical knowledge is regulated within a discursive archive that did not seek reference beyond its own practices. He argued that these practices:

> Determines that all ... things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass, nor are they inscribed in an unbroken linearity, nor do they disappear at the mercy of chance external accidents; but they are grouped together in distinct figures, composed

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[10] Foucault, M. (1972) op cit: p 88.

[11] Dreyfus, H. & Rabinow, P. (1983) *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism & Hermeneutics*, Uni of Chicago Press, Chicago: p 104.

> together in accordance with multiple relations, maintained or blurred in accordance with specific regularities.[12]

Foucault's notions on intertextuality were anti-humanist. This feature was contained in the suggestion that discourse was the process of an autonomous materialism found in discourse practices, and that these occluded any active creative aspect in its actual production. Foucault argued that knowledge was constituted and regulated through autonomous relations of power that were intrinsic to the structure of the discourses themselves. He argued that discourses worked through a field of discursive exclusion and valorisation to achieve a particular formation. Under such constraints it could be argued therefore that any attempts by a political movement such as a militant trade union to consolidate its unity under a freely constructed ideology of political emancipation would founder against the limitations of the discourse practices through which is was bound to speak. So, unlike many Marxists, who attempted to find the underlying structure of these relationships in the milieu of the social, Foucault argued that the mechanisms that constitute these relationships were an autonomous function of discourse. Whereas, ultimately Marxist analyses posited human subjectivity at the creative centre of meaning, what Foucault insisted was that the concepts used to support Marxist notions of 'objectivity' and 'truth' were implicitly and reflexively bound by the same criteria which were used to demonstrate their existence. He argued that these statements were constituted through the same mechanisms that enabled the idea of 'truth' and 'objectivity' to be spoken about in the first place. These supposed impartial concepts were, it could be argued, constituted by preformed points of reference and prejudice, which in the interpretative process already predispose a particular search for a particular truth to be undertaken in a particular way. There was therefore no 'outside' or a priori from which to speak of these things. For the historian therefore the challenging question was asked: 'How can history have a truth if truth has a history?'

Foucault's ideas threatened notions of critical methodology – such as those surrounding the concept of ideology - that had hitherto been used to challenge power relations in society and posed a substantial challenge to the interventionist potential of a political theory such as Marxism. Another threat was that they compromised claims to objectivity by denying the historian the opportunity of standing outside the very discursive structures which produced notions of objective truth. These features that undermine the notion of a critical methodology spread across the entirety of the interpretative process: from the analysis and retextualisation of an event or historical process by the historian; to the authors of those texts which correlate and attempt to circumscribe an event or historical process such as the authors of a union newspaper. Then there are those who are in immediate proximity to the text, such as the members of a union who read its publications. It is the features of this intertextuality that bring into focus the problems of asserting an independence from the texts and the discursive pressures which bear upon them.

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[12] Foucault, M. (1972) op cit: p 129.

Historians can begin to answer these challenges that are brought to bear on critical methodology by attempting to circumvent the need to respond to truth claims. In this particular analysis it is recognised that what is required is to firstly work through some of the problems that critical discourse theory introduces to interpretation in that discourse analysis functions as both critique and self-critique:

> First it functions as a tool of inquiry in the traditional task of interpretation of source, the exploitation of the archive of pertinent discourses that the historian uses to reconstruct the past. It is a formalist project that promises direct access to significant social processes; the formal description of the functioning of a discursive practice is at once the description of the structures and processes of social action. Second, analysis of the discourse of the historians themselves reveals the discursive strategies of preservation and thus the uses the historian makes of techniques, including discourse analysis itself.[13]

What this means in the context of studying history is an exploration of the past in the light of a number of questions that have arisen about language and its relationship with knowledge. If the task of history is to bring to light the events of the past in order to shed some illumination on the present, then in this age when language and knowledge production have become an integral part of the 'information age', the project of historical critique requires an understanding of the mechanisms through which the epistemological foundations of a given epoch or period have been constituted. By developing a critical method of discourse analysis this project will attempt to explore and challenge some of those themes for action in an historical sense, such as the notion of an emancipatory potential in Marxist understandings of history.

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[13] Struever, N. (1985) 'Historical Discourse' in Van Dijk T., *Handbook of Discourse Analysis: Vol. 1*, Academic Press, London: p 250.

The underlying justification for this investigation is recognition of the need for a re-examination of the historical texts in order to explore the ways in which the autonomy of discourse practices are capable of undermining and diffracting the notions of historical understanding and progress. It is an exploration therefore that seeks to challenge many of the modernist assumptions which lay the foundations of historical knowledge. It is this critique of the ideals on which historical knowledge is bound that philosopher David Couzens Hoy argues is Michel Foucault's point of departure. He suggests that Foucault:

> thinks the task today is not to defend reason or the ideals of the enlightenment tradition so much as to bring to awareness the dangers that have resulted from attempts to put these ideals into practice in social institutions that have had different historical effects than were intended.[14]

Accordingly it is in the work of Foucault where we find many of the challenges facing historians today. His work provides a useful starting point for outlining the problems that confront the historical profession. Importantly it is in Michel Foucault's notion of the epistemological field, or episteme, that we find the crucial expression of the conditions in which regimes of knowledge work to create the possibility of what can and cannot be known. The notion of the episteme, which had been most fully developed in his earlier 'archaeological' work, is the idea of a conceptual framework or an order of knowledge that exists as groups of discursive units outside of which things become unintelligible and incoherent. As Foucault says:

> I am not concerned therefore, to describe the progress of knowledge towards an objectivity in which today's science can finally be recognised; what I am attempting to bring to light is the epistemological field, the *episteme* [authors italics] in which knowledge, envisaged apart from all criteria having reference to its rational value or to its objective forms, grounds its positivity and thereby manifests a history which is not that of its growing perfection, but rather that of its conditions of possibility.[15]

The episteme in this sense is both anti-historical and anti-subjective. It is anti-historical in that it has no teleology in the sense of an underlying progression. There is no theme of an underlying unified historical principle emanating from Foucault's episteme except - as will be argued in Chapter VII - that which exists within the regulation of discourse practice itself. In fact Foucault is most critical of the concept of a unified principle and suggests that the task of critical understanding is in revealing the structures which bring about this unification:

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[14] Couzens Hoy, D. (1991) 'Foucault: Modern or Postmodern?' in Arac, J. (1991) *After Foucault: Humanistic Knowledge, Postmodern Challenges*, Rutgers University Press, NJ: p 21.

[15] Foucault, M. (1970) op cit: p xxii.

> Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are but to refuse what we are. We have to imagine and to build up what we could be to get rid of this kind of political 'double-bind', which is the simultaneous individualization and totalisation of modern power structures.[16]

Disassembling the principles of unity which has bound the formation of knowledge, Foucault "posits the episteme as a non-unified, multiple and complex field of play."[17] He suggests that each episteme is as unintelligible to one as the other - thus Foucault's description of discontinuity for example between the Classical and Modern period which he describes in his book *The Order of Things*.[18] An episteme is also anti-subjective in the sense that its creation is not based on agency or intended action:

> One had to dispense with the constituent subject, to get rid of the subject itself, that is to say, to arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework. And this is what I would call geneology, that is, a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs its empty sameness throughout the course of history.[19]

For Foucault the episteme is permeated by diffuse relations of power, but this notion of power developed by Foucault is complex because it refutes for instance the idea of repression that is a powerful theme that grounds and unites both Marxist and Freudian interpretations and brings them back to positing the subject at the centre of action. For Foucault power is not just a relationship between the dominant and the weak. For Foucault power is not to be 'had' at all:

> Power is not something that is acquired, seized or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations.[20]

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[16] Foucault. M. (1982), 'Truth and Power', in Dreyfus,H. & Rabinow, P. (1983) op cit: p 216.

[17] McHoul, A. & Grace. W. (1993), *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject*, Melbourne Uni Press, Melbourne: p 45.

[18] Foucault, M. (1970) op cit.

[19] Foucault, M. (1984a) 'Truth and Power: an interview with Alessandro Fontano and Pasquale Pasquino' in Rabinow, P. (1984) *The Foucault Reader*, Penguin, London: p 60.

[20] Foucault, M. (1978) *The History of Sexuality*, Penguin, London: p 94.

In Foucault's analysis, power becomes an autonomously enabling and creative force. In this thesis the notion of power is developed as an integral form of knowledge that criss-crosses the discourse of the Australian working class, embodying its sense of unity and collectiveness and giving it a subjective consciousness. So from within this discourse it could be seen that the embodiment of a Marxist dialectic - while it was seen as an attractive force in giving this subjective consciousness a political voice - is, from Foucault's standpoint, attempting to ground itself on a notion of truth which cannot stand outside those regulating practices which enable it to be spoken about in the first place. To ground a Marxist dialectic therefore in the notion of repression fails to take into account that it is an integral part of a discourse which creates its own subjectivities:

> The notion of repression is quite inadequate for capturing what is precisely the productive aspect of power. In defining the effects of power as repression, one adopts a purely juridical conception of such power; one identifies power with a law which says no; power is taken above all as carrying the force of a prohibition. Now I believe that this is a wholly negative, narrow, skeletal conception of power, one which has been curiously widespread. If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression.[21]

Foucault therefore disputes the notion of a subjective grasp, or human telos in history. The episteme does not constitute a *Weltanschauung* or world-view, since this assumes a coherence and cohesiveness to a set of ideas. As Mills suggests:

> [while] we might discuss the 'Romantic world-view' or the 'Elizabethan world-view', which is the philosophical and cultural underpinning of a particular group of people. . . an episteme consists of the sum total of the discursive structures which come about as a result of the interaction of the range of discourses circulating and authorised at that particular time. Thus, an episteme includes the range of methodologies which a culture draws on as self-evident in order to be able to think about certain subjects.[22]

The themes that Michel Foucault have pursued draw us to the ultimate problematic in pursuing the study of critical discourse as an historical method. If, as Foucault suggests we are inseparably bound to the episteme, the danger in arguing the case for critical discourse theory is that it has the potential to highlight the post-modernist assertions that there is no vantage point external to discourse from which truth-claims can be validated. Accordingly, a claim to a particular historical truth is self-validating and it is so because it can exclude 'other' notions of truth. Thus Foucault introduces us to the conundrum that when we speak of history we speak through a discourse that is self-actualising, and because of this dilemma the act of writing or 'doing' history is seen as self-referential because there is no privileged position from which to speak of the historical event. As Foucault suggests:

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[21] Foucault, M. (1984) op cit: pp 60-61.

[22] Mills, S. (1997), *Discourse*, Routledge, New York: pp 56-7

> We must not imagine that the world turns towards us a legible face which we would have only to decipher. The world is not the accomplice of our knowledge; there is no prediscursive providence which disposes the world in our favour.[23]

To see this problematic of self-referential closure in context for historians it is useful to consider Tony Bennett's arguments regarding the viability of Marxist discourse as a counter to a Foucauldian approach to history. Bennett would argue there are ultimate and disabling limitations in the 'post-modern' approach to history because it puts a brake on the emancipatory potential of a discourse like Marxism:

> To argue that Marxism 'is shot through with metaphors disguised as concepts' or that it is dependent on a whole battery of rhetorical and figurative devices is all very well, but in itself, hardly matters a jot. What would matter, what would count as helpful, would be to show that the existing stock of metaphorical, rhetorical and figurative devices used in Marxism had disabling theoretical and political consequences which could be remedied by the use of another set of similar devices. If this is not the point at issue, then deconstruction seems likely to do no more than to lock itself into a historical cul-de-sac in which it keeps alive the demand for transcendence simply by never-endingly denying its possibility - a criterion of essentialism which can rapidly become a lament for its loss, a consolation for the limitations of the human condition which is simultaneously a recipe for political quietism.[24]

In adopting a Foucauldian approach to history however I don't believe that the 'post-modern' approach necessarily leads to a denial that the evidential body of history exists as Himmelfarb suggested earlier. What this notion of the self-validation of 'truth claims' which is inherent in Foucault's work does allow us to do however is to adopt a critical stance against those organising principles which ground knowledge such as Marxist notions of the dialectic, or the Hegelian concept of Spirit in which interpretation is seen as external to actual history. Therefore it is a further concern of this investigation to examine the texts that make up one historical archive and explore their potential in terms of what they can bring to an historical understanding and also to highlight some of the constraints on which modernist notions of history and action are grounded.

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[23] Foucault, M. 'The Order of Discourse', in Young, R, *Untying the Text: A Poststructuralist Reader*, quoted in Mills, S (1997) op cit: p52

[24] Bennett, T. (1987) 'Texts in History: the Determinations of Readings and their Texts', in Attridge, D., Bennington, G. & Young, R., (1987) *Post-structuralism and the Question of History* Cambridge Uni Press, New York: pp 65-66.

The archive is that of an Australian trade union and this investigation proposes to analyse the discursive processes that surround it and give meaning to the union. The material is from the period 1938-45 and its principal feature is the *Maritime Worker* - the newspaper of the Australian Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF). The WWF, which amalgamated with the Australian Seamen's Union in 1993 to become the Maritime Union of Australia, has played a significant and influential part in the history of Australia's general industrial landscape through its trade unionism and working class politics. It is this influence that makes its activities of some interest in the critical analysis of discourse in the context of how one aspect of the Australian historical experience has been documented, read and retextualised. It is through this archive that the practices of discourse can be seen not only as providing the means for conveying a particular experience, but actually play a major part in constituting social subjects (the subjectivities and their associated identities), their relations and the fields of meaning in which they exist

Critical discourse analysis opens up many challenges for historians. As a critique of existing practices of interpretation and organization it demands an exploration of the ways in which language and power practices enter into the social body as discourse. A significant element in these concerns is an increased awareness of the duality of the interpretative act: a duality through which the past speaks to us at the same time as we speak to it. This awareness offers the insight that both positions in this duality - that of interpreter and the event - are mediated by a discourse that claims to have a knowledge of the past – a historical discourse in this case. Recognition of the pervasiveness of the discursive practices that are embedded in the historical event will enable historians to more critically reflect on their role in these practices as well as recognising their own enmeshment in the power relations that constitute the horizon of understanding and intelligibility through which all meaning is mediated. In this relationship between history and praxis the connection between subjectivity, structure and the discourse practices of society can be discerned and the impact that this insight has on any interpretation that claims to be free from the constraints of power is significant. The authority of the 'subjective viewpoint', for instance, is forced into greater scrutiny, and along with this the guarantee of meaning that has been previously given through the empirical and experiential relationship to what has been claimed to be the 'real', which is the reality that is assumed to exist beyond the social practices that define human existence.

At the critical heart of this investigation are concerns about what we understand to be the notion of 'truth' and its function in history. Can we for instance reclaim the humanist guarantee of the 'Subject' as a guarantee to 'truth', such as we would find in those notions that underpin the liberal tenets of individualism, or the collective subject that is embedded in much Marxist political theory? It is therefore not the intention of this survey to investigate the linguistic competency of a given discursive formation in order to examine its claim to 'truthfulness', because this notion relies on the premise of 'truth' as being something immutable against which all things are judged. What is under scrutiny is the very function of 'truth': a function that makes it possible to talk about something. As has been suggested, theorists like Michel Foucault would contend that the idea of 'truth' is not that of a measure of some eternally fixed quality against which all things are judged, but serves as an internal regulatory function within the processes of discourse. These questions about the nature and function of 'truth' have found fertile ground in Foucault's investigations into the nature of discourse, power and subjectivity.

What is proposed in this investigation is to attempt to identify and examine the parameters of constitutive reality that language imposes upon knowledge, and therefore how they place restrictions in the way knowledge is used as a social construct. To this effect the *Maritime Worker* can be seen to be working through a field of linguistic and symbolic valences that constitute a particular form of subjectivity and notion of the historical situatedness of that subject. The central thrust of this work is an attempt at a critical perspective to discourse analysis that attempts to respond to the conflicting role of language in understanding and exploring those linguistic and symbolic valences that constitute the horizon of meaning for both the historian and the historical subject.

CHAPTER I

FINDING A VOICE: THE UNION NEWSPAPER AND THE RE-MAKING OF AN AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNION 1938 –1945

> When Australia's honor was being dragged in the mud by politicians, when Prime Ministers and hack writers were endorsing aggression and lauding dictators and men who knew that conscience bade them speak the truth remained silent, it was on the waterfront that the conscience of the Australian people found expression.
>
> Rupert Lockwood, Jim Heally:Leader of the Waterside Workers' Federation p 10.

Critical discourse analysis does not seek to deny the actuality of history as Himmelfarb suggests; one of its principal goals is to subject it to revision and question the knowledge and practices that historians use to give it coherency and continuity. It is helpful to see the relation between discourse and the real in the terms set out by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe:

> The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has nothing to do with whether there is a world external to thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition. An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independently of my will. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of 'natural phenomena' or 'expressions of the wrath of God' depends upon the structuring of a discursive field. What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence.[25]

It is these features of coherency and continuity that this investigation seeks to explore and question. Part of this investigation is an attempt to explore the composition and meanings of discourse which constituted a particular period of Australian history within the context of the rebirth and rise of one of the nation's historically strongest union bodies – the Waterside Workers' Federation. It is in this context that this chapter and those following seek to outline the background to the rise of the union from a broken and dispirited organization in the 1920s and 30s and its attempt to become a strong, ideologically committed political and industrial body during the period following 1938. The chapters following attempt to chart this transformation and the processes that underpinned it in terms of the discursive practices that gave it direction, coherence and meaning.

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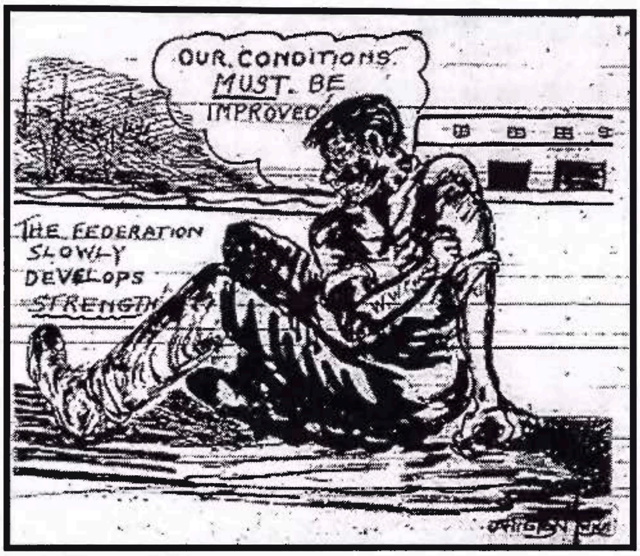
[25] Laclau, E. & Mouffe, C. (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics,* quoted in Mills, S. (1997) op cit: p50.

In 1938, the first year of publication of the *Maritime Worker*, the Australian Waterside Workers' Federation was a broken and divided union.[26] Its members had experienced the devastation of global depression in the 1930s; they were working in a physically unsafe and antiquated industrial environment and were doing so under the conditions of a widely despised industrial award and a restrictive licensing act which strictly regulated the terms of their employment and constrained their ability to do anything to remedy the conditions on the wharves.[27] In fact it was this industrial award – the Beeby Award of 1928 – that precipitated a nationwide strike that in its defeat, broke the back of the union, but was eventually to underwrite the conditions for a strong and confident new era in waterfront unionism. As Jim Healy, General Secretary of the union from 1937 to 1961 recognised, it was the disintegration of the union after 1928 that forced the combined branches to realise the importance of achieving national unity. [28] The *Maritime Worker* was both a product and a driving force in this rebuilding phase and as such is of great importance in understanding how this was undertaken.


OUR. CONDITIONS MUST. BE IMPROVED
THE. FEDERATION SLOWLY DEVELOPS STRENGTH
WWF

The period between 1938 and 1945 was significant in the history of the WWF. The union newspaper, the *Maritime Worker* documents this importance, both as a record of events and a journal of the ideas and discussions which surrounded them. This was a period both of substantial upheaval and enormous challenges for Australian wharfies. In the union general elections in late 1937 a bevy of Communists, (including Jim Healy, the man who was to lead the WWF until his death in 1961) were elected to power on the promise to unite the union and consolidate its industrial power within Australian society.[29] The events of World War II became the catalyst on the Australian waterfront and in the union itself, both for vast improvements in working practices and cargo handling technologies. The political outcomes of World War II also provided the ideological and practical model of a successful and powerful Communist state in the form of the Soviet Union from which the union was given some substance for its own beliefs.[30]

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[26] Beasley, M. (1996) *Wharfies: A History of the Waterside Workers' Federation,* Halstead Press, Sydney: pp 76-103.

[27] Lowenstein, W. & Hills, T. (1982) *Under The Hook: Melbourne Waterside Workers Remember*, Melbourne Bookworkers, Melbourne: p 62.

The *Maritime Worker* was a monthly publication with a standard tabloid format. Encompassing a newspaper type structure the *Maritime Worker* is a complex work with which to engage in the analysis of discourse for a number of reasons. Principally there are two, potentially contradictory elements in this type of text that need to be recognised, as having a significant impact on the way the text is understood. These two elements are those that have the potential to reveal both the nature of the constitutive as well as the dialogical in the discursive construction of meaning. Firstly newspapers, in their production and scope incorporate a wide range of disparate texts and discourses. This breadth and those forces of centralisation that organise newspaper production give historians access to a wide discursive field. They also physically draw those elements which make up this field into a central point of organization, thereby offering the opportunity to explore the forces through which the conditions and the regularities of epistemic intelligibility can be charted and brought into focus. The centripetal forces inherent within newspaper production therefore source a wide range of texts and discursive techniques together in the one document, thereby giving greater access to the common features involved in discursive formation, for instance the linguistic economies which outline the socialist narrative that run through a union periodical. However, this intertextual range also has a potential to reveal a destabilising force within the episteme: the broad range of texts that the newspaper draws upon also has the potential to unearth alternative discourses that may destabilise the predominating meta-narratives of social and historical understanding which underline its production by creating the conditions for what

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[28] Williams, V. (1975), *The Years of Big Jim*, Lone Hand Press: p 39.

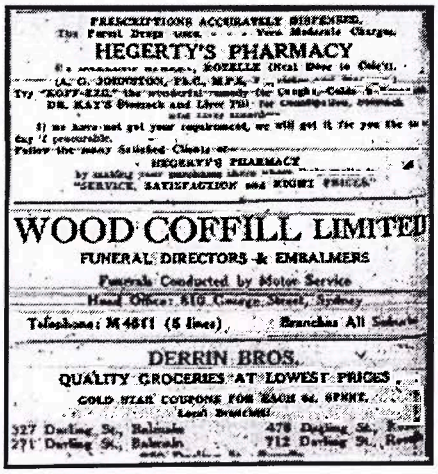
[29] Lowenstein, W. & Hills, T. (1982) op cit: p 84.

[30] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: pp 104-139.

Mikhail Bakhtin calls heteroglossia which is conceived as the polyphony of social and discursive forces that surround any event.[31]

The contradiction posed between the constitutive and the dialogical notion of discourse that is apparent in the text concerns the question: how much can alternative discourses or destabilising elements within the dominating discourse differ from the regulative practices of the predominating epistemes, and therefore exist in reality as alternative forms of discourse? It could be said for instance that the conflicting and adversarial political discourses of the period, through which the *Maritime Worker* charts its course, are marked not by difference but a form of cross-referentiality or intertextuality in which they interact in a form of epistemic unity. A focus of this investigation therefore will be on those features of discursive production and regulation that bring them together into an epistemological whole.

The *Maritime Worker* was a monthly paper consisting of an amalgam of different styles and genres - embracing advertisements for things such as shoe polish, funeral services or beer, to the results of union elections - it contained a broad mix of opinion, news and service articles. Critical analysis of this medium requires recognition of the different tiers of production and multiplicity of strategies that constitute and frame its existence. These levels of production can be opened up to analysis under the general headings of discourse, ideology and the text, and these will be the themes pursued through this investigation. To clarify these terms in context therefore it may be said that not only was the *Maritime Worker* the textual product of the executive body of the Waterside Workers' Federation's desire to construct and communicate a particular political, industrial and social agenda - in effect an active ideological perspective - but the *Maritime Worker* was also framed within the conceptual apparatuses of its period that defined its horizons of intelligibility. The former strategy allows for a substantial degree of conscious ideological production in the presentation of the *Maritime*



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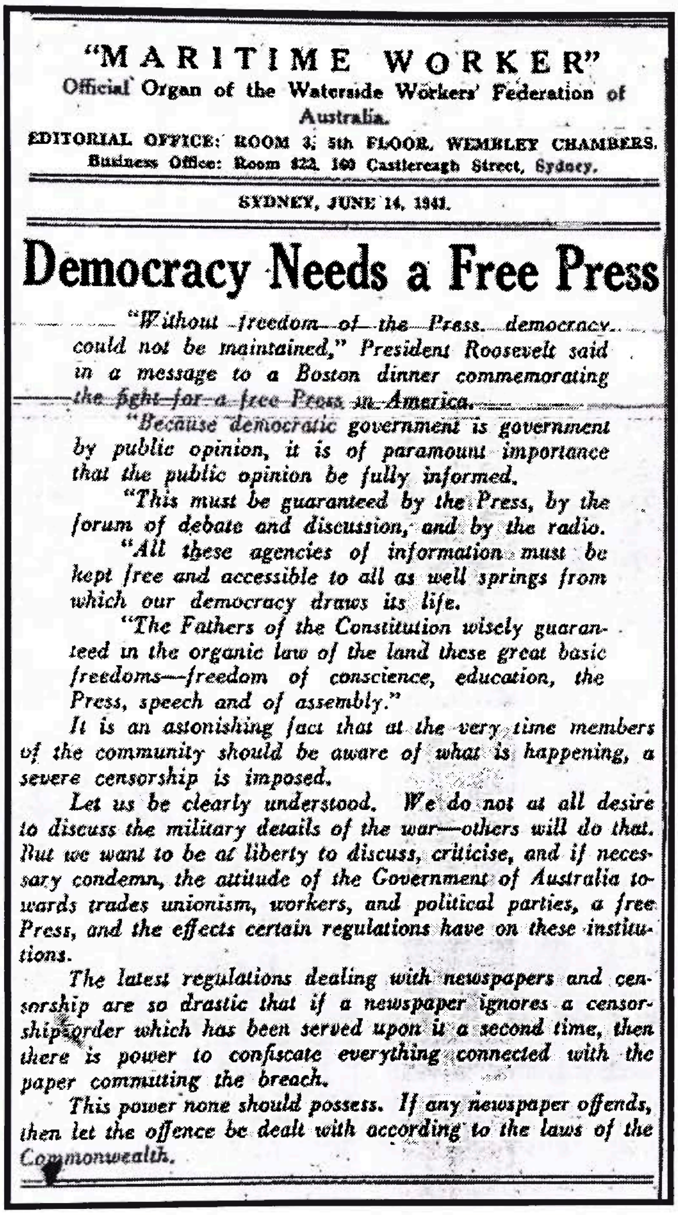
[31] Holquist, M. (1990) *Dialogism: Bakhtin & his World*, Routledge, London: pp 69.70.

Worker: the publishers have a choice about what is said in the newspaper and who says it. The text of the newspaper develops as a more problematic area of investigation however because it operates at a level of production that in many ways has an internal regulatory function that resists intervention by both an historical and an interpretative agency.



"MARITIME WORKER"
Official Organ of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia.
EDITORIAL OFFICE: ROOM 3, 5th FLOOR, WEMBLEY CHAMBERS.
Business Office: Room 422, 160 Castlereagh Street, Sydney.

SYDNEY, JUNE 14, 1941.

Democracy Needs a Free Press

"Without freedom of the Press, democracy could not be maintained," President Roosevelt said in a message to a Boston dinner commemorating the fight for a free Press in America.

"Because democratic government is government by public opinion, it is of paramount importance that the public opinion be fully informed.

"This must be guaranteed by the Press, by the forum of debate and discussion, and by the radio.

"All these agencies of information must be kept free and accessible to all as well springs from which our democracy draws its life.

"The Fathers of the Constitution wisely guaranteed in the organic law of the land these great basic freedoms—freedom of conscience, education, the Press, speech and of assembly."

It is an astonishing fact that at the very time members of the community should be aware of what is happening, a severe censorship is imposed.

Let us be clearly understood. We do not at all desire to discuss the military details of the war—others will do that. But we want to be at liberty to discuss, criticise, and if necessary condemn, the attitude of the Government of Australia towards trades unionism, workers, and political parties, a free Press, and the effects certain regulations have on these institutions.

The latest regulations dealing with newspapers and censorship are so drastic that if a newspaper ignores a censorship order which has been served upon it a second time, then there is power to confiscate everything connected with the paper committing the breach.

This power none should possess. If any newspaper offends, then let the offence be dealt with according to the laws of the Commonwealth.

This period between 1938 and 1945 was a period in which the industrial consolidation of the WWF was pursued by its leadership. Following a prolonged period of political and industrial attack from outside the organization as well as the destabilising effects of internal divisions, it was a union seeking to strengthen itself under a new, predominantly Communist leadership. Through its newspaper, the federal executive of the WWF sought to assert its position as the focal point for union policy, belief and action. The importance of having control of communication was seen as paramount in this union, which for much of its history cast itself at the forefront of the Australian industrial labour movement. The paramount example of the importance given to media control within the WWF was the establishment in the 1950s of a film unit, which produced among other titles *The Hungry Mile* (1955), *November Victory* (1955), a strike newsreel (1955-56), and *Hewers of Coal* (1956).[32]

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[32] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: p 162.

On securing the position of General Secretary in late 1937 Jim Healy promoted the establishment of the *Maritime Worker* as one of the principal objectives in the task of rebuilding the union.[33] Healy's unity program meant that consolidation of control of the newspaper at the federal level was vital. It was quickly relocated from its initial location in Melbourne to Healy's power base in Sydney. An editorial board for the *Maritime Worker* was established by August 1938 to control policy and consisted of each of the State elected representatives on the Federal Committee of Management, with Healy as General Secretary as Editor in Chief.[34] Given its structure and organization it is reasonable to suggest that this board was modelled on a democratic centralist ideal such as those Davison argued typified Communist organizations.[35] In his opening address in the *Maritime Worker* in 1938 Healy reinforced the importance of the centre to the organization:

> The Federal office is the centre of the organization, its services and assistance are all at times at the disposal of the branches and its members, and it is vitally necessary that the centre should be kept informed at to the activities of each and every one of the 46 branches.[36]

Healy edited the paper himself for the first twelve months and subsequently handed the day-to-day control to his friend and fellow Communist Ben Scott, with whom he had travelled through the Soviet Union in 1934. Healy, the principal architect of the *Maritime Worker*, appeared to remain very much in control of its editorial direction.

From the beginning of its publication the use of the *Maritime Worker* as a 'propaganda' tool, as stated by Healy,[37] was developed in a sophisticated and articulate manner. It managed to remain coherent and focused throughout its early history. During the various periods of censorship imposed on radical organizations in the late 30s and early 40s it maintained strong debate on social, political and industrial issues despite the Communist influence in the union, and during the Second World War it maintained circulation in spite of severe newsprint rationing. This was a period in Australian history in which such restrictions as the penal clauses of the federal Crimes Act of 1932, the banning of the Communist Party in June 1940 and wartime censorship all circumscribed the political programme of the union. Censorship was an issue that Jim Healy felt was unfairly targeted at union papers. In an editorial in 1940 he claimed that the *Maritime Worker* was subject to "a full censorship, more rigid than that applied to the ordinary daily press..."[38]

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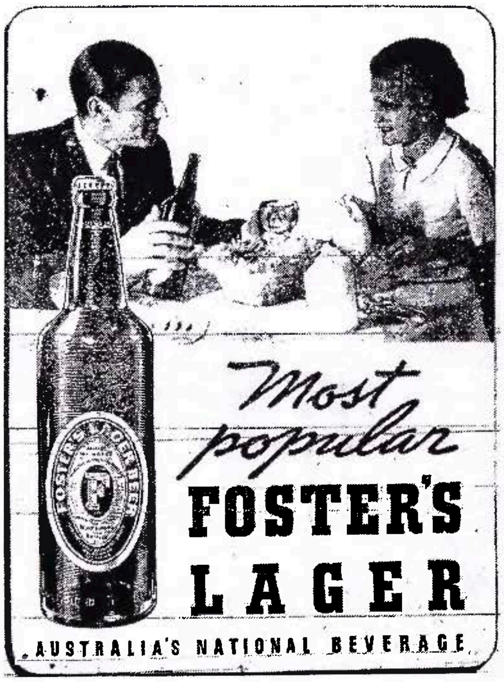
[33] Williams, V. (1975) op cit: p 38

[34] *Maritime Worker*, 'Editorial Board – Decision of C.O.M., Vol. 1, No.5, August 1938: p5.

[35] Davidson, A. (1969), *The Communist Party of Australia: A Short History*, Hoover Inst Press, Stanford: p 38.

[36] *Maritime Worker*, 'Greetings from the General Secretary', Vol.1, No.1, April 1938: p 1. See Picture 3 in Appendix.

This was also a period in which Australian governments appeared more than willing to enforce legislation designed to inhibit the activities of unions and radical political groups, as well as individuals. In May 1940, the Menzies Government illustrated this willingness by placing a ban on any publication it deemed seditious, outlawing a series of Communist publications including the *Wharfie,* published on the Sydney waterfront.[39] It is clear however that the *Maritime Worker's* role in maintaining waterfront peace and production during the war was recognised, particularly by the Curtin Labor Government. This is evident in the fact that during the period of newsprint restrictions it managed to continue publication in a largely unchanged format. It is testimony to the efforts of its publications committee that it managed to skilfully and successfully manoeuvre around the obstacles of censorship to ensure that the *Maritime Worker* survived and continued to fulfil its role during this period and beyond.



The editorial and journalistic policy of the *Maritime Worker* displayed substantial acumen and an intuitive approach to writing that showed a maturity that was neither too glib nor too dry in its presentation. It combined a number of features of standard newspaper design. It followed a standard tabloid-sized newspaper format that combined the three broad categories of newspaper presentation and design: service information; opinion; and news.[40] The service information consisted of lists rather than continuous copy - such as branch election results. The opinion copy included the 'editorials' or 'leaders'; and the third

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[37] *Maritime Worker*, 'Greetings from the General Secretary', Vol.1, No.1, April 1938: p 1.
[38] *Maritime Worker*, 'Where Is Labor Going?' Vol.3, No.4, July 13, 1940: p4.
[39] Brown, W.J. (1986) *The Communist Movement & Australia: A Historical Outline 1890s to 1980s*, Australian Labor Movement History Publications, Sydney: p 110.
[40] Bell, A. (1991), *The Language of News Media*, Blackwell, London: p 13.

category - news – was divided into four sub-categories: hard news; feature articles; special topic news such as sports, racing, arts, etc; and finally headlines, cross heads or subheadings, by-lines and photo captions.

A sound knowledge of newspaper structure and design typified the *Maritime Worker* - a feature that suggested the importance its publishers gave to the medium in supporting their needs. A reasonable understanding of format and layout was evident, and educated techniques of presentation and production were used to attract attention and maximise comprehension. One article written by the Communist leader of the Waterside Workers' Federation Sydney branch, Tom Nelson illustrates some of these strategies of design and presentation:

> **"Under Below"**
>
> **Coming from the length** and breadth of Australia, more than 60 wharfies - representatives of all the people of the Federation - met in Sydney last November, and came to the conclusion that progress in certain Federation demands was dependent on the Parliament having more powers to deal with them.
>
> **To a man** these delegates demanded a humane National Compensation Act, as well as National Navigation and Safety Regulations.
>
> **Ward, Beasley, Ford** and other big shots who were present regretted the Government's lack of power to solve these and other demands, such as co-operative stevedoring.
>
> **Unless the National Parliament** gets these new powers, many Federation needs will remain merely empty demands.
>
> **The objective** of the A.L.P. is socialisation by legislation. This, of course is not possible under the present Australian Constitution. Fadden, who said he preferred the rule of Hitler to that of the Trade Unions, is now resorting to the most despicable slander of the real meaning of a "Yes" vote.[41]

This particular article was designed to strike a familiar chord with its 'wharfie' readership. It did this by its use of certain presentation techniques such as metaphor and commonly understood phrases. The colloquial headline "Under Below" made a direct appeal to a familiar saying of the waterside workers: this was the traditional call for the men in the ship's hold to watch out for the cargo being lowered. In both contexts – rhetorical and literal - it represented a call for caution and watchfulness. The article was also structured with an emphatic style of presentation designed to be eye-catching in its impact. The paragraphs are short and concise and the first four or five words of each paragraph were highlighted in bold point, thus making a visual statement. These strategies promoted the reading of the article vertically as well as horizontally, and the bold lettering was used to demonstrate the main points of the article and promote the readers' ability to recall the message.

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[41] *Maritime Worker*, 'Under Below' Vol.7, No.5, August 12, 1944: p 4.

The scope of the *Maritime Worker* suggests it was designed to fulfil a multiple purpose in the agenda of the union. The presentation of these functions was delivered in a reasonably sophisticated manner, particularly if it is compared with a range of trade union periodicals over this period. These multiple objectives were encompassed in articles ranging from the instructive and the educational to the edifying and the argumentative. It was obvious that this was a newspaper intended for serious consumption and therefore was cast as an alternative to the mainstream media. It was a strongly political periodical: the opinion content was confrontational and involved itself in adversarial dialogue with the major Australian conservative newspapers over political and social issues as well as industrial ones. Its feature articles contributed to a general history of the union and the labour movement and provided a broad range of articles on the principles of unionism and labour politics as well as loosely structured socialist and Communist theory and action. It distributed branch news and comment from around Australia and provided general service information such as pay rates, election results, awards, etc. The November 1940 edition of the *Maritime Worker* contained five pages of detailed reports from the Triennial Conference of the WWF on all the matters that were discussed.[42]

Jim Healy saw union-fostered education as important. After a trip to the Soviet Union in 1934 Healy remarked admiringly on the educational and cultural development of the members of the Russian Water Transport Union:

> In 1932 it had one hundred and one clubs. It had fourteen powerful broadcasting stations and ninety-two cinemas. It had two hundred and ninety libraries ashore and two thousand five hundred afloat with five million books. In 1931 it founded a central newspaper.[43]

The *Maritime Worker* fostered the education of union members. In doing so it was maintaining a long-established union function that in the past had been facilitated by such things as the union libraries and guest speakers in the union clubrooms. Many editions of the paper contained recommended reading lists from the Left Book Club: such titles included John Strachey's *Theory and Practice of Socialism; Red Star Over China* by Edgar Snow; and *Promised Land* by Cedric Belfrage.[44]

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[42] *Maritime Worker,* Vol.3, No.9, November 16, 1940: pp 5-10.

[43] Healy, J. & Scott, B. (1934) *Red Cargo: Impressions of the Soviet Union,* Friends of the Soviet Union, NSW.

The structure and presentation of the *Maritime Worker* assumed that the comprehension levels of the average wharfie were of an educated standard. It neither talked down to the wharfies nor assumed too much. The mix of political and industrial articles as well as the articles of general interest assumed a readership which was well informed and aware of both Australian and international issues of the day. Many articles were sophisticated in their specificity. In one edition of the paper for instance an article titled 'The Composition & Resolution Of Forces'[45] illustrated reasonably complex mechanical formulas that represented the forces at work on a cargo-handling derrick. Similarly articles titled 'Manila Rope and Steel Wire Rope: Their Weight and Strength'[46] suggested that if a wharf labourer better understood the forces at work in cargo-handling then he was better able to make judgements about safety procedures and also demonstrate this understanding to the stevedoring foreman when one of the numerous disputes over safety arose.

The broad-based style of the *Maritime Worker* suggests it was intended to have a greater readership than just the members of the WWF. Its distribution would certainly have followed the sorts of physical connections wharfies traditionally had within the networks of transport workers. These networks facilitated the spread of news and information within the transport industry. Wharf labourers were at the hub of the transport unions. Between the ship and the docks they were the link between the interstate and international seamen and the transport drivers and railway workers. Copies of the newspaper found their way aboard ships heading to other ports and aboard the trains to destinations inland. One edition of the paper in 1940 acknowledged receipt of the *Maritime Worker* by the International Transport Workers' Federation in Amsterdam.[47]

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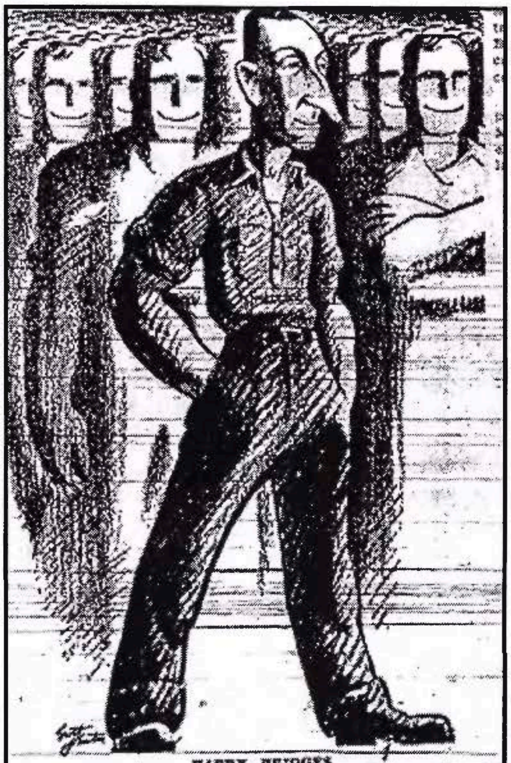
[44] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Left Book Club Comes to Australia', Vol.1, No.8, November 1938: p6.
[45] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Composition and Resolution of Forces', Vol.3, No.5, August 1940: p5.
[46] *Maritime Worker*, 'Manilla Rope and Steel Wire Rope: Their Weight and Strength', Vol.3, No.5, August 1940: p5.
[47] *Maritime Worker*, 'International Transport Workers' Federation', Vol.3, No.3, June 1940: p2. See also Picture 25 in Appendix.

Being located at the hub of a vast communication network the *Maritime Worker* would have also been a conduit for the influences of ideas and political movements from overseas. Traditionally waterfront culture was underpinned with a strong and pervasive network of information - both domestic and international. Wharfies were always well connected and well informed of the latest in local and international news and information, which for its speed of access was a unique experience among Australian unions. This culture benefited strongly from the ideas and influences carried to and fro by the sailors of the international shipping lines exchanging news from overseas. Rowan Cahill discussed the strength of this internationalism in the maritime industry at a history conference in 1999:

> The fact is that maritime workers – that is all those workers involved in the loading and unloading of ships, and the seamen who sail them – pioneered internationalism. One of the general realisations by dockers and seamen during the late nineteenth century was that effective local agitation sometimes required international links; hence the origins in 1896 of moves to create the International Transport Workers' Federation. Australia was no slouch in this direction; the great London Dock strike of 1889, which had a significant impact on the development of British trade unionism, was to a great extent sustained by Australian trade union funds.[48]



HARRY BRIDGES

The life story of the indomitable Harry Bridges is begun in this issue of "The Maritime Worker" and readers will be thrilled to read of the heroic struggle of the Pacific [illegible] shoremen for their rights, ably led and organised by their Australian-born secretary.

Australian wharfies were therefore familiar with the organisational networks and the debates of the international socialists. This culture of political and social awareness impacted strongly on what was - for a periodical of this time - the sophisticated nature of the *Maritime Worker*. The network of contributors to the newspaper suggests that this was the case. The extent of coverage in the *Maritime Worker* during 1938, for instance, regarding the attempted deportation from the USA of Australian-born Harry Bridges, the head of the American-based International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union is indicative of this international political awareness.[49]

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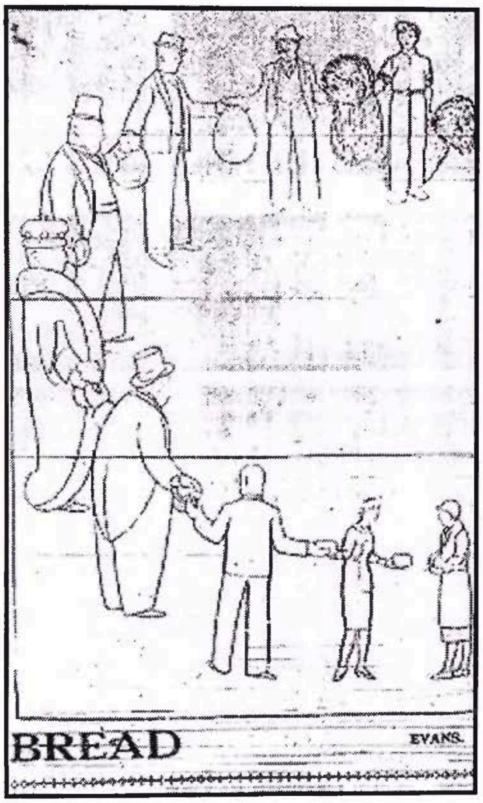
[48] Cahill, R. (1999) from a paper presented to 'On the Waterfront: Union Gains and Struggles 1890-1998', a conference organised by the Sydney Branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, Sydney University, 20 February, 1999: p 2.

The *Maritime Worker* was a highly political periodical and as such made many appeals to notions of justice and civil rights. These appeals were underlined by a call to the readers to be vigilant in their understanding of Australian and international political and legal processes. Many articles therefore cited the classic texts of political philosophy as part of this appeal. In one editorial, Jeremy Bentham, the English utilitarian philosopher, was quoted in recognition of the need for agitation on a particular piece of government legislation:

> In the darkness of secrecy, sinister interest and evil in every shape have full swing. Only in proportion as publicity has place can any of the checks applicable to judicial injustice speak. Where there is no publicity there is no justice. Publicity is the very soul of justice. It is the keenest spur to exertion and the surest of all guards against improbity. It keeps the judge himself while trying under trial. The security of securities is publicity.[50]



The guiding editorial principles of the first few decades of publication of the *Maritime Worker* were based on the tenets of scientific socialism. These principles were evident in many articles that implied that a good understanding of the asymmetry of the laws of social development would lead to a greater awareness of certain truths concerning injustice and inequality in Western society, and thus bring about political, social and economic change. One such article in 1940 was titled 'The Economic Structure of Australia: 100 Years of Change', and developed the notion of the laws of economic progression from the simple exchange systems of the Australian Aborigine to that of monopoly capitalism.[51] Underlying this theme was the notion that if left unchecked capitalism would always eventuate in an unfair system of social relations that reinforced the negative balance of power against the workers.

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[49] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Life Story of Harry Bridges', Vol.1, No's 3&4, June & July 1938.

[50] *Maritime Worker*, 'National Register', Vol.2, No.6, August 1939: p 6.

[51] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Economic Structure of Australia: 150 Years of Change', Vol.3, No.6, September 1940: p8.

The scientific socialist leanings of the *Maritime Worker* revealed the Communist political affiliations of the union executive and appeared in marked contrast to the general and idealist notions of an earlier period of utopian and syndicalist socialism. The scientific approach to socialism aligned itself with the theoretical base of the Communist International, which elaborated on the theories of Marx, Engels and Lenin in the development of a materialist philosophy and political economy that sought to analyse and lay bare the objective, law-governed processes that were purported to be the root cause of capitalism's recurrent instability. These influences were illustrated in many articles in the *Maritime Worker* that sought to establish the causal linkages in certain events or political and financial relationships, and expose the contradictions found therein. Thus the *Maritime Worker* contained articles that sought to explain specific instances of economic, political and class relations by seeking to expose the law-governed processes of social relations that existed under capitalism. One such article for instance sought to illustrate a financial connection between British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and Adolf Hitler in order to explain the suggestion of 'secret agendas' behind the appeasement policies of the British Government.[52]

A strong ideological determination was shown in the establishment of the *Maritime Worker*. The belief that the control of the written word was a significant means not only of directing the union agenda but also exerting influence within the labour movement was clearly illustrated. Articles spoke about the power of language to bring about political and industrial outcomes, and other articles warned of the power that language could also have in masking understanding. In a 1939 editorial, recognition of the power of language to both clarify and obscure argument was demonstrated when the author of the editorial went on the attack against the jargonised reporting of the Arbitration Court:

> We are of the firm opinion that there is an immediate need to make future Awards of the Arbitration Court on much more simple lines, without the addition of unnecessary legal jargon and worded in such a manner that the average workman can understand quite clearly the intentions of the Court when laying down the conditions under which he is to work and remove for all time the dangers of anomalous clauses.[53]

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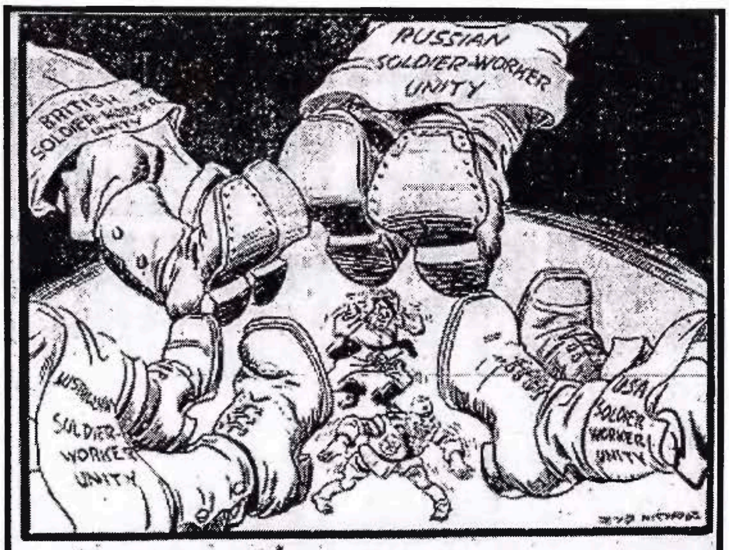
[52] *Maritime Worker*, 'Links Between Chamberlain and Hitler', Vol.2, No.1, April 1939: p2.
[53] *Maritime Worker*, 'Two Way Decision – Chief Judge Errs: Puzzles of Arbitration', Vol.2, No.4, July 1939: p4.

Where this belief in the power of controlling the media of communication was most forcefully stated was in direct relation to attempts to influence the union agenda. From the first issue of the *Maritime Worker* this belief was clearly stated. Jim Healy began his first editorial with the statement:

> Comrades - Today we pass another milestone in the history of our Federation. The need for a journal such as this has been long evident, not only for the purpose of bringing union news and comments thereon directly before the members but also as an organising and propaganda medium. . . In conclusion I wish to emphasise that the "Maritime Worker" is YOUR PAPER.[54]

Promoting the unity of the union through the pages of the *Maritime Worker* was regularly pursued and broadly applied. In one editorial in May 1942, the appeal for national unity in the fight against Australia's wartime enemies - illustrating the Waterside Workers' Federation's adoption of the Communist Party of Australia's commitment to the war effort following the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Germany - was coupled with an appeal for a unity of purpose and action on the waterfront.


RUSSIAN SOLDIER-WORKER UNITY
BRITISH SOLDIER-WORKER UNITY
AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER-WORKER UNITY
USA SOLDIER WORKER UNITY

STEPS OF DOOM

> **DEFEAT OF FASCISM REQUIRES WATERFRONT UNITY**
>
> During the past four weeks the Stevedoring Commission has found it necessary to pay particular attention to the situation in the Port of Melbourne. As a result of the conditions arising in the port, it was decided to introduce a gang system to control the working of waterfront labor in that port. . .

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[54] *Maritime Worker* 'Greetings From the General Secretary', Vol.1, No.1, April 1938: p1.

> There are, however, some individuals who are endeavouring to disrupt the harmonious working of the scheme because they personally do not see eye to eye with this method of control. These people ignore the fact that the country is at war and that steps have been taken by the Government, under National Security Regulations, to control all forms of industrial activity. Regulations have been introduced, which have for their aim the control of labor forces in the most important branches of the nation's essential services. Those members of the Federation who think, for one moment, that their personal convenience can receive prior consideration will find a rude awakening . . .The Federation is determined that the menace of Fascist aggression that is hanging over this country is defeated . . . The General Secretary appeals to all members to sink personal prejudices and parochial difficulties and to make a solid front for the defeat of Fascism.[55]

The *Maritime Worker* was also used as a tool to return disaffected branches to the Federation. Healy was emphatic in the importance he gave to the role of the *Maritime Worker* in the attempt to bring the disaffiliated Fremantle Lumpers' Union back into the Federation:

> Copies of our journal, the "Maritime Worker", are supplied to the Fremantle Lumpers, and I have recent advice from the Fremantle Lumpers' Union that our paper is read with interest and a keen interest is taken in Federation matters.
>
> In view of the fact that the Fremantle Lumpers have lost their own paper recently, the "Maritime Worker" will well play an effective part in bringing the Fremantle Lumpers' Union back to the ranks of the Federation.[56]

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[55] *Maritime Worker*, 'Defeat of Fascism Requires Waterfront Unity', Vol.5, No.2, May 1942: p 4.

[56] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Triennial Conference: General Secretary's Report', Vol.3, No.9, Nov. 1940: p7

CHAPTER II

HISTORY AS TEXT: THE BACKGROUND TO THE STRUGGLES OF THE WATERSIDE WORKERS' FEDERATION.

Even though the foundation of this investigation is its textual orientation this is not to suggest that historical events or periods are unknowable, separate from the text. As E.P. Thompson argues, the evidence exists apart from the forms of thought which organise it:

> The evidence...has a "real" (determinant) existence independent of its existence within the forms of thought, that this evidence is witness to a real historical process, and that this process (or some approximate understanding of it) is the object of historical knowledge.[57]

What occurred in this period under investigation was the product of preceding events and circumstances, and these outcomes became a factor in future events. This chapter attempts to outline its evidential features and provide the background against which the notion of the text is interpreted and the processes that organise these texts are recognised and understood. The text in this case was embodied in the *Maritime Worker,* which existed at the juncture of a number of streams of meaning and understanding that marked the period. The text represents the linguistic domain in which the materiality, form and structure of language can be placed under scrutiny. It represents both the singular and the collective such as a newspaper article, or a collective body of literature such as the archival collections of the Waterside Workers' Federation. The text is also represented in the notion of an utterance - for example the speech of a union speaker delivered from a soapbox on the banks of the Yarra River. The *Maritime Worker* existed in a sense as a multi-layered text that incorporated a spectrum of historical and political understanding, all of which were developed in a broad discursive framework. These were subsumed under the ideological direction of the Communist leadership of the Waterside Workers' Federation.

The significance of the period outlined lay in the confluence of a number of factors that can be seen in the years leading up to and during this period. These factors

- externally in national and international events as well as internally in the dynamics of the Federation itself - all had a significant impact on the objectives, directions and outcomes of the union. It was during this period that centralised union control under the leadership of the Communist Jim Healy was being consolidated. The tasks involved for Healy and his allies in uniting a broken, divided and fractious union were enormous - certainly so for a Communist in this period of fear and uncertainty - and with confused and vacillating directives emanating from the Communist Party of Australia not helping the cause. During this point in its history - possibly more so than any other period - the WWF was beset by its tradition of branch autonomy and the divisions that this caused to the Federation, compounded by the existence of rival unions of 'scab' labour on various Australian waterfronts. These were the combined legacies of defeat wrought by the strikes of 1917 and 1928, and the economic depression of the 1930s.

This period was also significant for the WWF because it was one during which the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) demonstrated varying degrees of willingness for cooperation and collaboration within the wider Australian labour movement. [58] To a degree, this relationship can be seen in the political and ideological direction of the WWF itself. The vacillation and on-again-off-again relationship of the CPA with the Australian labour movement went through a number of often-contradictory stages. The first half of the 1930s was marked by the insistence of the international Communist movement on worldwide revolution, a united front of workers under Communist direction, and class-against-class hostility.[59] This directive was manifest in Australia as a period of open hostility towards labour organizations, which were branded as 'social fascist'.[60] A deep and lasting animosity within the organised labour movement was one outcome of this period because the CPA attacked the rank and file, not just the leadership.[61] By the middle of the 1930s the directives had changed and the declaration of a second united front at the 7th Comintern Congress[62] meant a greater concern with local circumstances. In Australia this was interpreted as a "people's front" which was conceived as an alliance between working class

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[57] Thompson, E.P. (1978) op cit: p 220.

[58] Davidson, A. (1969) op cit: Chapters 3-4.

[59] ibid: p 72.

[60] ibid: pp 48-9.

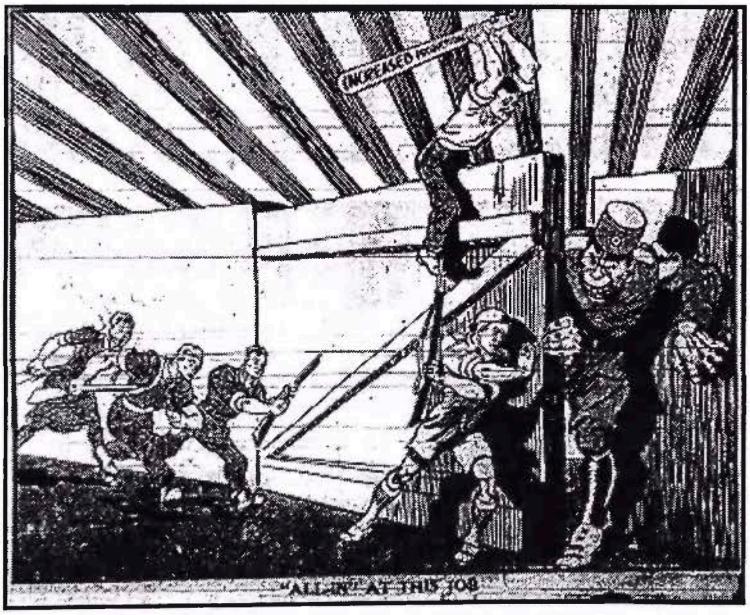
[61] ibid: p 62.

organizations, farmers and middle class, "a democratic alliance against reaction".[63] In the context of the WWF various Communist candidates in elections for positions within the union fostered this mutuality of interests by brokering unity agreements with left-leaning members of the ALP. This was the type of arrangement that promoted Jim Healy's election to General Secretary in 1937.

The announcement of the Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Pact in August 1939 again forced a policy change within the CPA and caught Australian Communists by surprise. As Davidson argued:

> The CPA itself had become so accustomed to thinking of fascism as the enemy with whom Communists could never make peace, and all anti-fascists as its allies and had aimed its propaganda at the menace of fascism for so long that the Nazi-Soviet pact came as a terrible surprise.[64]

This period, from late 1939 until the invasion of Russia by Nazi Germany in 1941, was one of actively protesting against the war.[65] Comintern policy was that the war should be attacked, and the recruitment, conscription and despatch of Australians overseas should be opposed. However, following the German invasion of Russia, this relationship between the Communists and the mainstream labour movement changed again to become more active in collectively opposing organised fascism. Communist parties worldwide were co-opted into an organised front and were readily accepted into the mechanisms of government instrumentality. In Australia the CPA supported ALP plans for conscription, more powers for the Federal Government and the subordination of industry to the needs of the war effort.[66] This did not necessarily mean an overnight cessation of industrial hostility because



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[62] ibid: p 78.
[63] ibid: p 78
[64] ibid: p 78
[65] ibid: p 79.

Communist trade union officials had varying amounts of influence over their members. On the Australian waterfront however there was greater success in implementing policy:

> On the waterfront the party had more success with its policy of limiting strikes. Cooperation with the Curtin government was so good that Communists Jim Healy and E.C. Roach of the WWF were made members of the Stevedoring Industry Commission.[67]

The political and ideological contexts through which the *Maritime Worker* was framed can be seen in many ways as a direct response to Australian society in the 1920s and 30s. Politically, apart from a number of short periods of power at both state and federal level during the late 20s and the beginning of the 1930s, there was a clear lack of parliamentary success and direction for the ALP during the third and fourth decades of the 20th Century. In these uncertain times the policies of the ALP were being increasingly criticised and undermined by the more radical elements of the labour movement, including the WWF. The Australian Labor Party was the object of Tom Nelson's criticism in a series of history articles he wrote for the *Maritime Worker* in 1941:

> During the recent Federal Parliamentary elections the "Maritime Worker" was unable to advise members which working-class candidate it was our Union's policy to support. The field was covered by three groups claiming to be ALP and a few Socialist Independents.[68]

From the late 19th Century onwards the Australian labour movement incorporated a broad range of influences and associated beliefs into its political spectrum, some which endured, others fleeting. In turn these promoted an ebbing and flowing between the poles of optimism and cynicism depending on economic and political circumstance.[69] At the time the *Maritime Worker* commenced publication however there is little doubt that the progressive crises experienced by Western societies since the 1890s, such as world war, revolution and major economic downturns would have inspired a cumulative sense that the prevailing systems were failing and that there was a need for change. As Farrell recognised, throughout the interwar period this pessimism was expressed unanimously for instance in the

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[66] ibid: p 84.
[67] ibid: p 91.
[68] Nelson T. (1941), 'The Future of Labor?', *Maritime Worker,* Vol.3, No.12, March: p6. See Picture 23 in Appendix.
[69] Farrell, F. (1981) *International Socialism & Australian Labour: The Left in Australia*, Hale & Iremonger, NSW: pp 176-78.

widespread belief among the socialist left in the inevitability of another world war.[70] This sense of an impending crisis in Western society and the apparent successes of the Soviet Union in creating a workers' utopia had brought about a sense of the need for greater endeavour in working towards promoting the political fortunes of the working classes. This sense of failure in the prevailing political systems saw increasing numbers of people subscribing to radical journals during the 1930s and also an increase in the numbers joining the Communist Party.[71] The prevailing tone of the *Maritime Worker* during its first decade of publication suggests this optimism and renewed vigour. From it we can get a sense of a union wanting to forge a strong, united and confident outlook and sense of purpose.

This belief - particularly among Communists - that given the circumstances of the times a strong and focused organization of the working classes would put them in a commanding political position to forge their political interests, stood in stark contrast to the reality. The reality was the equivocation of the organised labour movement in the political power vacuums that developed during these periods of crisis. This equivocation was illustrated markedly by the fortunes of the parliamentary labour movement in Australia. It was beset by influences that pulled it both Left and Right. Lloyd Ross, secretary of the NSW branch of the Australian Railways Union, spoke about these influences in 1932, and his assessment of labour politics stresses the sorts of divisions around which the *Maritime Worker* was framed:

> Around every Labour politician two streams have played - the sluggish stream of reformism, Liberalism, constitutionalism and conciliation, that would attempt to gain political success by compromising with the different sections in the community; and the fiercely turgid, muddy stream of socialism, radicalism, revolt. Every Labour politician sooner or later must decide in which direction he will be driven by these forces, that are the product of Australia's industrial history. Before the depression, most politicians chose the Right, and the Labour Movement concurred. Today Lyons chooses the Right, is expelled, and becomes an anti-Labour Prime Minister; Lang chooses the Left, becomes an outcast, a martyr, the most hated and the most admired of Labour leaders. The present situation must be interpreted in the light of Australia's development and the Australian temperament.[72]

It was in this climate that Communist union leaders, such as Jim Healy, saw a certain clarity and direction in the teachings of international socialism. These he sought to deliver to Australian workers through the existing structure of the union movement and from there, it was believed, start the process of delivering socialism to the Australian people. In the preface he wrote to Tom Nelson's pamphlet '*Towards Socialism in Australia*' in 1940, Healy spoke about this task:

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[70] ibid: p73.

[71] ibid: pp 184 & 208.

[72] Ross, L. (1932) 'Australian Labour and the Crisis', Economic Record, Vol viii, December: quoted. in Louis, L.J. & Turner, I. (1968) *The Depression of the 1930s*, Cassell Australia, Sydney: p 130 (1979 edition)

> Organised labour has been hamstrung in its struggles against capital because it lacked a conscious objective. This is only too true. Australian workers have built big and powerful unions, which in times of prosperity were able to extract many concessions from the employers. They have built a mass labour party, which has occupied the Treasury benches in State and Commonwealth Parliaments. But how often have they seen the gains made in boom periods wiped out in times of crisis? How often have they been disillusioned by Labour Governments in office? The major shortcoming of the Australian labour movement has been its traditional indifference to theory; its almost exclusive preoccupation with purely bread and butter problems to the neglect of ultimate aims...it must learn to extend its gaze beyond the present limited horizon.[73]

One of Healy's biggest tasks was to deliver this program in a way that could be understood and adopted by Australian workers, whose nationalistic insularity and tradition of Australian Labour Party reformist politics did not lend itself well to the interference of foreign ideas and practices from which many of the ideas of scientific socialism were derived. The *Maritime Worker* was an essential delivery vehicle for this socialist program, and in order for it to achieve this objective it had to make its ideas and political platform recognisable and coherent. This was the ideological objective that underlined the role of the *Maritime Worker*, and in order to achieve this objective its publishers attempted to manipulate a system of identification through which those to whom it was addressed were able to recognise themselves within discourse. To do this the *Maritime Worker* had to work within the political and social climate of the period and make its issues and debates coherent within a framework of socialist education and beliefs. This is one area of interpretation in which the notions of discourse and ideology collide.

Notwithstanding the equivocal political climate of the left in Australia in the 1930s, a common theme driving left-wing politics was the sense of an increasing awareness and a concomitant suspicion of the increasingly reactionary forces of conservatism within the ruling classes, both in Austraha and overseas. This issue was a constant source of discussion in the *Maritime Worker*. Illustrating this conservatism, Connell and Irving in their book *Class Structure in Australian History,* provide the sort of backdrop against which the radicals in the union movement recognised their opposition:

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[73] Healy, J (1940) cited in Williams, V. (1975) op cit: pp 26-27.

> It was social extremely conventional and markedly defensive. It stood for loyalty to the Empire and British traditions: strict law and order, including the absolute right of property owners to control those they hired, and to fire them if they couldn't: it assumed that property and respectability conveyed a moral right to rule. It saw the labour movement as a grasping, sectional, and sometimes subversive force: with union bosses regimenting the politicians and bribing the voters with promises of wealth they had not produced: with agitators and foreign influences causing unrest among otherwise decent workers.[74]

This experience of conservatism brought about a strong sense of social injustice for Australian workers; for many of them it was a collective memory that had been known from the convict period, through the experiences of such events as the Eureka Stockade, to the economic crisis of the 1930s. What marked this memory was the experience of hardship and attacks on living and working conditions. In the immediate memories of Australian waterside workers in the late 1930s this sense of injustice was made manifest in the form of repressive and draconian legislation such as the hated Transport Workers' Act and also in the continued deterioration of wages and conditions. It was this collective sense of having a history that provided a backdrop to a series of history articles in the *Maritime Worker* in 1941 by Sydney wharfie and Communist union official Tom Nelson.[75]

The experiences of hardship and repression which the wharfies felt were compounded by the general political and social climate of the Thirties where the manifestation of State-sanctioned repression would have been felt day by day, particularly at the height of the Depression when house evictions were being experienced daily.[76] State governments, alarmed at open displays of increasing radicalism from the disenchanted populace, were introducing special laws augmenting police powers to prevent public gatherings. Charges of unlawful assembly, loitering in a public place, offensive behaviour, insulting police, resisting arrest or assault were commonplace and the prosecution of activists for vagrancy turned an economic condition into a criminal offence.[77] Class antagonism became increasingly apparent with the appearance of extreme right-wing political and paramilitary groups such as the New Guard.[78] The general fear that the appearance of these groups fostered in the more moderate sections of society, however, was tempered by a suspicion of left-wing radicalism – neither element translated well into the Australian political psyche.

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[74] Connell, R.W. & Irving, T.H. (1980) *Class Structure in Australian History*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne: pp 287-288.
[75] Nelson, T. (1941) 'The Future of Labor', in *Maritime Worker*, March-July 1941.
[76] Lowenstein, W. (1978), *Weevils in the Flour*, Scribe, Newham: pp 394-6.

Where the differences lay between the moderate elements of the ALP and the more radical elements of the Australian labour movement was never clear, and it was in this grey area that the *Maritime Worker* explored its own radical agenda and the uptake of radical ideas within the union was most powerful. Between the First and Second World Wars an on-again off-again relationship between radical groups and the organised labour movement was an ongoing feature of Australian political life.[79] During the 1930s the tensions felt between these groups were heightened however. The reasons for this were numerous, but some of the more significant factors included increasing Communist Party influence in some of the radical front movements, such as the Militant Minority Movement, which were infiltrating the trade unions. Also CPA policy in the early 1930s denouncing non-Communist labour groups as 'social-fascists' created long-lasting hostility.[80] The outcome of these tensions created a climate of divisive politics and constant bitterness and recrimination. These tensions, which were manifest in the late 30s, saw a culmination within the WWF in the hostile and bitter battles over influence and leadership between the Communists and the Santamaria-influenced Industrial Groups in the later 1940s and 50s. The *Watersider,* which was the amateurish publication of the Australian Labor Party Waterfront Industrial Group in Melbourne during the 1950s, clearly illustrates the divisions and acrimony these tensions created. One article written in 1957, titled 'Who's Next for the Axe', blames the Communists for the fall of State Labor Governments during this period.[81]

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[77] MacIntyre, S. (1998) *The Reds: The Communist Party of Australia From Origins to Illegality*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney: Chapter 9.

[78] For works relating to the rise of right-wing paramilitary organizations see Cathcart, M. (1988) *Defending the National Tuckshop: Australia's Secret Army Intrigue of 1931*, McPhee Gribble/Penguin, Melbourne; and Moore, A. (1989) *The Secret Army and the Premier: Conservative Paramilitary Organisations in NSW 1930-32*, NSW Uni Press, Sydney.

[79] This is documented extensively in Farrell, F. (1981) op cit.

[80] Farrell, F. (1981) op cit: Chapters 7 & 8.

[81] *Watersider*, 2nd May, 1957: p 1 – See picture 26 in Appendix.

During the 1930s the process of assimilating radicalism within the trade union movement and the left of the ALP would have been assisted by the massive unemployment wrought by the Depression, and the numerous radical and Communist front organizations that sprung up in response to this crisis. Some of these groups included the Militant Minority Movement, the Unemployed Workers' Movement and the Movement Against War and Fascism. Indeed the 1930s saw increasing involvement of the Communists in the mining, waterfront and transport unions through organizations such as the Militant Minority Movement.[82] The circumstances of waterfront employment illustrate both how any clear distinctions between radical groups and the organised labour movement could become blurred during this period, and also how conditions fostered the growth of radicalism. Employment in the maritime industry was strongly susceptible to changes in economic conditions; therefore economic downturn would have seen many unemployed and underemployed wharfies enter the ranks of the radical movements. These experiences and the radical ideas generated by them would have been brought back to the union when work returned. This sort of exchange from the organised labour movement into radicalism and (sometimes) back again is exemplified in the experiences of Jim Healy, whose decision to cancel his membership of the ALP and join the Communist Party was influenced by what he saw of the treatment of the unemployed whom - forced by government dole regulations to keep on the move - were trudging the 'sunshine track' through his North Queensland home port of Mackay during the Depression. Another example of this crossing over between the radical movements and the ALP was the experience of the Sydney branch Communist official Stan Moran who, while still a member of the ALP, was elected leader of the Unemployed Workers' Movement in 1930 and subsequently joined the CPA in late 1930, not relinquishing his ALP membership for some time afterwards.[83]

These experiences of radicalism on the waterfront were again illustrated by Melbourne wharfie Tom Hills:

> I was converted to socialism during the Depression. I joined the Communist Party in 1932. If there hadn't been a Depression I don't think I would have become a Communist. The Party hardly existed in Port Melbourne before that but it grew. And the

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[82] Davidson, A. (1969) op cit: p 58.

[83] Moran, S. (1979), *Reminiscences of a Rebel*, Alternative Publishing Coop, NSW: p7.

> Unemployed Workers' organisation at its peak had about 300 members in Port [Melbourne].[84]

It was against the backdrop of a turbulent 1930s Australia that the WWF introduced the *Maritime Worker* as the flagship of a politically re-awakening union. Through its pages the industrial and political world of the Australian waterside worker was debated, disseminated and documented. In a union buffeted by a tumultuous political and industrial environment this newspaper is an anthology of the industrial and political battles in which the WWF was engaged. In a narrow sense it offers a testimony to the sorts of trials and hardships that the wharfies faced in their everyday lives. These were those of an inherently dangerous industry that demanded at times the handling of noxious and deadly cargoes such as asbestos and untreated animal hides without protective clothing. The cargoes were laboured sometimes in 24-hour shifts under the ever-present threat of broken and faulty winching gear. Dutchie Young, a wharfie who worked on the Sydney wharves described some of these conditions:

> Dreadful! One of the worst jobs was discharging soda ash, the stuff you put in soap powder. You tied a handkerchief round your nose and mouth so you wouldn't be breathing it. They didn't issue masks. Nothing – not even protective clothing in the freezer. One time I was on the soda ash. It came in three bushel bags. There was six men below and the pannikin boss was working with us. He got threepence an hour more. This panno had me loading eighteen bags of this soda ash in a sling. That would be three fives and three on top. You'd have to lift these three bushel bags up: terribly heavy, terribly unpleasant. You'd be sneezing, your eyes were running and the stuff would irritate the skin on your arms, and you were being pushed to go top speed all the time.[85]

These experiences of physical hardship were one element that the *Maritime Worker* documented; on the other hand it also documented the strength, determination and pride of a group of workers who had a clear vision of their place in their nation's history. Wendy Lowenstein in the introduction to *Under The Hook* wrote about this collective consciousness:

> Wharfies, like shearers, worked on the frontiers of the nation in a hard, dangerous occupation. They too have a heroic past, legends and heroes, and a tradition of mateship which is close and fierce. Their generosity towards good causes is legendary. But, above all, they have a continuing tradition of class struggle, of active, militant and successful unionism, of internationalism and political action.[86]

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[84] Lowenstein, W. & Hills, T. (1982) op cit: p 73.
[85] Lowenstein, W. (1978) op cit: p243.
[86] Lowenstein, W. & Hills, T. (1982) op cit: p 6.

On a much broader front, the publishers of the *Maritime Worker* pursued and contested the rocky road of Australian political life and examined and debated the political fortunes of the Australian working classes. The *Maritime Worker* was the text through which the wharfies both read and re-textualised their understanding of the world and their place in it. This is the place where historians meet the objects of their investigations, for as Mikhail Bakhtin argued "where there is no text, there is no object of study and no thought either".[87]

The framework around which the *Maritime Worker* was constructed was the empirical narrative of the Australian waterside worker and this narrative was strongly expressed in its pages. The collective oral memory of the wharfies themselves was strong. Jim Healy, commenting on the breadth of the impact of the 1917 strike on Sydney wharfies, said:

> I have a personal recollection, that when I came to Sydney in 1936, all that I could hear people talking about on the Sydney waterfront, was the evils of 1917, and I looked at chaps there who had obviously not been there in 1917 but they could tell me all about it.[88]

Using the narrative as a tool on which to attach its radical agenda, the *Maritime Worker* sought to encapsulate and embody a unified and positive framework of meaning for Australian wharfies. Framing and uniting this narrative were a great number of factors - economic, political, geographical and cultural. The WWF held a strategic position in the Australian labour movement by virtue of the fact that the maritime industry was the economic lifeline of the nation. The union's importance was relative to this position. Because of this no Australian government from the beginning of European settlement to the present day was going to allow a group of militant unionists to dictate the terms of industrial relations. This fact is borne out by the number of strikes and the intensity of the battles. The big strikes of 1890, 1917 and 1928 are prime examples.

The wharfie's place in Australian society was also an ambivalent one; the popular consensus was that the men who worked the wharves were little more than thieves and thugs. This was a common picture painted in the mainstream media

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[87] Bakhtin, M., (1986), *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, quoted in Gardiner, M. (1992), *The Dialogics of Critique*, Routledge, London: p 106.

(although the claim had some foundation because historically criminals were attracted to the stevedoring industry because of its casual nature and many were able to use the spurious excuse of working on the wharves as an alibi to cover up crime). Notorious underworld figures like Squizzy Taylor were connected with the Melbourne waterfront during the 1920s.[89] An illustration of this low regard was reflected in a popular saying that the wharfie's wages were 'twenty quid a week and half the cargo'.[90] This tumultuous relationship with Australian politics and industry saw the union involved in a significant number of disputes in which it was badly mauled by legislative action, police brutality, public animosity and enduring scorn. Overall these features were to combine in an overarching socialist narrative that was the underlying feature of the discursive construction of the *Maritime Worker.*

Economic factors were a primary feature of the history of the Australian waterside workers, and the elemental features of economic relations in the social structure were certainly discussed in various critiques that the *Maritime Worker* published from time to time.[91] The Australian economy was dominated by a pastoral export industry supported by a mercantile bourgeoisie[92] and the waterside workers were a vital physical link in the maintenance of that economy. Australia's trade was predominantly within the British Empire and the Australian ruling classes overwhelmingly owed their allegiance to Britain - both for its trading networks and cultural identity. Any display of militancy from the Australian waterside workers was dealt with severely by these ruling classes. Any disruption of trade and waving of the flag of incipient Australian nationalism (let alone the 'foreign curse' of communism) were seen as traitorous acts in the context of Australia's relationship with Britain and the Empire. The Bruce-Page Government during the 1920s was one such government that declared its intention to defeat 'the nefarious designs of the extremists' in the Australian maritime unions. Using the cover of outrage over the British seamen's strike in 1925 which tied up ships in Australian ports, the Federal Government drafted a Bill designed to deport Australian unionists who supported the British sailors. This was an action designed specifically to target Tom Walsh, the Irish born leader of the

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[88] Williams, V. (1975) op cit: p 32.

[89] *Latham Papers*, 'Intelligence Reports re Pilfering on Melbourne's Waterfront', Australian National Library, Canberra.

[90] Morrison, J., in Lowenstein, W. & Hills, T. (1982) op cit: p 16.

[91] *Maritime Worker*, 'A Tale of Pigs', Vol.3, No.6, September 1940: p2; 'The Economic Structure of Australia: 100 Years of Change', Vol.3, No.6, September 1940: p 8; 'Money – What is It?', Vol.3, No. 8, October 1940: p 8.

Australian Seamen's Union, and his deputy, Dutch-born Jakob Johansen. It certainly didn't help Walsh's cause by his declaring during this strike that:

> If the Empire is to be maintained by such sufferings as British seamen complain of, then I say to hell with Bruce and to hell with the Empire.[93]

It is notable that in one of the worst defeats of Australian waterfront unionism - the strike of 1928 - the chief protagonist was again Stanley Melbourne Bruce. The strike itself was sparked by the introduction of a new Award on the waterfront but much evidence suggests it was part of a direct and targeted response by government and business to crush the more militant and powerful unions. The Beeby Award for the stevedoring industry was part of a draft of anti-worker action that was taking place at the end of the 1920s. Along with the introduction of the Lukin Award for timber workers in early 1929, the Beeby Award was widely seen as a direct and provocative attack on the pay and conditions of Australian workers.[94]

Prime Minister Bruce, the leader of the Nationalist Country Party coalition government and an influential member of the Australian mercantile bourgeoisie with close connections to the shipping industry,[95] was a scion of the Melbourne establishment and Chairman of Directors of the Melbourne importing company Patterson, Laing & Bruce. His involvement in the machinations that caused the strike is circumstantial, but his role in introducing the notorious Transport Worker's Act (TWA) as a direct and targeted response to it was pivotal.

Judge Beeby of the Federal Arbitration Court fully understood that his decisions would force the Waterside Workers' Federation into strike action. The circumstantial evidence suggests this intention was in direct collusion with the Bruce-Page Government. Beeby wrote to Attorney-General John Latham in October 1928:

> I am hopeful that the complete defeat of the waterside workers will have good results. I realised when I made the award that there would be a strike, but felt that the power of an arrogant faction which controlled the union must be broken. The conflict should result in a re-organised union from which the unreasonably militant element and other undesirables will be excluded.[96]

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[92] Connell, R.W. & Irving, T.H. (1980) op cit: see Chapter 3.

[93] Lockwood, R. (1990) *Ship to Shore,* Hale & Iremonger, Sydney: p 206.

[94] Turner, I (1976), *In Union is Strength,* Nelson, London: pp 80-81.

[95] Lockwood, R. (1990) op cit: pp 202-9

[96] *Latham Papers,* 'Letter from Beeby to Latham', Australian National Library, Canberra.

The intentions of Bruce in breaking the WWF were clear: after the strike was declared the Transport Workers' Act was blasted through Parliament in an all-night sitting. Bruce's hatred of waterside workers was widely recognised. On the issue of the strike federal ALP parliamentarian E.G. Theodore declared, in Parliament in 1928 that "the Prime Minister appears to have developed insanity on this subject".[97] Ostensibly designed to control the engagement, service and discharge of all transport workers the TWA was nevertheless targeted specifically at striking waterside workers. The provisions of the Act provided for the licensing of waterside workers under the direct administration of the Minister for Trade and Customs, making the Act a powerful tool in any future dispute by forcing the recalcitrant port or branch of the Federation to take out licences. The licence could be revoked for a period of six months for any sort of provocation, including refusal to work within the terms of the Award. Waterside workers claimed that the 'Dog Collar Act' as it became known made conditions on the waterfront much worse and hindered any attempts to alleviate these conditions because it made it virtually illegal to refuse to work in unsafe conditions.[98] The widely supported claim by wharfies that this Act was designed purposely as a strikebreaking tool for government was supported by the fact that it appeared to be enforced only in those ports that refused to work under the new Award, and was used as an attempted strikebreaking tool during the Port Kembla Pig Iron Strike when the Lyons Government threatened to licence the port.[99]

The enactment of the TWA in 1928 was the culmination of a bitter and divisive dispute that left the Waterside Workers' Federation broken and fragmented for more than a decade. It was out of this dispute that Jim Healy emerged as a strong and militant leader who attempted to make sure that the past would never be repeated. The Federation recognised this need to learn from the past at the All-ports Conference in 1937. Reflecting later on that conference Healy stated that the:

> all-ports conference marked a turning point in the history of the Federation in more ways than one. The outstanding decision arrived at by that conference, with an overwhelming majority, was the establishment of national policy and the promise of adherence to it by the branches. Obviously, the branches by that time had come to realise that as individual units they could not cope with the national organization of the employers.[100]

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[97] Quoted in Lockwood, R. (1990) op cit: p 202.
[98] Lowenstein, W. & Hills, T. (1982) op cit: p 62.
[99] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: p 107.
[100] Williams, V. (1975) op cit: p 39.

The troubled history of Australian waterside workers was also a product of the Federation's own traditions and loosely organised structure, and it was these factors that the *Maritime Worker* sought to address. Healy made this clear at the All-ports Conference and proposed a solution:

> One thing that stands out is the lack of cohesion between the branches caused to a great extent by the absence of an official journal.[101]

The individual unions that made up the Federation evolved out of specific relationships within their regional and geographical circumstances and the principal industries of those regions, such as sugar in Mackay or steel in Port Kembla. These relationships were expressed through varying degrees of autonomy and militancy in the unions and the wharf communities. These were the products of a waterfront industry that through its diverse geographical and industrial nature created a plethora of independent communities in the fifty odd trading ports along the Australian coast.[102] Part of this evolution was the development of autonomous union organizations. These different unions, depending on the circumstances of the time were either affiliated to the WWF or had distanced themselves to some degree from the central organization. Many of these were known for their insularity, the strength of local autonomy and the militancy of the rank and file.

To illustrate these traditional contrasts between the waterfront communities, the circumstances on the Melbourne waterfront, until 1928 when the strike changed everything on the city's wharves, was a good example of the sorts of divisions that had occurred between communities and the differences that could be found even within the same geographical community. Until the 1928 strike the Melbourne waterfront was divided between two unions, the Melbourne Wharf Labourers Union (MWLU) and the Port Phillip Stevedores' Association (PPSA). The MWLU worked the shallow draught vessels that came up the Yarra River plying the intra/interstate trade. The Port Phillip Stevedores worked the deep-sea vessels in Hobson's Bay. The PPSA saw themselves as the elite of the waterfront workforce and were proud of their skills in stowing cargo for the long, treacherous journeys around Cape Horn to Britain. The PPSA saw themselves as a cut above the members of the MWLU or the 'river rats' who worked the coastal boats which carried such goods as coal, dairy produce, potatoes and timber. They had their own clubrooms in Bay Street Port Melbourne and were often involved in local civic and sporting life. The pick-up for the day's work was conducted from the clubrooms. Inside they had built up an impressive library and entertainment centre which catered to the social and educational needs of their members. It was a place of discussion and debate on local and world affairs. The contrasts between these two organisations were apparent in the differences between wages and conditions, which reflected the better organisational skills and the bargaining power that the PPSA had over the lesser-skilled MWLA. As such, the PPSA treated the MWLA with some disdain. It was these sorts of differences, on a much broader scale, which were a part of the history of the Waterside Workers' Federation. [103]

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[101] ibid: p 38.
[102] This figure from Lowenstein, W. & Hills, T. (1982) op cit: p 61.

The traditionally fractured nature of the Federation was divided further by the method of selecting labour - the pick-up - for waterfront work. Until 1942, when the Stevedoring Industry Commission introduced rotational gangs to the waterfront, the 'bull system' as it was known was the principal method for the selection of labour. Under this system it was the stevedoring foremen, working for the companies contracted to load and unload ships, that selected the labour. The 'bulls', as the regularly selected labour were referred to, were the men favoured by the company foremen. These were the men who worked hard, without complaint, or those who were able to bribe the foremen in one way or another. Militants on the waterfront were excluded by this method of labour selection - these militants were often Federation men. Historian Rupert Lockwood was scathing in his criticism about this system:

> Under the "bull" system, militant workers were victimised. The "bull" system was the auction block for labor, a survival of the North Carolina slave mart. Wharfies were picked up outside gates or even pubs. It was "Hey! You in the grey sweater!"..."You, Ginger!"..."You with the torn shirt!"..."You with the broken nose!"[104]

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[103] Lockwood, R. (1990) op cit: see Chapters 6 & 7.

[104] Lockwood, R. (1951) *Jim Healy: Leader of the Waterside Workers' Federation*, Current Book Distributors, Sydney: p10.

Discrimination and corruption were rife in the labour pick-up and the divisions that broke out between men were endemic and often bitter. Jack Simpson, a wharfie, described the conditions of the bull system on the Sydney waterfront during the 1930s:

> A ghastly, frightening (group) of men at times fighting and tearing each other's clothes off in sweating jungle-like scuffles, for a starting docket to earn twenty-three shillings for a day's work on the wharves. That was the bull system. Hundreds of men, lines of fear, pain and anguish in their tired faces, walking despondently and dispiritedly up the street.[105]

Following the introduction of the Transport Workers' Act in 1928, the preference system for selecting labour - in the ports where the Act was applied such as Melbourne - compounded the iniquities of the bull system. This served to further fragment the waterfront. John Morrison, a wharfie in the 1930s described this system in *The Compound*, a short story written about the Melbourne waterfront:

> It is divided into four parts: one for the members of the Waterside Workers' Federation, one for the members of the Permanent and Casual Waterside Workers' Union (popularly known as Jacks or scabs) one for Second Preference men and one for the Blank Licence men. The first two are by far the largest. The Federation lies in dignified remoteness at the rear, cut off from the Jacks by a partition extending right up to the high roof . . . as yet only a few Federation men have the hardihood to say openly what all of them know in their secret hearts, that 'there are some good men in the Jacks'.
>
> Federation men hate the Jacks, tolerate the Seconds and pity the Blanks. The Jacks, moving always in an atmosphere of hostility, fear the Federation, cultivate the good will of the Seconds, and indulge the Blanks. The Seconds envy the Federation, despise the Jacks and resent the Blanks. The Blanks envy everybody, dislike the Seconds even more than they dislike the Jacks, and have a comradeship amongst themselves none the less deep because it is not in evidence when a pick-up is actually in progress.[106]

This history of splintered branch development, rank and file militancy and the internecine struggles of the pick-up system was recognised by the Federal Executive to be among the biggest obstacles to the consolidation of industrial power for Australian wharfies. Branch unity was seen as the stepping-stone to achieving industrial and political strength, and it was on this platform that Communist Jim Healy established his credentials as General Secretary of the WWF from 1937 to 1961. As Healy wrote in 1938:

> Since 1928 one of our greatest weaknesses has been a noticeable lack of cohesion and cooperation between the States and the branches therein. Branches have at times, been prone to adapting, what may be termed a parochial outlook and unfortunately, in

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[105] Quoted in Williams, V. (1975) op cit: p 31.
[106] Lowenstein, W. & Hills, T. (1982) op cit: p 38.

> some instances, the welfare of the Federation has been subordinated to a desire to provide for an immediate or local situation.[107]

Elected to the position of General Secretary in November 1937, Jim Healy carried with him a militant labour tradition with strong international influences. Born in Manchester, the son of an Irish labourer, his family were active in the British trade union movement and the British Labor Party, as well as being agitators for a free Ireland. Healy enlisted in the British army in 1915 and served on the Western Front until discharged with a serious leg wound in 1917. In 1925, unemployment forced Healy and his family to emigrate to Australia where he found work on the wharves in the Queensland sugar port of Mackay and became active in the union.[108] He was elected to the Mackay Committee of Management in 1928, becoming President of the Mackay branch of the WWF in 1936.[109] In 1937 Healy transferred to the Sydney branch of the WWF to pursue his intention of entering the federal executive. In Sydney he was part of a coalition of Communist and Labor Party activists that contested the leadership of the WWF.

Healy brought with him a broad industrial and political agenda for the Waterside Workers' Federation, an agenda that he understood to be based on the unity of all branches, and Healy fostered its application through his belief in the principles of scientific socialism. His concern was to widen the focus of trade unionism from the 'bread and butter' issues. Part of this ambition was to place the issues concerning the labour movement into a wider and more effective structural framework. In a foreword to a 1940 pamphlet, *Towards Socialism in Australia*, Healy wrote of his belief in socialist development:

> Marx was the first to show that social development, like natural development, follows definite internal laws. However, unlike the laws of nature, the laws of development of human society are realised, not independently of the will and acts of men, but on the contrary, through the actions of the broad human masses. If the working class arms itself with a knowledge of these laws, if it conducts its activities in accordance with them, and does not run blindly counter to them, it will be able to advance confidently and with certainty towards the new social order. The major shortcomings of the Australian labour movement have been its traditional indifference to theory; its almost exclusive preoccupation with purely bread and butter problems to the neglect of ultimate aims... it must learn to extend its gaze beyond the present limited horizon.[110]

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[107] *Maritime Worker*, 'Greetings From the General Secretary', Vol.1, No.1: p 1.

[108] Lockwood, R. (1951) op cit: pp 5-6.

[109] Williams, V. (1975) op cit: p 25.

[110] ibid: p 27.

CHAPTER III

THE RADICAL DEBATE – A CLASH OF IDEOLOGY WITHIN THE WATERSIDE WORKERS' FEDERATION

Healy's political and educational program did not enter the WWF without strong resistance. As suggested earlier, the Australian political psyche did not translate easily into radical ideas, and certainly within the ranks of the WWF the uptake of radicalism was always going to be a battle. To a large degree it was within the texts of the waterside workers that these battles were fought. The dominance of the *Maritime Worker* in controlling the political and ideological agenda of the WWF was resented by many within the union, and ultimately opposition to Healy's control of the union's media was mounted in the publication of such journals as the anti-Communist *Maritime Vigilante,* which was produced in the 1950s under the subtitle "A Journal Published in the Interests of Waterside Workers".[111]

Opposition to the prevailing leadership and direction of the WWF from within the union was an enduring feature of political life in such a large organization. The issue of Communist influence within the union however was intense and while the manifestations of this hostility were most virulent and bitter during the anti-Communist debates of the 1950s, they can certainly be seen in one of the earliest editions of the *Maritime Worker* as an obvious response to the changes in the power-balance at the top levels of the union. In 1938, the newspaper featured in its Letters Columns a lively political argument between two wharfies - one a Communist and the other an anti-Communist – on political ideology.[112] In this particular exchange the ideological perspectives of the two main political camps within the WWF – radical and reformist – were placed in stark opposition and illustrate the ideological divide within the union. It was these divisions that, along with the physical and historical features of the WWF defined the union as a multifaceted and fractious organization. They also represented the divisions within the wider labour movement, with the one argument representative of the Catholic Social Studies Movement while the other was fixed firmly within the radical dialogue of the Left. It was this ideological divide that the publishers of the *Maritime Worker* attempted to overcome, to establish it as a legitimate voice for political democracy in Australia. To achieve this objective they had to find the means to fuse their own notions of democracy onto the conceptual horizons of Australia's workers. This meant that they needed to graft their system of ideas and beliefs onto an Australian working class narrative in order to develop the *Maritime Worker* into a cohesive conceptual vehicle for change.

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[111] See Picture 24 in Appendix.

[112] *Maritime Worker*, Vol.1, No.2, May 1938: p4; Vol.1, No.3, June 1938: pp 8&10April 1938: p4; Vol.1, No.4, July 1938: p7.

The democratic principles that underlined Healy's proclamation in April 1938, when he encouraged his members to think of the *Maritime Worker* as "your paper",[113] became somewhat unwieldy when exposed to criticism from one of the more vocal anti-Communist members of the union. He was intent on questioning the validity of some of the political arguments which were being propagated in the *Maritime Worker*. Spurred by an editorial in the *Maritime Worker* by Jim Healy titled 'The Growth of Fascism'[114] which looked at the Spanish Civil War as a parable of fascism's international growth, and another article on the Spanish conflict by British Labour Party MP Clement Atlee in the same edition,[115] Sydney wharfie John McDonagh made a spirited attack against what he perceived as their support of communism. Melbourne wharfie A.H. Aanensen, a committed Communist took up the right of reply. The argument that developed between these two wharfies became a strong disagreement on the nature of Australian politics and the merits of communism as a solution to the problems facing Western society. It is an illuminating exchange because it represents one of the few times in which the Waterside Workers' Federation's ideological program was publicly challenged from within the pages of the *Maritime Worker* itself, and also represents the sorts of problems faced in trying to bring its ideological program into focus. The subsequent lack of open debate in future editions strongly suggests the editorial board had developed a distaste for such a forum.

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[113] *Maritime Worker*, 'Greetings From the General Secretary', Vol.1, No.1, April 1938: p1.
[114] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Growth of Fascism', Vol.1, No.1, April 1938: p 4. See picture 6 in the Appendix
[115] *Maritime Worker*, 'What Spain Means To You', Vol.1, No.1: April 1938: p 11. See picture 13 in the Appendix.

While this particular debate typified the sorts of ideological divisions within the union, it more importantly also represented an exchange that exposed the tensions that arise between the notions of discourse and ideology, highlighting one of the central problems for the Communists within the WWF - which was the attempt to translate a radical ideological program into a dialogue of democratic action. Even though the two wharfies were taking strongly divergent ideological positions this tension arises because they were nevertheless forced to do so within a certain discourse which placed limitations on the scope of their respective arguments. Therefore it could be argued that both wharfies spoke from within a discourse of power and deprivation which determined the parameters through which things could and could not be said, and as such circumscribed the context in which terms such as democracy could be understood and effectively utilised. Within such a discourse therefore the notion of class for instance was structured around a widely shared set of beliefs about society. This meant that while the political terms of reference were different according to one's position within the socio-economic structure, these terms were nevertheless stated from within a discourse in which all members of society perceived the notion of class relations as the determinant feature of all social relations. So while one wharfie advocated the need for a radicalisation of the working classes in political life and the other advocated the status quo of Labor Party reformism, both arguments nevertheless were implicitly bound to the idea of political necessity which determined the discourse through which they both spoke. Therefore, this debate, while overtly representing an exchange of ideological positions, was to a large part forced inextricably to operate within the discursive framework that structured the whole of Australian political life. The arguments of the two are therefore framed by a relationship to the institutional discourse that supported the Australian political system, and so the strategies on which this exchange relied depend on the way that each man is able to construct his argument within this discourse. The outcomes depend on the 'fit' each argument has within this framework.

Both combatants were forced to ground their views within the horizons of meaning which supported the discursive framework of the Australian labour movement: for McDonagh however this was a relationship which had a positive valance because his arguments were based on fear of difference and foreign influences. For Aanenesen it was a negative relationship in which introduced political ideas were forced into a certain level of abstraction because of a lack of political context in the Australian experience. Both arguments asserted a legitimacy to speak on behalf of Australian workers, and attempted within the prevailing discourse to define a means by which this legitimacy could be structured. In a larger context this was the issue for the *Maritime Worker:* by what techniques and strategies could it speak through the prevailing discourse and affect ideological intervention within it?

Ideologically the argument between McDonagh and Aanensen highlights the importance of linguistic device in framing a system of beliefs and shows how powerfully they can translate into ideas and images. Just as Healy in various parts of his editorial used proper nouns as a metaphor for the term fascism, McDonagh used the term Communism in the same manner to describe an entity that did not correlate with his notion of democracy. Linguistic devices such as these allow terms like Communism and fascism to translate into political and propaganda cartoons that, for instance, portray the 'ogres' of fascism or Communism as monstrous creatures with menacing snarls, and claws that drip the blood of innocents. These cartoons were used extensively throughout the newspapers of the period and were widely seen as an effective tool in demonstrating the perceived clear-cut nature of social and political relations. This argument between McDonagh and Aanensen carried another facet of understanding however, concerning the question of the actual translatability of ideas and images within the prevailing discursive constraints that defined the period.

Broadly speaking, the ideological perspective from which John McDonagh spoke was that which predominated within the Australian labour movement. It was an ideology of political reformism that relied for its strength on its own traditions of gradualist political change, a lack of radical tradition and an imperial parochialism that was suspicious of foreign ideas. Buttressed by such things as the institutional framework of the British Empire and the White Australia Policy, the pervasiveness of this ideology relied on strategies of masking potentially disruptive political notions about Australian society by setting up 'straw men' of foreign interference in Australian affairs. These 'straw men' were the Communists and other radicals, onto whom were attached negative stereotypes such as those that the Bruce Government managed to hook to the radical Irishman Tom Walsh and the Swede Jakob Johansen during the Federal elections of 1925.[116] In taking up the reply to McDonagh's assertions A.H. Aanensen (a well-known Communist on Melbourne's waterfront), became this 'straw man', and because of this he was carrying a number of negative stereotypes before McDonagh had even written a word.

McDonagh based his argument on a critical view of Healy's proposition that fascism was a looming threat to Australia. He held the belief that it was Communism that was the actual threat, a threat that he saw as already existing in Australia:

> The red herring of fascism is drawn across the trail, and, many people for one reason or another are ready to swallow it. Fascism is something remote, but Communism is here, and, is here to some purpose; and both of these systems are abhorrent to a democratic people. Why, then, assail one and not the other?[117]

Aanensen, in response outlined the contention between the reformist tendencies of the Australian labour movement and the zeal of the radical left:

> Our friend attempts to bring about the twin relationship of fascism and Communism on the question of democracy, and suggests that he much prefers present day democracy. I would remind him that the Australian workers are on a precipice, either the expansion from capitalist democracy into a People's Front democracy, or the alternative, the bloody suppression of human liberties, right of trade union organisation and the trail of considerable lowering in the standards of working and living conditions.[118]

McDonagh's point of attack already had an implied legitimacy because he spoke within the prevailing discursive framework that was available to Australian workers to speak about politics. In this space he was able to set up his attack on Healy and Aenensen by developing parallels between the notions of Communism and fascism that served to make them both remote and alien in an Australian context, therefore undermining the legitimacy of both their propositions as well as diverting attention away from his own politics. For McDonagh the notion of fascism was a "Trojan horse [which] is trotted out to conceal the real enemies of liberty in Spain".[119] He saw the real threat as Communism. Therefore, in response to Healy's attempts to use the Spanish conflict as an illustration of the threat that fascism posed to Australia, McDonagh countered with a series of spatial contextualisations. These attempted to distance the threat of fascism, deflate the arguments about its negative features and confine it to the Spanish issue, therefore taking away its legitimacy as a parable for Australian politics. McDonagh turned the argument around and spoke about Communism being the real threat both nationally and internationally. He stated: "fascism is something remote, but Communism is here, and, is here to some purpose; and both of these systems are abhorrent to a democratic people. Why then assail one and not the other?"[120] In an interesting twist McDonagh also questioned the legitimacy of Communism as a valid political proposition for Australia by also reinforcing its foreign-ness. So even though McDonagh asserted that "Communism is here", his argument used a number of devices that serve to alienate it from its Australian context and imply its illegitimacy.

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[116] Ward, R. (1977) *A Nation For a Continent: The History of Australia 1901 – 1975*, Heinemann, Melbourne (1988 ed): p 160.
[117] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Editor's Mailbag', Vol.1, No.2, May 1938: p 4.
[118] *Maritime Worker*, 'Letters to the Editor', Vol.1, No.3, June 1938: p 8.

McDonagh's strategies of distancing oppositional debate and refusing legitimacy were reinforced by his use of parody and satire. McDonagh lampooned the claims of Healy, Atlee and Aanensen by citing sections from E. Knoblaugh's book *Correspondent in Spain*, in which the Spanish conflict is reduced to the scenes of a caricature of a Russian drama play. This undermined the legitimacy of the Soviet Union as a source of political insight as well as trivialising the intentions of the Communists in Spain:

> 'Spain was falling into anarchy in 1934.' Caballero told him in that year 'that the whole existing order will be overturned if Azana will play Kerensky to my Lenin. A union of Iberian Soviet Republics, that is our aim. Portugal will come in peaceably, we hope, but by force if necessary. I shall be a second Lenin.'[121]

Aanensen's attempts to take his argument up to McDonagh illustrated the problem of dealing with what were essentially demonstrated as foreign elements - Communism and fascism - in the Australian context. Any ultimate success for Aanensen's argument relied on his ability to provide an Australian context for the unfamiliar. This resistance represented the sorts of problems faced by the *Maritime Worker* in the wider context:

> Our friend attempts to bring about the twin relationship of fascism and Communism on the question of democracy, and suggests that he much prefers present day democracy. I would remind him that the Australian workers are on a precipice, either the expansion from capitalist democracy into a People's Front democracy, or the alternative, the bloody suppression of human liberties, right of trades union organisation and the trail of considerable lowering in the standards of working and living conditions. Which does he

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[119] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Editor's Mailbag', Vol.1, No.2, May 1938: p4.
[120] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Editor's Mailbag', Vol.1, No.2, May 1938: p4.
[121] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Editor's Mailbag', Vol.1, No.2, May 1938: p 4.

> prefer? To suggest that fascism is remote, and that Communism is right here is too stupid for words.[122]

McDonagh's answer to Aanensen's counter-attack used the inherent tactical strength of his discursive position by again reinforcing the alien features of fascism in the Australian context, and he did this not by exploring it as an actual political ideology that had its parallels in Australian political life, but by disputing its physical manifestations in Australia. Therefore McDonagh implied that fascism did not exist in Australia because, for instance, there was no armed political party (despite the existence of right-wing paramilitary organizations during the 1930s).[123] and that it had a tradition of egalitarianism (despite the existence of widespread poverty).[124] For McDonagh however Communism had shown its physical manifestation in Australia and was therefore a real threat:

> Mr Aanensen speaks often of Fascism, and I will endeavour to define it. Invented by Mussolini, in 1922, it is a Dictatorship, by an armed political party, trade is conducted by Guilds of men and masters. Catholic, Protestant, or Jew may worship God in his own way. So in most respects Fascism is remote. In regard to my contention that Communism is here, we have evidence of this fact in its numerous publications. The leagues and societies which it controls, its repeated attempts to seize the machinery of the Labour Party, its partial success in having its members or sympathisers in key positions in the Trades Unions . . .[125]

There are a number of levels of argument operating in this exchange, some of them being used at a conscious level and some having a much deeper resonance within the discursive framework. The verbal to-and-fro between McDonagh and Aanensen reflect the arguments that can be found within the labour movement at a more conscious political level of debate, such as would occur in the chambers of a Trades Hall. The power of rhetoric and skilful manipulation of linguistic tools such as parody and satire and the use of metaphor distinguish these arguments. At a much deeper level however are those features of coherency that are essential to framing the contexts in which the arguments are staged - but are not necessarily acknowledged as conscious supports for the arguments themselves. One of the more systematic and underlying threads that ran through this particular debate, for instance was the notion of democracy, a strategically positioned, but largely undisclosed term in this dialogue. So while this term exists as an essential support in the framing of McDonagh and

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[122] *Maritime Worker*, 'Letters to the Editor', Vol.1, No.3, June 1938: p8
[123] Cathcart, M. (1988) op cit; and Moore, A. (1989) op cit.
[124] Louis, L.J. & Turner, I. (1968) op cit: pp 76-123.

Aanensen's argument they do not have need to consciously state its terms of relevance: those terms are largely assumed as being known within a cluster of discursive values that support the importance of politics to the structures of social meaning, just as the notion of class carries with it a series of widely understood assumptions about social relations. Within the discursive values found within the texts of the Australian labour movement therefore, the use of the term democracy carried with it a certain weight according to how it is applied. So in McDonagh's application it has a positive valence and in Aanensen's it has a negative one. In relation to this value weight, McDonagh's application of the term works through the obvious assumption that the democratic is found within the liberal democratic tradition. For Aanensen it is inscribed in the socialist tradition. Raymond Williams in his book *Keywords* explores the evolution of these differences in the modern era:

> In the socialist tradition, **democracy** continued to mean *popular power*: a state in which the interests of the majority of the people were paramount and in which these interests were practically exercised and controlled by the majority. In the liberal tradition, **democracy** means open election of representatives and certain conditions (**democratic rights**, such as free speech) which maintained the openness of election and political argument. These two conceptions, in their extreme forms, now confront each other as enemies.[126]

Within Australian political discourse, democracy therefore is a word having strong discursive associations with the notion of power. Ideologically speaking, whoever has control over this word has legitimacy. In this particular debate McDonagh has this implied position of power: he does not need to vigorously defend his claims because they are implied in the common assumptions that bolster Australian political and social institutions. Therefore, in terms of efficacy it is this liberal democratic idea of democracy that remains the powerful element underlining McDonagh's argument, because it is supported by a certain set of assumptions which through the process of institutionalisation have come to mean a particular form of representative democracy. So while democracy is invoked within his argument to mean, among other things, "the will of the people", "liberty", "truth", it has a privileged position in the discourse of Australian labourism. Therefore McDonagh does not need to vigorously defend its terms against attack; in fact McDonagh is able to successfully construct his argument within its framework of intelligibility, which

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[125] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Editor's Mailbag', Vol.1, No.4, July 1938: p7

[126] Williams, R. (1976) *Keywords*, Fontana, London: p 96 (1988 edition)

was demonstrated in his ability to successfully merge the twin terms of fascism and Communism in a metaphor of negativity. The operability of the notion of democracy within the McDonagh argument therefore remains unproblematic, based as it is on the notion that its defence is already assured within the horizon of understanding that represented moderation and reasonableness in Australian labour politics.

Aanensen had a far more complex task in debating his political beliefs within the context of a democratic tradition because his notion of democracy was defined within the radical socialist tradition, which in Australia had contentious and ambiguous links to Australian political and social institutions. The contexts in which Aanensen developed the notions of democracy were ones that corresponded with politically charged terms such as class justice, and were therefore contentious. In contrast to McDonagh, whose contextual use of the term allowed a certain amount of political neutrality in its definition because its terms of reference were already assumed, Aanensen thrust his argument straight into the cauldron of political debate. For him, Australian workers "stood on the precipice of a descent into fascist dictatorship or the adoption of a popular front democracy" – a contentious statement indeed. For Aanensen to challenge the dominance of McDonagh's position, the ideological strategies of the radical left must be able to assail this position of being the outsider, the 'Other' in which the statements that are enunciated have an uneasy fit within the dominant social and political discourse.

This debate between McDonagh and Aanensen is representative of many of the discussions, disagreements and disputes that prevailed during the politically heated 1930s and 40s. They manifest themselves at a theoretical level as clashes of ideologies but as will be discussed in further chapters, they also represent the sorts of constraints in which action is framed. These constraints are found in the very notions that both authors use to frame their arguments. The notion of democracy, which is used as a contextual undercurrent providing meaning for both of their ideological positions, carries with it an element of power which resists being actively co-opted into a political program. It carries the force of a statement, as defined by Michel Foucault,[127] thus putting constraints on the notion of ideology as both an interpretative and a political tool. Both McDonagh's and Aanensen's arguments are trapped by this concept of power because power is not something which can be picked up and used to repress or challenge; as Foucault suggests, the function of power operates as a regulatory feature within a particular discourse of political rationality in which all interpretative positions are constrained by its points of reference. Foucault alludes to these constraints in an essay on power and subjectivity in which he wrote:

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[127] This notion of the statement will be discussed further in later chapters but for a full explication of its meaning see Part III in Foucault, M. (1972) op cit.

> I'd like to mention ... two "pathological forms" – those two "diseases of power" – fascism and Stalinism. One of the numerous reasons why they are, for us, so puzzling, is that in spite of their historical uniqueness they are not quite original. They used and extended mechanisms already present in most other societies. More than that: in spite of their own internal madness, they used to a large extent the ideas and the devices of our political rationality.[128]

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[128] Foucault, M. (1982) 'The Subject and Power', in Dreyfus and Rabinow, (1983) op cit: p 208.

CHAPTER IV

PURSUING THE RADICAL OBJECTIVE: DISCOURSE, IDEOLOGY AND THE TEXT

The period of restructuring, reunification and reorientation by the Waterside Workers' Federation in the late 1930s and early 40s was a time of intensely competing and conflict-driven political, social and religious beliefs, values and allegiances. These conflicts were demonstrated in the debate between McDonagh and Aanensen in the previous chapter. The workplace, the union meeting room, the pub and even the family home became places in which heated discussion ensued on such topics as Japanese expansionism in Asia or the relative abilities of the ALP or the CPA in securing the political interests of Australian workers. These debates were made relevant in the context of historical circumstance, life experiences and the social and political character of Australian society. The political atmosphere within the union itself was often heated and passionate, both within the branches and the Executive. This climate extended to disputes in the holds of the ships, on the wharves and in the pubs. Jim Healy's struggle to relocate the Federation from a belligerently recalcitrant Melbourne branch to Sydney following his win in the union elections in 1938 represented a shift in the political outlook of the union. It changed from that which characterised a defeatist and politically lacklustre Melbourne branch after 1928 to that of a more goal-directed and positive radical outlook that was being embraced within an increasingly radical political culture on the NSW wharves.[129] It was a shift that exposed the sorts of schisms in the union that would cause conflicts that would erupt again and again - particularly in the 1950s when a concerted campaign by the right-wing Waterfront Industrial Group on the Melbourne docks to wrest control of the union from the Communists became bitter and protracted.

As we have seen, the ideological campaign to secure the union under its Communist leadership was established under the banner of the *Maritime Worker*. It is through this journal that the three crucial terms of this investigation - text, discourse and ideology – can be explored. For the last quarter of a century these three terms have featured prominently in the concerns of social theorists on the relationship between language and society. In defining a relationship between text, discourse and ideology we can say that discourse and ideology find realisation through the texts, and that the text is also the site of their production. This is never a straightforward relation because a text may be the site of a number of competing and contradictory discourses and ideologies. The *Maritime Worker* therefore was a site of these competitive and contradictory influences, and as such is an important text in the type of analysis being undertaken in this thesis. At one level the *Maritime Worker* operated at a conscious level of ideological production in that it performed an immediate role in attempting to forge a sense of unity and purpose for the Waterside Workers' Federation. It was also designed to engage the debates that were taking place within the Australian labour movement and offer an alternative political and social culture. At another level however it was constrained by those features of discourse in which notions of history, life experiences, and the formation of culture and tradition are constituted and regulated. It is these features that are primary in understanding the regulatory practices that govern knowledge, power and ultimately subjectivity.

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[129] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: pp 101-103.

The previous chapter highlights some of the tensions that exist between notions of discourse and ideology in understanding the regulatory functions that govern society, such as those that regulate social subjectivities. In the study of history such tensions are found in the notions of action and agency through which history, as a process, is made legitimate. In the introduction to this thesis the notion of discourse is shown to place a number of constraints on the creation of subjectivities and the 'truth-claims' that ground them, such as those that Foucault identified in the human sciences. In *The Birth of the Clinic* and *The Order of Things* he identified those 'truth-claims' in which we constitute ourselves as subjects of knowledge; in *Discipline and Punish* he studied the fields of power through which we constitute ourselves acting on others; and, in *The History of Sexuality* he identified the 'truth-claims' in which we constitute ourselves as moral agents.[130] In contrast to the sort of investigation that Foucault had undertaken into the role of discursive practices, the notion of ideology therefore becomes one of the contentious features of this investigation for a number of reasons - principally because of its long association with Marxist critique and the sorts of assumptions that it uses to drive ideological analysis as a political discourse. Many theorists of ideology had looked to Marxism for the assurance of its political potential, because of Marxist claims to ground an empirical perspective in the collective experiences of class for instance. This has meant that the study of ideological relations has been for a long time the favoured model of much critical analysis in attempts to understand the relationship between language and society. The notion of critical discourse analysis offers a corrective to this dominance, suggesting there is a failure in much ideological analysis to recognise the regulation of discursive practices that contribute to an understanding of ideology and the subject within ideology. The regulative effect of discourse therefore determines that ideological practices are blind to those features that circumscribe and unite both the practices and the objects to which they apply. Therefore, even though the definitions of ideology are multiple, as Terry Eagleton has demonstated in his work,[131] they all share certain instabilities in the discursive features that constitute the horizon of understanding for any ideological formation.

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[130] Foucault, M. (1983) 'On the Geneology of Ethics: An Overview of Work In Progress', in Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983) op cit: p 237.

Therefore, while the three principal terms under investigation here – text, ideology and discourse – are featured generally in a complex network of interpretative models in which they are often applied interchangeably - particularly so with the terms discourse and ideology - it is the intention of this investigation at this point to attempt to draw out the differences between them and highlight the principal nature of discourse in all understanding. The *Maritime Worker* is the focal point for this juncture and divergence in relation to these three terms, but the intention will be to contest the notion of ideological analysis in favour of a critical analysis of discourse. This provides a framework of meaning for re-reading historical processes. The reason for making these distinctions is to challenge some of the pitfalls and expose some of the deficiencies which ideological analysis has had in its quest for knowledge of the social condition. One way of approaching this is to examine some of the areas of analysis where their meanings and applications converge, and then opening up the interstitial spaces where they exist in tension.

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[131] For a comprehensive investigation of ideology see Eagleton, T. (1991) *Ideology: an Introduction*, Verso, London.

As we have seen in previous chapters, the *Maritime Worker* was placed at a particular historical, political and social juncture. It attempted to exploit the features that comprised this juncture into a socialist program of political and trade union development. These features were embodied in the text of the *Maritime Worker* in a number of ways, and are found in historical articles, articles of broad social commentary such as those which reflected on religion and class, political commentary and idiomatic political quotes, as well as articles of general interest. All these features of coherency and intelligibility combined against the backdrop of a particular historical circumstance in which the objectives of the *Maritime Worker* were clearly to make sense of the competing features of signification which abounded in this period. The task was then to try and direct them towards specific political and industrial outcomes for the Waterside Workers' Federation under the banner of a general socialist reorientation of society and its political systems. Therefore the ideological agenda which drove the Waterside Workers' Federation was one in which it was envisaged that the different discourses which made up the collective consciousness of Australian waterside workers could be subsumed into a comprehensive whole. The *Maritime Worker* was clearly designed for ideological purposes in the sense that it was believed that control of ideas and images could be used to bring about change and to create a sense of political identification for its readers. Healy stated this purpose in the inaugural edition of the *Maritime Worker* when he declared its function to be "an organising and propaganda medium".[132] The *Maritime Worker* therefore consisted of an amalgam of different discourses – some having their basis in Australian Labor Party traditions, others sourcing from the political texts of the Soviet Union and so forth. This notion of discourse is being used in its most general sense, in that what is being talked about is the social element of language – its content, function and social significance. This notion of discourse can be found also in ideology in which the concept relates, for instance, to those features by which institutions (university history faculties or unions) produce specific ways or modes of talking that are related to the place and nature of that institution. We can say therefore that discourse produces a set of statements about something that will define, delimit, and circumscribe what it is possible and impossible to say with respect to it, and how something is to be talked about. So three generic features of discourse can be noted:

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[132] *Maritime Worker*, 'Greetings from the General Secretary', Vol.1, No.1, April 1938: p1.

1. The institutional nature of discourse and its situatedness in the social. As Diane Macdonnell in *Theories of Discourse* argues "dialogue is the primary condition of discourse: all speech and writing is social . . . discourses differ with the kinds of institutions and social practices in which they take shape and with the positions of those who speak and those whom they address."[133]
2. That discourses are principally organised around practices of exclusion. As Sara Mills suggests: "Whilst what it is possible to say seems self-evident and natural, this naturalness is a result of what has been excluded, that which is almost unsayable".[134]
3. Whatever signifies or has meaning can be considered part of discourse.

By using this reference and applying it to two of the broadest conceptions of what we understand the ideological to be, we can read the text of the *Maritime Worker* and identify the sorts of mechanisms through which a broad range of discourses were brought into focus and developed both consciously and subconsciously into a meaningful construct that gave intelligibility and cohesion to a field of social relations. The first of the ideology theorems concerns the broader notions; these include those that J.B. Thompson described as the 'inclusive' theories that concern the broad rationality of political belief systems.[135] Next come those of a more restrictive nature, more commonly associated with Marxist social analyses that perceive ideology in terms of specific political belief systems. This is either as a positive phenomenon, such as Lukács' notion of ideology as the expression of the proletariat,[136] or the more commonly understood negative expressions of Marxism such as the notion of ideology as being embodied in the hegemonic apparatuses of the ruling classes.[137] It should be noted that generally speaking much Marxist analysis also includes a synthesis of these two ideological streams.

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[133] MacDonnell, D. (1986) *Theories of Discourse*, Blackwell, New York: p 3.
[134] Mills, S. (1997) op cit: p12.
[135] Thompson, J.B. (1984) *Studies in the Theory of Ideology*, Blackwell, Oxford: pp 75-90.
[136] Eagleton, T. (1991) op cit: p 94.
[137] ibid: pp 112-17.

Inclusive theories of ideology have gained some currency over the last 30 years as part of the 'end of ideology'[138] debates that have arisen since the end of WWII and the crisis associated with the crimes of Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia.[139] The inclusive theories are associated with the work of people like Alvin Gouldner[140] and Martin Seliger[141] and follow concerns that perceive ideology as having less an antagonistic and more a cohesive role in society. The broadest of these are those outlined by people like Gouldner who see the manifestation of ideology in a direct lineage with the progress of reason stemming from the Enlightenment. Influenced by the 'rationalisation' thesis of Jürgen Habermas, Gouldner sees ideology as a part of the historical project of modernity emerging from the Enlightenment, one that has been interlaced with the technologies of communication. As Gouldner argued, ideology entailed:

> the emergence of a new mode of political discourse; discourse that sought action but did not merely seek it by invoking authority or tradition, or by emotive rhetoric alone. It was discourse predicated on the idea of grounding political action in secular and rational theory... Ideology separated itself from the mythical and religious consciousness; it justified the course of action it proposed, by the logic and evidence it summoned on behalf of its views of the social world, rather than by invoking faith, tradition, revelation or the authority of the speaker.[142]

In a similar approach, Seliger defines ideology in a narrower, more politically directed way as an action orientated set of beliefs that were organised into coherent systems for the realisation of political aims - whether they be revolutionary, reformist or traditional in outlook:

> An ideology is a group of beliefs and disbeliefs (rejections) expressed in value sentences, appeal sentences and explanatory statements. . . [It is] designed to serve on a relatively permanent basis a group of people to justify a reliance on moral norms and a modicum of factual evidence and self-consciously rational coherence the legitimacy of the implements and technical prescriptions which are to ensure concerted action for the preservation, reform, destruction or reconstruction of a given order. [143]

The *Maritime Worker* can be situated within this inclusive view of ideology. Seliger believed that this view had its antecedents in an earlier theory of social action: Seliger believed that Lenin's view of ideology as class-consciousness orientated towards political action was a transitional one that naturally led to a cohesion of political beliefs.[144] The *Maritime Worker* illustrated this attempt at realising these action-orientated beliefs through its editorials, which were influenced by its Leninist beliefs in creating an educated working class. As Healy suggested, the path to greater class-consciousness was through greater understanding of socialist theory:

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[138] Bell, D. (1960) *The End of Ideology*, Free Press, New York.
[139] Eagleton, T. (1991) op cit: p xii.
[140] Thompson, J.B. (1984) op cit: pp 83-90.
[141] ibid: pp 76-83.
[142] Gouldner, A.W., (1976) *The Dialectic of Ideology and Technology*, quoted in Thompson, J.B. (1984) op cit: pp 84-5
[143] Thompson, J.B. (1984) op cit: p 79.

> The major shortcoming of the Australian labour movement has been its traditional indifference to theory; its almost exclusive preoccupation with purely bread and butter problems to the neglect of ultimate aims...it must learn to extend its gaze beyond the present limited horizon.[145]

Much of the editorial content and style was influenced by this underlying belief in the tenets of scientific socialism and the need for widespread politicisation of the working classes. The influence of scientific socialism was manifest in the themes of many articles in the *Maritime Worker.* The importance given to it was clearly demonstrated in an implied belief in the values of scientific socialism, and was also demonstrated in a practical orientation to the need for a socialist education. This education was seen as valuable in exposing the underlying laws of capitalism, leading to greater understanding and awareness of the causes of social inequality. From this understanding it was assumed that the working classes generally would be in a better position to force political change. In his biography of Jim Healy, Vic Williams suggested that Healy well understood this need for a union to have politics to free itself[146]

The manifestation of these action-orientated political practices within the union can be seen in the way that the editorial policy of the *Maritime Worker* was restrictively controlled both physically and ideologically. This control was apparent in the way that dissent was both physically excluded - the McDonagh/Aanensen debate for instance was an isolated incident - and editorial policy was rigorously directed. These policies represented a serious and concerted attempt to bring the union branches under the centralised control of the Federal Executive, and also to bring the individual members of the union into line with accepted political and educational policy. The extent to which these beliefs created an active policy of political and social intervention in the agenda of the Waterside Workers' Federation was illustrated by the increasing willingness of the union to pursue political as well as industrial action.

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[144] ibid: p 77.
[145] Healy, J (1940) cited in Williams, V. (1975) op cit: pp 26-7.

Such actions can be seen in the black-ban on Dutch ships in support of Indonesian independence during 1946.[147]

In contrast to the inclusive models of ideology, the restrictive models are concerned more with relations of domination. When used as a theory of action they were therefore much more politically specific in that they directly targeted the causes of asymmetrical power relations. The notion of 'restrictive' derives its definition from the sense that they are concerned largely with the mechanisms through which power is linked to the maintenance and reproduction of the material interests of inequality in social relations, and as such are much more concerned with the negative aspects of ideological control. Therefore restrictive models are more likely to focus on the processes that serve the interests of specific groups in society: whereas the inclusive models were more universal in scope and application in terms of focussing on the idea of consensus. As such the 'restrictive' models of ideology have their strongest expression in Marxist theory. In the light of its strong Communist affiliations and its stated political program, the restrictive theories of ideology are useful in understanding both the role of the *Maritime Worker* and the restrictions that are placed on political action. The role of the *Maritime Worker* was both to enlighten its readers as to the nature of asymmetrical power relations in society, and also to overcome these as a voice of radical opinion and action.

There is much more concern in the restrictive theories with the notion of the ideological control of the structure of social institutions. Within Marxist theory this connection to structure is related back to the economy and Marx saw this relationship as producing social relations as a commodity.[148] Other Marxists implied a restrictive ideological role in those forces that are intrinsically connected to the superstructure that supports the relations of production, such as the role of the media industries in maintaining asymmetrical power structures.[149] The implications in this thinking were that it was in the apparatuses of production that relations of power and domination could be found. This knowledge suggested that intervention, either directly in the

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[146] Williams, V. (1975) op cit: p 168.

[147] Lockwood, R. (1982) *Black Armada: Australia and the Struggle for Indonesian Indpendence 1942-49*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney.

[148] Marx, K. in Kamenka, E. (1983) *The Portable Karl Marx*, Penguin, London: pp 432-61.

apparatuses of production, such as in a revolutionary overthrow of the state, or in the relations that supported them meant that some degree of active control and manipulation could be achieved. It was this point that underscored Tom Nelson's history articles on Australian working class history in 1941. Nelson, a Communist WWF official from Sydney, argued that the key to class history was to be found in:

> the development of the material conditions of existence of society; by the changes in the mode of production of the material wealth required for the existence of society; by the changes in the mutual relations of classes in production and distribution of material wealth. So let us proceed briefly to our real study of Australian history and worry less about the morals of this or that politician or who Governor so-and-so said or did. Let us get down to fundamentals.[150]

The restrictive theories of ideology have progressed from crudely deterministic models that focussed on the primacy of the economy, into more modern conceptions which sought to unravel the complex interlinking that occurs between the forces of production and the superstructures that support them. The work of Karl Marx and Friedreich Engels was seminal in understanding the influence of ideology in the structure of social relations. They saw ideology as a *lens obscura,* a term they used to describe it as a false representation of the 'real' - an inversion of reality.[151] The 'real' were those features which constitute the economic base on which social relations were structured, and through which the bourgeois classes maintained their grip on power. However this emphasis on ideology as a false representation of the 'real' is associated with an earlier Marxist orthodoxy that has been shown to be an inadequate model for understanding social relations. This inadequacy has been shown in the underlying assumptions that believed that seizing the power of the state would reverse that inversion and that the revolutionary proletariat was in possession of 'true' knowledge. It was an assumption that could not ascertain the 'reality' effects that ideology has. As a social critique, these forms of Marxism did not acknowledge that there were in fact certain valuable insights for social modelling in the social systems they attacked, and that there were aspects of false consciousness in its own system of beliefs. As Martin

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[149] For a good synopsis of the role of the media industries in modern capitalist society see Bennett, T. Gurevich, M., et.al. (1982) *Culture Society and the Media*, Methuen, London.

[150] Nelson, T. 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', *Maritime Worker*, Vol.3, No.12, March 15 1941: p 6.

[151] See Eagleton, T. (1991) op cit: p71.

Selinger noted, it became difficult to maintain the orthodox conception of ideology when it:

> becomes necessary to admit that bourgeois ideology is not bare of factual insights or even entirely wrong about causal relationships and predictive evaluations. It is also conceded that the proletarian belief system is coloured by false consciousness. Consequently, the argument reaches the point where the original absolute juxtaposition of objective or total perception of reality and ideology, of objective and subjective class-consciousness breaks down.[152]

These more orthodox Marxist conceptions of ideology gave way to the view that the ideas, beliefs and practices of power which were invested in the superstructure had a far more pervasive role in the maintenance of social relations than had been previously thought. The notion of ideology that principally saw power directly linked to direct control of the apparatus of material production proved to be an inadequate conception of the pervasive influence of language and the realm of the symbolic in modern society. This was a point that Lenin made in a speech to a conference of trade unions in Moscow in 1918, when he argued that while the Russian revolutionaries were able to seize the apparatuses of the state, the influence of cultural factors was a substantial issue to overcome:

> The whole difficulty of the Russian revolution is that it was much easier for the Russian revolutionary working class to start than it is for the West European classes, but it is much more difficult for us to continue. It is more difficult to start a revolution in West European countries because there the revolutionary proletariat is opposed by the higher thinking that comes with culture, while the working class is in a state of cultural slavery.[153]

These sorts of insights were also made in the *Maritime Worker*, but as a political understanding they were expressed in rather deterministic terms that were linked to issues of gaining control of the media industries. This was the purpose of the *Maritime Worker*: It was designed as an alternative to the mainstream media. Tom Nelson certainly made the point that the Australian experience of workers gaining political control did not lead to better outcomes for the working class nor a lessening of the authority of the capitalist state. In the prologue to his history he mused:

> ... What a peculiar capitalist country is this, [Australia] in which Labor predominates in the Upper House (Senate) and recently predominated in the Lower House (Reps.) and yet the capitalist system does not suffer damage.[154]

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[152] Seliger, M. (1977), *The Marxist Conception of Ideology*, quoted in Thompson, J.B. (1984) op cit: p 77.
[153] Quoted in Eagleton, T. (1991) op cit: p 114.
[154] Nelson, T. 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1' *Maritime Worker*, Vol.3, No.12, March 15, 1941:p6

It is from these concerns about the pervasiveness of ideas and beliefs that conceptions of ideology increasingly sought to understand the role of the superstructure in the maintenance and reproduction of social relations. The work of Marxists, such as the Hungarian, George Lukács and the Italian, Antonio Gramsci have been instrumental in understanding ideology in these terms. Following on from their legacy the French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser also understood ideology to be in the superstructure. Althusser's notion of ideology recognised the primacy of symbolic relations in the maintenance of social relations and society's infrastructure. He argued that ideology was not the distorted representation of real relations, but rather a real relation itself. In Althusser's view ideology can be summarised as:

> a representation of the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence . . . [In ideology] men do indeed express, not the relation between them and their conditions of existence, but the way they live the relation between them and their conditions of existence: this presupposes both a real relation and an 'imaginary', 'lived' relation . . . In ideology, the real relation is inevitably invested in the imaginary relation.[155]

It was the combination of these two streams of Marxism – the deterministic and the cultural – that gave greater insight to the broad structural relations existent in society. It was these influences that brought about attempts, such as Althusser's, to address the problems of how social and economic institutions were actually reproduced in ideas, beliefs and practices - in discourse. It was this aspect of ideological analysis that suggested that the real basis of social relations may be found across the total social infrastructure – not just those that serve a repressive, distorting or overtly coercive function such as the role of the army or the police. It also included those which Louis Althusser called the 'Ideological State Apparatuses' (ISAs) such as the church, the education system or the family.[156] Althusser argued that these institutions were supported through discourse practices that served not only to foster their own interests - such as the integrity and coherence of the education system – but also assisted in reproducing and maintaining the dominant social relations. French Marxist, Michel Pêcheux - a student of Althusser's - was one such theorist who was instrumental in establishing the connection between discourse and its support of the ISAs.[157]

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[155] Althusser, L. (1965), *For Marx*, Verso/NLB, London (1986 ed): pp233-4

[156] Althusser, L. (1970) 'Ideology & Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)' in Beechey, V. & Donald, J. (1985), *Subjectivity & Social Relations*, Open Uni Press, London: pp 64-7.

[157] Pecheux, M. (1982), *Language Semantics and Ideology*, Macmillan, London.

The basis of understanding the differences that arise between discourse and ideology would appear to be on the notion of the constitution and regulation of social subjectivities. The common element in many forms of Marxist thought is a point of reference through which the subject can be empowered by their knowledge of self and grasp the political potential of this knowledge outside of those features of ideology which constrain them. This is found as an underlying element in both the more deterministic forms of Marxism that focus on the realm of the economic and those Marxist notions that focus on the symbolic in the maintenance of social relations such as Fredric Jameson's 'ideology of the text'.[158] There has however been a failure to recognise the processes of power that provide the grounding for these discourses of modernity. The analysis of the discursive nature of social regulatory practices does provide some insight into the failures of these meta-narratives to deliver the promises of science, the rational human agent and the secular progress of reason which were seen as critical to the emancipation of the subject in the modern era.[159]

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[158] Jameson, F. (1988), *The Ideologies of Theory: Essays 1971-1986*, Uni of Minnesota, Minneapolis: Chapter 2.

[159] Appleby, J., Covington, E., et al. (1996) *Knowledge and Postmodernism in Historical Perspective,* Routledge, New York: pp 385-92.

CHAPTER V

IDEOLOGY AND THE NARRATIVES OF IDENTITY

The successful implementation of any ideological program that sought to expose the negative ideological effects of the dominant political institutions and reinforce a culture of its own values would inevitably rely on its own institutional forms and apparatuses. In Australia, the institutionalisation of socialist and Communist theory and praxis was an uneven one, and a significant part of this phenomenon was Australia's relative isolation and Anglo-centric culture. Although organizations dedicated to the cause of international socialism in Australia had been around since 1872, with the Democratic Association of Victoria which was associated with Karl Marx's Working Men's Association,[160] it wasn't until after 1918 that the impact of international labour movements in Australia proliferated and extended beyond their predominantly British roots.[161] From the conclusion of World War One Australian socialists and Communists began to increasingly adopt the ideas and practices of international political movements. By the end of the 1930s these movements in Australia, coupled with increasing communication and transportation technology as well as the impact of a world-wide depression, had heralded a heightened internationalism - particularly one in which the USSR backed Communist International (Comintern) had a dominant place.[162] A central view that was used to bind together this increased sense of internationalism was the notion of geopolitics, and it was through this concept that the political identity of the Australian working class was reinforced in a broader framework of meaning. This chapter investigates this notion of a geopolitical understanding, the way it was used in relation to a series of industrial disputes that were fought on the issue of Australia's national security, and the ways this political ideology was made to fit within the framework of Australian working class identity.

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[160] Burgman, V. (1985) *In Our Time: Socialism and the Rise of Labor, 1885-1905,* Allen & Unwin, Sydney: p 11.
[161] Farrell, F. (1981) op cit: p xviii.
[162] ibid: pp 231-2.

In many ways the tyranny of distance was a major factor in the way that foreign ideas were received in Australia generally. As seen in the earlier debate between McDonagh and Aanensen, these ideas also did not sit easily within the mainstream discourse of Australia's labour movement. Comintern-influenced ideas and directives were often unclear for early Australian Communists and socialist organizations, and were a source of much confusion, for reasons both of distance and lack of a stable and organised radical tradition in Australia.[163] Towards the end of the 30s, however - even though the Comintern had increasingly toned down its policies of world revolution and developed more into a branch of the USSR foreign service[164] - the influence of the Comintern had increased, and its role became much clearer. As such, the directives it issued had a much more targeted influence on the direction of the CPA. It was around these influences that the *Maritime Worker* - under the direction of its Communist leadership - was published. The various paths taken by this paper can be seen to a certain degree - particularly on matters of international relations – to be a product of those directives that were being issued from the Comintern to its Communist affiliates worldwide. When Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the CPA, in line with the Comintern's directives came out wholeheartedly in support of the war against fascism[165] - and thus so did the leadership of the Waterside Workers' Federation.[166] To this end the CPA concentrated its efforts in two directions: active involvement of Communists in the fighting forces abroad, and improvement of production in Australia. The WWF promoted this involvement by developing an active participation in the Stevedoring Industry Commission's attempts to reform Australian wharves.[167]

In this heightened climate of international relations, strong concerns within the WWF about the ominous direction of world events began to manifest throughout 1937 and 1938.[168] Australian waterside workers displayed their opposition to the aggressive armament build-up of the Japanese and the annexation of Chinese territory. This expression of opposition was made in a series of bans on the loading of cargoes destined for Japan, and across the country the slogan 'No Scrap for the Jap' started appearing on the wharves.[169] In October 1937 waterside workers in Fremantle refused to load a Japanese whaling ship with coal; that same month Geelong wharfies refused to load wheat for Japan; in January 1938, Sydney waterside workers refused to load metal; in February, Port Adelaide members voted in favour of an embargo; and in April, Melbourne waterside workers refused to load scrap iron on two ships destined for Japan.[170] In a growing climate of political polarity where Australian governments were being increasingly perceived by those on the Left to be supporting the growth of fascism, these actions provoked a strong response from the Lyons Government. Its response was to threaten to invoke the Transport Workers' Act in those ports where these actions were occurring. The under-prepared and still largely disorganised Federal body,[171] fearing an all-out attack similar to the reprisals during the strikes of 1928, intervened and the Executive instructed their members in Sydney and Melbourne to resume work on the disputed cargoes[172]. The strength of feeling at the grass-roots level of the union, however, brought these events to a head in November 1938 when Port Kembla waterside workers, led by Communist Ted Roach - in defiance of the Federation Committee of Management's re-stated directives to work cargo - refused to load the Dalfram with its load of scrap iron destined for Japan.[173] After much discussion, particularly between the Communists at Port Kembla and the Federal Executive, the

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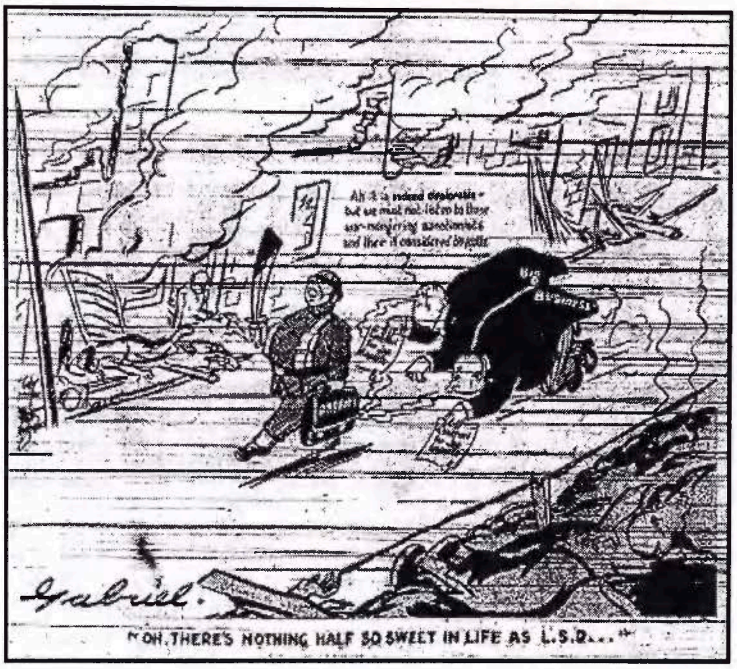
[163] Davidson, A. (1969) op cit: pp 175-83.
[164] ibid: p73.
[165] ibid: p 83.
[166] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: pp 115-16.
[167] ibid: p 116.


Ah it is indeed deplorable - but we must not listen to these war-mongering sensationalists and their ill-considered boycotts
Gabriel
"OH, THERE'S NOTHING HALF SO SWEET IN LIFE AS L.S.D..."

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[168] Articles in the *Maritime Worker* on this issue included such titles as 'The Growth of Fascism' April 1938'; 'What Spain Means to You', April 1938; 'Who Dictates our Foreign Policy? Our Actions Correct', June 1938; 'Japan Drives to World War: The Danger to Australia' September 1938.

[169] Mallory, G. (1999) 'The 1938 Dalfram Pig-Iron Dispute and Wharfies' Leader, Ted Roach', presented in a paper to 'On the Waterfront: Union Gains and Struggles 1890-1998' a conference organised by the Sydney Branch of the Australian Society for the study of Labour History, Sydney University, 20 February, 1999: p 10.

[170] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: p106.

[171] Mallory argued that in Ted Roach's belief the Federal Committee of Management still had a large conservative element from the union's post 1928 period. It was this element who were reluctant to engage in any militant action. See Mallory, G. (1999) op cit: p 11.

[172] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: p 106.

Committee reversed its decision and began a program of widespread support for the Port Kembla wharfies. This also became an issue of repealing the Transport Workers' Act.[174]

This action precipitated a confrontation between the wharfies and the Federal Government that saw Attorney-General Robert Menzies, in a bid to break the bans, threaten to introduce the Transport Workers' Act.[175] In the heightened standoff, a war of words ensued in which the union and its supporters sought to defend the justice of their actions in broad ideological terms. The success of the union in this war of words can be seen by one of its more enduring legacies: from this dispute Menzies earned himself the disparaging sobriquet of 'Pig Iron Bob', a name which stuck to him like mud for the rest of his life.[176]

Ultimately the strike was successful. The Lyons Government backed down on the licensing of the Port Kembla wharves. Even though the workers initially rejected the return to work proposals because of the simmering issue of dispatching the remaining 27,000 tonnes of scrap iron waiting on the Port Kembla wharves to Japan, they eventually returned because of the continuing hardship felt by them and the BHP steel workers who went out on strike with them.[177] As part of the return to work deal an assurance was made by the Federal Government that after the Dalfram was loaded no more pig iron would be exported.[178] While exports were reduced, Menzies did not keep the spirit of this promise. In April 1939 Beasley claimed that the Federal Government forced the Townsville branch of the WWF – which was already under the grip of the Transport Workers' Act – to load metal concentrates for Japan.[179]

Greg Mallory argued a number of important outcomes for the union were achieved out of the successes of this action. It firstly showed that the Transport Workers' Act was an ineffectual tool for oppression when workers collectively stood up to it.[180] The Dalfram protest included local steel workers as well as the crew on the

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[173] Mallory, G. (1999) op cit: p 12.
[174] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: pp106-7.
[175] ibid: p107.
[176] Tony Stephens, 'Pig Iron Memories Bob Back Up', Sydney Morning Herald, 17 July 1993.
[177] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: p108.
[178] Mallory, G. (1999) op cit: pp 19-20.
[179] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: p108.
[180] Mallory, G. (1999) op cit: p 20.

Dalfram itself, and this blunted the Federal Government implementation of the Act. When the Transport Workers' Act was applied on 7 December 1938, only one licence was taken out. This was subsequently burnt in a public stand of defiance outside the Customs House in Port Kembla, following which the wharves were declared black.[181] The *Maritime Worker* observed that the industrial and political work of galvanising the branch was crucial to the outcome, and set an example to other branches:

> It will also indicate to the members of the Federation generally that the threat of the Transport Workers' Act does not necessarily preclude the right of our members to use their industrial organization for the purpose of maintaining their democratic rights and privileges.[182]

A second outcome was the effective spread of militancy throughout the union. Ted Roach argued that not only was the success spread through the media but also Port Kembla wharfies spread their success to other wharves through transfers where some of these men became union delegates.[183] The third outcome of the pig-iron dispute was that it led the WWF into a more militant involvement in the political sphere. This involvement became manifest in the union's involvement in such actions as the support of Indonesian Independence in 1946.[184] In 1948 the union stopped work in support of striking Queensland railway workers.[185] In 1949, both Ted Roach and Jim Healy were jailed for their support of the Coal Strike,[186]and the WWF vigorously supported the 'No Campaign' against the Communist Party Dissolution Bill of 1950 with financial as well as political support.[187]

One of the central components of any widespread successes that could be ascertained in the Dalfram dispute was the way the dispute was managed from within the framework of a political ideology. This dispute and others provided an early challenge for the fledgling *Maritime Worker* in the development of its political and ideological program under its Communist leadership, and its success would be seen as giving it some leverage as a voice in Australian industrial and labour politics. Ted Roach placed this dispute in its wider context:

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[181] ibid: pp 15-16.

[182] *Maritime Worker*, 'Determined Stand At Port Kembla: Trade Union Movement Behind Our Members', Vol 1 No 10, January 1939, p.1.

[183] Mallory, G. (1999) op cit: p 21.

[184] Lockwood, R. (1982) op cit.

[185] Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: p 137.

[186] ibid: pp 137-139.

[187] ibid: pp 144-45.

> The essence of the struggle was not so much whether we loaded the Dalfram or not. Intrinsically the cargo itself made little difference to the war on China. The real issue was that the Dalfram was the vehicle to focus national and international attention on the reactionary policy of the Lyons/Menzies Government; to alert the Australian people to the dangers inherent in the Japanese policy, and to force alteration in Government foreign policy. In this we were extremely successful.[188]

The focus in this chapter will be an examination of the ways in which this political ideology was both constructed and legitimised. From the beginning the embargo disputes were always going to be difficult to manage because, unlike the industrial strikes typically engaged in by the union movement, these were unique in that they were fought on strong moral and political grounds. The union sought to intervene in Australia's foreign political and economic relationships rather than the traditional union disputes over wages or conditions. The central issue was the politically sensitive one of Australia's obligation to foreign trade, and even the Federal Labor Party leader John Curtin told the wharfies that under a Labor Government they would still have to load the Dalfram.[189] Any management decisions by the Federal Executive required a large degree of circumspection and caution. A broad consensus across the community was therefore needed for the Dalfram dispute to be successful, and one of the aims of the *Maritime Worker* was to develop this support and display the actions of the waterside workers as being in Australia's long-term interests.

The circumstance of the Dalfram dispute in Port Kembla caught the union Executive under-prepared – and to a degree unwilling.[190] It became a test of the union's resolve and ability to withstand intense political pressure. Even though the *Maritime Worker* was already publishing articles expressing the danger to Australia of Japanese expansionism in China,[191] the actual need for physical intervention and action was reluctantly thrust upon the Federal Executive of the WWF. Its initial reluctance to take a combative stance on the issue indicated some hesitation in the union's belief in its ability to withstand an assault from the Government and employers so early into the Healy administration. Successful intervention therefore demanded the *Maritime Worker* display a united front of workers, as well as delivering its position effectively to the general public. In this it was helped by an already existing groundswell of support because of the concerns shown about Japanese intentions in China. The strategy involved using the *Maritime Worker* to invoke widespread support in recognising that it was in the general interest of Australian national security to hinder the Japanese military build-up and that Australian wharfies were leading the way forward. By achieving this objective, and by giving the wharfies' version of events much greater scrutiny, the opportunity was also taken to highlight the injustices of the Transport Workers' Act, therefore developing a strong support base for its repeal. The *Maritime Worker* made this intention clear in statements that were issued following a combined meeting of the A.C.T.U. executive and the Federal Management Committee of the Waterside Workers' Federation in the midst of the Sydney dispute in May/June 1938:

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[188] ibid: p 108.
[189] Mallory, G. (1999) op cit: pp 14-15.
[190] Mallory suggests that Roach believed that the FCOM was unwilling to take on the TWA: See Mallory, G. (1999) op cit: p 11.
[191] *Maritime Worker*, 'Japan Drives to World War: The Danger to Australia', Vol.1, No.6, September 1938: p2.

> All sections of the community should view with the deepest horror the barbarous systematic massacre of the Chinese population by the Japanese military and naval forces and the ruthless slaughter of civilised populations in other parts of the world, and that is the duty of civilised people to show in the most tangible form their hatred of such actions...That the Federal Government be severely condemned for their threat to implement the Transport Workers' Act...That we call upon all sections of the community to show their opposition to the inhuman decision of the Federal Government to endeavour to economically strangle the waterside workers for their human interest in the affairs of the peoples of other lands....[192]

The editorial approach taken in the *Maritime Worker* involved intensive reportage over the period of the disputes. This increased in intensity during the Dalfram crisis, when the Federal Executive was forced to go on the offensive. The approach included articles and editorials both highlighting the widespread implications of fascist expansionism for national security and the oppression of the working classes. It also included reports and discussion from branch and executive meetings on dispute management, using these both as a demonstration of a united union approach as well as a tool to create unity. The overarching framework of the editorial policy was to demonstrate that these disputes were conducted under an umbrella of democratic action. One of the ways this was achieved was by publishing numerous copies of letters and statements proclaiming support for the "moral stand" of the wharfies, and these came from groups such as civil rights organizations, church groups, affiliates to the Communist Party, trade unions, trade union organizations and branches of the WWF.[193] The publication of these sorts of letters in the *Maritime Worker* was a common practice during periods of industrial action.

Having its own newspaper meant that the WWF was able to have some control over the political debate that issued during the Dalfram dispute, both as a means of contesting opposition claims as well as putting its own arguments into the public domain. This gave the WWF some leverage in achieving specific political objectives because it gave the union an effective medium of communication with its members which could be used to direct unified political action. As had been noted in Chapter One this was one of Jim Healy's intentions for the *Maritime Worker*. Underlining the methods of dealing with these immediate political necessities through the pages of the *Maritime Worker* were the broader political and ideological features that reveal the types of discursive tactics used. These included the sort of language used, who could speak for instance, and the sorts of contexts in which the debates were framed and made relevant to broader concerns. Ultimately the success of the union in pursuing its broader ideological objectives was going to hinge on the ways its points of reference was going to be made relevant to its members and those in the broader working class community.

During these disputes the need to develop a framework for these broader ideological strategies meant that the *Maritime Worker* sought to portray the disputes as representative of true democratic action, and the actions of the men as morally just. To this end the moral and ethical motives in the actions of wharfies were demonstrated in contrast with the absence of such qualities in the members of the Lyons Government, who were portrayed as being secretive, underhand and duplicitous in their role. It is in this space of discursive construction that ideological subjectivities are constituted and given a point of reference to a broader range of ideas and beliefs. As such the *Maritime Worker* sought to portray the striking workers as fair, sensible, compassionate and courageous in the face of draconian threats from the Government.

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[192] *Maritime Worker*, 'Statement re Waterside Workers' Dispute', Vol.1, No.3, June 1938: p1.

[193] The correspondence in the June 1938 edition of the *Maritime Worker* represents the sorts of letters which were published.

It was these sorts of qualities, such as democracy and egalitarianism, which the *Maritime Worker* demonstrated in generic terms as being representative of a certain Australian working class character. These metaphorical elements of the working class character were not just argumentative devices that arose as a means to combating the disputes however. They formed part of a broader system of reference and contextualisation that the *Maritime Worker* was engaged with in which the notion of a working class consciousness encapsulated certain ideas of political action and meaning. It was this broader system of reference that provided the context through which the embargo disputes were played out. The disputes did not just provide the context for the expression of the meaning embodied in this referential field. In many ways it was this referential field that determined the contexts in which the disputes were understood and therefore it is in this system of reference that the construction of meaning can be found.

Consistent with its widespread and internationalist influences, one set of strategies that was used within the *Maritime Worker* to fuse together a broader political and ideological agenda and combine it with political action, took the form of what was being defined in the lexicon of the 1930s as 'geopolitics'. In this sense politics was cast in an international framework of clear-cut divisions between Communism versus fascism, workers versus business, and so forth. In this increasingly global political framework Australian working class radicalism wanted to look outside of its domestic roots and the perceived failures of its parliamentary representatives to deliver the implied promises of working class representation and demonstrate an internationalist frame of reference. The promulgation of articles on international affairs in the *Maritime Worker,* such as those that supported the political beliefs behind the embargoes on exports to Japan and those that made reference to the broader issues of fascism and Western imperialism, represented a commitment on the part of the Waterside Workers' Federation to engage Australian workers in the debates of the international labour movement and to promote these debates as a concern for Australian workers. It was within the framework of geopolitics that a certain quality of working class consciousness was universalised, and attempts were made to make this pertinent to Australian workers. The shipping embargoes gave the editors of the *Maritime Worker* some scope to develop this frame of reference and they attempted this in a number of ways such as through the editorial policies.

In the midst of these disputes the Healy editorial titled 'The Growth of Fascism,[194] (the one which sparked the McDonagh-Aanensen debate referred to earlier), was grounded in these broader debates. It offers a useful index to the sorts of mechanisms through which political identities were constituted. It was able to do this through a number of means, such as metaphorical association, in which negative and positive stereotypes were assigned to specific identities. These stereotypes were drawn from broader associations, such as those that involved the capitalist/Communist divide that structured the political horizons of the period, and were used to manufacture a series of political constrasts. The events of the Dalfram dispute were structured within the terms of these broader associations. These gave context to the ways in which the *Maritime Worker* and even the individual wharfies made sense of their world. In many ways - such as Healy's attempts in his editorial to reinforce the political stereotypes of capitalist rapaciousness and its outcomes in fascist political movements - these broader associations were cast in ideological terms. These were perceived in either an inclusive sense, in the idea that a unified working class consciousness was possible, or in the restrictive sense in the idea that the structured asymmetry of power relations could be challenged through the creation of political organs and methods of resistance such as the publication of working class newspapers. The Healy editorial therefore provides some of the background to understanding the ideological terms of the embargo disputes, as well as the sorts of arguments that were taking place between wharfies like McDonagh and Aanensen. One question that continues to arise however is: How are these broader contexts of meaning constituted as a form of knowledge that can be used ideologically to achieve the twin aims of resistance and unification, when in one sense they are ultimately grounded in those aspects of language, which, as Roland Barthes argues, resist all attempts to secure an origin?[195] One way to do this is to explore the source of those meanings through which the *Maritime Worker* sought to ground its knowledge of identity.

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[194] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Growth of Fascism', Vol.1, No.1, April 1938: p4

[195] Refer to the Introductory chapter for the source of this quote.

In the editorial, Healy's particular concern was to highlight the sorts of relationships that had arisen between Western governments and the armament industries, and the contribution these made to the growth of fascism. Dominated by the notion of geopolitics, this editorial featured a number of strategies that sought to politicise Australian workers within a radical internationalist agenda. Healy explored the sorts of roles that were perceived to be open to Australian workers to engage in the international fight against the injustices he argued were being perpetrated against the working classes. The strategies used in this editorial demonstrate the sorts of methods and techniques that were generally undertaken within the union's Communist leadership to forge a particular perspective and vision of world and local events for its readership.

The focus of the editorial was ostensibly the Spanish Civil War. Healy spoke about this conflict as an illustration of the way in which fascism was becoming increasingly universalised. The widespread prominence of this particular confrontation gave him the opportunity to develop an internationalist frame of reference that could be recast to fit within the domestic context, in which the Lyons Government was threatening waterside workers with the Transport Workers' Act. By developing this context, Healy believed Australian workers would become increasingly aware of their political responsibilities and stem the tide of fascism – which included recognising its presence in Australian political life. Healy spoke about the growth of fascism in Europe and his belief that its growth was linked to the policies of Western governments. Healy suggested that the appeasement policies of Western governments were not only failing to stop fascist expansionism, in some cases they appeared to be supporting it for their own profit. He was concerned to highlight that this problem was not just a European issue, but was of great concern to Australians because of Japanese expansionism in East Asia. Healy saw the spread of fascism inextricably linked with armament sales to fascist countries by Western businesses such as Armstrong Vickers. To illustrate this point he used a domestic context to show the commercial and political interests of these businesses in promoting armament sales. He highlighted the figure of 43 million pounds spent by the Lyons Government on defence while at the same time promoting the sale of iron to Japan. Healy concluded with a call for a broad policy of resistance to be adopted by

Australian workers. This included a call for action: exhorting workers to support the resolutions of the Council of Australian Trade Unions on the reduction and limitation of armaments and the strengthening of the League of Nations, and also to be politically united in the defeat of fascism.

The text reveals those devices through which the notions of fascism and the ideologies of opposition and resistance are made. One of these devices was the use of metaphoric parallelism in which antonymic terms are placed in contrast and extended into other spheres of meaning and context. In this editorial the notions of the democratic and the undemocratic were contrasted to reinforce a point of recognition between fascism and non-fascism. By using this device Healy attempted to develop a contrast between the positive attributes of democracy and the negative ones of fascism that could offer condensed points of identification. Therefore the notion of fascism was linked with such terms as 'unrestrained brutahty', 'ferocious repression' and the actions of the Italian and German governments in Spain were made devoid of any humanity by Healy's technical description of their actions as 'experiments' in warfare. The Spanish workers in contrast were portrayed as heroically "fighting in defence of their country and democratic liberty..." By developing these systems of contrasts they could then be linked to a wide range of recognisable political and economic situations to undermine their legitimacy – in this case the foreign policy of the Lyons Government. So by setting up political entities as a series of metaphors of difference, and by reinforcement of the negative aspects of your adversary, the political process could be made recognisable within starkly contrasting terms that denaturalised common conceptions or beliefs. One immediately motivated association, which Healy hoped to create with this denaturalising strategy, was an image in which the conservative Lyons Government in Australia could be tagged with the label of fascism. Through a series of propositional strategies Healy portrayed Western governments and business as being complicit with the growth of fascism. Healy stated "the Chamberlain government, with the support of Lyons and Company is pursuing a course designed to allow these fascist aggressors a free hand in certain directions". This complicity of Western governments was manufactured by an series of negative word play: Healy developed the term 'fascist' synonymously with the proper nouns 'Hitler', 'Mussolini' and 'Franco', and by extending these synecdoches the British and

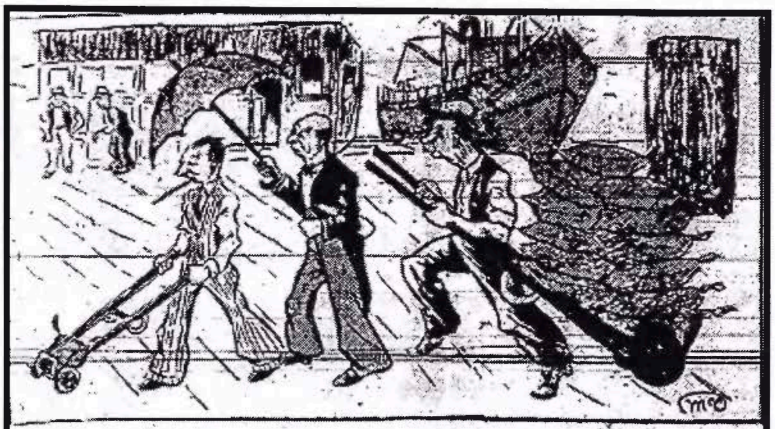
Australian governments respectively became ‘Chamberlain’ and ‘Lyons and Company’. In contrast, the Republican government of Spain was represented by inclusive and collective terms, referring to the workers “fighting in defence of their country and democratic liberty”. This strategy of inclusiveness was extended to Australian workers who “are strong enough to demand a change in the foreign policy of the Lyons government, and to ensure that a real solution is found to those twin evils of fascism and war”.

The success of any ideological strategies, which are designed to create a culture of inclusiveness, is the ability to create both a sense of identification and conversely misidentification. In Healy’s editorial this strategy of identification was achieved through metaphorical parallelism, which - through a series of contrasts - provided images of inclusion and mutual identity that Australian workers could identify with. This mutual identification was ultimately sourced to notions of a political collective - the Australian working classes - who were assumed to be able to recognise themselves in the discourse of this culture and therefore be able to recognise themselves as part of a wider collective - those of the workers of the world Karl Marx exhorted to unite. So while the immediate addressees of Healy’s editorial were, as he states, “every member of the Federation” and it was his intention for Australian workers to “demand a change in the foreign policy of the Lyons government” the underlying feature of the discourse is driven by a need to identify a generic political collective. And it was this political collective who, if the discourse is to have any efficacy at all, is able to identify itself as the subject to whom the address is directed, and is therefore able to respond to it. The ideological objectives which underpinned this strategy were crucial to the survival of the Waterside Workers’ Federation’s political direction under the Communists, because without this ability to create a cohesive identity, Australian workers would fail to recognise themselves within a certain type of adversarial political relationship and therefore not be able to develop a self-awareness and a politics based on that relationship. Therefore strategies were required that attempted to identify and ultimately manipulate a number of conceptions regarding this collective, their sense of identity and their sense of self, and this was the role of the *Maritime Worker.* These strategies were undertaken in all aspects of the newspaper’s production – they underpinned everything from the reportage of the

Dalfram dispute to the back page reports of inter-branch cricket contests. These strategies were not constructed in isolation within the text however; they required a remodelling of existing working-class narratives if they were to be effective.

Throughout history these narratives had found expression in Australian society in a myriad of contexts and could be found intermingled in numerous expressions of political and social action. These expressions had taken many forms, from the militancy of outback shearers in the 1890s to the sense of belonging in the establishment of communities of wharf labourers in Port Melbourne. They can be found in numerous expressions of working class identification and solidarity, such as those found in phrases supporting the "socialist cause". In an ideological context the development of these narratives can be seen as the product of a particular set of experiences which can be demonstrated to be 'true' and held in common by a particular group in society over an extended period of time, and therefore are able to be incorporated into a set of political and social practices. Therefore, in the narratives of the Australian working class tradition identifiable aspects of this experience are seen to be manifest in such things as the establishment of certain forms of social relationships, and the self-understanding of those that live within these relationships. In the way they are used in the *Maritime Worker,* these narratives can be identified as intertwined with those of certain notions of class and community and these can be seen as the product of a much more widely enunciated class-based historical and experiential understanding. These narratives are expressed through a discourse, which can be loosely recognised as a discourse of socialism or a discourse of working class solidarity - ones that provided a series of meaningful references that embody these experiences.

The editors of the *Maritime Worker* attached themselves to a strong narrative line that embraced a number of features of the historical experiences of the Australian working class. They coupled this with a universal conception of working class history and politics that had its reference in the texts of international socialism. As such, the characteristics of this narrative incorporated various sources. Broadly speaking, these were a mixture of Marxist science fused with a utopian socialism that was grafted onto the narrative themes of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The purpose of this narrative was an attempt to create and unite a sense of shared experience and history, and encompass these as the product of a specific grouping of social interests - that of the working or labouring classes. In its various manifestations throughout the *Maritime Worker* - more noticeable in the short histories of Australian workers that appeared from time to time but nevertheless having an underlying structure in all of the *Maritime Worker* - these narratives promoted the notion that the struggles of the workers embodied a certain destiny. Coupled with a Marxist dialectic, they promoted the belief that history was on the side of the workers. On the presumption that the workers were in possession of an innate and natural wisdom, they also suggested a privileged access to a subjective realisation of truth, and furthermore suggested that the experiences of the working class offered the only means to understanding basic human qualities and needs such as empathy and solidarity. Uniting these ideas was the notion that manual labour represented one of the basic requirements of human endeavour, and from this the narratives illustrated a belief in the honesty and nobility that was seen as inherent in a productive working life. From these particular beliefs come such expressions as 'salt of the earth' and to be called as such was highly valued. These beliefs, expressed in a wider social context, were critical of idleness. Idleness was seen as a parasitic burden on society and much disdain and hatred were shown towards the 'idle rich', who were perceived to have gained their wealth and privilege by exploiting the working classes. Taken as a whole, these sorts of beliefs that emanated from the narratives encapsulated the notion that the fulfilment of their potential would lead to the disappearance of the coercive apparatus of the state, and the realisation of basic human needs and desires.



". . . that's the shipowner's son. He is working his way up from the bottom . . ."

The potential these narratives offered was an enormous scope for socialist activists to mould and shape a political class of workers. As Donald Sassoon argued, the consolidation of these narratives into a political program was the work of socialist activists, which in this case meant people like Jim Healy and Tom Nelson in the Waterside Workers' Federation who attempted to achieve this through such political organs as the *Maritime Worker.* These ideologies allowed a number of contradictory elements to be conflated into a single project. The socialist activists:

> believed the fundamental agency of change to be the working class, and in a sense this act of identification was also one of creation. The socialist activists understood, more or less instinctively, that the working class represented a social subject with tremendous political potentialities. In today's language we could say that the great intuition of the first socialist activists was that they had identified a 'new political subject' with definite potential aspirations, able to produce a coherent set of political demands for both the short and the long term. If politics is an art, then this was one of its masterpieces. Socialist politics and the socialist movement could comprehend the most varied issues: short-term demands such as an improvement in working conditions; national reforms such as pension schemes; comprehensive schemes such as expansion of suffrage; utopian projects such as the abolition of the state, etc. All these demands could be embodied into a single overarching project in spite (perhaps because) of their contradictory nature.[196]

One of these socialist activists who attempted to tie together this historical narrative was Tom Nelson, the Communist leader of the Sydney branch of the WWF. He wrote an episodic history of the Australian labour movement in the *Maritime Worker* over five months in 1941 that relied on these narratives to give embodiment to the historical struggles of Australian workers and the political contexts in which these took place.[197] This series of five articles was published in the *Maritime Worker* over consecutive months under the title 'The Future of Labor?*'*. Its scope ranged across the period of European history in Australia from its beginnings in convict settlement to the Federal elections of 1940, and its focus was an examination of the fortunes of the Australian labour movement relative to the laws of socialism. Nelson illustrated his belief in the value of the scientific socialist approach to understanding history: he spoke of this method laying bare the material relations which hitherto determined the path of history but which had been up until this point of time been masked by the:

> distorted capitalist class version" [of history which] counter-poses the laws governing the development of society to the activities of individuals.[198]

These articles were politically driven and highly critical of the Australian Labor Party. They sought to illustrate the argument that the interests of Australian workers in the 1940 Federal election were betrayed because of the conflicting interests of several political groups claiming to represent the working classes. Nelson believed that the Australian labour movement had been harmed by the lack of socialist theory, and he thought that a true understanding of social and historical development would remedy this problem. This meant a recasting of the narratives to fit his ideological agenda. Nelson attributed what he suggested were the confusion and ignorance of the labour parties to the distorting effects of capitalism and its focus on individualism above that of "class, organization or party". The historical distortions of capitalist society, he argued, were in contrast to the 'real' history of development that is determined:

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[196] Sassoon, D. (1996) *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, Fontana, London, (1997 ed): p 7.
[197] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor?', which ran as a serial in the March, April, May, June, July editions 1941.
[198] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', Vol.3, No.12, March 1941: p6.

> not by the wishes and ideas of outstanding individuals, but by the development of the material conditions of existence of society; by the changes in the mode of production of the material wealth required for the existence of society; by the changes in mutual relations of classes in production and distribution of material wealth.[199]

Presented in an epochal style of history that sectioned the chronology into specific time frames according to themes of significant events or dominant influences, Nelson charted what he called the progression of the Australian economy:

> steadily and surely along the course leading to monopoly capital and social mass production. . . corresponding with this has been the irresistible development of the political and industrial movement of the people towards a struggle for the social ownership of the means of production.[200]

The series purported to examine Australian history relative to the progressive development of working class organization. Nelson illustrated this progress as the historical development of union, parliamentary and party organization, in contrast to what he saw as the true demands of the socialist objective. As such he sought to illustrate the increasing power of capitalism and the corresponding lack of policy and programme in the organised labour movement. Over the five months of its publication, this history featured what Nelson saw as the progressive development of the Australian labour movement since European settlement. This progression was marked, according to Nelson, by certain epochal historical periods which began from the period of convict settlement in 1788 to the gold rushes of the 1850s;[201] and from the land booms of the mid to late 1800s and the strikes of the 1890s which culminated in the birth of the Australian Labor Party.[202] It featured the period from the 1890s until the First World War when Nelson believed that the expectations on the A.L.P. as the party of the working class were at their highest.[203] Later episodes of his history illustrated the trials and tribulations of the labour movement during World War I and the emergence of the Industrial Workers' of the World and the rise of Communism following the Russian Revolution.[204] They featured the economic changes brought about by increasing industrialisation during the 1920s and the country's slide into the Depression of the 1930s, with a particular focus on the resulting rise to power of New South Wales Labor Premier Jack Lang whom Nelson condemned as a demagogue and a "condescending philanthropic bourgeois!".[205] The culmination of his history was characterised according to Nelson by the imminent rise of socialism, an outcome he saw made real by the election in 1934 of a Communist to the leadership of the miners' union.[206]

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[199] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', Vol.3, No.12, March 1941: p6.
[200] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', Vol.3, No.12, March 1941: p6.
[201] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', Vol.3, No.12, March 1941: p6.

Nelson was driven by his strident criticism of the paths taken by the Australian labour movement, and the publication of these articles in the *Maritime Worker* can be seen as part of a wider dialogue that had been undertaken within the radical left following the 1940 Federal elections. His criticism was driven by his belief that those in the Australian Labor Party had not understood the laws of social development. In his belief, these laws had developed to such an extent that he declared the imminent demise of labour reformism and the birth of:

> SOCIALISM IN OUR TIME - IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.[207]

Nelson's own narrative of history and his ultimate belief in the creation of a socialist state were generated by reinterpreting and manipulating the narrative threads of the Australian working-class experience. These narratives of the working-class experience became important to the *Maritime Worker* in the wider context of its ability to find a stable and coherent base on which to construct meaning: it was in these narratives that the *Maritime Worker* looked for those threads of meaning by which its program of socialist development could be made to fit. Ultimately the entire ideological agenda, on which the political program of the *Maritime Worker* hinged, relied on exploiting and intertextualising these narratives in order to develop a coherent sense of self-recognition for its readers. If it couldn't achieve this fit, Healy's entire project of bringing the union into a socialist framework would be doomed, and such events as the Dalfram dispute would lose an important political context and be rendered meaningless in terms of its historical significance. Therefore the project of the *Maritime Worker* was not just the discursive manipulation of immediate political events such as the Port Kembla dispute, its ultimate success hinged on its ability to integrate itself within a narrative in which the appeals of scientific socialism could be made conterminous with the conceptual horizons of the Australian waterside workers. In this overall context of its narrative framework, the *Maritime Worker* was both the product of the development of a particular type of historical consciousness as well as a contributing factor to its evolution.

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[202] *Maritime Worker,* 'The Future of Labor? – Part 2', Vol.4, No.1, April 1941: p6.
[203] *Maritime Worker,* 'The Future of Labor? – Part 3', Vol.4, No.2, May 1941: p6.
[204] *Maritime Worker,* 'The Future of Labor? – Part 4', Vol.4, No.3, June 1941: p6.
[205] *Maritime Worker,* 'The Future of Labor? – Part 5', Vol.4, No.4, July 1941: p6.
[206] *Maritime Worker,* 'The Future of Labor? – Part 5', Vol.4, No.4, July 1941: p6.
[207] *Maritime Worker,* 'The Future of Labor? – Part 5', Vol.4, No.4, July 1941: p6.

For Marxist historians such as E.P. Thompson the development of the narratives of the working classes was the outcome of a particular type of historical experience through which the notion of class came to be recognised not just as the structured expression of a situation within an economic formation, but also as the development of a culture which has been overlaid with the practices and beliefs of a particular series of experiences and histories. As he suggested in *Making of the English Working Class,* the notion of class is a:

> historical phenomenon, unifying a number of disparate and seemingly unconnected events, both in the raw material of experience and in consciousness.[208]

As E.P. Thompson demonstrated, there are tangible elements in this type of narrative that are linked inextricably in the day-to-day experiences of manual labourers and their physical environment. These give a discourse the embodiment of the 'real' in the sense that they convey a cultural experience which is arguably uniquely that of being working class and has a tangible aspect in a collective memory: the workers could say "I was there" or "my father told me about such and such". In the physical and environmental aspects of a wharf labourer's framework of meaning for instance, this notion of the 'real' is recognisable through a shared experience of hardship and struggle - a noticeably constant element in the narratives of Australian wharfies. It is this feature, for instance, which finds expression in the political demands of the wharfies for better working conditions. This experiential relationship to the narrative is significant - particularly notable in the extent to which it remains constant in the numerous histories written of the Australian waterside workers: historians, for instance, often quote the McQueen Report to the Stevedoring Industry Commission to document this life of physical hardship. In 1942 Sydney medical specialist Dr Ronald McQueen documented the medical and physical state of the average waterside worker:

> The endless search for the infrequent job which would keep them and their families from the precarious borderline of malnutrition has taken its devastating toll. The feverish high tension work performed when the job is secured in order to ensure its repetition has been paid for at the shocking price of premature old age and physical calamity.[209]

A broad reading of the *Maritime Worker* reveals a widespread embodiment of these narratives of class and community based on the notion of a shared experiential relationship. These can be found across a wide range of commentary and thought from articles on community affairs to political argument and photos of union picnic days. Notably these narratives were implicitly imbricated within a particular embodiment of language: they were illustrated through a certain linguistic economy, what the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieau calls a 'linguistic market'[210], in which particular words and ideas in various combinations carried the force of the whole. This linguistic economy essentially represents the basic building blocks on which the narratives were constructed, and hint at the central role of language in the creation of meaning. Thus the *Maritime Worker* made appeals within the framework of ideas combined in phrases and words such as 'common-sense'; 'sound instincts'; 'courage'; 'unselfishness'; 'common prudence' - all of which were linked to what was referred to, inter alia, as the 'ordinary man in the street'. The linguistic economy in this framework defined the contrast between the worker and the employer for instance - a contrast that was seen as clear cut and straightforward. Maintaining this contrast was a functional necessity to the integrity of this economy of understanding, in that the qualities that distinguished the worker cannot be those had by the boss. These

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[208] Thompson. E.P. (1963) *The Making of the English Working Class*, Penguin, London, (1988 ed): p 8.

[209] McQueen R. (1943), Report on the Medical Examination of Sydney Waterside Workers with Disability cards, Quoted in Beasley, M. (1996) op cit: p 119.

[210] Thompson, J.B. (1984) op cit: pp 44-46

linguistic economies therefore defined a certain knowledge and way of speaking about certain things – such as the notion of the qualities which embody the working class.

Ideologically these appeals to the 'ordinary man' were a powerful element in attempts to develop a sense of a unified consciousness or a belonging to a social group. These could be used for political purposes among other things. During the Nationalisation Referendum debates in 1944, these appeals to the 'ordinary man' fuelled the pen of John Barry, K.C. in his political campaign. In his exhortation to waterside workers to vote "yes" on the nationalisation question Barry wrote:

> THE WAY TO NATIONHOOD
>
> On August 19 the Australian people will stand at the crossroads. They can take one road by voting "NO". That road leads to national helplessness, to the strengthening of the grip of selfish sectional interests, to economic disorder and the consequent misery of unemployment and social insecurity. They can take the other road by voting "YES". That road leads to virile nationhood, to the attainment through courageous and unselfish effort of a degree of social justice and security hitherto unknown in this continent.
>
> The fate of the nation is in the hands of the people. Will the sound instinct of the ordinary man guide him in the right direction? I believe that it will, and that the count of the votes will show that, as is needed to carry the Referendum, the majority of the people of at least four of the States, and the whole of the Australian people, will vote "Yes". . .
>
> The Commonwealth Constitution is not a sacred unalterable document . . We have it in our power to alter it and common sense and common prudence tell us to do so . . .
>
> Isn't it plain the interests they represent want to return to the jungle savagery of uncontrolled profit making. . . Any decent sentiment can be mouthed by rogues to deceive a trusting people. But if the Australian people are deceived when the arch-enemies of democratic freedom prostitute the battle-cries of democracy in an endeavour to preserve their selfish anti-social privileges, they will deserve to go into bondage. .[211] .

The underlying features of this development of class consciousness and identification are based on a notion stemming from the Enlightenment, that through reason people can freely come to understand the true conditions of their existence and recognise its trajectory through history. This process embodies the notion of a cumulative acquisition of ideas, images, practices and beliefs, through which a narrative can be formed and become a tangible and recognisable element of understanding. This process, in which political ideas embodying the conditions of being working class enter a dialogue within a wider network of historical understanding, is a feature of the *Maritime Worker*. It is this network of understanding and expression that can be sourced through those general aspects of discourse outlined earlier that defined a number of characteristics similar to that of ideology, such as its social nature and the practices of exclusion and signification. Through this approach a body of text can be read that explores - as had been done in exploring the attempt by the union to control the dispute over Japanese shipping embargoes - the deliberate actions of a union in its attempts to create a unified political and industrial body out of a disorganised and factionalised group of disparate branches and their members. Historical practices however have been reluctant to explore the processes, through which the horizons of meaning that form the background to any conception of place and identity, work to bring these formations into being. This is the role of critical discourse analysis, which seeks to be able to understand those features of language that bring meaning into being, and regulate the practices of understanding and the constitution of identity and place.

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[211] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Way to Nationhood', Vol.7, No.5, August 1944: p1.

CHAPTER VI

LANGUAGE AND THE HORIZON OF MEANING

It has been illustrated that in broad ideological terms the *Maritime Worker* was the vehicle in which it was envisaged that a multiplicity of working class and associated interests could be subsumed into homogeneous elaboration of working class political interests. This objective was ideological in the sense that it was underscored by the notion that the active application and manipulation of ideas and symbolic images could be instrumental in the achievement of specific political outcomes in a program - not just of trade unionism, but also in the development of a fair and just society. Furthermore, by its very publication and sense of heightened self-awareness, the production of the *Maritime Worker* represented a stage in the rationalist program whereby the working classes were coming to realise their place in capitalist relations and thus be able to identify those negative features of Western society which impacted on their lives and restrained their natural freedoms and rights. These assumptions regarded the existence of a coherent sense of identity that could be found across time; that this identity could be accessible through the narratives; and that these narratives could be transformed by a historical approach that had as its knowledge base the 'true' laws of social development.

By a process of inclusion and exclusion in relation to what and who was published in the *Maritime Worker,* the editors sought to create and develop a broad unification of interests between the wharfies and other Australian workers. They ultimately sought to develop this unity into a political program that recognised the asymmetrical nature of social relations. Typical examples of these attempts at fostering unification and self-identification are found in the letters page of the *Maritime Worker*. The first two editions of the newspaper published a series of letters celebrating its launch that demonstrate these features. These letters came from various sources, such as union and associated working class organizations and numerous branches of the WWF. The publication of these letters was a tactical strategy aimed at generating a general sense of unity of purpose and common understanding within both the union and the wider labour movement.

Indicative of the type of letters which were published was one from J.F. Chapple from the Australian Railways Union.[212] This letter was far more embellished than many of the others however and embraced the notion of a political unity in a concept Chapple referred to in the letter as the 'socialist ideal'. The ubiquity of this phrase and its variants across a wide historical milieu indicated the importance that concepts like these had in maintaining the discursive integrity of the working class narratives. Out of context, such as a political rally, it had an ambiguous political use-value, but its value lay in the discursive potential within and across the economies of working class narratives to unify the concept of a working class political identity. As such it can be said that this phrase had a functional role within a discourse, and its appearance suggests the existence of discursive practices that function to regulate the stability of the meaning formations of which it is a part. It is a term that had a meaning potential that was able to traverse the conceptual horizons of a working class consciousness and bond together its many elements:

> Greetings to the "Maritime Worker", and best wishes to those who have sponsored the progressive move. May the printed word carry its message to the hearts and minds of the maritime workers who in the past have moulded history, and who in the future have many important tasks to fulfil.
>
> 'The paper is the lifeblood of the union'. It circulates ideas and wisdom. It builds solidarity and leads to greater service in the working class cause. It generates clarity of thought and dispels misunderstanding. It is an inspiration and messenger of hope for the toilers who, under capitalism are slaves to the system of profit making, but who, under Socialism, shall yet be masters of the machine and of the wealth that their labor creates.
>
> In the belief and hope that "The Maritime Worker" will help in the fight for economic emancipation and the realisation of the Socialist Ideal on behalf of the railway workers I welcome its publication and issue.
>
> Yours in The Cause
>
> J.F. Chappie

The notion of the 'socialist ideal' and the various manifestations of it - found in such phrases as the 'socialist cause' or the 'socialist objective' - are those which can be seen traversing the historical archive of the Australian labour movement.[213]

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[212] *Maritime Worker,* 'From the Australian Railways Union', Vol.1. No.1. April 1938: p2.

[213] Burgman, V. (1985) *In Our Time: Socialism and the Rise of Labor, 1885-1905,* Allen & Unwin, Sydney: p 2.

They offer a powerful reference point to histories of the working class, from the early utopian texts to the later Marxist/Leninist influenced ones such as those found in the *Maritime Worker*. While these phrases were not necessarily capable of becoming powerful political slogans in their own right - and if they were, they were of immediate political value such as a demonstration - the importance they have is that they are found across a whole range of working class historical understanding, fusing together the experiential elements of working class life with a political and social consciousness giving powerful narrative expression to those experiences. This is the point E.P. Thompson was making when he talked about class consciousness being the fulfilment of the experiences and beliefs of working class history. The concept of the 'socialist ideal' therefore is one that traversed the discourse of the labour movement, bringing many of its elements together and harnessing them within a linguistic market that encapsulated the experiences of being working class. As an active ideological tool it had a powerful influence because it could be used to tie together a widely dispersed set of experiences such as was done in Nelson's histories, fusing them into a narrative of a collective consciousness. This could then be incorporated into political and social programs as well as fuelling a sense of belonging at a very basic level of working class life, such as the family and community.

What is evident however in the narrative development of the socialist tradition of the Australian working classes is that it had - like all narrative development - assumed a clear and unmediated link between the narrative and the language used to express it. The notion of the 'socialist ideal' therefore derives its force by appearing to be invested with a certain level of meaning, involving the notion that language provides a direct and non-problematic link to a particular quality or experience. To use the notion of the 'socialist ideal' and its outcomes in claims of 'socialism in our time', as Tom Nelson had done, suggests that it acts as a bonding function. So individual experiences such as losing one's job or collective experiences such as a strike can all be brought together under one narrative, in which a single phrase can penetrate the reality of these experiences. Studies in this relationship between language and experience however suggest that this transparency masks certain features of language production, revealing that certain linguistic features bind these narratives - indeed any understanding of historical experience. These features in important ways function exclusively within discourse and act as the enabling and regulating mechanism that frame what is valid and legitimate within this narrative, while at the same time excluding that which is not. This relationship, on the one hand between our perception of an active and subjectively constituted understanding which can be achieved through a certain mastery of language, and on the other, the structured circumscription of understanding that is bound within the strategic environment inherent to the functioning of discourse is a key theme of this investigation. It is at this level that a conflict exists between the notion of ideology and discourse.

Michel Foucault explores this conflict and subordinates the notion of ideology to that of discourse:

> The notion of ideology appears to me to be difficult to use for three reasons. The first is that, like it or not, it is always in virtual opposition to something else which is supposed to count as truth. Now i believe that the problem does not consist in drawing the line between that in a discourse which falls under the category of scientificity or truth, and that which comes under some other category, but in seeing historically how effects of truth are produced within discourses which in themselves are neither true nor false. The second drawback is that the concept of ideology refers, i think necessarily, to something of the order of a subject. Third, ideology stands in a secondary position relative to something which functions as its infrastructure, as its material, economic determinant, etc. For these three reasons, I think that this is a notion that cannot be used without circumspection.[214]

This conflict of interpretation had its genesis in studies based on the nature of the 'sign'. In the later stages of the 20th Century this conflict has evolved into one between those who see the text as the expression of structured and autonomous relations found within discourse - a relation which binds the constitution of subjectivity and knowledge within an autonomously constructed framework of meaning - such as Michel Foucault, and those such as the historian E.P. Thompson. Thompson and his peers see the text as the expression and product of an historically constituted consciousness, a consciousness that is capable of either actively creating and manipulating its social environment, or failing that, is nevertheless still able to reclaim a notion of truth from the structure of social relations through a process of reason such as a Hegelian dialectic or even (notwithstanding Thompson's objections to Althusser's structuralism[215]), an Althusserian appeal to a Marxist science.[216] The former are sceptical of the authority of the subjective position and the legitimacy given to Enlightenment notions of reason, and owe their legacy to the work of the structuralists and post-structuralists into the nature of the sign. For them the existence of the sign is seen as paramount to the process and functioning of meaning. They argue that temporality (hence social, economic and political change) is bracketed to the interests of system and structure that surround the sign. A brief overview of these themes offers fruitful speculation through which the discursive historical development of a socialist discourse - from which the *Maritime Worker* was both a product and a source - can be explored and understood. From this understanding it is the contention of this investigation that a reading of a historical text such as the *Maritime Worker* becomes problematic in terms of attempting to reconstitute an autonomously active historical subject that exists beyond the discourse that brings it into being.

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[214] Foucault, M. (1984a) op cit: p 60.
[215] Thompson, E.P. (1978) op cit: pp 193 – 397.

The structuralist and post-structuralist element that underpins much critical discourse theory suggests that such a position outside of discourse is untenable, and that an interpretative position that is beyond the constitutive effects of language in which to grasp some essential human condition and therefore fashion humanity in its image is fraught with contradiction. This decentring of subjectivity is a central element of the work of Michel Foucault:

> My objective ... has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects. My work has dealt with three modes of objectification which transform human beings into subjects. The first is the modes of inquiry which try to give themselves the status of science ... In the second part of my work, I have studied the objectivising of the subject in what I shall call "dividing practices" ... Finally, I have sought to study ... the way a human being turns him – or herself into a subject.[217]

This decentring of subjectivity can be seen in Foucault's arguments about knowledge and power and his rejection of the negative conceptions of ideology - those that he has termed the 'repressive hypothesis' and its manifestations in ideas of coercion, constraint and negativity.[218] It is this negative concept of repression that Foucault sees as characteristic of Marxist thought, which views power as an infringement on someone else's rights. Foucault argued that as a result of Marx we have a very good understanding of the mechanisms of exploitation but believes this is too reductive a model and argues that exploitation is only one aspect of power; that

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[216] Althusser, L (1969) *For Marx*, Verso, London (1977 ed.): pp 182-193.

[217] Foucault, M. (1982) op cit: p 208.

[218] Dreyfus,H. and Rabinow, P. (1983) op cit: p 129.

Marxism does not consider its general nature, strategies and range of effects.[219] Foucault rejects the notion that, in its essential form, power is the manipulation by one group in society to repress the interests of another. For Foucault power is that which creates knowledge;[220] this in turn functions to produce social relations. Therefore the notion of a ruling class controlling the apparatus of power is undercut by this suggestion that social relations are the product of the discourse and it is only through discourse that those relations have any meaning at all. Thus according to these arguments there are no epistemologically sustainable external points of view - such as those embodied in traditional notions of freedom or truth - from which to view these relations. Everything is perceived from inside discourse. Foucault questioned the notion that is implied within the understanding of ideology that there is a position of interpretation external to those features of social relations that are identified as ideological in which to stand and bring judgement against them. The notion of ideology and the subject of ideology therefore are part of those power relations which allow the subject to exist. Foucault would argue that any such position of exteriority that claims to be free of the practices of power is actually imbricated within the same epistemological constraints of those relations that are under investigation. He wrote that our perception of these objects of concern is formed within the limits of discursive constraints, suggesting that discourse is characterised by

> a delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts or theories.[221]

This characterisation of discourse had its antecedents in the notion of structure and structuralist thinking which had developed many forms over the years and took its strongest influences from the study of language and society. Although Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels identified certain structural features in the relationship between the economy and society - such as those found in the fetishism of commodities through which Marx says products take on the form of a social hieroglyphic [222] - and thus can be seen as early proponents of a structuralist type of thinking, the structuralist movement found its genesis in the exploration of the sign initiated in the early years of the 20th Century by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure.[223] Saussure's contributions concerning the relationship between language and understanding were made in the distinction, he argued, that existed between a diachronic and synchronic understanding of language, and the impact this distinction had on the way language was used and understood. This distinction Saussure argued existed between language constantly changing through time - diachrony - and language as it existed at any given moment - synchrony. In this duality Saussure privileged the latter over the former, and argued this by suggesting that the existence and meaning potential of language was the product of a system of relationships found within the structure of language itself. He contended it was manifest in the synchronic structure of language and was not the result of an historical accumulation of meaning - diachrony - that was stored in a collective social consciousness. Hawkes argued that Saussure identified that:

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[219] Best S. (1995), *The Politics of Historical Vision: Marx, Foucault, Habermas*, Guilford Press, New York: p115.

[220] Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Allen Lane, London: p 27.

[221] Foucault, M. (1977) *Language, Counter-memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, quoted in Mills, S. (1997) op cit: p 51.

[222] Marx K, (1889) *Capital Vol 1*, trans Moore, S & Eveling, A. (1971), Allen & Unwin, London: p 45.

> Each language ... has a wholly valid existence apart from its history, as a system of sounds issuing from the lips of those who speak it now, and whose speech in fact constructs and constitutes the language (usually in ignorance of its history) in its present form.[224]

Implicitly critical of philological etymology[225] (the study of the history of language), Saussure's work illustrated that historical connections between words - for instance the old English word *sty-ward* and the contemporary *steward* - were ultimately of no functional relevance to the role of language as communication.[226] For Saussure the synchronic constituted the structure of language above and beyond the ability of the individual or a collective body to contemporaneously alter it without language becoming meaningless. He based this argument on the notion that a consciousness of the diachronic features of language was of no relevance to the language user who, when uttering a statement, was engaging in the synchronic features of language and therefore had no need to be mindful of the history of the words used. As such, there was no need for the user of a language to refer to the history of each word in order to demonstrate the validity of its expression. In the matter of speech production what is important therefore is the synchronic system of language (*langue*), as it exists at any given time. As Saussure explained, this system does not rely on the notion that concepts or signifieds (the idea inside one's head) have a natural relation to that to which they refer, but exist as a system of signifiers - sounds or visual marks - which themselves have meaning only in relation to other signifiers. He argued:

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[223] Saussure, F. (1915) *Course in General Linguistics.*
[224] Hawkes, T. (1977) *Structuralism and Semiotics*, Routledge, London, (1989 ed): p 20.
[225] Jameson, F. (1972) *The Prison House of Language*, Princeton Uni Press, Princeton (1974 ed): pp 6-7.
[226] Bennett, T. (1979) *Formalism & Marxism*, Methuen, London (1986 ed): pp 51-52.

> The ultimate law of language is, dare we say, that nothing can ever reside in a single term. This is a direct consequence of the fact that linguistic signs are unrelated to what they designate and that, therefore, 'a' cannot designate anything without the aid of 'b' and vice versa, or in other words, that both have value only by the difference between them, or that neither has value, in any of its constituents except through this same network of forever negative differences.[227]

In essence, Saussure challenged the notion that there was an easy fit between the words we use to describe a thing and the thing itself. As Hawkes identified:

> There exists no necessary 'fitness' in the link between the sound-image, or signifier 'tree', the concept or signified that it involves, and the actual tree growing in the earth. The word 'tree', in short, has no 'natural' or 'tree-like' qualities, and there is no appeal open to a 'reality' beyond the structure of the language in order to underwrite it.[228]

The ramifications of Saussure's insights impacted on other areas of investigation in the human sciences. His work in highlighting the ways through which philological etymology had guaranteed meaning had ramifications that illustrated the sorts of guarantees that other areas of thought such as history and politics had also assumed. In his criticism of philological etymology Saussure exposed its assumptions of a non-problematic notion of identity across time. This was an identity that claimed to stand outside the history that it related and assumed its origins in explanations that were neat, ingenious, or ideologically satisfying. Saussure's investigations and others like them raised broad questions about the guarantee of meaning that hitherto the search for origins was intended to deliver, and the role that language had up until that point in time played in providing that guarantee. This scepticism towards the origins of the word as the guarantee of meaning was to find itself echoed in the future in the work of such theorists as Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault.

The development of Saussure's insights in successive structuralist and post-structuralist debates has brought about the evolution of a complex field of enquiry, which has had a significant impact across many areas of knowledge. A constant theme - from Saussure in the field of linguistics to Claude Lévi-Strauss in anthropology and to Jacques Derrida in philosophy - has been demonstrated as the problematical relationship that language has with the objects and ideas to which it refers. This theme became focused on the radical arbitrariness of the sign in which language is compelled to slide away from all attempts to grasp both an objective external 'reality' or an internal subjective 'reality'. Both of these had been largely assumed to have some existence beyond the language used to describe or talk about it. It is this idea of being able to grasp a 'reality', either objectively or subjectively, which has underpinned much of Western philosophy. This has driven the idea of history in which 'truth' can be isolated, either in the interpretative subject - the historian - or in the realisation of the historical process - as in the themes of a Marxist dialectic which sees historical process as an outcome of the contradictions played out within the relations of production.

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[227] Saussaure, F., quoted in Silverman, D.& Torode, B. (1980), *The Material World*, Routledge, London: p 256.

This inability of language to grasp a 'thing-ness' in itself is seen as a product of language being endlessly caught up in a chain of metaphorical displacement, whereby it is constantly referring to itself rather than to something external to language. The 'deconstructive' work of Jacques Derrida illustrates some of the more insightful conclusions to which this theory leads:

> The meaning of meaning. . . is infinite implication, the indefinite referral of signifier to signifier . . . its force is a certain pure and infinite equivocality which gives signified meaning no respite, no rest, but engages it in its own *economy* so that it always signifies again and differs.[229]

Implied in this theory however is the potential of language to propel itself into a state of schizophrenic displacement, such as that found in the work of French post-structuralist Jean Baudrillard.[230] This is where Michel Foucault's work on the regulating aspects of discourse becomes an important corrective to the theoretical excesses in the analysis of language theory. This importance lies in his contribution to the notion that discourse harnesses and subdues those properties of language that threaten to evade the stability of meaning. It is the notion of discourse that is a powerful element of understanding because of the suggestion that it is in discourse that a strategic environment of concepts is organised around a centre of power which gives meaning to particular regimes of knowledge. If we look at the *Maritime Worker*

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[228] Hawkes, T. (1977) op cit: p 25.

[229] Derrida, J. (1978) *Writing and Difference*, quoted in Harland, R. (1987) *Superstructualism: The Philosophy of Structuralism and Post-Structuralism*, Methuen, London: p:135.

[230] See particularly Baudrillard, J. (1981) *Simulacra and Simulations.*

for instance, its existence is defined by a particular regime of knowledge that defines its existence and this knowledge centres on an historical subject – the working class. Through such political organs as the *Maritime Worker* this historical subject was the focus of the ambitions of socialist radicals to unify into a coherent political force. This they attempted to do via an ideology that sought to develop a knowledge through which the subject could be emancipated from the effects of power. Foucault however contests this idea of subjectivity, and sees power manifest as an internal function of the regulatory practices of a discourse of the subject. Through these practices the notion of the ideological became a product of that power; it does not pre-exist nor have a position outside of the practices of power as a basis for unifying the subject.

French historian Michel de Certeau understood some of the ways power relationships functioned strategically within bodies of knowledge. Certeau's investigations into such areas of thought as theological historiography are suggestive of the very basic role of language - particularly metaphor and allegory - in our understanding of the past and the present. Although the focus of Certeau's work stands in contrast to the anti-subjectivism of Foucault (in his psychoanalytic approach to the historical text Certeau looked to reclaim a place for the subject), his description of how power relationships are organised strategically around a centre of power is useful to understanding some of the ways in which discourse is organised. One way that strategies operate within a power structure to delimit the boundaries through which power functions is by designating what is internal and external to that structure. As Certeau argued:

> I call a *strategy* the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that become possible as soon as a subject with will and power (a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated. It postulates a *place* that can be delimited as its *own* and serve as the base from which relations with an *exteriority* composed of targets or threats (customers or competitors, enemies, the country surrounding the city, objectives and objects of research, etc.) can be managed. As in management, every "strategic" rationalisation seeks first of all to distinguish its "own" place, that is, the place of its own power and will, from an "environment." A Cartesian attitude, if you wish: it is an effort to delimit one's own place in a world bewitched by the invisible powers of the Other. [author's italics][231]

Foucault's development of this understanding of the regulatory aspects of language in power relationships extends much deeper than Certeau's. For Foucault, strategic function within discourse can be seen to serve a dual and self-regulating role, given that it can be both the cause and the product of power and is not organised externally from the perspective of some self-contained Cartesian cogito. Development of the 'internal/external' dichotomy that Certeau uses to demonstrate his idea of the structure of power relations is one way to understand this difference between the two theorists. While Certeau suggests that strategic relationships designate a subject centred process of determining what is internal and external to a discursive regime, it may be more instructive to see this dichotomy more as a function of a strategic environment which circumscribes a discursive regime by organising its concepts around a centre in which both terms are mutually inclusive. The concepts 'internal' and 'external' therefore do not just delimit meaning, but in conjunction serve a strategic function in the structure of that which gives meaning. These two concepts operate within discourse, not as the ultimate and mutually exclusive limit of what is and what is not valid within that discourse, but as mutually inclusive in a way that sets up a series of oppositions in which meaning can at once be framed and ultimately expanded. So while these concepts exist on the surface of language to categorise certain things as 'internal' and 'external', they operate in much the same way as that which Foucault calls a statement in that they traverse the whole body of the discourse organising meaning as a series of inclusive oppositions whereby that which is external gives meaning to that which is internal and vice versa. This however is not a simple matter of binary opposition, because the function of these terms always extends beyond their immediate referent. An example of this function is the use of the terms 'inside' and 'outside' to designate the division of space. While these terms are used in various ways to designate the boundaries of certain actions or to designate the physical relationship of certain objects to that of others, they also extend to a whole series of relations that exist for instance between conceptions of the public and the private, and even the relations of gender roles between males and females.

This idea of a strategic function within discourse is based on the notion that there is a materiality within discourse that mediates the interaction between the meaning potential and meaningless potential of language. Materiality in this sense is

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[231] Certeau de, M. (1988a), *The Practice of Everyday Life*, University of California Press, Berkeley, (trans - Rendall, S.): pp 35-6.

derived from Michel Foucault's conception of language as producing things, an idea which he explored most comprehensively in the *History of Sexuality*. For Foucault, one of these effects is that which takes place on the body, as in the creation of sexuality. As he suggests:

> What I am after is to try and show how the relations of power are able to pass materially into the very density of bodies without even having to be relayed by the representation of subjects.[232]

It is this function of producing things that is important in understanding the way discourse circumscribes the centrifugal tendencies of language and brings it back into meaning. This involves forcing language into an organising strategy around which knowledge can be constituted. One form that this strategy takes - to borrow a concept from the French philosopher Jacques Derrida - is called the *logos*. Derrida uses this term to talk about an inward rational principle or law that serves to control or take charge of outward material things. Richard Harland explains that the *logos* is:

> A Greek word that illuminatingly brings together in a single concept the inward rational principle of verbal texts, the inward rational principle of human beings, and the inward rational principle of the natural universe. Even more illuminating, 'logos' combines all these meanings with a further meaning: 'the Law'. For 'logos' as an inward rational principle serves to control and take charge of outward material things. And any version of 'logos' can save us from our greatest human fear of insecurity and 'letting go'.[233]

The principle of the *logos* within Western tradition is inextricably linked with the concept of speech having a strategic value in the maintenance of meaningful discourse. It does this by animating the existence of an origin from which the notion of 'truth' can be assumed. This origin has some features in common with French Marxist Louis Althusser's notion of the Absolute Subject, which he identified in his 1970 essay 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses'.[234] In this essay one of Althusser's concerns was the way religious ideologies were bound to an identification of God, as the Absolute Subject, or the *logos.*[235] Althusser suggested that the notion of the Absolute Subject was the ideological formation around which subjectivity was made to identify and was made natural to perception. As Althusser argued:

> As St Paul admirably put it, it is in the 'Logos', meaning in ideology, that we 'live, move and have our being'. It follows that for you and me, the category of the subject is a primary 'obviousness' (obviousnesses are always primary): it is clear that you and I are subjects (free, ethical, etc . . .) Like all obviousnesses, including those that make a word

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[232] Foucault, M. (1979) *Michel Foucault: Power, Truth, Strategy*: quoted in Harland, R. (1987) op cit: p 156.
[233] Harland, R. (1987) op cit: p 146.
[234] Althusser, L. (1970) op cit: pp 56 –88.
[235] ibid: pp 83-6.

> 'name a thing' or 'have meaning' (therefore including the obviousness of the 'transparency' of language), the 'obviousness' that you and I are subjects - and that that does not cause any problems is an ideological effect. It is indeed a peculiarity of ideology that it imposes (without appearing to do so, since these are 'obviousnesses') obviousnesses as obviousnesss, which we cannot *fail to recognise* and before which we have the inevitable and natural reaction of crying out (aloud or in the 'still small voice of conscience'): That's obvious! That's right! That's true!' (author's italics)[236]

Althusser's conception of the Absolute Subject however has a problematic existence if we try and incorporate its fundamental features within the notion of critical discourse analysis. This is because of Althusser's notion of the absoluteness of the Subject. For Althusser the absoluteness of the Subject appears to be rooted in a determinate relationship with an external reality that serves the function of 'truth', and this is the concept that is contested within Foucault's notion of discourse. This 'truth' is that which Althuser identifies in the material basis of all ideology, which he sees as the *'real conditions of existence'* through which ideology is represented as an imaginary relationship.[237] The determinateness of this material basis for Althusser is such that it can be recuperated to consciousness through a scientific Marxism. What Althusser fails to acknowledge in this argument however is that the existence of these real conditions is not absolute and is itself a function of discourse which is both the condition of its genesis as well as the product of its continuing maintenance.

Notwithstanding this ultimately determinative viewpoint, Althusser did successfully identify the role discursive processes have in animating a centre of 'truth'. His work is instrumental in understanding how discourse functions in the creation of subjectivity. He illustrated that these processes had the function of making the subject transparent to itself, because, as Althusser argued, the category of the subject becomes "a primary obviousness".[238] One way this 'obviousness' is achieved is through discursive practices functioning around a centre, animating language to orientate this obviousness through authorising the presence of 'voice'. The concept of 'voice' thereby is given a 'truth' function. As Althusser identified, in the Western tradition this centre which we call the capital 'S' Subject is that which was found in the notion of God.[239]

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[236] ibid: p 80.
[237] ibid: pp 75-80.
[238] ibid: p 80.
[239] ibid: p 84.

Following the upheavals of the Enlightenment, this Subject became associated with the Human Subject. Therefore even though there are two notions of Subject being identified here – pre and post Enlightenment notions – it is the contention of this thesis that the types of discursive strategies that animate a ‘truth’ function remain the same in both, and exist throughout the narratives that underpin the conceptual horizons of the Australian labour movement. It is this notion of subjectivity as an origin of meaning that needs to be explored in the context of understanding the narratives on which the *Maritime Worker* sourced for the development of its ideological program.

CHAPTER VII

DISCOURSE AND THE COMING INTO BEING: THE NARRATIVES AND THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF ORIGIN

It becomes apparent that the structuralist and post-structuralist questioning of subjectivity and the discursive construction of identity identify a number of issues about language and meaning that need clarification, particularly those concerning the possibility of an interpretative position that exists beyond the regulating practices of discourse. It must then be asked: how helpful is the notion of ideology in understanding the historical development of a working class consciousness, given that the notion of subjectivity appears to be heavily bound within the discursive process that surrounds its existence? As Mills notes, even though the concept of ideology attempts to get beyond the subject, ultimately it is in the notion of the subject that ideological analysis is grounded:

> An ideological analysis may downplay the importance of the subject because of its concern with groups or classes of individuals, and because of its interest in the construction of individual subjectivity through the actions of institutions such as the state. However, an ideological analysis still, in the last instance, retains the notion of the individual subject who is capable of resisting ideological pressures and controlling his or her actions. Discourse theory has far more difficulty in locating, describing and even accounting for this individual subject who resists power.[240]

To explore this issue of the discursive construction of subjectivity, the structure of the narratives on which the *Maritime Worker* draws for its coherency needs to be examined. One way of approaching this is to follow one narrative path in the Australian working class experience. In following this path it is hoped to highlight the discursive features that underline its existence, and illustrate the means through which the *Maritime Worker* used them to seek legitimacy. One of the principal features that the narratives of the working classes have is their strong discursive links to the notions of an original meaning; these are the same features found in all Western traditions of knowledge. These narrative sources are implicitly connected to the texts of Judeo/Christian tradition. The powerful features of these traditions however are the ways in which their origins are masked through the discourse. It is the intention of this chapter to unmask these discursive features, and by doing so contest those notions that underpin an historical knowledge that assumed the possibilities of finding a stable working class identity within an ideological identification with a reality that had its existence beyond the effects of discourse.

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[240] Mills, S. (1997) op cit: p 35.

Consistently throughout the texts of the Judeo/Christian tradition, the existence of spoken language had been invested with a presumption of meaning designed to ensure a perfect and intuitive ‘fit’ between intention and utterance. This fit was made because it animated the notion of an origin or absolute centre, and the strategic value of this process within the texts of this tradition has accorded them status as self-authenticating of truth and meaning. This was achieved because they were always able to refer back to an origin. This origin was animated by metaphors of ‘presence’. These metaphors of ‘presence’ had been accorded the status of ‘truth’ through the privileging strategies of ‘speech’: because ‘speech’ was inextricably linked to the sovereignty of the Subject. These metaphors of presence are found in the discourse. Derrida recognised this in that:

> All names related to fundamentals, to principles, or to the center [sic] have always designated the constant of a presence.[241]

It was these features of self-authenticity that constituted the conditions for the actualisation of discourse in the Western tradition, and it is from the authority of a strategically placed self-animating sovereign Subject that discourse can be seen to form its constitution of knowledge, expression and action. The development of the narrative through which the *Maritime Worker* sourced its historical, social and political references was the product of these discursive processes that rely on an origin for the structuring of meaning. The underlying processes of discursive development in these narratives reveal the mechanisms through which discourse frames the historical event. These mechanisms ultimately resist all unconstrained access to the subjective realisation of ‘truth’. These processes of resistance within the discourse stand in contrast to those attempts in the *Maritime Worker* to ground the notion of ‘truth’ in an originating subject. As was illustrated in Chapter Five, the *Maritime Worker* existed at the juncture of a narrative tradition that gave embodiment and expression to a certain kind of historical knowledge. It was a knowledge that presumed to recognise the reality of the collective experiences of a subject - the working class - and out of this recognition an attempt was made to implement change in social power relations. These narratives were those in which an historical subject had claimed to have thrown off the shackles of a religious metaphysics and was able to bring a subjective consciousness into the light of reason. This process was one in which the cumulative experiences and increasing self-knowledge of an historical subject were overlaid onto a narrative of progress such as E.P. Thompson's notions of the construction of a working class identity.[242] Thus this historical subject was claimed to be able to recognise itself increasingly in this narrative, and it was these strategies of recognition which were used in the *Maritime Worker* and constituted those horizons of meaning from which it drew, and those which it attempted to modify. Closer examination of these narratives however reveals that the processes through which this knowledge and self-recognition of the subject took place were done by masking the origins of its coming into being: that the subject failed to recognise that this coming into being was an effect of discourse. It was not that of a subject coming to recognise itself through access to a hitherto hidden truth that was increasingly being revealed through the processes of reason. This development of a subjective consciousness can be seen arising out of a feature that Foucault identifies as a 'truth function'. This function makes problematic any claim of subjectivity that it is able to stand outside the discursive environment in which it is placed and make reference to an extra-historical reality that forms the basis of its 'real' existence - such as a notion of the essential human condition. This orientation of the 'truth function' that surrounds the subjective consciousness is the effect of discourse circumscribing those centrifugal tendencies of language that were referred to in the previous chapter. It is this function that controls the processes of self-recognition for the subject, giving it a centre and masking the features of its production. The narratives on which the *Maritime Worker* relied therefore - while animating the impression of an historical subject coming to a realisation of self - do this by reference to an extra-historical Subject. This Subject is similar to that which Louis Althusser described as the Absolute Subject and the function of discourse is to animate this Subject and give it an originary presence by giving the notion of 'voice' a strategic value.

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[241] Derrida, J. (1967) *L'Ecriture et la differance*, quoted in Culler, J. (1982) *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*, Cornell Uni Press, New York (1992 ed): p 92.

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[242] Thompson. E.P. (1963) op cit.

How is this presence of 'voice' constituted in discourse? One approach to this question is - as has been shown earlier - to examine the ways in which the *Maritime Worker* firstly sought to bring together a sense of class unity, and secondly, expose these attempts at unification to an analysis of those discursive mechanisms which regulate the horizons of subjective meaning. This applies particularly to that part of discourse which organises and controls the subjective experience of history which is embodied in the narrative.

The narrative themes found throughout the texts of the Australian working classes are those that are both a continuation and a modification of the Judeo/Christian narrative tradition. These narratives rely on an archetype of history as a linear process of accumulated knowledge. Ironically the driving features of this process are contained in the references these narratives make to such notions as justice and freedom, which are assumed to have an extra-historical reality that can be brought to bear on the historical process. Framing these concepts of justice and freedom within a critical analysis of discourse however suggests that these ideas are very similar to Foucault's notion of a 'truth function'. In the Judeo/Christian religious tradition these notions have a related function to the concept of an eternal and unchanging God, and they function both as a reference to an origin and also as a projection of the ultimate outcome of history.

Similarly constructed 'truth functions' are also found in the discourses of socialism. These discourses were able to incorporate them from the religious into a secular context via the processes of the Enlightenment. In this process of metamorphosis, the metaphysical referents of a religious knowledge were challenged and moulded into those that embodied the humanist ideals of reason. Located at the centre of these humanist ideals was the 'everyman', which replaced the figure of God and embodied the qualities of reason, justice and equality. Steven Best explains this relationship between the Judeo/Christian tradition and that of the Enlightenment in his book *The Politics of Historical Vision*:

> Although Enlightenment thinkers rejected the Christian narrative in content, substituting human agency for divine fiat, progress for providence, and the values of dignity and autonomy for humility and sin, they appropriated and transcoded the religious form and poetic forces of Christian historiography into a secularised framework. In their speculative nature, their attribution of meaning and purpose in history, their positing of a final stage of history, and their appeal to natural law and a timeless rational structure of reality, such Enlightenment narratives are deeply religious and metaphysical in character.[243]

These narrative themes and discursive devices of the Judeo/Christian tradition reverberate throughout the texts of the Australian working classes and they exist in a trajectory that can be found in the utopian socialist texts of the 19th and early 20th Century. They extend into those seemingly disparate texts produced by the Communist Party of Australia in the 1930s and 40s. These themes and discursive devices are found in the *Maritime Worker,* structuring and reinforcing its modes of reference and meaning such as the historical narratives that structure Tom Nelson's broad-ranging history of the Australian labour movement. What is significant however is that the underlying principles of discursive organization, for which these narrative themes and devices are a function, can be seen to remain constant across the different styles and types of text. This suggests that transitions in the texts, while seemingly evolutionary such as in E.P. Thompson's notions of a cumulative working class cultural identity, remain tied to the regulation of discursive practices. Therefore, while an apparent shift appears between the utopian themes of the earlier socialist texts and the scientific positivism of the later ones, the perceived hiatus only masks the strategies through which discourse constitutes its field of meaning - it does not replace them. The same sorts of rules and strategies that constitute the earlier narratives are those that can be found in the later ones, suggesting that it is these functions which circumscribe discourse - not the notion of an autonomous subject creating both its own notion of self and the social functions of class or community and those institutions which support them.

Evidence of this continuity can be argued to exist in comparing the style and form of the *Maritime Worker* with that of an earlier union newspaper from the 1910s.

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[243] Best S. (1995) op cit: p 5.

The *Timber Worker*[244] was the masthead of the Australian Timber Workers' Union and similarly to the *Maritime Worker* was an influential union periodical of its time. Beginning publication in 1913, one of its more marked characteristics was the influence of utopian socialist thinking in its content and editorial style. A comparison between the two papers can be made for a number of reasons. Firstly there is a commonality of institutional factors and experiences that existed between Australian wharfies and timber workers. Until the 1930s the role of the timber workers in Australian economic life was in many ways equal to that of the wharf labourers in terms of economic influence. The timber workers had a pivotal role in the establishment of Australia's early economic fortunes: they provided timber for shoring up the shafts in the establishment of Australia's deep lead mining industries; they were also equally important in providing the fencing timbers for the pastoral industry, the sleepers and bridge building timbers for the construction of the railways, and the construction timbers for the housing industry. In many ways the physical environment and the settlement patterns of the communities of the timber workers were also similar to those of the wharfies. Work in the timber industry was a heavy, physically demanding, dangerous and dirty occupation similar to the work on the wharves. The establishment of communities was also formed along similar patterns. The timber workers were dispersed across the Australian bush in the same sort of tight-knit communities that the wharfies had established for themselves along Australia's coastline. Secondly, and most importantly, the comparison between the two unions can be made because of the sort of significance they both placed on the importance of education and the printed word in the active fostering of a particular view of society. This feature makes a comparison of the two periodicals of some importance, because both unions attempt to use their respective journals to consciously transcend the texts that precede them. The *Timber Worker* was attempting to supersede past texts and bring a working class subject into a non-metaphysical but nevertheless utopianistic focus, while the methods and style found in the *Maritime Worker* by contrast sought to replace this utopianism with that of a scientific method in which the human subject was brought into the focus of a materialist science of social relations.

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[244] See Picture 27 in the Appendix.

In the following extract from the *Timber Worker* it is apparent that the style of the narrative remains overtly connected with the Judeo/Christian religious tradition. These relationships are found in both the thematic content and the structural style of the narrative. The borrowing from one narrative tradition and its overlay onto another is apparent, and strong connections can be drawn between the two. For instance this extract borrows heavily from the British Methodist experience for its context and these themes are overlaid onto a socialist political narrative. Also the use of metaphor, and the strategies to which they are applied in organising the narratives can be seen to be interchangeable between the religious and the secular. The title is a notable example, with the inference of a 'voice of enlightenment' that would perform equally well in both a religious and secular context as a function of 'truth' and 'reason'. This interchangeability of themes and images extends right through the overall tone of the extract. For instance, the promise of a messiah is indicated in the phrase: "the wandering people huddled together as they waited for a revelation, a sign of true leadership". Ambiguously this could be referring to either Moses or Marx. The narrative flow of the extract is maintained by the dominant phrase "thou shalt" which appears systematically. The repetitive occurrence of this phrase has several major functions - all of which relate to a particular strategic function within the discourse, and all of which point back to the origin of 'voice' as the principal strategy through which discourse is circumscribed. Stylistically this phrase gives the piece the effect of a sermon and affects this by simulating the physical presence of the priest and his congregation. In a literal sense the phrase "thou shalt" itself also represents the word of law. But most importantly it functions as a strategic device within the discourse because of the evocation of the metaphorical presence of 'voice'. It is this function that allows an insight into some of the strategies in which the truth claims found within discourse are made valid and, as suggested earlier, it does this by a process organising meaning around a centre - the *logos.*

Importantly the following extract has a linear structure that charts a line of historical progression leading to a promise of freedom. The merging of the narrative theme and structure can be identified in the sense that in a religious narrative the progressive realisation of 'truth', 'justice', 'equality', etc., can be seen as the promise implied in reaching the Kingdom of God, while in the secular context of the *Timber*

Worker it had become the promise of humanity reaching these ideals through the progress of reason.

> **"A NEW COMMANDMENT I GIVE UNTO YOU."**
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> ===========================
>
> **Thou Shalt Not Be Divided.**
>
> "Thou shalt not" rang down through the flame and smoke of sanctified Mount Sinai to the expectant Israelites. "Thou shalt not" thundered the everlasting Voice, and the cry striking the weird rocks reverberated again, again, again. Thou shalt not, not, NOT was the word of the jealous Jehovah, and the trumpeting echoes made more manifest the mystery and majesty of the command in the wandering people huddled together as they waited for a revelation, a sign of true leadership. The "Thou shalt not" of the miraculous mount has sound past six thousand years, yet to-day is as imperative an injunction as when first it fell upon the startled ears of the Moses-led nomads. . .
>
> **Union Is Strength.**
>
> And so, "Thou shalt be united" has been the simple yet profound message for the creators of the Labor movement since the aspiration for Social Justice brought the workers increasingly together as an organised force, since the divine spirit of Discontent set them journeying as a marching army towards Freedom. . .
>
> **Union Is Essential.**
>
> Thou shalt not be divided! The lesson of universal history, the teaching of universal experience, is that union is strength. When the people are united they have won; when they have been divided they have lost. The peoples own credibility, ignorance, servility, division, have enabled the robber classes to triumph in the days agone and to date. Had the peasants in 1381 stood true to John Ball and Wat Tyler, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity had long been an accomplished fact. Chartism in 1848-52 was in the main slain by the dry-rot of petty jealousies and divided counsels. . .[245]

The texts of the Judeo/Christian tradition all point to an idea of God as the originator of meaning. This notion of God as the Absolute Subject or origin is revealed in St John's credo: "In the beginning was the Word". In this credo the Word authorised the presence of God thus, structured into the discursive framework that supports the Judeo/Christian narratives. The notion of the Word becomes a metaphor for God, or in other words a metaphor for foundation. This logocentrism according to Derrida represents the orientation of all thought about knowledge and meaning in the Western tradition:

> Toward an order of meaning – thought, truth, reason, logic, the Word – conceived as existing in itself, as foundation.[246]

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[245] R.S. Ross, 'A New Commandment I Give Unto You', *Timber Worker* Vol.1, No.5, June 1913: p 1.

[246] Culler, J. (1982) *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*, Cornell Uni Press, New York (1992 ed): p 92.

The concept of a foundation in the Word cannot be physically apprehended however, and can only exist in the strategic moment of language and meaning. Derrida again is clear in how this is achieved as an ordering of discourse that takes place in language in which a duality of oppositions such as meaning/form, soul/body, intuition/expression, literal/metaphorical, nature/culture, positive/negative are all orientated towards a foundational presence. In this presence the first term in the pair is elevated to a higher place in the schemata of understanding and the second, in relation are a complication or a negation. According to Culler description or analysis thus becomes:

> The enterprise of returning "strategically," in idealization, to an origin or to a "priority" seen as simple, intact, normal, pure, standard, self-identical, in order to conceive of derivation, complication, deterioration, accident, etc ... This is not just *one* metaphysical gesture among others; it is the metaphysical exigency, the most constant, profound and potent procedure.[247]

This foundationalism in the narratives has been given meaning through the concept of God, who is given presence through his Word, which authorises Him as the originator and centre of all meaning. In the development of the Judeo/Christian tradition the notion of God was given presence through the strategic value of 'voice' as an origin. This strategy was mediated to God's subjects through God's representatives - the priests - who were invested with the power to speak. It was through them that God spoke and the investment of meaning took place. In terms of an origin in this tradition, the notion of God constitutes the *logos*. But as we have seen, this presence can only be given through language - in other terms it can only be given through God's Word. The Word becomes the Absolute Subject through which subjectivity is framed. The paradox of this hypostasis of God's Word is that it is from this that the concepts of truth, justice, beauty, goodness, etc., are given reference or meaning. However these references are to that of an origin that resists all attempts to reclaim it linguistically. The authority that is invested in the God concept is that which language cannot describe: God cannot be seen nor touched, but remains represented within religious discourse as the 'voice' - the presence of authority and the origin of all knowledge. It is this function within discourse that reveals its autonomous nature: metaphor serves a function which resists the slide of language into meaninglessness, by giving the presence of 'voice' a strategic place in the legitimacy of all truth claims.

The discourses of the post-Enlightenment tradition need to manufacture this presence and to reaffirm this authority to rule – to create a subject. But it is only through discourse that this reaffirmation is made, because the origin can never be truly recovered. As Foucault suggests:

> The origin lies at a place of inevitable loss, the point where the truth of things corresponded to a truthful discourse, the site of a fleeting articulation that discourse has obscured and finally lost.[248]

In the extract from the *Timber Worker* these metaphors of 'presence' authorise the discourse. They are found in a plurality of voice and subject positions. One of these is the evocation of God's 'voice' as he speaks from the mountain. This serves a metaphorical purpose in the extract by animating an image of a working class messiah (the union leader) bringing forth the words of truth and reason. In the context of the *Timber Worker* it is an image reminiscent of the figure of John Curtin - the editor of the paper - a renowned Yarra Bank orator, preaching the message of socialism.[249] The principal strategy of this particular invocation of 'voice' is not to give a univocal 'presence' the means of legitimacy; this led to the despotism of the priests acting under God's Word, which is what the tenets of the Enlightenment sought to overcome. The socialist discourses of the 19th and early 20th centuries were a product of the post-Enlightenment transformation where God's Word has been replaced with that of the Subject of humanism as the source of legitimacy and authority. In the overwriting of the narrative through which this transformation took place, the figurative presence of God as the source of 'truth' was replaced by that of the human subject - and this subject was seen as the maker of his/her own destiny and the source of knowledge. It is through this shift that the narratives of the Judeo/Christian tradition, in which hardship and struggle were rewarded in a promised future, were grafted onto a socialist narrative. So in the Judeo/Christian tradition this future, manifest in the promise of a glorious afterlife, found its way into the socialist narrative illustrating the notion of destiny which became manifest as the idea of History. The metaphorical strategies in the *Timber Worker* extract imply this 'presence' of a working class audience that had massed beneath the mountain to make a claim to a History that is its own. They are the "expectant Israelites" who are waiting for the

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[247] Derrida, J. (1977) *Limited Inc*, quoted in in Culler, J. (1982) op cit: p 92.

[248] Foucault, M. (1984b) 'Nietzsche, Geneology, History' in Rabinow, P (1984) op cit: p 79.

[249] Ross, L. (1977) *John Curtin: A Biography,*, Melbourne Uni Press, Melb (1996 ed): p 29.

promises implied in the ‘voice’ of truth and reason, of whom they are both the Subject and the subjects of a certain kind of knowledge and it was this knowledge that the socialist agitators attempted to use to forge a working class political identity.

These transformations in the narratives that became part of the post-Enlightenment proclamations of the rights of humanity and its attacks against suspicion, ignorance, injustice and inequality are therefore not the creation of a freely emancipated subjectivity that is able to create its own history. The narratives that are used to authorise and legitimise these transformations can only exist through the strategic relations found within discourse, and not externally to them through reference to an objective or subjective reality because, as we have seen, these references continue to seek a foundation that eludes them. In a direct challenge to the cultural materialist approach of such historians as E.P. Thompson, the critical features of this transformation are therefore not freely available to a subject to form through a direct and cumulative acquisition of the narratives: the shifts in narrative from the religious to the secular indicate a strategic movement within discourse - not a progressive overlaying of the narrative within a subjective recuperation of reason. As we have seen, Foucault is critical of this notion of a cumulative acquisition of an historical consciousness that takes place around something that is seen as ‘truth’, such as that which underlies the historical determinism of the working classes. These notions of ‘truth’ find their legitimacy in discursive relations that function as an originating event that can never be reclaimed.

Foucault is critical of those types of history that are conducted as a search amongst the manifest plethora of knowledge for a hidden trace of humanity’s essential condition or origin that can be redeemed as part of a liberatory project of reason. Foucault sees his project as dismantling the totalising conceptions that have hitherto driven this search for knowledge. As Steven Best argues:

> Foucault redefined the nature of social theory by calling into question conventional assumptions concerning the Enlightenment, Marxism, rationality, subjectivity, power, truth, history and the political role of the intellectual. Foucault breaks with universalist, foundationalist, dialectical, and normative standpoints and emphasises principles of contingency, difference, and discontinuity. Adopting a nominalist stance, he dissolves abstract essences and universals such as Reason, History, Truth, or Right into a plurality of specific sociohistorical forms. He challenges traditional disciplinary boundaries between philosophy, history, psychology, and social and political theory, as well as conventional approaches to these fields. He does not do “theory” in the modern

> sense, which aims at clarity, consistency, comprehensiveness, objectivity, and truth; rather, he offers fragments, "fictions," "truth-games," "heterotopias," "tools," and "experiments" that he hopes will prompt his readers to think and act in new ways. Trying to blaze new intellectual and political trails, Foucault abandons both liberalism and Marxism and seeks a new kind of critical theory and politics.[250]

One aspect of traditional history's reliance on origins is that which Foucault calls the 'historical transcendental'[251]. He uses this term in reference to the type of history that assumes a singular unifying principle in which the transformations that occur in the discourse of human understanding continue to assume an absolute centre, guaranteeing its claims to truthfulness. Foucault argues that the manifestations of discourse that are found in these histories are treated as an exteriority that needs to be explored for hidden truths, whereas for him these signs of exteriority are those that actually constitute the knowledge on which understanding is created. As Foucault suggests:

> the historical description of things said is shot through with the opposition of interior and exterior; and wholly directed by a desire to move from the exterior - which be no more than contingency or mere material necessity, a visible body or uncertain translation - towards the essential nucleus of interiority. To undertake the history of what has been said is to re-do, in the opposite direction, the work of expression: to go back from statements preserved through time and dispersed in space, towards that interior secret that preceded them, left its mark in them, and (in every sense of the term) is betrayed by them. Thus the nucleus of the initiating subjectivity is freed. A subjectivity that always lags behind manifest history; and which finds, beneath events, another, more serious, more secret, more fundamental history, closer to the origin, more firmly linked to its ultimate horizon (and consequently more in control of all its determinations). This other history, which runs beneath history, constantly anticipating it and endlessly recollecting the past, can be described - in a sociological or psychological way - as the evolution of mentalities; it can be given a philosophical status in the recollection of the Logos or the teleology of reason; lastly, it can be purified in the problematic of a trace, which, prior to all speech, is the opening of inscription, the gap of deferred time, it is always the historico-trancendental theme that is reinvested.[252]

In understanding how this principle of the 'historical transcendental' is manifest in the *Maritime Worker,* those articles written by Tom Nelson in 1941 are instructive in illustrating how those foundationalist strategies found in discourse determined that the earlier utopian socialist narratives - such as those found in the *Timber Worker* - could be grafted onto the type of positivist socialist ideology that found expression in the texts of the *Maritime Worker.* This is regardless of the implicit claims of a positivist turn to a science of social relations that was found in the wharfie's newspaper. The advent of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the spread of socialist theory emanating out of the Soviet Union meant that socialist discourse had taken a positivist turn regarding its claims to scientificity. While the transformations between the discourse of utopian socialism and that of scientific socialism would appear complete in Nelson's history, the strategic search for foundations is never severed from within the discourse. Seeking to eschew the idealism of an earlier period, Nelson strove to develop the fundamental economic formula of a classical Marxist analysis. He contrasted this with what he calls the "capitalist class version" in which history is seen as a product of the actions of influential individuals. He argued that:

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[250] Best S. (1995) op cit: p 87

[251] McHoul, A. & Grace, W. (1993) op cit: p 43.

> The development of society is determined, not by the wishes and ideas of outstanding individuals but by the development of the material conditions of existence of society: by the changes in the mode of production of the material wealth required for the existence of society; by the changes in the actual relations of classes in production and distribution of material wealth.[253]

Despite his appeals to the 'ahistorical' laws of historical materialism, Nelson's search for a foundational meaning remains embedded in the historical tradition out of which the earlier narratives were produced. His attempts to secure a foundation for a knowledge of material relations are therefore dependent on the discursive processes that the narratives cannot transcend. The narrative traces of an earlier period structure this history. A principal feature of this correspondence is a reliance on the idea of history, which as Michel Foucault would argue, stems "from nineteenth-century philosophy, which relied on an essential historical origin, a psychological version of the subject (as 'consciousness') and the idea of hidden meanings".[254] This idea of history as a search for origins has strong roots in the Christian redemptive tradition through which the narratives of the Western tradition seek a unified meaning of past, present and future. In socialist discourse this transcendence can be found in the idea of an imminent watershed through which the emancipatory projections of an historical subject will be fulfilled. This can be seen in Nelson's history, in which the figurative transformations are evident: the image of God calling from atop of Mt Sinai which the

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[252] Foucault, M. (1972) op cit: pp 120-1

[253] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', Vol.3, No.12, March 1941: p 9.

[254] McHoul, A. & Grace. W. (1993) op cit: p 51

extract from the *Timber Worker* vividly coopts into a socialist vision, is incorporated into Nelson's concluding comments in his text, in which history reveals its 'true' meaning:

> ...economic forces are setting the stage for something far beyond the power of reformism to control.
>
> THAT SOMETHING IS SOCIALISM IN OUR TIME - IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.[255]

Nelson's historical search for its watershed cannot deny its origins. Despite an attempt at unifying a notion of past, present and future in an implied subject - through which the realisation of socialism can be achieved - this type of history relies on a foundationalism through which the embracing of the working class as a historical concept has been made legitimate. This is done by a repositioning strategy that has occurred solely within discourse, acting to maintain its source of meaning - the *logos*. By positioning the subject as both the origin and the object of historical knowledge, the discourse manufactures subjectivity. For Foucault, this search for foundation represents a desire for totalities and for a wholeness through which the subject can eventually come to self-knowledge. This desire means that even through the transformations of history the subject of consciousness remains firmly fixed at its centre:

> Continuous history is the indispensable correlative of the founding function of the subject: the guarantee that everything that has eluded him may be restored to him; the certainty that time will disperse nothing without restoring it in a reconstituted unity; the promise that one day the subject - in the form of historical consciousness - will again be appropriate, to bring back under his sway, all those things that are kept at a distance by difference, and find in them what might be called his abode. Making historical analysis the discourse of the continuous and making human consciousness the original subject of all historical development and all action are the two sides of the same system of thought. In this system, time is conceived in terms of totalisation and revolutions are never more than moments of consciousness.[256]

It is within the socialist narratives that those key elements of discourse that serve a role in maintaining the notions of an origin can be found. Embodied in such statements as J.F Chapple's 'socialist ideal', these narrative elements remain under-written in the desire for an historical totality because they act to bridge historical and chronological time and traverse the various boundaries of consciousness and expression from the psychological to the social - serving as a concept-metaphor for a reclaimable subjective 'truth'. Within the socialist discourse Chapple's phrase corresponds to Nelson's declaration regarding 'socialism in our time' in that they both refer to a particular notion of historical progress. In it, the working class as subject is bound within a certain structuration of meaning relative to that idea of history. The term, the 'socialist ideal', therefore is not a neutral feature within discourse. Its existence in the texts in its various forms illustrates those wider constraints that discourse has on meaning. While appearing to be transparent in terms of having an expressive function within the working class narratives - as a political slogan in the cries for justice for the workers for instance - it serves a much broader purpose that points to its function in the regulatory aspect of discourse. It is situated at a strategic and functional juncture within discourse that delimits the framework in which the political and historical expressions that are manifest through the *Maritime Worker* are constrained. Michel Foucault illustrates these constraints as that set of rules, which at a given period and for a given social formation, defined the sort of statements that can and cannot be made, and which can and cannot count as legitimate within a particular body of knowledge.[257]

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[255] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor? – Part 5', Vol.4, No.4, July 1941: p 6.

[256] Foucault, M. (1972) op cit: p 12.

The role of the statement is a critical feature in the maintenance of discursive systems. These systems are found across the whole range of the episteme and define the limitations that exist within it. The role of statements within the episteme is to define and order the 'truth' criteria, according to which particular knowledge problems are to be resolved, and which are embedded in and imply particular institutional arrangements. Historian Steven Best argues that this ordering of discourse also constrained the potential of Marxism to reach beyond its discursive features. He argued it produced the same constraints for Karl Marx as it did for the bourgeois political economists whose writings he critiqued:

> For Foucault, Marx's works belong entirely to the modern era and are ensnared in its aporias. In contrast to Althusser and others who interpret Marx's later works as an "epistemological break" from both his earlier humanist works and bourgeois theory in general, Foucault sees Marx's ideas as wholly derivative of the modern episteme: "At the deepest level of Western knowledge, Marxism introduced no real discontinuity: it found its place without difficulty...within an epistemological arrangement that welcomed it gladly...and that it, in return, had no intention of disturbing and, above all, no power to modify, even one jot, since it rested entirely upon it. Marxism exists in nineteenth century thought like a fish in water: that is, it is unable to breathe anywhere else".

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[257] Foucault, M., cited in McHoul, A. & Grace, W. (1993) op cit: p 30.

> Foucault does not deny that Marxism stands in opposition to bourgeois economic theories, but he sees these disputes as family squabbles within the modern episteme and emphasises the importance of their similarities over their differences.[258]

For Foucault, a statement functions in a vertical relationship across all those features that have meaning within discourse, traversing even the basic units of coherence and communication such as the proposition, the sentence or the speech act. A statement, for Foucault, is:

> a function that operates vertically in relation to these various units, and which enables one to say of a series of signs whether or not they are present in it. . . [it is] not itself a unit, but a function that cuts across a domain of structures and possible unities, and which reveals them, with concrete contents, in time and space.[259]

Contrary to those rules which we have hitherto used to determine our understanding of a statement - such as the logical proposition - in Foucault's definition he has shown less interest in the actual utterances and texts that are produced than in the rules and structures which produce them. For Foucault, statements are framed according to what he has identified as the "set of rules that at a given period and for a given society defined:

> 1. The limits and forms of *expressibility*. . .
> 2. The limits and forms of *conservation*. . .
> 3. The limits and forms of *memory*. . .
> 4. The limits and forms of *reactivation*. . ."[260]

These four points constitute the strategies through which a particular body of knowledge is formed, ordered and maintained. All four points relate to the criteria under which things can be said, maintained as meaningful, be repeated and extend into other domains of knowledge. Statements, according to Foucault, are defined as objects to be studied, repeated and passed onto others. Statements are not necessarily the same as linguistic expressions that rely on grammatical correctness or the rules of logical consistency. For Foucault, statements are those that make serious sense in the knowledge domain in which they are applied, and which also have legitimacy across other domains:

> Statements are not like the air we breathe, an infinite transparency; but things that are transmitted and preserved, that have value, and which one tries to appropriate; that are repeated, reproduced, and transformed; to which pre-established networks are adapted, and to which a status is given in the institution; things that are duplicated not

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[258] Best S. (1995) op cit: p 103.
[259] Foucault, M., cited in McHoul, A. & Grace, W. (1993) op cit: p38.
[260] Foucault, M., cited in McHoul, A. & Grace, W. (1993) op cit: p 30.

> by copy or translation, but by exegesis, commentary, and the internal proliferation of meaning. Because statements are rare, they are collected in unifying totalities, and the meanings to be found in them are multiplied.[261]

Accordingly, a statement is not a specific unit of logic such as a proposition - a declarative utterance describing a state of affairs - but exists as a functional unit within a body of knowledge. Nor is it specifically related to the rules of grammatical structure; a statement is not the same as a sentence - it can be a graph or a flow chart for instance. The difference between the rules for grammar and those for a statement within this definition is that the criteria for grammatical structure only relate to the rules regarding how something can be said, whereas the criteria for a statement also relate to the possibilities of what can be said. In this definition the statement is a function in that it does things: it brings about effects rather than simply represents a state of affairs. Any meaningful utterance - such as that made by Chapple - functions as a statement because it provides a regulatory role within the economy of a working class narrative, linking it to a series of strategies operating within discourse that guarantee it overall meaning. Such strategies are those operations in discourse that function to legitimise the existence of a sovereign and autonomous subjectivity, or the 'truth of reason'. That is, the strategies either act to guarantee the truth of an utterance by formulating the presence of a locus of subjectivity - such as the notion of a Cartesian *cogito* - or establishing a dialectic of reason whereby subjectivity can be reclaimed by ascending to the stage of a transcendental truth through the working of the historical process. It is these strategies within discourse that reach across the entire discourse of the waterside workers, unifying their psychological, social, political and historical consciousness and embodying these within a discourse in which to be human, for instance, is to be political.

Ultimately it is this concern with origins that has a problematic status in the study of ideological relations. Within the analysis of ideology there is a failure to recognise the determination of the epistemological origins on which notions of the ideological are based. The principal feature that is expressed in many notions of ideology concerns the primacy of a political subjectivity as its ultimate determinant. It is this notion of a source that becomes problematic however, because it has a particular blindness in relation to those factors that constitute and determine what is meant by the political. This is a failure to recognise the discursive formation which determines the political, and the sorts of practices which foreground it as a particular type of human experience and understanding. This is the problem faced repeatedly within ideological analysis, in that its terms of reference operate from within its own determinants - and these it fails to recognise. What is suggested in the work of Michel Foucault - among others - is that the conceptual apparatus that the study of ideology utilises cannot be found outside of the practices that it is investigating. In claiming to do so, the apparatus is in fact revealed to be ironically taking a repressive ideological position vis-à-vis these practices in bringing them into the realm of ideological understanding. The difficulty for much ideological analysis therefore appears to be its inability to recognise its own constitution in discursive practices, and its continuance in reformulating its position within the same epistemological frameworks that it seeks to overcome. One aspect of this failure can be seen in the ideational nature of the inclusive ideology models for instance, in their content and application. They can be seen to place far too much emphasis on the notion of ideas and subjective application in the creation and maintenance of a system of beliefs. As J.B. Thompson suggests:

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[261] Foucault, M. (1972) op cit: p120.

> To conceptualise ideology in terms of beliefs is to divert attention away from the complex and crucial problems of the relation between ideology and language. Seliger speaks very loosely of ideology as a 'system of beliefs', a 'system of thought', a 'system of thought and speech'; he describes the ideological composite as comprising 'principles' and 'commitments', 'judgements of value and statements of fact', 'tested and testable empirical claims'.[262]

This failure of ideological analysis to recognise its own constitution is that which critical discourse analysis attempts to disclose. It attempts to reveal those rules of discursive formation that mark out the political as an object of analysis. Critical discourse analysis seeks to discover these constitutive elements in the

> laws of possibility, rules of existence for the objects that are named, designated or described within it, and for the relations that are affirmed or denied in it.[263]

The existence of key discursive terms or markers assisting in the formation and constitution of a discourse are those which Michel Foucault took some pains to explore in his book *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. In this study, Foucault suggests that ideology fails to take into account those discursive practices that bring these

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[26]· Thompson, J.B. (1984) op cit: p 83.

markers into being. Underlining those textual elements that are being explored in this work is the suggestion of a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements. This suggests that the field of meaning in which these textual elements are dispersed does not exist principally as the field of ideological relations, but in many ways is imbricated with the practices through which ideological relations are formed and understood.

Those key textual components integral to the functioning of the *Maritime Worker* hint at the existence of those laws that define a discourse. Key words such as *worker, employer, capitalism, socialism, society, class, democracy, history, politics, economics,* etc., constitute significant elements in the statements that organise the discourse through which the *Maritime Worker* is framed. These terms operate within the parameters of a discursive environment by designating and determining the boundaries of what is of legitimate concern from that which is not. This determination is affected through a type of self-referentiality, in which the subject of concern is also a product of the discourse used to refer to it.

In a simplified model of this relationship it could be suggested, for example, that within the discursive parameters of the *Maritime Worker* the concept of the political is imbricated with a particular type of historical understanding. This understanding involves a conflict between classes that is based on their economic relations and which extends throughout the social fabric. In this model, discourse operates within an economy of understanding whereby statements function as a particular type of knowledge. This knowledge extends into both the private and public aspects of social life and has an integral connection with the values, beliefs and institutional apparatus of social formations, such as political parties, banks, newspapers, trade unions, public libraries, families, etc. The self-referential aspect of discourse is such that the statement has a co-determinate function with the other. This relationship is much like Ferdinand de Saussure's notion of the sign in that it does not refer to something external from itself, but gets meaning from a relationship with the other to which it is inseparably bound. The generation of meaning therefore cannot relate to a concept that lies above and beyond the matter under investigation, such as

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[263] Foucault, M. (1972) op cit: p91.

that embodied in the notion of 'truth' - because it can be seen that it is within discourse that this determination of 'truth' is made.

This concept of self-referentiality as it is applied to critical discourse analysis has similarities to the distinctions that exist between Saussure's concept of synchrony and diachrony. A diachronic analysis of the evolution of these key terms expressed above would suggest the existence of a particular history in which the cumulative experiences of a particular social class would create increasing definition and richness to their meaning, and a more complete understanding of their position in the social structure. A diachronic analysis of discourse would be similar to that of the cultural materialist Raymond Williams in his book *Keywords,*[264] in which he traced the etymological evolution of particular words deemed significant in the discourse of modernity. A synchronic analysis would suggest that only in understanding their function as a system of simultaneous relations would the disclosure of their real function in creating and maintaining formations of knowledge become apparent.

Tom Nelson's history of the Australian labour movement relies on a series of practices that are set up within an episteme that gathers meaning from inter-discursive relations. These operate like Michel de Certeau's notion of strategic discourse, in which language operates as a form of power. The development of the notion of 'class' for instance is set up within a discourse of struggle and conflict that is determinant on a wider field of relations that constitutes the experiences of the working classes as existing in opposition to other social classes - and it is only in this contradiction that history exists. The narratives that defined the working class, using terms such as 'common-sense', 'sound instincts', 'common prudence' etc., therefore were the product of these oppositions and define these experiences as political. These terms were not only the product of the physical experiences of the labouring classes, they were also the product of a system of oppositional dialogue that operates within discourse to give the terms meaning. The term 'class', as it is used to define the experiences of the working classes in a text such as the *Maritime Worker,* therefore is grounded in the notion of a collective as opposed to the individual; it is material and physical as opposed to metaphysical and non-material; democratic opposed to undemocratic; honest opposed to dishonest, etc. Tom Nelson therefore can speak about the 'real' history of Australia as opposed to the "capitalist class version [which] is useless for practical politics"[265] in these terms of an oppositional structure. The one version has connotations of being physically experienced and grounded in tangible material relations, while the other has the connotation of being non-material and ideationally grounded. So Nelson can lambast the reformist tendencies of the A.L.P. as being grounded in the "metaphysical, non-material atmosphere of A.L.P. tradition"[266] which in its isolation from socialism has "led to degeneration and capitalist ideas".[267] Furthermore, he attacks the A.L.P. dissidents W.M. Hughes and W.A. Holman, who were expelled from the party during WWI, in the disparaging terms of being "intellectuals".[268] In the discourse of Australian socialism this notion of class exists in a trajectory that reaches back into its origins to authorise the presence of the working classes as the true subject of history. In this way the notion of class functions as a statement, because from this point of origin it exists in a vertical relationship within the discourse that traverses the entire field of understanding of Australian workers. This field of meaning is found expressed in the community relations of the suburbs and townships of wharf labourers; it is found in the intra-family relations; it is found expressed in working class newspapers such as the *Maritime Worker.*

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[264] Williams, R. (1976) op cit.

Therefore this field of meaning, concerning the ways in which the key words (*worker, employer, capitalism etc.)* function within a framework of cogently-held beliefs and associated practices, highlights the distinction that can be made between discourse and ideology. Implied within ideological analysis is the suggestion that these terms can be actively manipulated in terms of supporting a particular political practice, such as Marxist-Leninism or Western liberal democracy. Implicit to this notion of ideology lies the notion of repression – a concept that involves the active exploitation of ideology in order to secure the interests of a certain group of people at the expense of others; or conversely to constrain the members of a certain class from coming to know the injustice of their 'true' condition. Within critical discourse theory however the concept of repression is challenged. By borrowing an observation from nature we can argue that the notion of repression is not entirely one-sided. An analogy of the spider and the web can be instrumental in explaining how the common conceptions of repression are undermined in a discursive understanding of social relations. This is what is implied in much of Foucault's work. Underlying this analogy is the suggestion that even though the web may appear to the spider to be a freely-created device that it spins to capture its victims, it is however seen to be most effectively a prison - not of the spider's victims, but of the spider itself The spider cannot live without it, or even perceive whether anything lies beyond it. Therefore, looking for instance at those aspects of class analysis which suggest that the actual motor of social inequality is found in the active manipulation of the mechanisms of power and privilege, then the analogy of the spider and the web would seem to undercut this argument. Within this analogy lies the suggestion that all parties are actually constrained by a larger set of autonomously shaped power relations that mould their epistemological horizon. We can see this in Foucault's statement about repression:

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[265] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', Vol.3, No.12, March 1941: p 6
[266] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', Vol.3, No.12, March 1941: p 6
[267] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor? – Part 3', Vol.4, No.2, May 1941: p6
[268] *Maritime Worker*, 'The Future of Labor? – Part 4', Vol.4, No.3, June 1941: p6.

> The notion of repression is quite inadequate for capturing what is precisely the productive aspect of power. In defining the effects of power as repression, one adopts a purely juridical conception of such power; one identifies power with a law which says no; power is taken above all as carrying the force of a prohibition. Now I believe that this is a wholly negative, narrow, skeletal conception of power, one which has been curiously widespread. If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? [my underline].[269]

Much of the preceding discussion has embraced the idea of structure as a way of understanding the fundamental features of organization that determine social relations. Foucault's concern with the isolation and objectification of a chosen domain of theoretical investigation has many elements of a structuralist thinking.[270] This concern with structure exists within Marxist thinking in the notion that historical development is determined by the interplay of material forces. It offers a useful counter-argument to be mounted in relation to critical discourse analysis, to the extent that it challenges some of Foucault's arguments that social relations are the outcome of a regulated series of discursive practices. As a counterpoint, the concern with structure within Marxism functions both as a means of highlighting Foucault's position, and ultimately as a means of revealing the problems of Marxist notions of ideology. Ultimately, the Marxist concern with structure would appear to be drawn back into the need to acknowledge the primacy of discourse. This acknowledgement arises because in the final analysis the Marxist concern with structure is ultimately grounded on a false distinction between the objects of investigation and the discourse practices that are used to define them. It therefore fails to recognise the epistemological determinants of its interpretative position.

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[269] Foucault, M. (1984a) op cit: pp 60-61.
[270] Foucault, M. (1972) op cit: p 15.

Like the theorists of critical discourse analysis, many Marxist historians developed the notion of structure to solve the unsettling problem of the subjective 'voice' in history. Tom Nelson's history was one such example - albeit a crudely deterministic model of structured economic relations - that attempted to purge the 'conscious agent' from the historical process. For many Marxists the existence of structured determinants in the relations of production provides the key to understanding the ultimate inequalities brought to social relations. It is these concerns that inform many of the 'restrictive theories' of ideology, and suggest that ultimately social relations are structured within the relations of production. However within the scope of this type of analysis there is continuing argument about the relationship between those fundamental institutions of society, such as the economy, and the ideological mechanisms that facilitate their maintenance and reproduction. The fact that this argument continues suggests a high degree of uncertainty about how these relations arise and are maintained. These questions are concerned with how one legitimises and supports the other, and vice versa. Within Marxist theory these concerns deal with the relationship between the base and the superstructure and the ideological relations that connect them. Continuing argument about this relationship between the base and the superstructure within Marxism however seems to flounder on a false distinction. By exploring the Marxist problematic - the relationship between the base and the superstructure - it can be seen that this distinction is one which relies on a subject-object dichotomy. It becomes increasingly difficult to maintain when applied against a discursive framework which appears to authorise and legitimise the existence of both subjective and object positions within the one discourse. A notable example of this conflation of subject/object positions is that which Foucault speculated upon in his study of the adoption in prison architecture of the English utilitarian Jeremy Bentham's notion of the 'panopticon' - an annular architectural contraption with a watchtower in the middle. Foucault's suggestion concerning this sort of structure was that it was the physical manifestation of a particular historical development of knowledge about discipline and punishment. Foucault argued that this was a knowledge that was characterised through discourse by a form of self-surveillance that created both the subject and the object to which it refers.[271]

Ultimately however, for many Marxists – and this was part of Foucault's criticism of Marx[272] - the premise underlying this concern with structure lay in the notion that if understanding and action are ultimately the products of the institutional structures of society relative to the forces of production, then at some point in the process appropriate intervention in these institutions can force change in their ideological direction - and therefore effect change in social relations. The notion of ideology that has essentially arisen out of Marxist analysis of social relations is therefore ultimately premised on the idea of a subjective consciousness that is able to grasp the true conditions of society. This feature, as has been argued, has its determinants in the discursive construction of subjectivity that is not free from the epistemological constraints of its coming into being.

This issue of a subjectively reclaimable 'truth' informed many of the articles on labour history that appeared in the *Maritime Worker* - such as Nelson's history of the Australian working classes. This notion of 'truth' was found in an historical materialism in which the contradictions existent in the relations of production drove forward history. The outcome of this type of thinking suggests the accessibility of guided political action and it was this idea that had its most coherent response in an ideological war between capitalism and communism in the second half of the 20th century. This war had its roots in the beliefs of Communists like Jim Healy and Tom Nelson. This idea of a guided political response is one that seeks to firstly identify and then manipulate the social mechanisms of control. This was the ideal aim of the *Maritime Worker.* Critical discourse theory however seeks to undermine this idea of a guided political action by detailing the sort of discursive mechanisms that provide the framework of rules and structuration, through which the very idea of a guided political action is made coherent. The idea of the constitutive relations of discourse is one in which it is seen that the relations given through discourse provide the criteria through the realisation of a political consciousness which is made coherent and systematically framed.

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[271] Dreyfus,H. and Rabinow, P. (1983) op cit: pp 188-97.
[272] ibid: p 33.

The notion of an historical materialism that avoided the framing effects of its discursive features therefore is an unstable one. So while Tom Nelson's histories certainly relied on an interpretation of processes that were informed by a Marxist notion of historical materialism, nevertheless those narrative processes that structure discourse remained underwritten in them; therefore a materialist understanding could not exist without the framing effects of discourse. These histories relied on the same linear style of the Judeo/Christian narratives. As such, they relied on this linearity to presume a specific historical destiny whereby the contradictions of capitalism coupled with the political intervention of an enlightened working class would bring about a socialist society. This awareness according to Nelson would be brought to bear through a proper understanding of 'theory'.[273] Theory, he suggested would expose the historical laws that revealed the true nature of society as those that were determined by its material conditions. The assumption inherent in this theory is that while history masks the progression towards socialism, those laws that would constitute its eventual outcome are immutable and will eventually be revealed by the historical process. It was this understanding of historical development which Nelson contrasted with that which he called the "capitalist class version", in which the actions of individuals were the principal motors driving historical change. As Nelson argued:

> capitalist historians infer that all the changes for good or bad in the past are brought about by the actions of good or evil kings, governors, etc., instead of explaining that the activity of the people, including outstanding persons is caused by the composition and organisation of society; the relation of the class forces during definite stages in the development of the productive forces, and by the conditions of life.[274]

Nelson's attempts to derive a Marxist notion of history through an understanding of 'theory' proved to be problematic in providing a comprehensive analysis of the ways in which social relations are discursively constructed. Nelson's attempt to develop a Marxist analysis of social relations, while focussing on the "development of the material conditions of society" nevertheless remains tied to the discursively organised strategies of the narratives, from which it ultimately sources meaning and legitimacy in the subjective reclamation of history. So while Nelson attempts to draw away from the earlier utopian narratives of historical progress and outline a Marxist notion of social relations, he is nevertheless subject to an inherent contradiction in his claim to understand the true progress of historical law that is distinct from the "capitalist class version" of the individual or the autonomous subject in history. Nelson's version of historical process cannot cast off the metaphor-concept of an absolute centre of truth around which the development of discursively constructed social relations takes place. So even though Nelson's argument affirms the classical line of orthodox Marxist thought - that it is the structure of economic relations that is the true engine of history[275] - he cannot advance this without taking a subjective position - because for him the outcome of historical progress is humanity's reclaiming of its origin. This origin is based on a humanist conception of truth, freedom and justice, and even though the subject in this case is not embodied in the individual, the subject is nevertheless that of a collective working class. As suggested, this notion of an origin can only be given through discourse. Therefore it is those rules of legitimacy and regulation and the strategic development of these within discourse that in many ways govern the notion of subjectivity. The discursive creation of this subjectivity has been made unrecognisable to the subject through the authorising strategies of the *logos*.

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[273] *Maritime Worker,* 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', Vol. 3, No.12, March 1941: p6.
[274] *Maritime Worker,* 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', Vol. 3, No.12, March 1941: p6.

Discourse therefore animates both a subject and a history, but it does not do this from some preliminary and fundamental point of 'truth' from which both the subject and history can reclaim their genesis. This 'truth' is both the product and the function of discourse and is organised through the strategies that are intrinsic to its internal regulation. Foucault describes the function of these strategies in his book *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* where he explores the ways in which the discourse of

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[275] *Maritime Worker,* 'The Future of Labor? – Part 1', Vol. 3, No.12, March 1941: p6.

Economics or Natural History in the Classical Period are organised. As he suggests, strategies:

> are not rooted anterior to discourse, in the silent depths of a choice that is both preliminary and fundamental. All these groups of discourses that are to be described are not the expression of a world-view that has been coined in the form of words, not the hypocritical translation of an interest masquerading as theory... On the contrary, these options must be described as systematically different ways of treating objects of discourse (of delimiting them, regrouping or separating them, linking them together and making them derive from one another), of arranging forms of enunciation (of choosing them, placing them, constituting series, composing them into great rhetorical unities), of manipulating concepts (of giving them rules for their use, inserting them into regional coherences, and thus constituting conceptual architectures). These options are not seeds of discourse (in which discourses are determined in advance and prefigured in a quasi-microscopic form); they are regulated ways (and describable as such) of practising the possibilities of discourse.[276]

The regulation of discourse therefore is not tied to the origin of an autonomously acting subject, whether this is manifest in the individual, the collective, or - as in an adversarial Marxist analysis - the state. Nor is it tied to the notion of an objective reality as its ultimate reference point. Discourse is tied to the regulation of the enunciative field, in which our objects of thought are discursively constructed. It is the recognition of these discursive organising strategies that lie at the heart of Foucault's criticism of Marx. While it can be argued that Marx claims an historicist and contingent perspective in his interpretation of social forms and relations, he nevertheless retains the notion of a humanity retaining an essential presence in the 'truth' claims of his discourse. As Best argues:

> Trying to negotiate the empirical and transcendental, Foucault claims Marx acknowledges human finitude and historicity, but posits a human essence that stands beyond time and social conditioning; caught between the *cogito* and the unthought, Marx seeks to bring the unconscious forces determining thought into conscious awareness; split between the retreat and return of the origin he sees communism as the means to recover the lost origin and essence of the human subject, as the "true appropriation of the *human* essence through and for man," and "the emancipation and recovery of mankind".[277][Quotations from Marx, K. *Early Writings*]

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[276] Foucault, M. (1972) op cit: pp 69-70

[277] Best S. (1995) op cit: p 104.

CONCLUSION

Its publishers and editors envisaged the role of the *Maritime Worker* as the medium through which to capture and regulate its own discursive space in the adversarial political climate of 1930s and 1940s Australia, and it did so effectively within the ideological scope of its milieu. They accurately determined the effectiveness of the printed media in the dissemination of ideas and debate, and actively entered into this field with sophistication and clarity, as they did in their approach to the various industrial and political disputes of the time. The sophistication of the *Maritime Worker* was mirrored in its style of presentation, which sought to appropriate the conventions of newspaper production and compete, as it were, with the mainstream conservative newspapers of the day. As well as developing the political notion of the Australian waterside worker as a generic member of the working class, the style of presentation in the *Maritime Worker* sought to enhance the ideological impact of this process by developing a system of semiotic self-recognition and a community identification or orientation for the Australian wharfies. It did this by including such items as advertisements for localised small businesses such as butchers and tailors. It also adopted the printing technology that made possible the photographic publication of the social events of waterside workers and their families. These strategies made the *Maritime Worker* very much the "wharfies paper" and developed a broader sense of community that included small business and the family. The fundamental features of these strategies were the directions they received through a discursively constructed notion of a collective political subjectivity and its constitutive system of knowledge that informed both a sense of history and social development for its Australian working class readership. These features regulated the notion of history and social development within an adversarial relationship based on class and the inherent inequality found in the relations of production. In terms of the use that this notion of history and social development offered to a political program, the guiding assumptions suggested that the discursive mechanisms that constituted this relationship were non-problematic in the sense that they were a reflection of a pre-existent reality - or a reality that found its basis in the structured material relations of the economy.

In contrast to this notion of a non-problematic relation to the discursive, the arguments in the previous chapters were an attempt to bring history into thinking about language and the constitutive social effects that it has. One way of developing an understanding of how these connections between language and society interrelated is by examining what has been one of the principal features of language and social analysis - ideology - and exploring the implications of its use within a critical analysis of discourse. By exploring the context of ideology in relation to the discursive production of the *Maritime Worker,* two of the principal and more influential ways of thinking about ideology – the inclusive and restrictive theories – have been shown to have a problematic relationship to a foundationalist notion of redemptive truth that owes its grounding either to the idea of the Cartesian cogito or the Hegelian dialectic. These two dominant mainstreams of Western thought, on which historical knowledge has been grounded and which constitute the basis of historical understanding, are blind to their logocentric origins and the contingency of the premises on which they are based. Cartesian logic is based on fundamental presuppositions of thought and knowledge that are laid out beyond any empirical questioning, precisely because they ground empirical knowledge. Whereas the Hegelian logic affirms its purported contingency in an historical method, it nevertheless attempts to secure an overwhelming meta-integration where the entire ‘true’ movement of the empirical spirit or event is recovered within the single dialectic of reason.

The historical logic on which the *Maritime Worker* was ultimately conceived was constituted through a problematic relationship to its epistemological origins and it is this blindness that had given its narrative a semblance of continuity. Its Marxist-socialist narrative, while claiming its genesis in the development of a science of material relations which had presumed to have cast off the utopianism of its past remained however indebted to those origins - which were grounded on a foundationalist logocentrism that was embodied in the discursive structures of the Judeo-Christian tradition. By exploring the origins of this logic, the notion of critical discourse analysis has some claim to justification in the exposition of historical knowledge and the constitutive features of language on knowledge and social forms.

The attempt through the *Maritime Worker* to frame the idea of knowledge within a Marxist notion of ideology - and indeed to extrapolate an interpretative historical methodology based on Marxist politics of emancipation - is problematic because of the historical origins that the term ‘ideology’ has within Marxist social and political analysis. Marxist analysis suggests that the ideological field is inscribed within the system of class relations. Therefore, according to a Marxist interpretation, the objective of historical progress is the emancipation of the ideological field from bourgeois power relations. Marxist interpretations of ideology however lead us back to the paradoxical relationship which language has with understanding. These interpretations challenge and attempt to negate the diffusive and elusive nature of language in social formations by arguing that acquiring the mechanisms of language production and circulation through an emancipatory politics can bring about change. Speculation of this type of intervention however does not account for the autonomous relationship that language has with society. The ramifications of many Marxist attempts to expose the nature of ideologies are that they are in danger of totalising a method of interpretation that is open to the deconstructive potential of critical discourse analysis.

From the investigation so far it can be seen that the liberatory potential of much ideological understanding has been grounded within the same processes of language formation that constitute the objects of its investigation. Therefore, it is in the nature of critical discourse analysis that this investigation suggests is most fruitful to explore the relationship between language and society. As has been noted, critical theory exposes an unstable relationship between notions of discourse and notions of ideology, and this opens itself to a consideration of a hierarchy in the way language functions in society. This in turn leads to a concern with the different functions that language has within this hierarchy, and consideration of the levels at which discursive relations act as the ultimate determining factor in the constitution of meaning and understanding.

Broadly speaking, the distinctions made between these different levels of the hierarchy are those on the one hand that embrace the structuralist/post-structuralist notions of discourse as constituting its objects of knowledge - which Foucault is legacy to - and those in which discourse acts as an active ideological phenomenon that is determined in the dialogical expression of social relations. These are best demonstrated in the work of the Bakhtin Circle[278] in early 20th Century Russia or in the work of the German Hans-Georg Gadamer.[279]What remains fundamental however in all of this work is the notion that discursive functions have a certain level of autonomy in the way that knowledge is formed, and these functions are integral to the coherency of all forms of knowledge. These discursive strategies organize knowledge, and these features are present in the *Maritime Worker.* They form part of the epistemological framework of modernity, which Jean-François Lyotard had termed the 'metanarratives'.[280]

Much of Foucault's work remains troubling however, because it does create an uncertain future for any political program that seeks liberation from the processes of power. His insights into the autonomy of discursive regulation and the questioning of the notion of 'truth' occlude the notion of subjectivity at the site of meaning constitution where power relations can be challenged. It was this criticism that Hans Herbert Kogler in his work on Gadamerian-influenced 'dialogical hermeneutics' levelled at Foucault. Focussing on Foucault's notion of the episteme as elaborated in *The Order of Things,* he says Foucault is mistakenly attempting to lay bare the various symbolic horizons of the modern West as a system of meaning that obeys internal rules. Kögler argued that:

> Foucault's mistake is that he approaches these "rules" at a level of external connection between statements rather than viewing such rules as internal and concrete principles of the episteme's meaning constitution. By contrast, a projection of meaning and being is inherent in every discourse; this projection forms a symbolic horizon, according to which contact with the world, achieved through the discursively pre-given order, becomes *particular lived experience* for the speakers. Foucault certainly does not want to interpret, albeit in a detached attitude, the category of meaning in terms of internal rule mechanisms; he wants rather to free himself entirely from meaning. In this absolute elimination of meaning however, Foucault remains antithetically bound to the philosophy of the subject: the symbolic projection of ontological premises is supposed to relate purely to externally "observed" discursive practices, because, according to Foucault, it is clear that any reference to "meaning" necessarily leads back to the category of the subject. Foucault fails to perceive, however; that *meaning* can be retained and indeed deployed against the omnipotence of transcendental subjectivity. This is precisely what

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[278] Holquist, M. (1990) op cit.

[279] See the book by Kogler, H.H. (1996) The Power of Dialogue Critical Hermeneutics after Gadamer and Foucault, for an interesting interpretation of a fusion between Gadamerian hermeneutics and Foucauldian post-structuralism.

[280] Lyotard, J. (1979) The Postmodern Condition: a Report on Knowledge, Manchester Uni. Press, Manchester: see Introduction pp xxiii - xxv in 1984 edition.

> the dialogic approach achieves by conceiving meaning as an intersubjective dialogue phenomenon, which cannot be grounded in the individual speaker.[281]

Notwithstanding the validity of this criticism, Foucault's importance - and this Kogler also recognised - lies in the fact that his influence was instrumental in promoting the critical reformulation of the nature of social relations by stimulating an intensive reinvestigation into the discursively constitutive elements of society. This has forced historians to perceive their own role in the ontological relation of the observer to history and to society because as Mikhail Bakhtin noted:

> The observer has no position outside the observed world, and his observation enters as a constituent part of the observed object.[282]

By challenging the primacy of both the study of material relations and also the notion of the autonomous subject in the construction of social reality Foucault has drawn us to the central role of the discursive operations of society. He has laid bare hitherto unrecognised connections between power and knowledge in such things as the practices of the human sciences, political discourse, historical discourse, etc. By arguing that our knowledge or beliefs about material or subjective relations in society are a function of the underlying discourse which supports their existence, Foucault brings us to an emphasis on the effects of language as constituting the 'real'. Foucault wants to draw away from the Marxist idea that the material relations of production determine what can be thought and said at a particular time. Whilst he was very aware of the importance of state control and power relations based on economic imbalances, he did not see economic relations as primary - but as one type of power relation within a range of power relations. As Patton comments:

> It is not, perhaps capitalist production which is autocratic and hierarchised, but disciplinary production which is capitalist. We know after all that disciplinary organization of the workforce persists even when production is no longer strictly speaking capitalist.[283]

Under the weight of this criterion the notion of class - for instance - as a materially structured socio-political entity in the relations of production or as the cultural network of accumulated experiential understanding cannot be accorded the primary focus in an historical investigation without some concern. This concern is based on how this category of class exists as a certain kind of knowledge, and focus is given to the discourse practices that regulate this knowledge. Therefore, as Foucault would assert - *contra* ideological theory - the structure of material relations or the cultural experience of class relations are the outcomes of discourse practices - not the reverse.

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[281] Kogler, H.H. (1996) The Power of Dialogue Critical Hermeneutics after Gadamer and Foucault, MIT Press, Massachusetts: p 97.

[282] Bakhtin, M. (1986) Speech Genres and Other Late Essays: quoted in Gardiner, M. (1992) op cit: p 103.

[283] Patton, Paul (1979) 'Of Power and Prisons' in Morris Meaghan and Patton, Paul, *Michel Foucault: Power/Truth/Strategy*: quoted in Mills, S. (1997) op cit: p 36.

By allowing us to break from the historical materialist and subjective theses on the nature of social relations, thinkers like Foucault revealed the need to understand how discourse comes to exist as a body of shared knowledge. It is how knowledge comes to be shared, and the relationship that knowledge has to understanding and mechanisms of power that have been the major underlying concerns of this investigation. There is however a need to acknowledge the potential of critical intervention in social relations, because without the capacity for such intervention society is bound by the immense constraints of its own constitutive mechanisms. So, while acknowledging Foucault's investigations as the impetus for a critical reformulation of our understanding of the forces involved in the constitution of social relations – an understanding which has brought us to question the traditional paradigms of historical knowledge - there is still the issue to be addressed that social relations remain a site of struggle and contest, and language is at the intersection of this struggle. An indication of this social feature of language is that discourses are found to intersect at innumerable points of social systems, exposing forces of alterity that bring about tension and resistance. Alterity is found in the disruption within and between discourses that occurs when meanings, which have been excluded or modulated, are continually unearthed in the interplay of action and structure.

Foucault's work opens itself up to the possibility for historians to return to history and look for the processes that constitute knowledge - not as a means of totalising history but as a means of engaging with it in a dialogue in order to expand its potential for insight. It is in the dialogical potential of all meaning that we can attempt to understand the doors that have opened through the emancipatory features of Foucault's project of dismantling modernist regimes of 'truth'. His attacks against universalist, foundationalist, dialectical and normative standpoints, and emphasis on the principles of contingency, difference and discontinuity provide the basis for a revisiting of the historical texts to find the potential for transformation and a greater knowledge of the human condition. Foucault in one of his last works hinted at the dialogical and intertextual possibilities inherent in an historical consciousness when he wrote:

> [By writing], I aim at having an experience myself – by passing through a determinate historical content – an experience of what we are today, of what is not only our past but also our present. And I invite others to share the experience. That is an experience of our modernity that might permit us to emerge from it transformed.[284]

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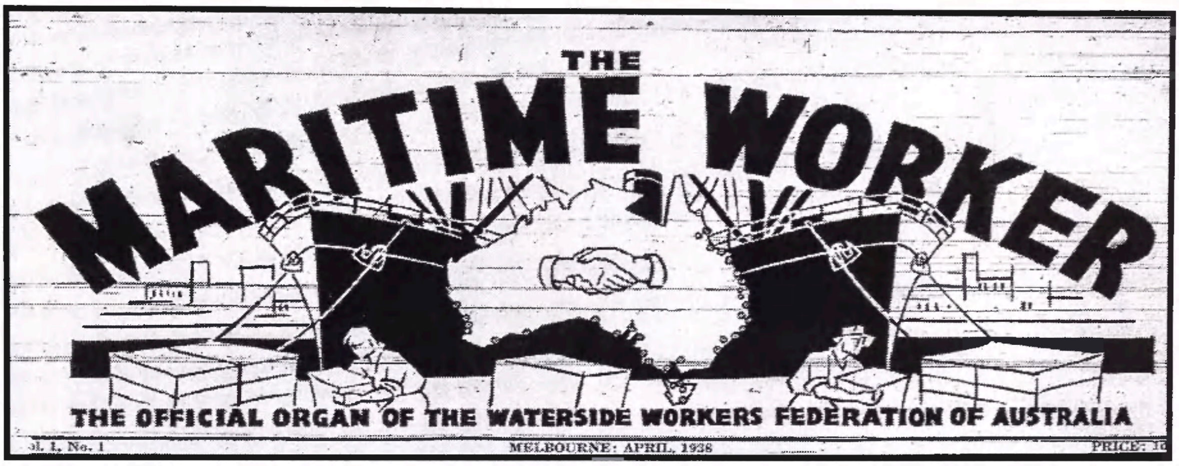
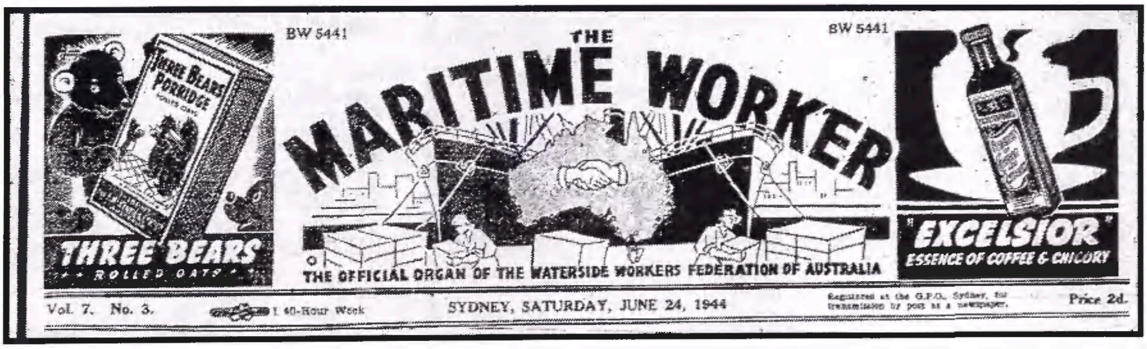
[284] Foucault, M. (1991) *Remarks on Marx*, quoted in Best, S. (1995) op cit: p 129.

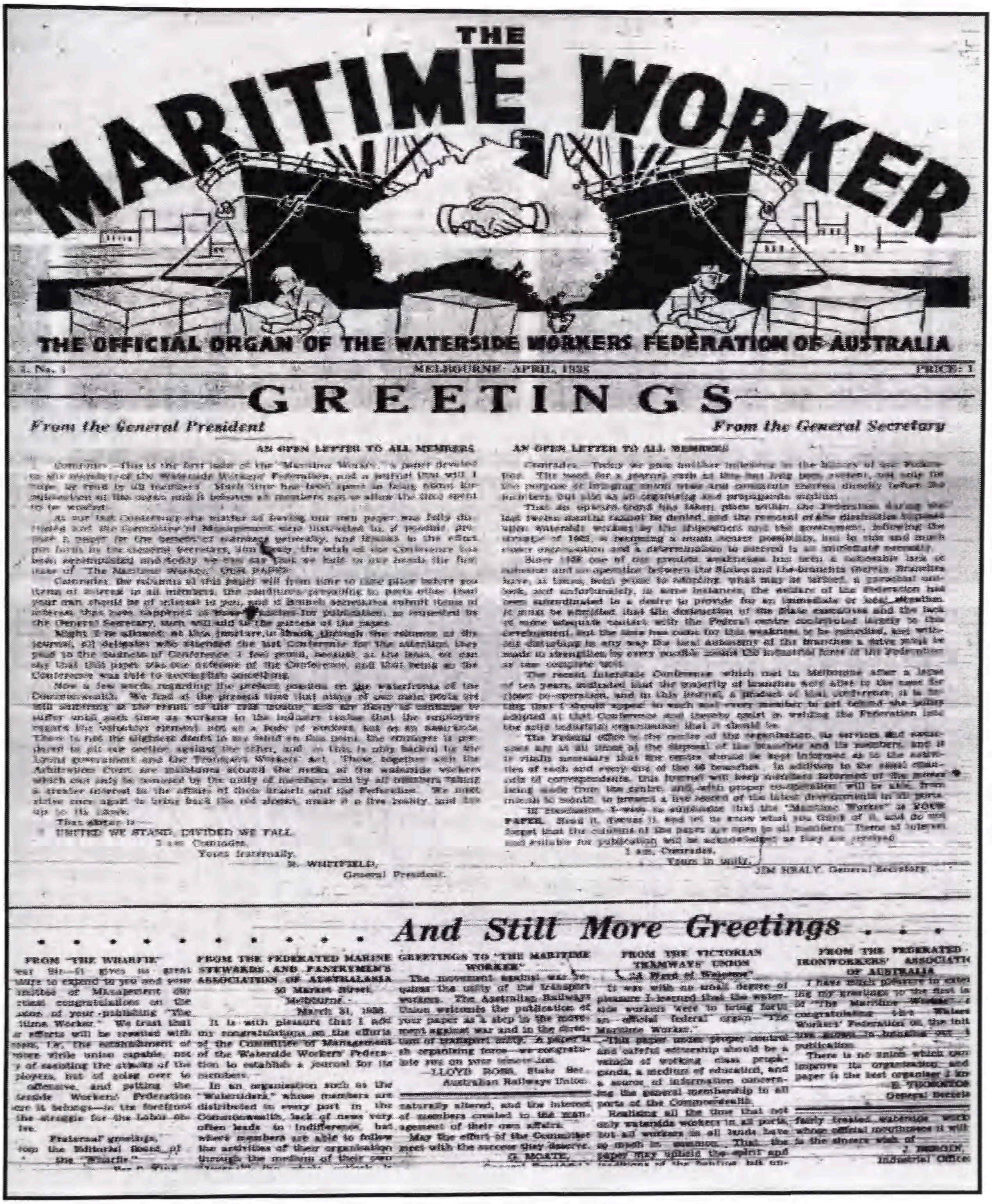
Appendix


THE
MARITIME WORKER
THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE WATERSIDE WORKERS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA
ol. 1, No. 1
MELBOURNE: APRIL, 1938
PRICE: 1

Picture 1:
Masthead from April 1938 edition of
the *Maritime Worker.*


BW 5441
THE
MARITIME WORKER
BW 5441
THREE BEARS PORRIDGE
THREE BEARS
ROLLED OATS
"EXCELSIOR"
ESSENCE OF COFFEE & CHICORY
THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE WATERSIDE WORKERS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA
Vol. 7. No. 3.
1 40-Hour Week
SYDNEY, SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 1944
Registered at the G.P.O., Sydney, for transmission by post as a newspaper.
Price 2d.

Picture 2:
Masthead from June 1944
edition of the *Maritime Worker.*



THE MARITIME WORKER

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE WATERSIDE WORKERS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

1. No. 1 MELBOURNE APRIL, 1938 PRICE: 1

GREETINGS

From the General President

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS

UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL.

I am, Comrades,
Yours fraternally,
R. WHITFIELD,
General President.

From the General Secretary

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS

I am, Comrades,
Yours in unity,
JIM HEALY, General Secretary.

And Still More Greetings . . .

FROM "THE WHARFIE"

Fraternal greetings,
from the Editorial Board of
the "Wharfie."

FROM THE FEDERATED MARINE STEWARDS AND PANTRYMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALASIA
50 Market Street,
Melbourne.
March 31, 1938.

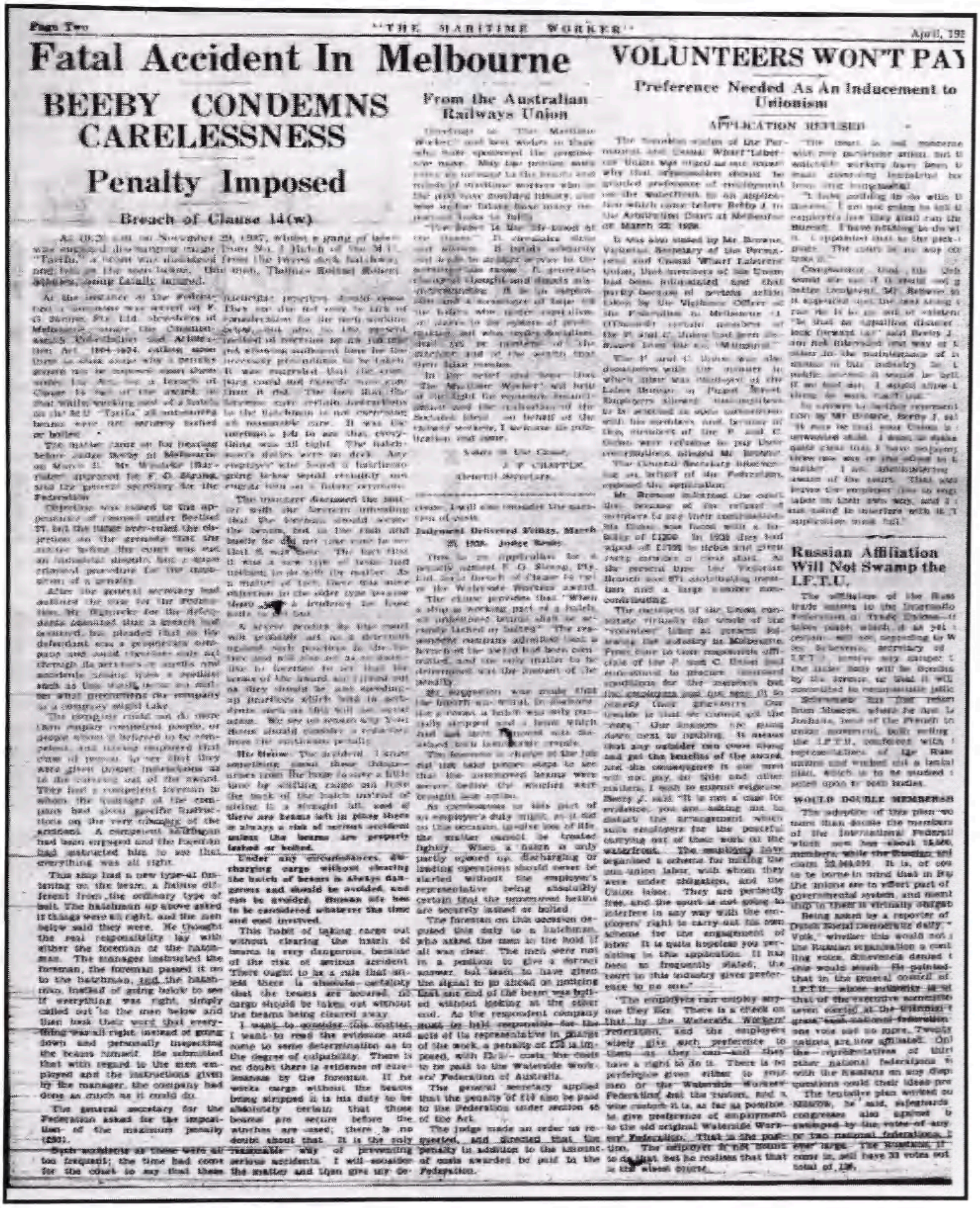
GREETINGS TO "THE MARITIME WORKER"

—LLOYD ROSS, State Sec.
Australian Railways Union.

FROM THE VICTORIAN TRAMWAYS UNION

FROM THE FEDERATED IRONWORKERS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Picture 3:
Front page from first edition - April 1938.



Page Two "THE MARITIME WORKER" April, 193

Fatal Accident In Melbourne

BEEBY CONDEMNS CARELESSNESS

Penalty Imposed

Breach of Clause 14(w)

From the Australian Railways Union

VOLUNTEERS WON'T PAY

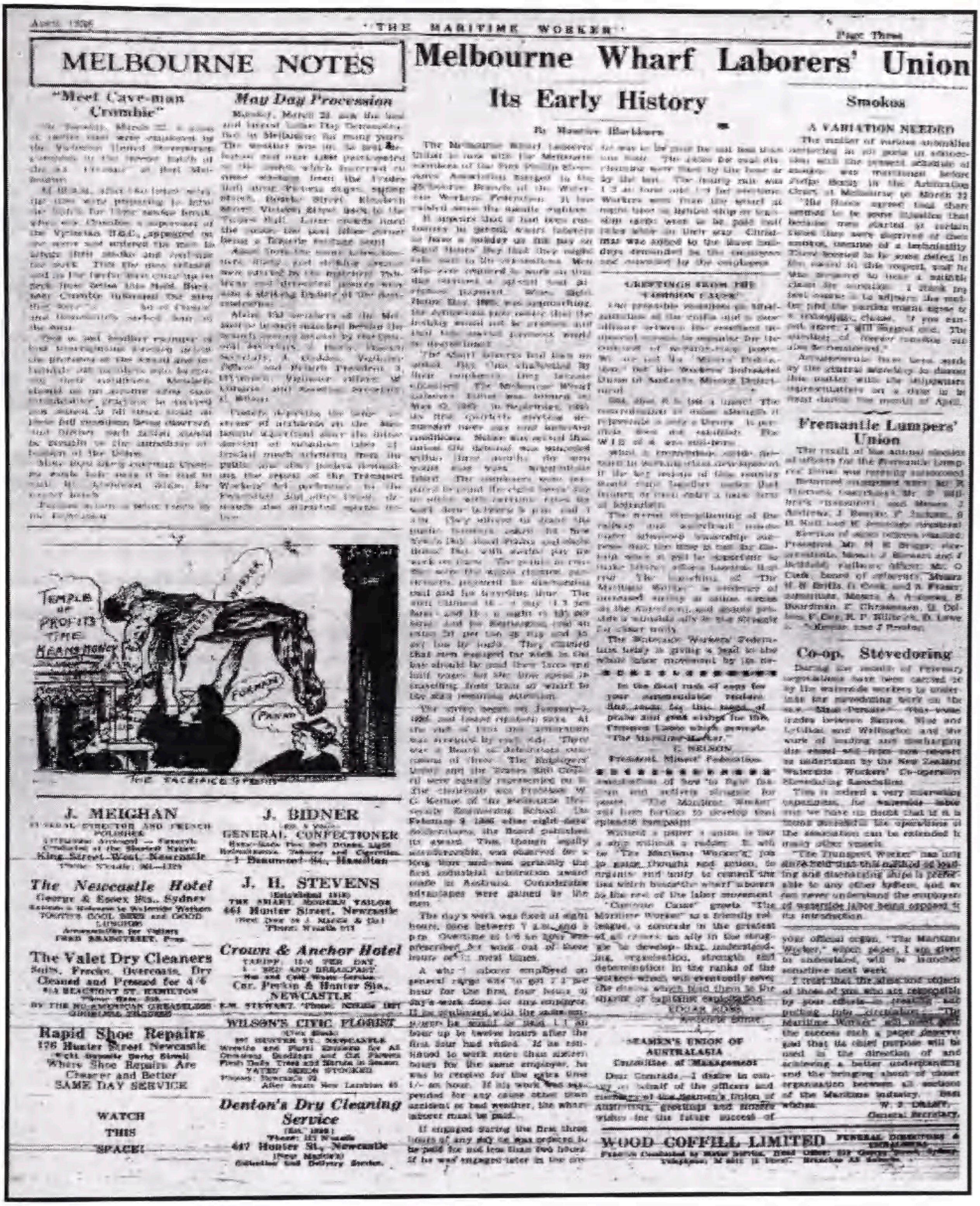
Preference Needed As An Inducement to Unionism

APPLICATION REFUSED

Russian Affiliation Will Not Swamp the I.F.T.U.

WOULD DOUBLE MEMBERSHIP

Picture 4:
Page 2 - April 1938.


April 1938 "THE MARITIME WORKER" Page Three

MELBOURNE NOTES

"Meet Cave-man Crombie"

May Day Procession

Melbourne Wharf Laborers' Union

Its Early History

Smokos

A VARIATION NEEDED

Fremantle Lumpers' Union

Co-op. Stevedoring

SEAMEN'S UNION OF AUSTRALASIA

Committee of Management

J. MEIGHAN

King Street West, Newcastle

J. BIDNER

GENERAL CONFECTIONER

The Newcastle Hotel

George & Essex Sts., Sydney

J. H. STEVENS

461 Hunter Street, Newcastle

The Valet Dry Cleaners

Suits, Frocks, Overcoats, Dry Cleaned and Pressed for 4/6

Crown & Anchor Hotel

Cnr. Perkin & Hunter Sts., NEWCASTLE

Rapid Shoe Repairs

176 Hunter Street Newcastle

Where Shoe Repairs Are Cheaper and Better

SAME DAY SERVICE

WILSON'S CIVIC FLORIST

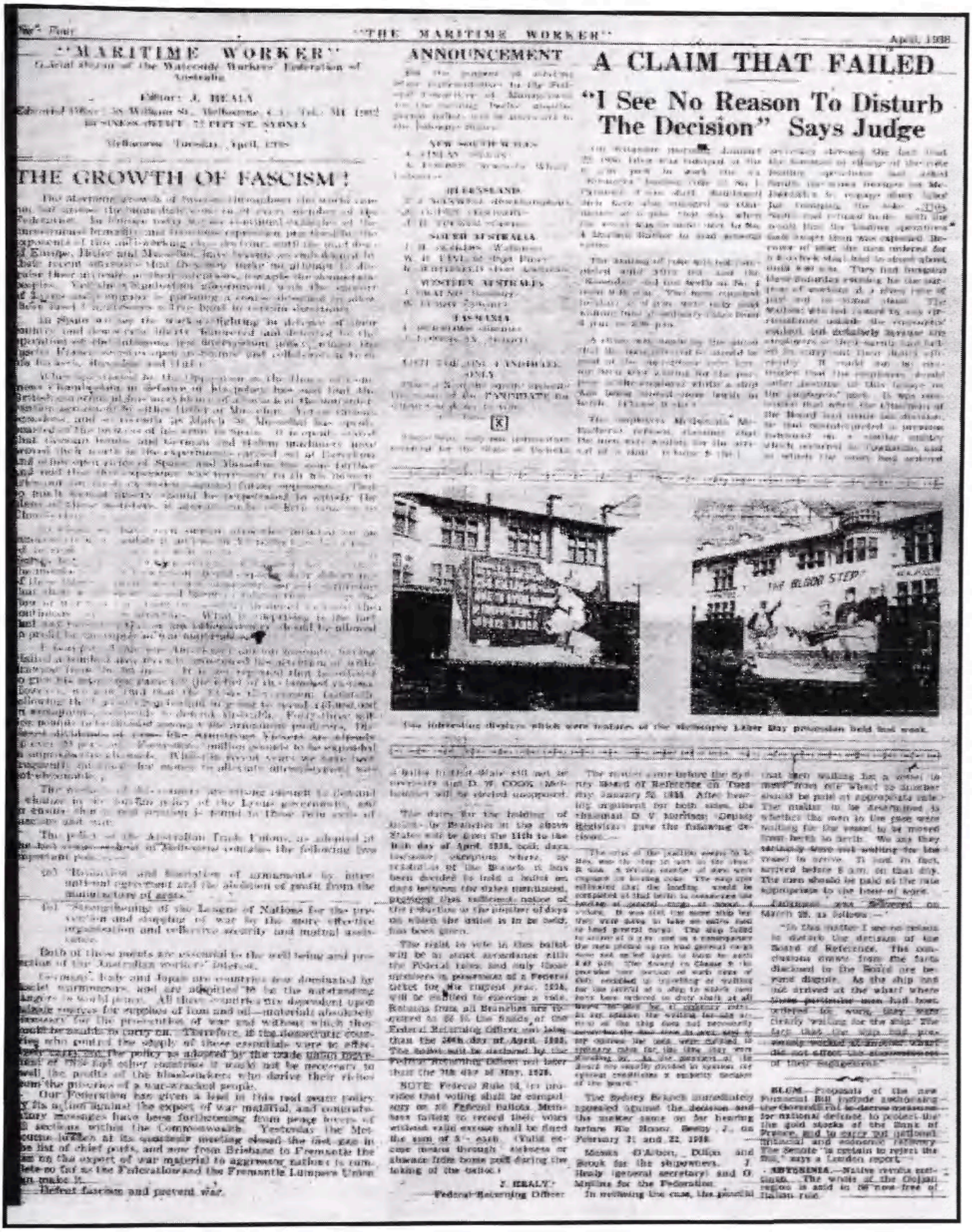
WATCH THIS SPACE!

Denton's Dry Cleaning Service

447 Hunter St., Newcastle

WOOD COFFILL LIMITED

Picture 5:
Page 3 - April 1938



"THE MARITIME WORKER" — April, 1938

"MARITIME WORKER"

Editor: J. HEALY

THE GROWTH OF FASCISM !

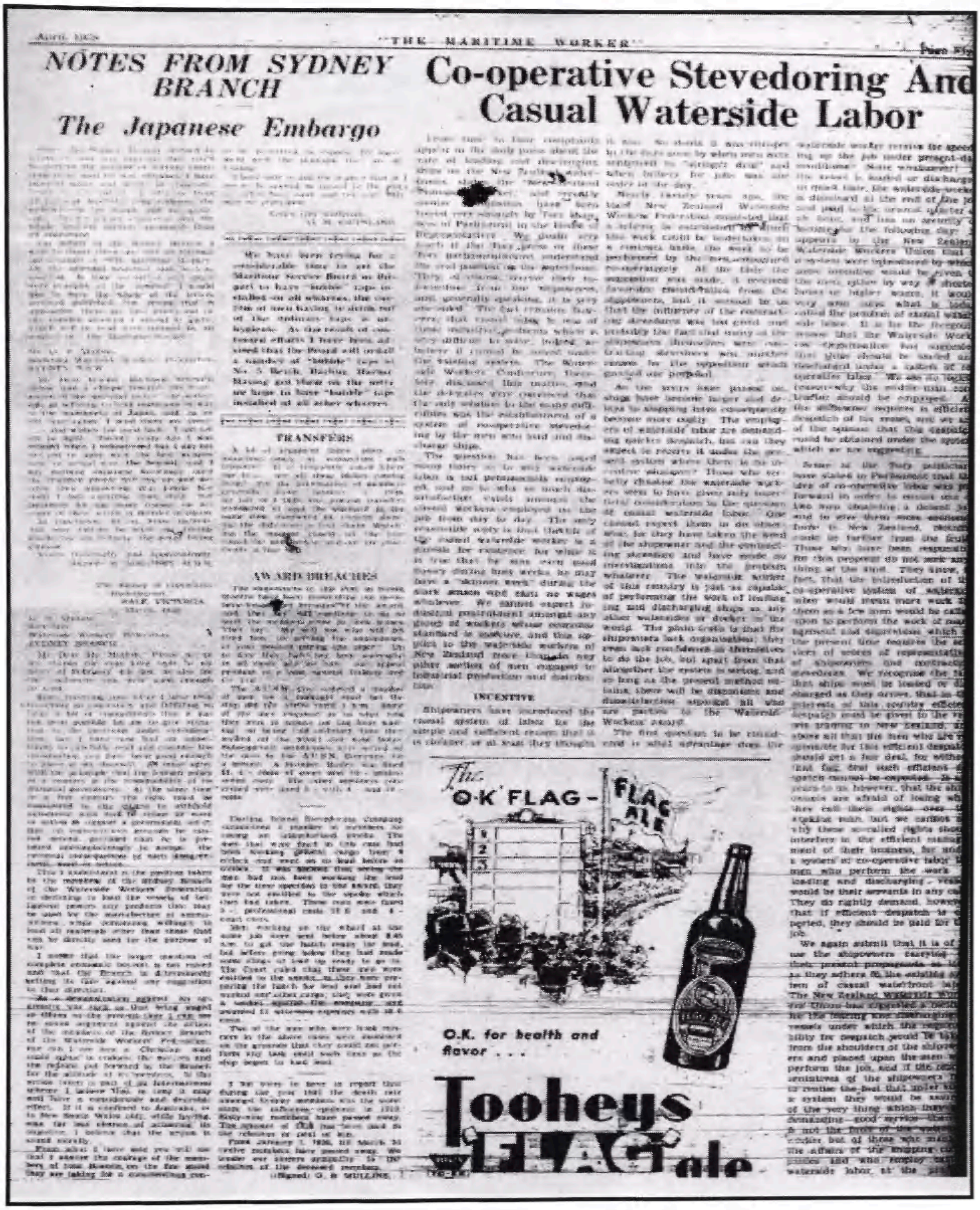
Defeat fascism and prevent war.

ANNOUNCEMENT

A CLAIM THAT FAILED

"I See No Reason To Disturb The Decision" Says Judge

Picture 6:
Page 4 - April 1938.



"THE MARITIME WORKER"

NOTES FROM SYDNEY BRANCH

The Japanese Embargo

Co-operative Stevedoring An

Casual Waterside Labor

TRANSFERS

AWARD BREACHES

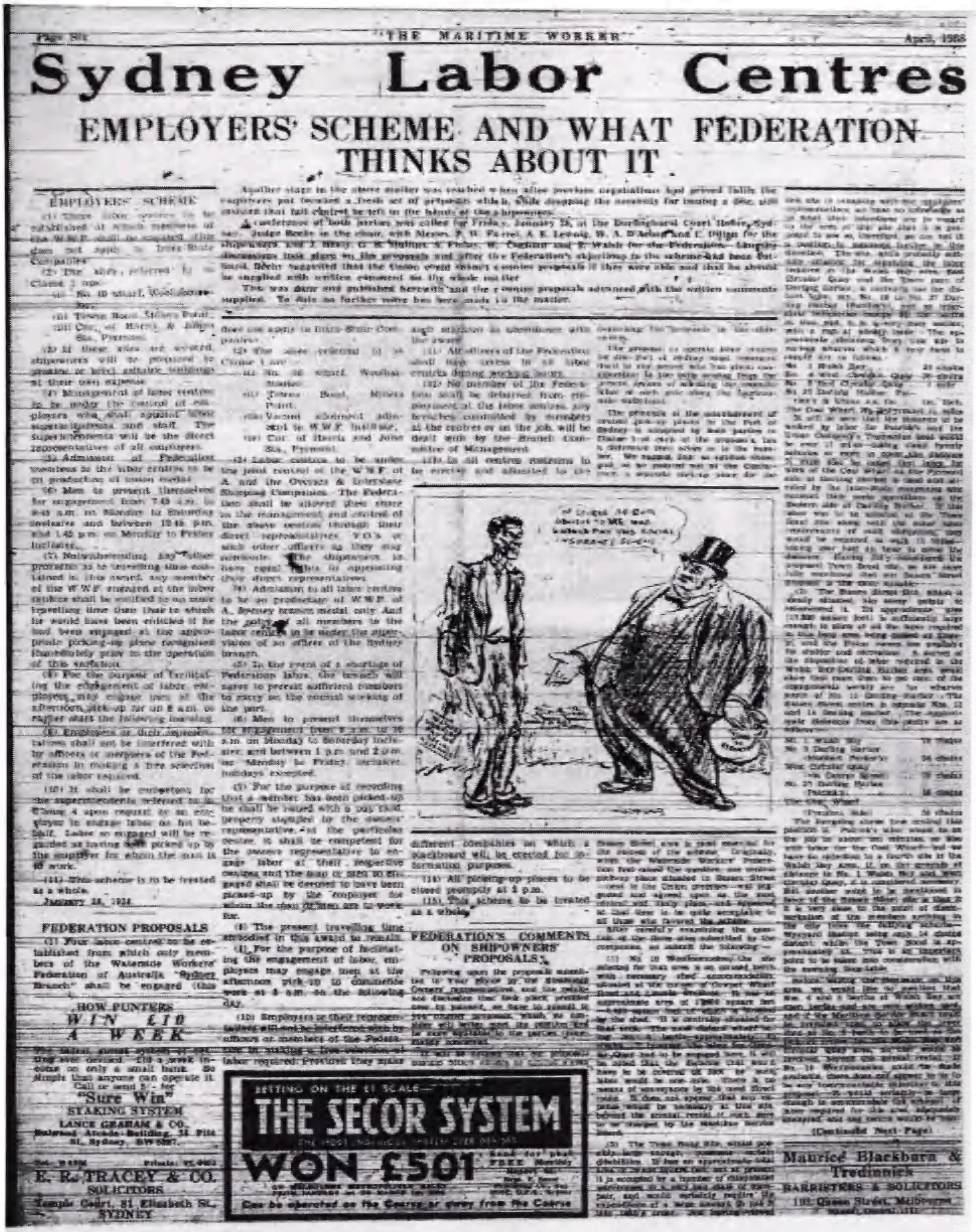
INCENTIVE

The O·K FLAG-ALE

O.K. for health and flavor . . .

Tooheys FLAG ale

Picture 7:
Page 5 - April 1938.



Sydney Labor Centres

EMPLOYERS' SCHEME AND WHAT FEDERATION THINKS ABOUT IT

EMPLOYERS' SCHEME

FEDERATION PROPOSALS

FEDERATION'S COMMENTS ON SHIPOWNERS' PROPOSALS

(Continued Next Page)

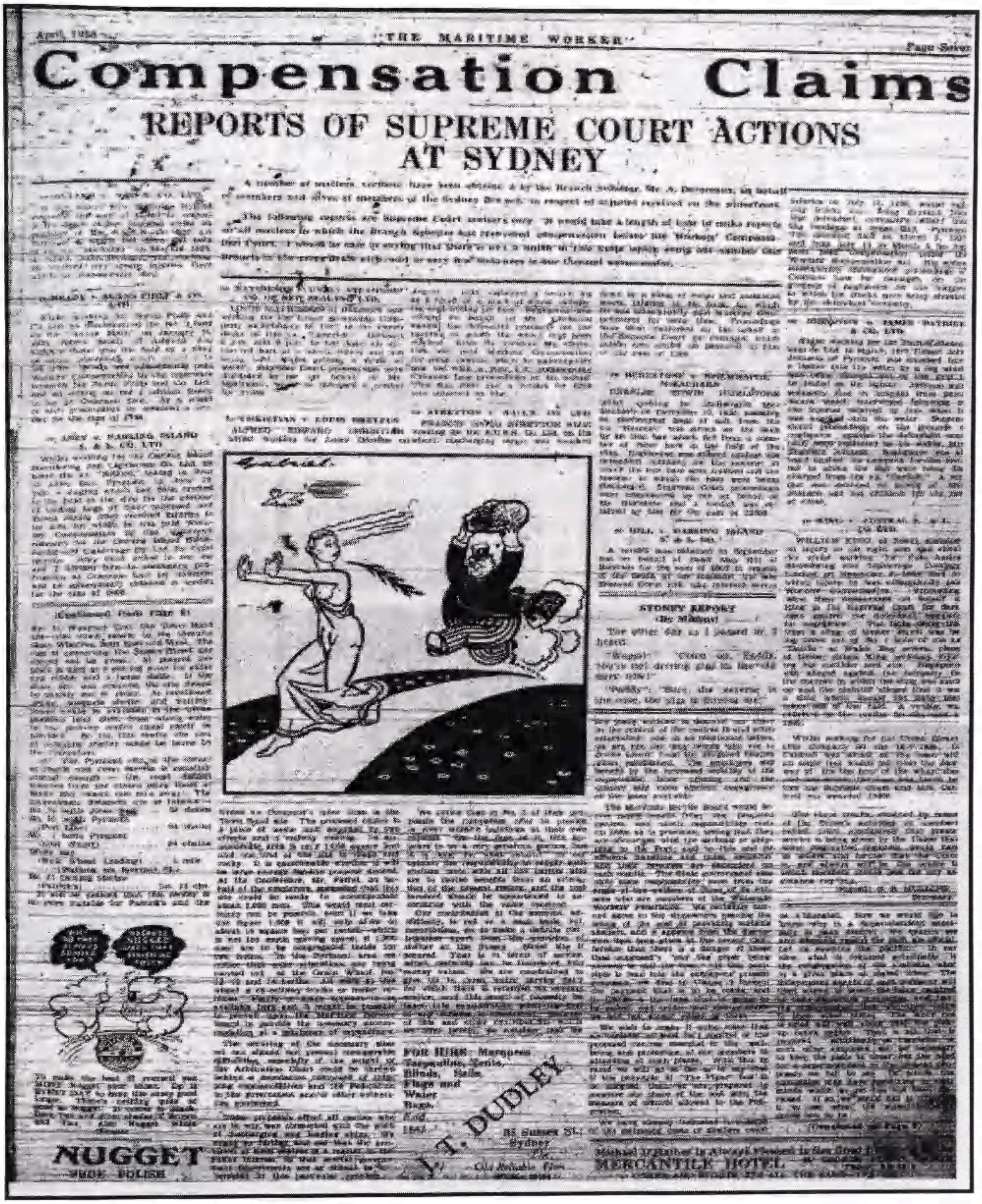
HOW PUNTERS
WIN £10
A WEEK
"Sure Win"
STAKING SYSTEM
LANCE GRAHAM & CO.

BETTING ON THE £1 SCALE—
THE SECOR SYSTEM
WON £501
Can be operated on the Course or away from the Course

E. R. TRACEY & CO.
SOLICITORS
Temple Court, 81 Elizabeth St.,
SYDNEY

Maurice Blackburn &
Tredinnick
BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS
101 Queen Street, Melbourne

Picture 8:
Page 6 - April 1938



April, 1938 "THE MARITIME WORKER" Page Seven

Compensation Claims

REPORTS OF SUPREME COURT ACTIONS AT SYDNEY

Gabriel.

FOR HIRE: Marquees, Tarpaulins, Tents, Blinds, Sails, Flags and Water Bags.

J. T. DUDLEY

85 Sussex St., Sydney

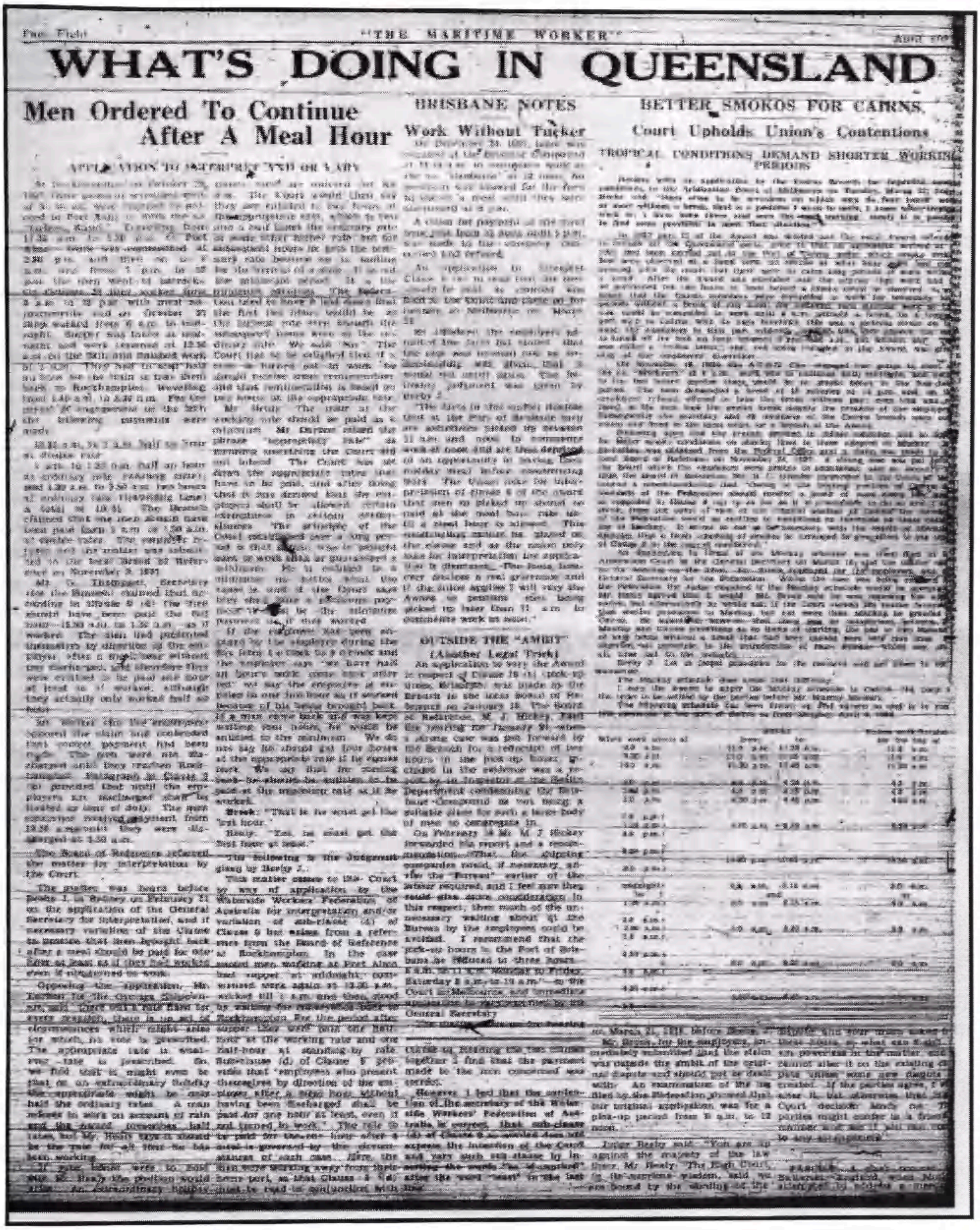
Old Reliable Firm

MERCANTILE HOTEL

NUGGET

SHOE POLISH

Picture 9:
Page 7 - April 1938



"THE MARITIME WORKER"

WHAT'S DOING IN QUEENSLAND

Men Ordered To Continue After A Meal Hour

BRISBANE NOTES

Work Without Tucker

OUTSIDE THE "AMBIT"

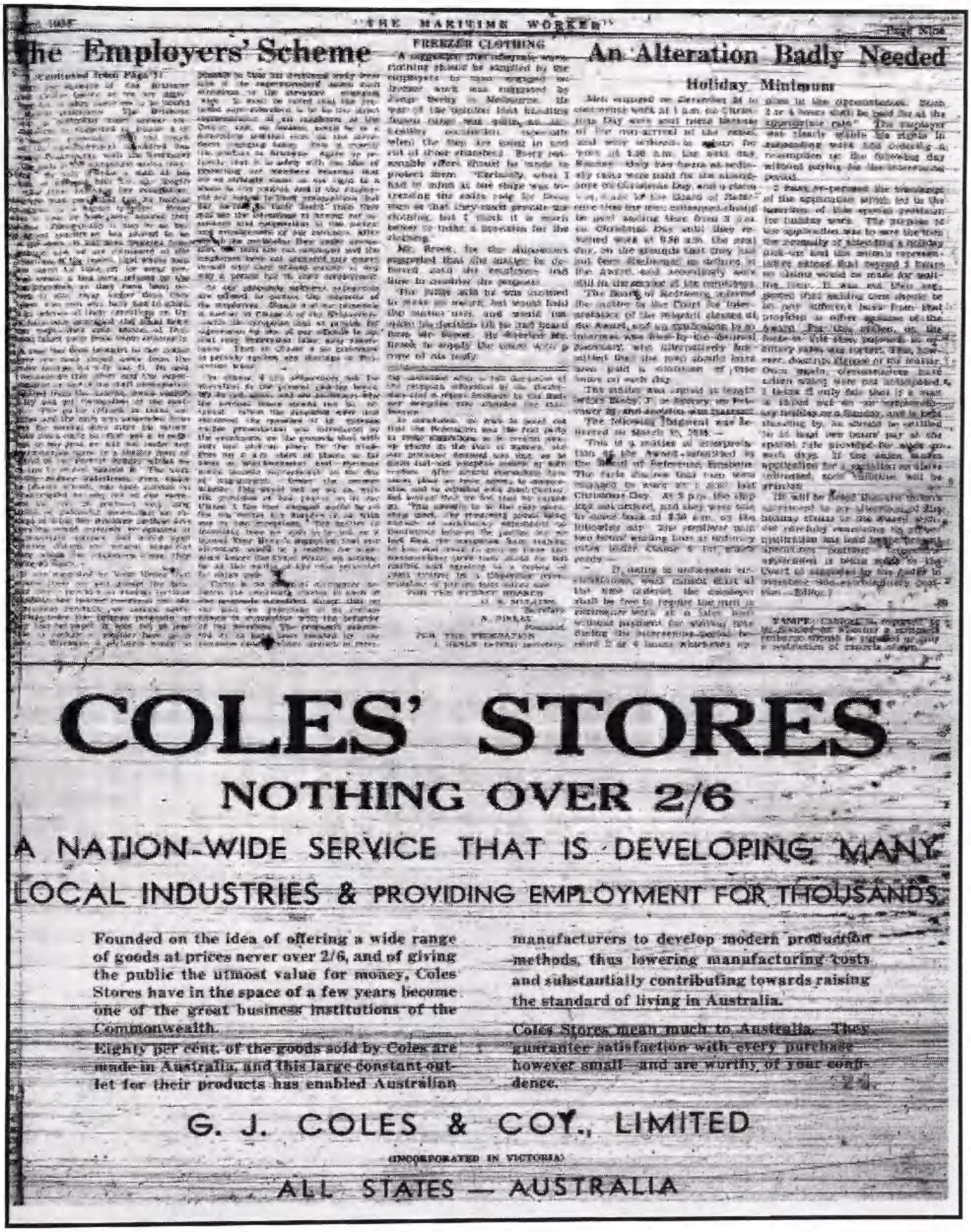
(Another Legal Trick)

BETTER SMOKOS FOR CAIRNS

Court Upholds Union's Contentions

TROPICAL CONDITIONS DEMAND SHORTER WORKING PERIODS

Picture 10:
Page 8 - April 1938



"THE MARITIME WORKER" Page Nine

he Employers' Scheme

Continued from Page 1)

FREEZER CLOTHING

An Alteration Badly Needed

Holiday Minimum

COLES' STORES

NOTHING OVER 2/6

A NATION-WIDE SERVICE THAT IS DEVELOPING MANY LOCAL INDUSTRIES & PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT FOR THOUSANDS

Founded on the idea of offering a wide range of goods at prices never over 2/6, and of giving the public the utmost value for money, Coles Stores have in the space of a few years become one of the great business institutions of the Commonwealth.

Eighty per cent. of the goods sold by Coles are made in Australia, and this large constant outlet for their products has enabled Australian manufacturers to develop modern production methods, thus lowering manufacturing costs and substantially contributing towards raising the standard of living in Australia.

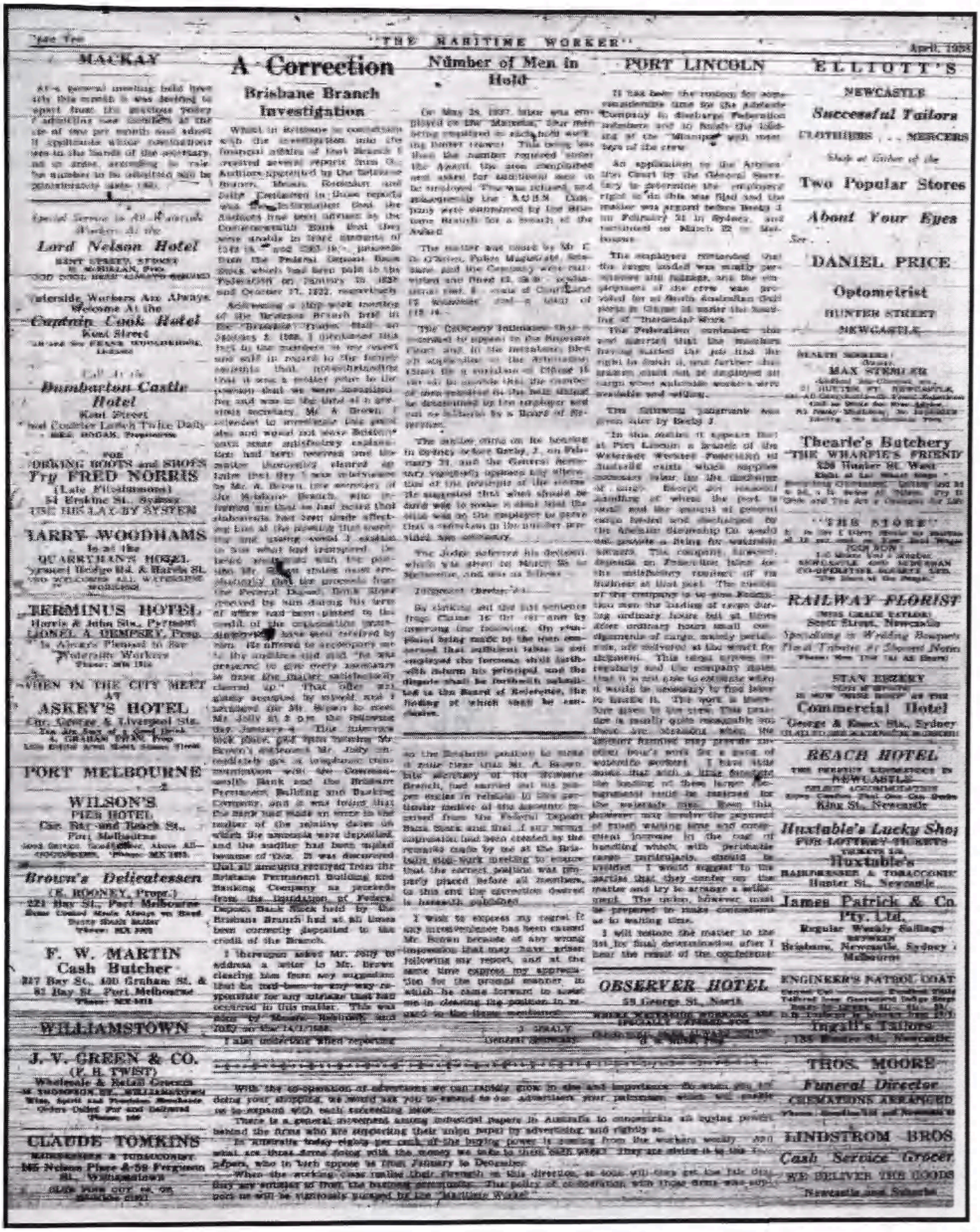
Coles Stores mean much to Australia. They guarantee satisfaction with every purchase however small and are worthy of your confidence.

G. J. COLES & COY., LIMITED

(INCORPORATED IN VICTORIA)

ALL STATES — AUSTRALIA

Picture 11:
Page 9 - April 1938



"THE MARITIME WORKER"

April, 1938

MACKAY

Lord Nelson Hotel

Kent Street, Sydney

Waterside Workers Are Always Welcome At the

Captain Cook Hotel

Kent Street

Dumbarton Castle Hotel

Kent Street

Try FRED NORRIS

(Late Fitzsimmons)

54 Erskine St., Sydney

USE HIS LAY-BY SYSTEM

HARRY WOODHAMS

Is at the

QUARRYMAN'S HOTEL

Pyrmont Bridge Rd. & Harris St.

TERMINUS HOTEL

Harris & John Sts., Pyrmont

LIONEL A. DEMPSEY, Prop.

Is Always Pleased to See Waterside Workers

WHEN IN THE CITY MEET AT

ASKEY'S HOTEL

Cnr. George & Liverpool Sts.

PORT MELBOURNE

WILSON'S

PIER HOTEL

Cnr. Bay and Beach Sts.,

Port Melbourne

Brown's Delicatessen

(E. ROONEY, Propr.)

221 Bay St., Port Melbourne

F. W. MARTIN

Cash Butcher

317 Bay St., 180 Graham St. & 81 Bay St., Port Melbourne

WILLIAMSTOWN

J. V. GREEN & CO.

(F. H. TWIST)

Wholesale & Retail Grocers

CLAUDE TOMKINS

HAIRDRESSER & TOBACCONIST

165 Nelson Place & 58 Ferguson St., Williamstown

A Correction

Brisbane Branch Investigation

Number of Men in Hold

PORT LINCOLN

OBSERVER HOTEL

58 George St., North

ELLIOTT'S

NEWCASTLE

Successful Tailors

CLOTHIERS . . . MERCERS

Two Popular Stores

About Your Eyes

See . .

DANIEL PRICE

Optometrist

HUNTER STREET

NEWCASTLE

Thearle's Butchery

"THE WHARFIE'S FRIEND"

"THE STORE"

RAILWAY FLORIST

Scott Street, Newcastle

Commercial Hotel

George & Essex Sts., Sydney

BEACH HOTEL

NEWCASTLE

King St., Newcastle

Huxtable's Lucky Shop

Huxtable's

HAIRDRESSER & TOBACCONIST

Hunter St., Newcastle

James Patrick & Co.

Pty. Ltd.

Regular Weekly Sailings

Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, Melbourne

ENGINEER'S PATROL COAT

Ingall's Tailors

THOS. MOORE

Funeral Director

CREMATIONS ARRANGED

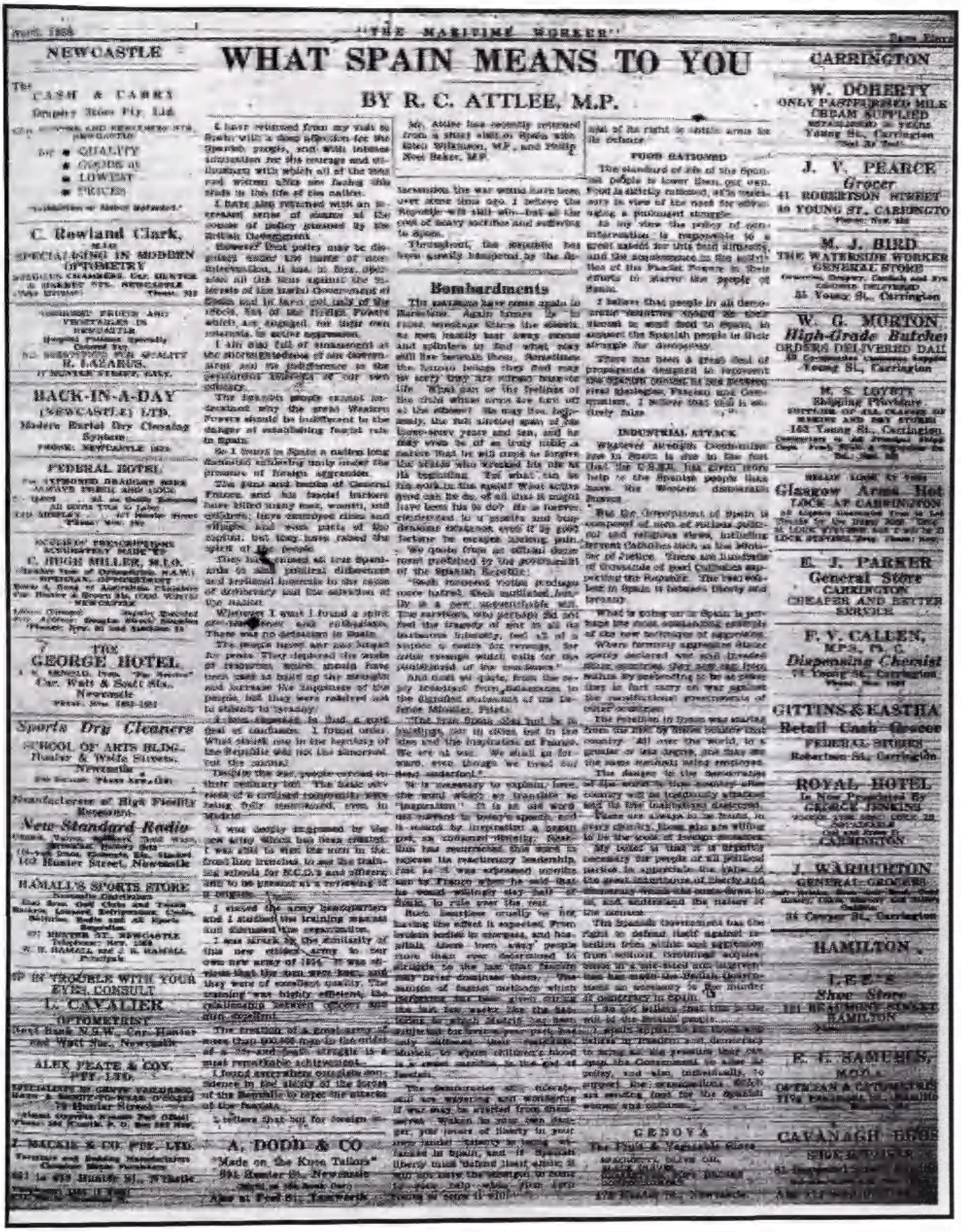
LINDSTROM BROS

Cash Service Grocer

WE DELIVER THE GOODS

Newcastle and Suburbs

Picture 12:
Page 10 - April 1938



"THE MARITIME WORKER"

WHAT SPAIN MEANS TO YOU

BY R. C. ATTLEE, M.P.

Mr. Attlee has recently returned from a short visit to Spain with Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., and Philip Noel Baker, M.P.

Bombardments

FOOD RATIONED

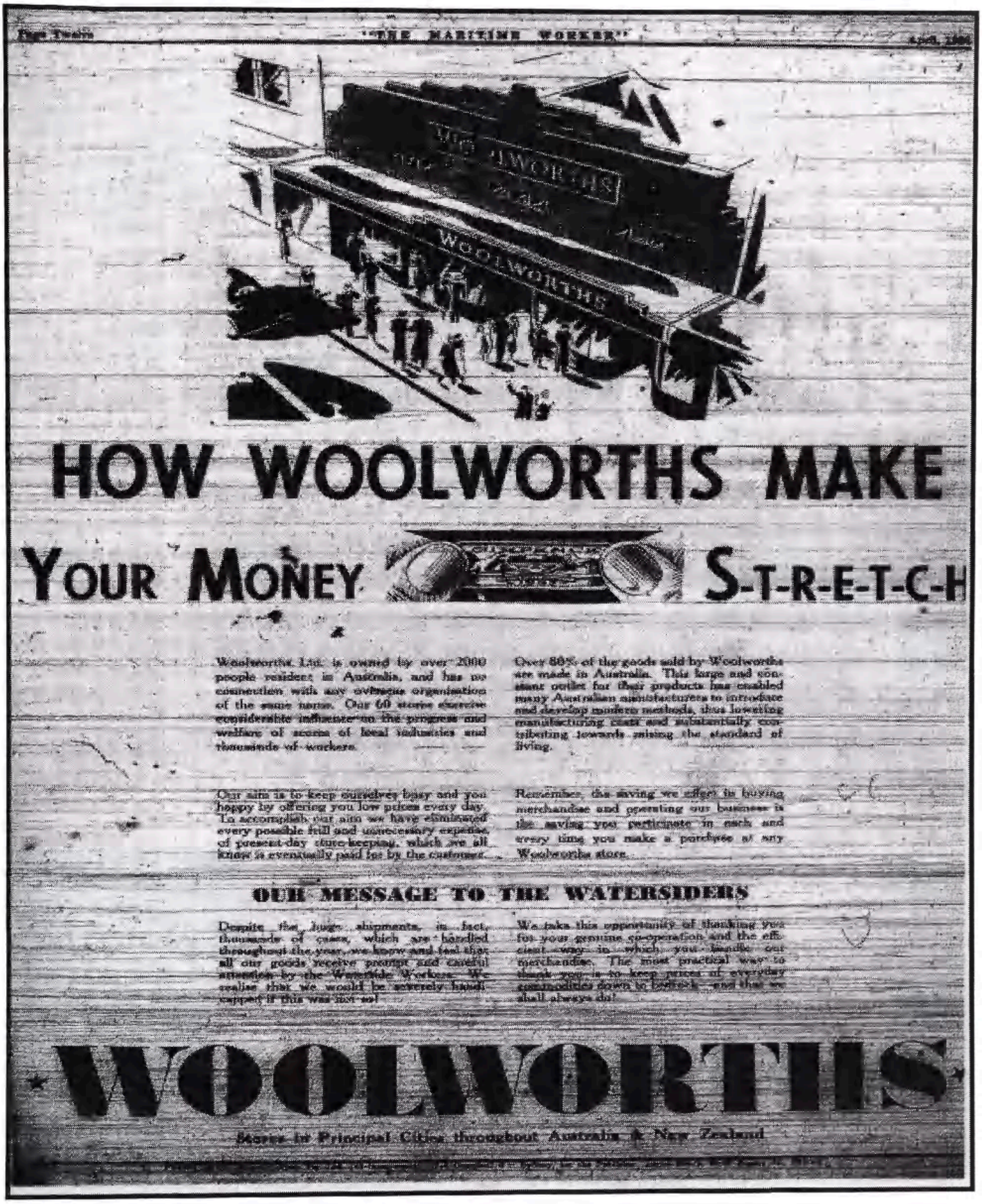
INDUSTRIAL ATTACK

NEWCASTLE

CARRINGTON

HAMILTON

Picture 13:
Page 11 - April 1938


WOOLWORTHS
WOOLWORTHS

Page Twelve "THE MARITIME WORKER" April, 1938

HOW WOOLWORTHS MAKE YOUR MONEY S-T-R-E-T-C-H

Woolworths Ltd. is owned by over 2000 people resident in Australia, and has no connection with any overseas organisation of the same name. Our 60 stores exercise considerable influence on the progress and welfare of scores of local industries and thousands of workers.

Over 80% of the goods sold by Woolworths are made in Australia. This large and constant outlet for their products has enabled many Australian manufacturers to introduce and develop modern methods, thus lowering manufacturing costs and substantially contributing towards raising the standard of living.

Our aim is to keep ourselves busy and you happy by offering you low prices every day. To accomplish our aim we have eliminated every possible frill and unnecessary expense of present-day store-keeping, which we all know is eventually paid for by the customer.

Remember, the saving we effect in buying merchandise and operating our business is the saving you participate in each and every time you make a purchase at any Woolworths store.

OUR MESSAGE TO THE WATERSIDERS

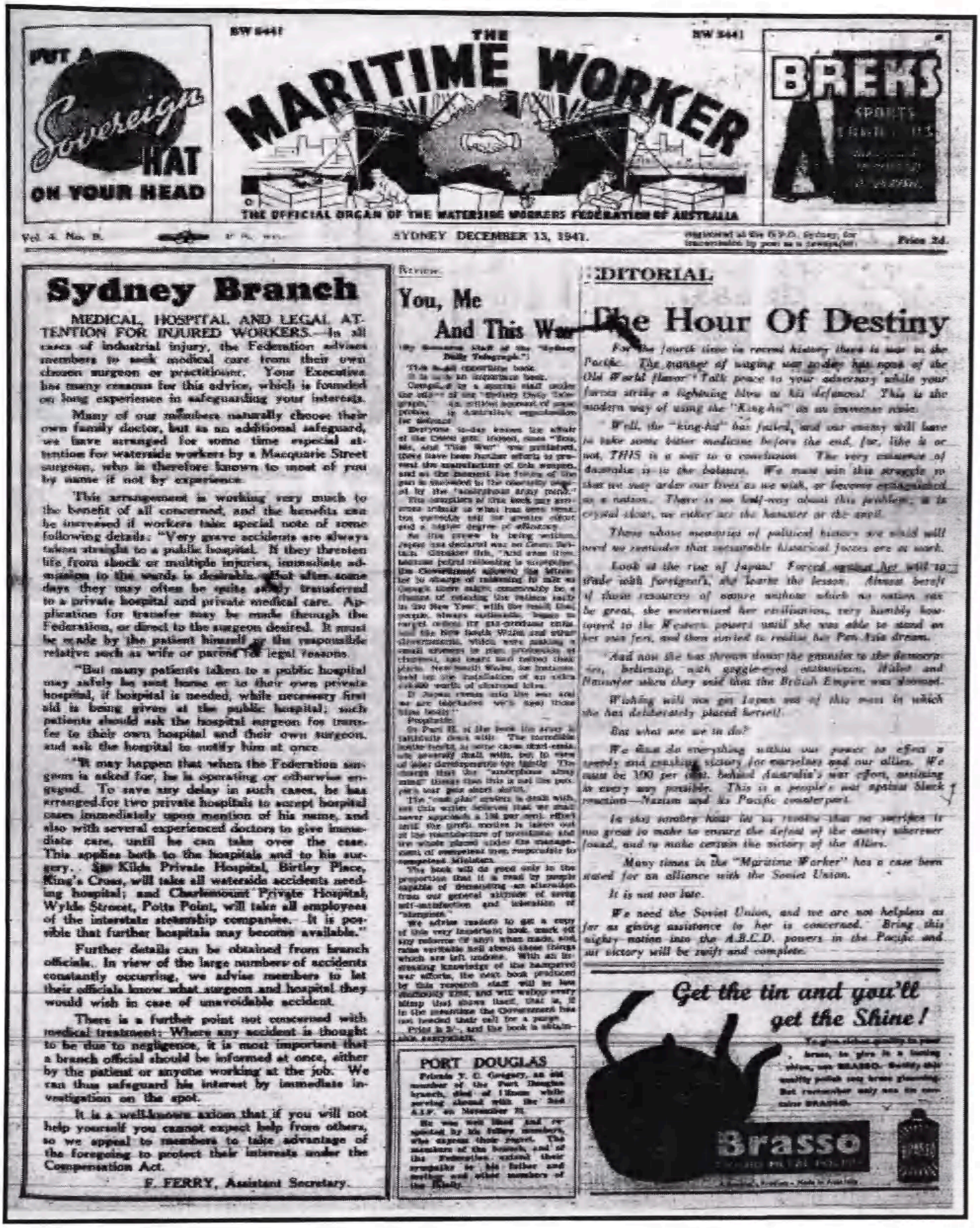
Despite the huge shipments, in fact, thousands of cases, which are handled throughout the year, we know and feel that all our goods receive prompt and careful attention by the Waterside Workers. We realise that we would be severely handicapped if this was not so!

We take this opportunity of thanking you for your genuine co-operation and the efficient way in which you handle our merchandise. The most practical way to thank you is to keep prices of everyday commodities down to bedrock—and that we shall always do!

★ WOOLWORTHS ★

Stores in Principal Cities throughout Australia & New Zealand

Picture 14:
Page 12 - April 1938.


PUT A Sovereign HAT ON YOUR HEAD

BW 8441
THE MARITIME WORKER
BW 8441
THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE WATERSIDE WORKERS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA
Vol. 4. No. 8.
SYDNEY DECEMBER 13, 1941.
Registered at the G.P.O., Sydney, for transmission by post as a newspaper.
Price 2d.

BREKS SPORTS

Sydney Branch

MEDICAL, HOSPITAL AND LEGAL ATTENTION FOR INJURED WORKERS.—In all cases of industrial injury, the Federation advises members to seek medical care from their own chosen surgeon or practitioner. Your Executive has many reasons for this advice, which is founded on long experience in safeguarding your interests.

Many of our members naturally choose their own family doctor, but as an additional safeguard, we have arranged for some time special attention for waterside workers by a Macquarie Street surgeon, who is therefore known to most of you by name if not by experience.

This arrangement is working very much to the benefit of all concerned, and the benefits can be increased if workers take special note of the following details: "Very grave accidents are always taken straight to a public hospital. If they threaten life from shock or multiple injuries, immediate admission to the wards is desirable. But after some days they may often be quite safely transferred to a private hospital and private medical care. Application for transfer may be made through the Federation, or direct to the surgeon desired. It must be made by the patient himself or the responsible relative such as wife or parent for legal reasons.

"But many patients taken to a public hospital may safely be sent home or to their own private hospital, if hospital is needed, while necessary first aid is being given at the public hospital; such patients should ask the hospital surgeon for transfer to their own hospital and their own surgeon, and ask the hospital to notify him at once.

"It may happen that when the Federation surgeon is asked for, he is operating or otherwise engaged. To save any delay in such cases, he has arranged for two private hospitals to accept hospital cases immediately upon mention of his name, and also with several experienced doctors to give immediate care, until he can take over the case. This applies both to the hospitals and to his surgery. St. Kilda Private Hospital, Birtley Place, King's Cross, will take all waterside accidents needing hospital; and Charlemount Private Hospital, Wylde Street, Potts Point, will take all employees of the interstate steamship companies. It is possible that further hospitals may become available."

Further details can be obtained from branch officials. In view of the large numbers of accidents constantly occurring, we advise members to let their officials know what surgeon and hospital they would wish in case of unavoidable accident.

There is a further point not concerned with medical treatment: Where any accident is thought to be due to negligence, it is most important that a branch official should be informed at once, either by the patient or anyone working at the job. We can thus safeguard his interest by immediate investigation on the spot.

It is a well-known axiom that if you will not help yourself you cannot expect help from others, so we appeal to members to take advantage of the foregoing to protect their interests under the Compensation Act.

F. FERRY, Assistant Secretary.

Review.

You, Me And This War

(By Research Staff of the "Sydney Daily Telegraph.")

This is an opportune book.

It is also an important book.

Compiled by a special staff under the editor of the "Sydney Daily Telegraph," an critical account of [illegible] in Australia's [illegible] for defence.

Everyone to-day knows [illegible] "You, Me, and This War" was published, [illegible] [illegible] "amorphous army mind."

[illegible]

As this review is being written, Japan has declared war on Great Britain. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] "amorphous army mind" [illegible]

The "cost plus" system is dealt with, [illegible] 100 per cent. effort [illegible] competent Ministers.

The book will do good only in the proportion that it is read by people capable of demanding an alteration from our general attitude of smug self-satisfaction and toleration of "bumbling."

We advise readers to get a copy of this very important book [illegible]

Price is 2/-, and the book is obtainable everywhere.

PORT DOUGLAS

Private Y. C. Gregory, an old member of the Port Douglas branch, died of illness while serving abroad with the 2nd A.I.F. on November 21.

He was well liked and respected by his fellow members, who express their regret. The members of the branch, and of the Federation, extend their sympathy to his father and mother and other members of the family.

EDITORIAL

The Hour Of Destiny

For the fourth time in recent history there is war in the Pacific. The manner of waging war to-day has none of the Old World flavor. Talk peace to your adversary while your forces strike a lightning blow at his defences! This is the modern way of using the "King-hit" on an immense scale.

Well, the "king-hit" has failed, and our enemy will have to take some bitter medicine before the end, for, like it or not, THIS is a war to a conclusion. The very existence of Australia is in the balance. We must win this struggle so that we may order our lives as we wish, or become extinguished as a nation. There is no half-way about this problem; it is crystal clear, we either are the hammer or the anvil.

Those whose memories of political history are vivid will need no reminder that inexorable historical forces are at work.

Look at the rise of Japan! Forced against her will to trade with foreigners, she learnt the lesson. Almost bereft of those resources of nature without which no nation can be great, she westernised her civilisation, very humbly kow-towed to the Western powers until she was able to stand on her own feet, and then started to realise her Pan-Asia dream.

And now she has thrown down the gauntlet to the democracies, believing, with goggle-eyed enthusiasm, Hitler and Haushofer when they said that the British Empire was doomed.

Wishing will not get Japan out of this mess in which she has deliberately placed herself.

But what are we to do?

We must do everything within our power to effect a speedy and crushing victory for ourselves and our allies. We must be 100 per cent. behind Australia's war effort, assisting in every way possible. This is a people's war against black reaction—Nazism and its Pacific counterpart.

In this sombre hour let us realise that no sacrifice is too great to make to ensure the defeat of the enemy wherever found, and to make certain the victory of the Allies.

Many times in the "Maritime Worker" has a case been stated for an alliance with the Soviet Union.

It is not too late.

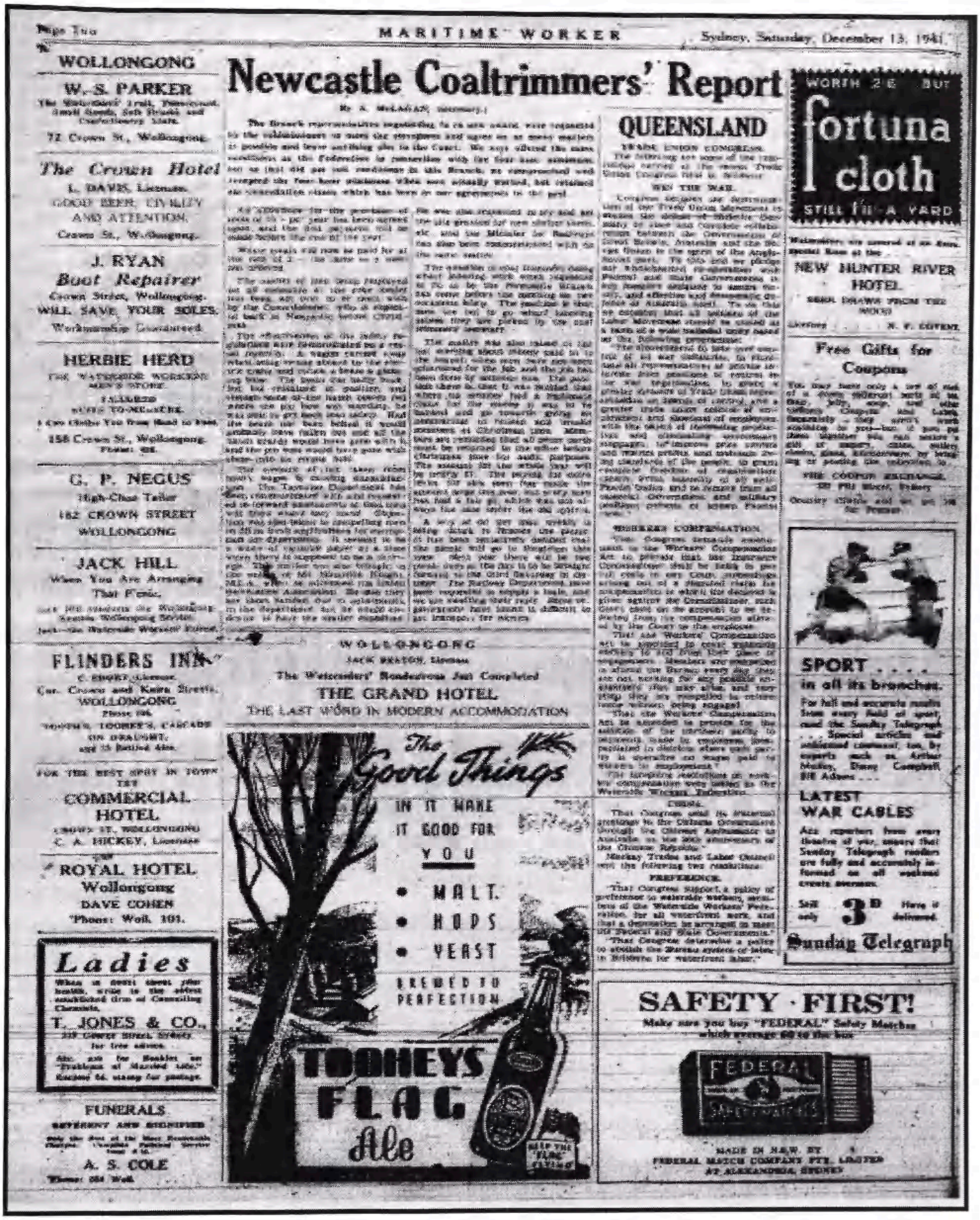
We need the Soviet Union, and we are not helpless as far as giving assistance to her is concerned. Bring this mighty nation into the A.B.C.D. powers in the Pacific and our victory will be swift and complete.

Get the tin and you'll get the Shine!

[illegible] brass, to give it a lasting shine, use BRASSO. [illegible] But remember only one tin contains BRASSO.

Brasso

Picture 15:
Page 1 - December 1941.



Page Two

MARITIME WORKER

Sydney, Saturday, December 13, 1941.

WOLLONGONG

W. S. PARKER

72 Crown St., Wollongong.

The Crown Hotel

L. DAVIS, Licensee.

GOOD BEER, CIVILITY AND ATTENTION.

Crown St., Wollongong.

J. RYAN

Boot Repairer

Crown Street, Wollongong.

WILL SAVE YOUR SOLES.

Workmanship Guaranteed.

HERBIE HERD

158 Crown St., Wollongong.

G. P. NEGUS

High-Class Tailor

182 CROWN STREET

WOLLONGONG

JACK HILL

When You Are Arranging

That Picnic.

FLINDERS INN

Cnr. Crown and Keira Streets,

WOLLONGONG

TOOTH'S, TOOHEY'S, CASCADE

ON DRAUGHT.

FOR THE BEST SPOT IN TOWN

TRY

COMMERCIAL HOTEL

CROWN ST., WOLLONGONG

C. A. HICKEY, Licensee

ROYAL HOTEL

Wollongong

DAVE COHEN

'Phone: Woll. 101.

Ladies

T. JONES & CO.,

for free advice.

FUNERALS

REVERENT AND DIGNIFIED

A. S. COLE

Newcastle Coaltrimmers' Report

QUEENSLAND

TRADE UNION CONGRESS.

WIN THE WAR.

WORKERS COMPENSATION.

CHINA.

PREFERENCE.

WORTH 2/6 BUT

fortuna cloth

STILL [illegible] A YARD

NEW HUNTER RIVER HOTEL

BEER DRAWN FROM THE WOOD

Free Gifts for Coupons

THE COUPON EXCHANGE

WOLLONGONG

The Watersiders' Rendezvous Just Completed

THE GRAND HOTEL

THE LAST WORD IN MODERN ACCOMMODATION

The Good Things IN IT MAKE IT GOOD FOR YOU

- MALT.
- HOPS
- YEAST

BREWED TO PERFECTION

TOOHEYS FLAG Ale

SPORT . . . .

in all its branches.

For full and accurate results from every field of sport, read the Sunday Telegraph . . . Special articles and unbiassed comment, too, by experts such as Arthur Mailey, Danny Campbell, Bill Adams . . .

LATEST WAR CABLES

Still only 3D Have it delivered.

Sunday Telegraph

SAFETY · FIRST!

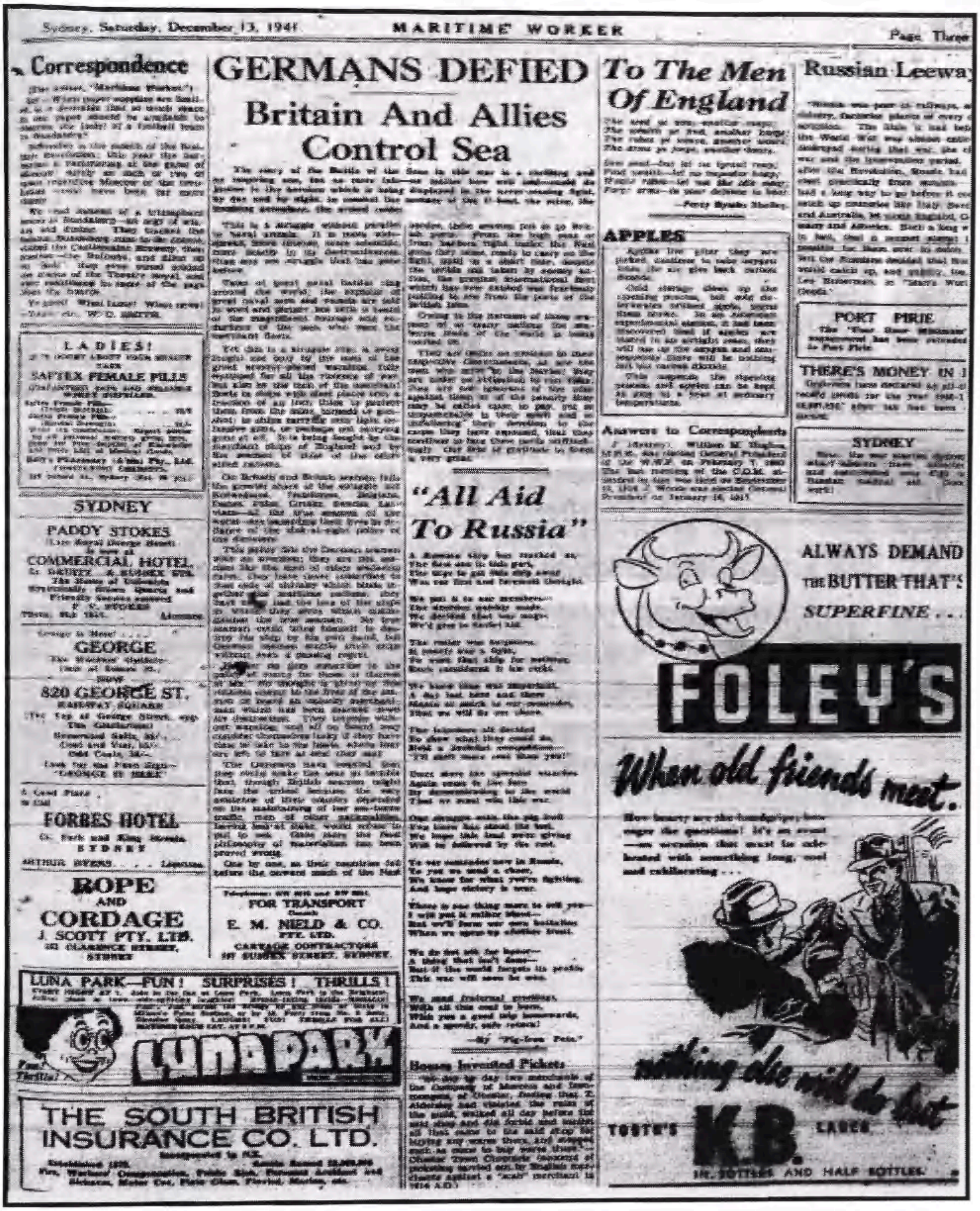
Make sure you buy "FEDERAL" Safety Matches which average 60 to the box

MADE IN N.S.W. BY

FEDERAL MATCH COMPANY PTY. LIMITED

AT ALEXANDRIA, SYDNEY

Picture 16:
Page 2 - December 1941



Sydney, Saturday, December 13, 1941 MARITIME WORKER Page Three

Correspondence

LADIES!

SAFTEX FEMALE PILLS

SYDNEY

PADDY STOKES

COMMERCIAL HOTEL

GEORGE

820 GEORGE ST.

FORBES HOTEL

ROPE AND CORDAGE

J. SCOTT PTY. LTD.

GERMANS DEFIED

Britain And Allies Control Sea

FOR TRANSPORT

E. M. NIELD & CO.

PTY. LTD.

CARTAGE CONTRACTORS

To The Men Of England

—Percy Bysshe Shelley.

APPLES

Answers to Correspondents

"All Aid To Russia"

Bosses Invented Pickets

Russian Leewa

PORT PIRIE

THERE'S MONEY IN

SYDNEY

LUNA PARK—FUN! SURPRISES! THRILLS!

LUNA PARK

THE SOUTH BRITISH INSURANCE CO. LTD.

ALWAYS DEMAND THE BUTTER THAT'

SUPERFINE . . .

FOLEY'S

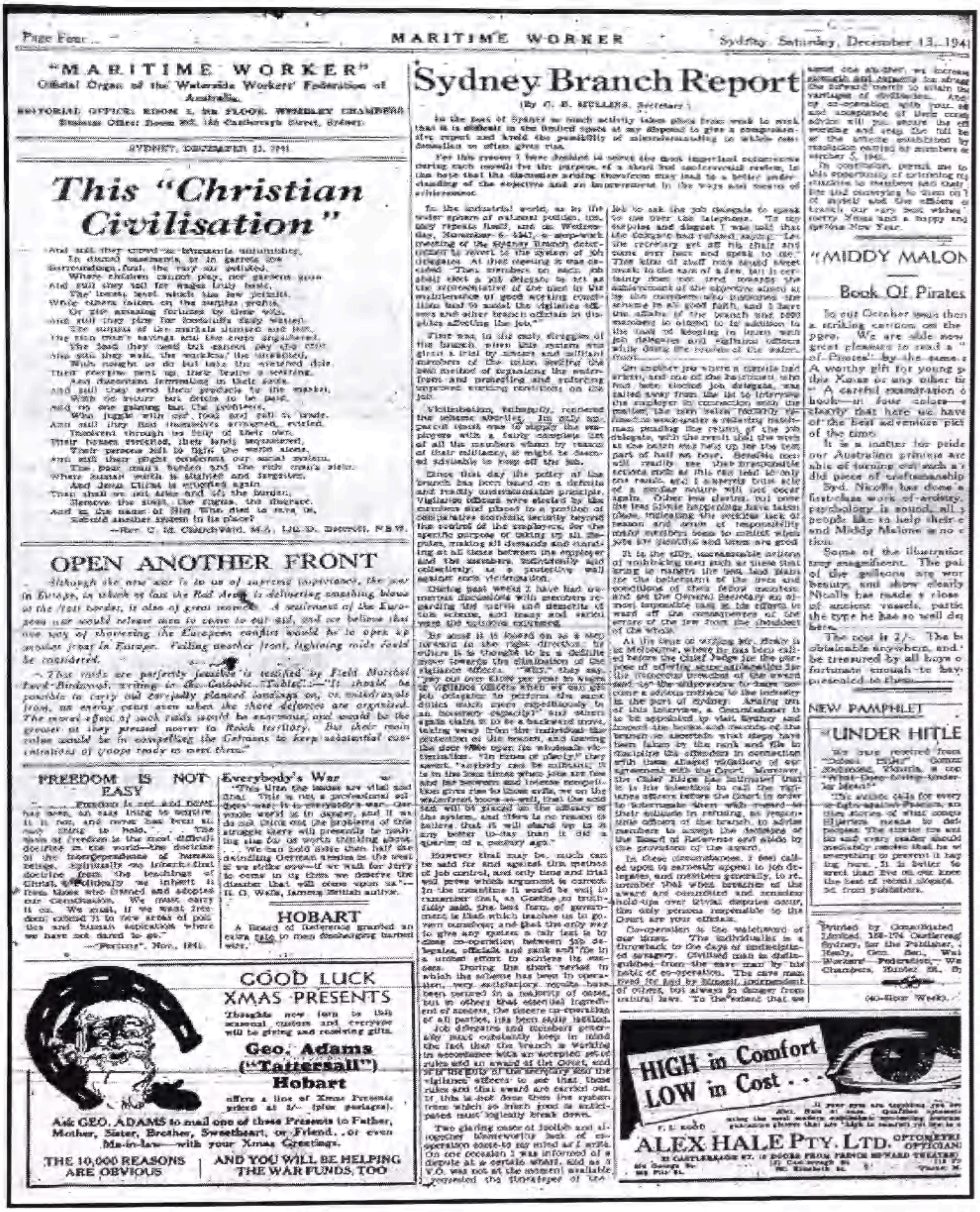
When old friends meet.

nothing else will do but

TOOTH'S KB LAGER

BOTTLES AND HALF BOTTLES

Picture 17:
Page 3 - Dec. 1941



Page Four

MARITIME WORKER

Sydney, Saturday, December 13, 1941

"MARITIME WORKER"
Official Organ of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia.

This "Christian Civilisation"

Sydney Branch Report

OPEN ANOTHER FRONT

Although the new war is to us of supreme importance, the war in Europe, in which at last the Red Army is delivering smashing blows at the Nazi border, is also of great moment. A settlement of the European war would release men to come to our aid, and we believe that one way of shortening the European conflict would be to open up another front in Europe. Failing another front, lightning raids could be considered.

That raids are perfectly feasible is testified by Field Marshal Lord Birdwood, writing in the Catholic "Tablet":—"It should be possible to carry out carefully planned landings on, or withdrawals from, an enemy coast even when the shore defences are organised. The moral effect of such raids would be enormous, and would be the greater as they pressed nearer to Reich territory. But their main value would be in compelling the Germans to keep substantial concentrations of troops ready to meet them."

FREEDOM IS NOT EASY

Everybody's War

HOBART

"MIDDY MALON

Book Of Pirates

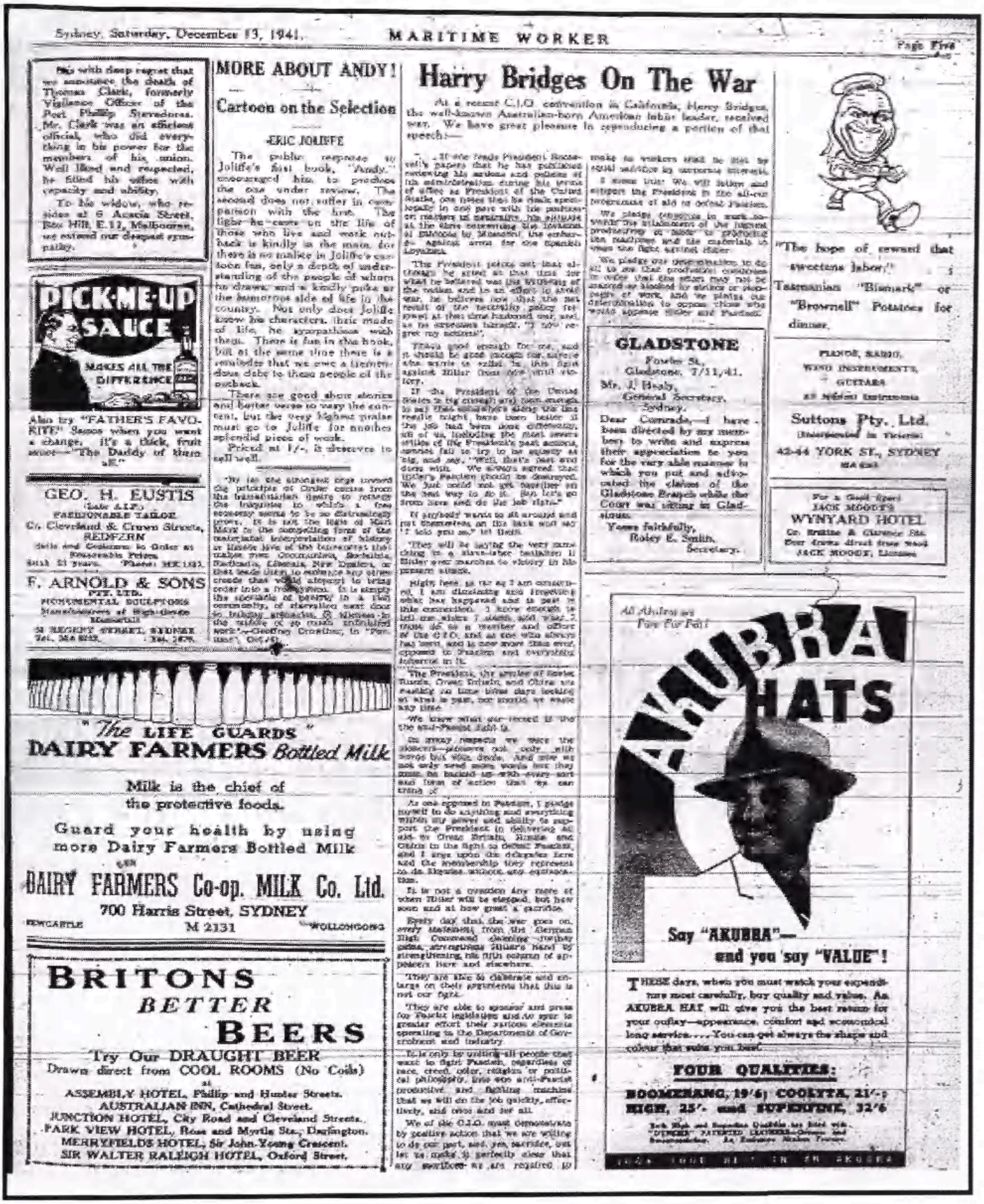
NEW PAMPHLET

"UNDER HITLE

GOOD LUCK
XMAS PRESENTS
Thoughts now turn to this seasonal custom and everyone will be giving and receiving gifts.
Geo. Adams
("Tattersall")
Hobart
offers a line of Xmas Presents priced at 5/- (plus postage).
Ask GEO. ADAMS to mail one of these Presents to Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, Sweetheart, or Friend, ..or even Ma-in-law—with your Xmas Greetings.
THE 10,000 REASONS ARE OBVIOUS | AND YOU WILL BE HELPING THE WAR FUNDS, TOO

HIGH in Comfort
LOW in Cost . . .
ALEX HALE PTY. LTD.

Picture 18:
Page 4 - Dec. 1941.



Sydney, Saturday, December 13, 1941. MARITIME WORKER Page Five

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Thomas Clark, formerly Vigilance Officer of the Port Phillip Stevedores. Mr. Clark was an efficient official, who did everything in his power for the members of his union. Well liked and respected, he filled his office with capacity and ability.

To his widow, who resides at 6 Acacia Street, Box Hill, E.11, Melbourne, we extend our deepest sympathy.

PICK-ME-UP SAUCE
MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Also try "FATHER'S FAVORITE" Sauce when you want a change. It's a thick, fruit sauce—"The Daddy of them all."

GEO. H. EUSTIS
(Late A.I.F.)
FASHIONABLE TAILOR
Cr. Cleveland & Crown Streets,
REDFERN
Suits and Costumes to Order at Reasonable Prices
Estab. 21 years. 'Phone: MX [illegible]

F. ARNOLD & SONS
PTY. LTD.
MONUMENTAL SCULPTORS
Manufacturers of High-Grade Memorials
51 REGENT STREET, SYDNEY
Tel. MA [illegible]

MORE ABOUT ANDY!

Cartoon on the Selection

ERIC JOLIFFE

The public response to Joliffe's first book, "Andy," encouraged him to produce the one under review. The second does not suffer in comparison with the first. The light he casts on the life of those who live and work outback is kindly in the main, for there is no malice in Joliffe's cartoon fun, only a depth of understanding of the people of whom he draws, and a kindly poke at the humorous side of life in the country. Not only does Joliffe know his characters, their mode of life, he sympathises with them. There is fun in the book, but at the same time there is a reminder that we owe a tremendous debt to these people of the outback.

There are good short stories and better verse to vary the content, but the very highest praise must go to Joliffe for another splendid piece of work.

Priced at 1/-, it deserves to sell well.

"The LIFE GUARDS"
DAIRY FARMERS Bottled Milk

Milk is the chief of the protective foods.

Guard your health by using more Dairy Farmers Bottled Milk

DAIRY FARMERS Co-op. MILK Co. Ltd.
700 Harris Street, SYDNEY
NEWCASTLE M 2131 WOLLONGONG

BRITONS BETTER BEERS
Try Our DRAUGHT BEER
Drawn direct from COOL ROOMS (No Coils)
at
ASSEMBLY HOTEL, Phillip and Hunter Streets.
AUSTRALIAN INN, Cathedral Street.
JUNCTION HOTEL, City Road and Cleveland Streets.
PARK VIEW HOTEL, Rose and Myrtle Sts., Darlington.
MERRYFIELDS HOTEL, Sir John Young Crescent.
SIR WALTER RALEIGH HOTEL, Oxford Street.

Harry Bridges On The War

At a recent C.I.O. convention in California, Harry Bridges, the well-known Australian-born American labor leader, received war. We have great pleasure in reproducing a portion of that speech:—

GLADSTONE

Fowler St.,
Gladstone, 7/11/41.

Mr. J. Healy,
General Secretary,
Sydney.

Dear Comrade,—I have been directed by my members to write and express their appreciation to you for the very able manner in which you put and advocated the claims of the Gladstone Branch while the Court was sitting in Gladstone.

Yours faithfully,
Roley E. Smith,
Secretary.

"The hope of reward that sweetens labor."
Tasmanian "Bismark" or "Brownell" Potatoes for dinner.

PIANOS, RADIO,
WIND INSTRUMENTS,
GUITARS
All Musical Instruments
Suttons Pty. Ltd.
(Incorporated in Victoria)
42-44 YORK ST., SYDNEY
MA [illegible]

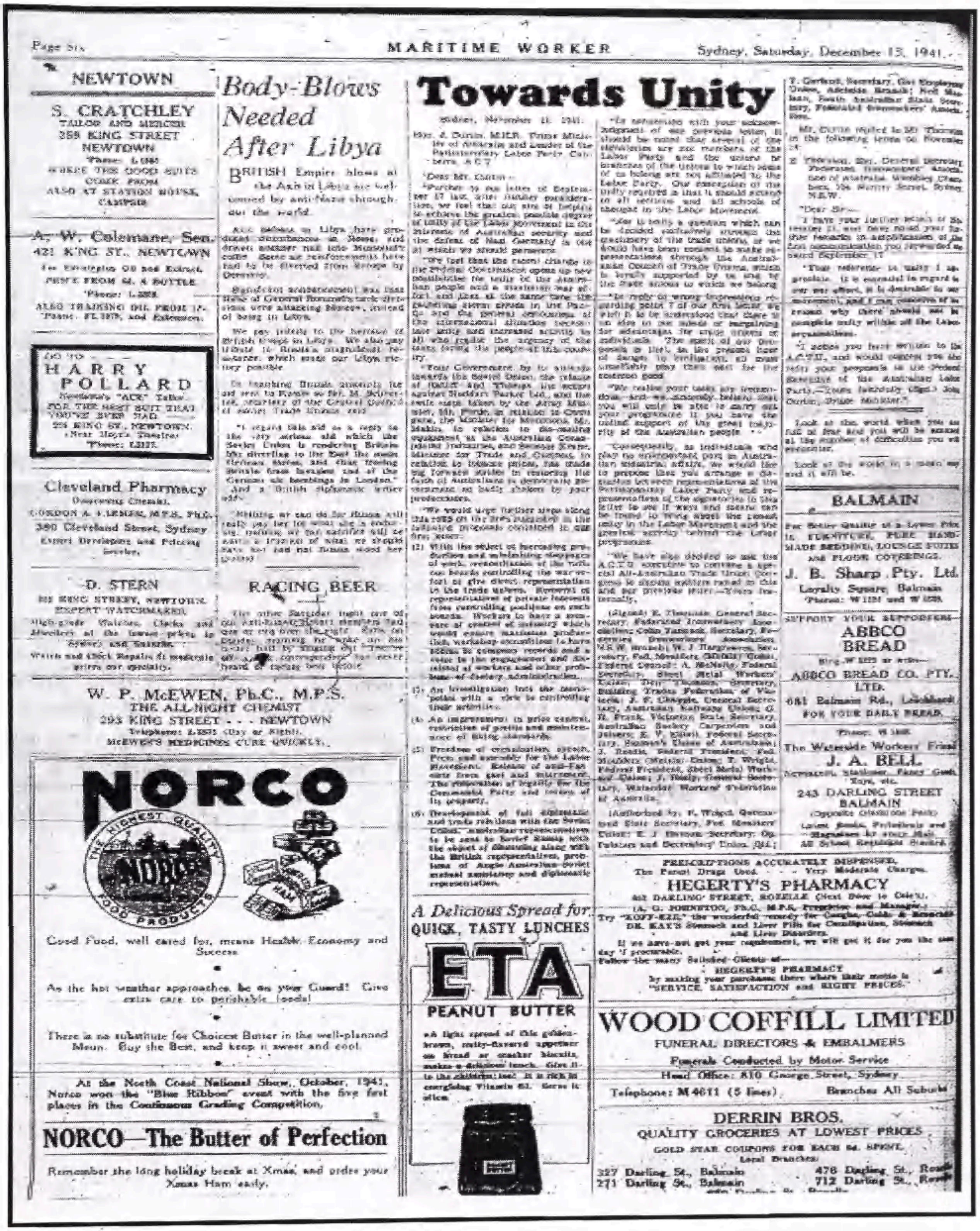
For a Good Sport
JACK MOODY'S
WYNYARD HOTEL
Cr. Erskine & Clarence Sts.
Beer drawn direct from wood
JACK MOODY, Licensee

All Akubras are Fur Felt
AKUBRA HATS
Say "AKUBRA"— and you say "VALUE"!

THESE days, when you must watch your expenditure most carefully, buy quality and value. An AKUBRA HAT will give you the best return for your outlay—appearance, comfort and economical long service.... You can get always the shape and colour that suits you best.

FOUR QUALITIES:
BOOMERANG, 19/6; COOLYTA, 21/-; HIGH, 25/- and SUPERFINE, 32/6

Picture 19:
Page 5 - Dec. 1941.



Page Six MARITIME WORKER Sydney, Saturday, December 13, 1941.

NEWTOWN

S. CRATCHLEY
TAILOR AND MERCER
358 KING STREET
NEWTOWN

ALSO AT STATION HOUSE,
CAMPSIE

A. W. Colemane, Sen.
421 KING ST., NEWTOWN

GO TO
HARRY POLLARD
Newtown's "ACE" Tailor
FOR THE BEST SUIT THAT YOU'VE EVER HAD
KING ST., NEWTOWN.
(Near Hoyt's Theatre)

Cleveland Pharmacy
Dispensing Chemist.
380 Cleveland Street, Sydney

D. STERN
KING STREET, NEWTOWN.
EXPERT WATCHMAKER.

W. P. McEWEN, Ph.C., M.P.S.
THE ALL-NIGHT CHEMIST
293 KING STREET - - - NEWTOWN
McEWEN'S MEDICINES CURE QUICKLY.

NORCO

Good Food, well cared for, means Health, Economy and Success.

As the hot weather approaches be on your Guard! Give extra care to perishable foods!

There is no substitute for Choicest Butter in the well-planned Menu. Buy the Best, and keep it sweet and cool.

At the North Coast National Show, October, 1941, Norco won the "Blue Ribbon" event with the five first places in the Continuous Grading Competition.

NORCO—The Butter of Perfection

Remember the long holiday break at Xmas, and order your Xmas Ham early.

Body-Blows Needed After Libya

BRITISH Empire blows at the Axis in Libya are welcomed by anti-Nazis throughout the world.

RACING BEER

Towards Unity

Sydney, November 11, 1941.

Hon. J. Curtin, M.H.R., Prime Minister of Australia and Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party, Canberra, A.C.T.

"Dear Mr. Curtin,—

"Mr. Curtin replied to Mr. Thomas in the following terms on November 24:

"Dear Sir,—

Look at the world when you are full of fear and you will be amazed at the number of difficulties you will encounter.

Look at the world in a brave way and it will be.

BALMAIN

J. B. Sharp Pty. Ltd.
Loyalty Square, Balmain

SUPPORT YOUR SUPPORTERS
ABBCO BREAD
ABBCO BREAD CO. PTY. LTD.
681 Balmain Rd., Leichhardt
FOR YOUR DAILY BREAD.

The Waterside Workers' Friend
J. A. BELL
243 DARLING STREET
BALMAIN

A Delicious Spread for QUICK, TASTY LUNCHES
ETA
PEANUT BUTTER

PRESCRIPTIONS ACCURATELY DISPENSED.
HEGERTY'S PHARMACY
DARLING STREET, ROZELLE
"SERVICE, SATISFACTION and RIGHT PRICES."

WOOD COFFILL LIMITED
FUNERAL DIRECTORS & EMBALMERS
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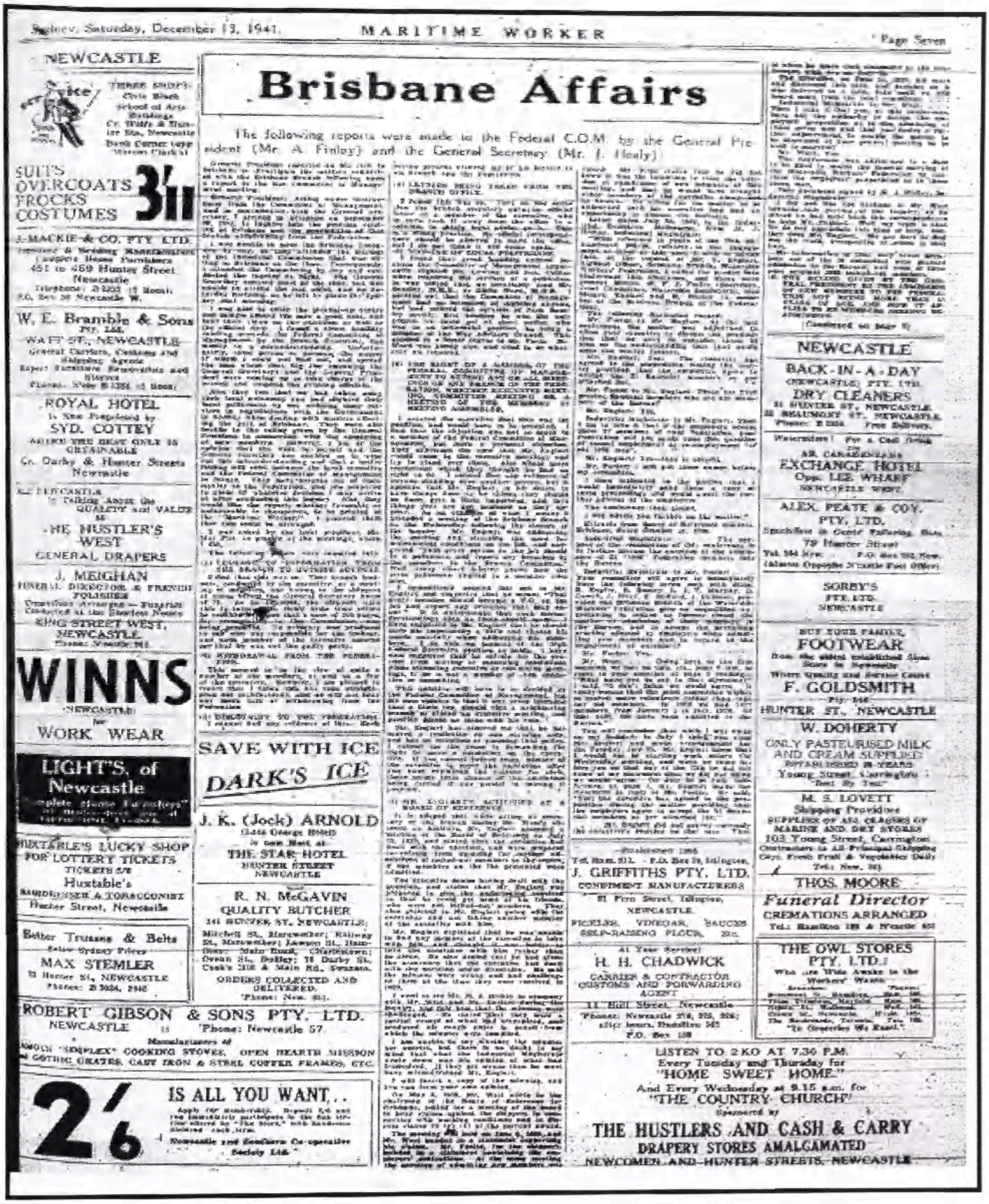
Picture 20:
Page 6 – Dec. 1941.



Sydney, Saturday, December 13, 1941. MARITIME WORKER Page Seven

Brisbane Affairs

The following reports were made to the Federal C.O.M. by the General President (Mr. A. Finlay) and the General Secretary (Mr. J. Healy).

(Continued on page 8)

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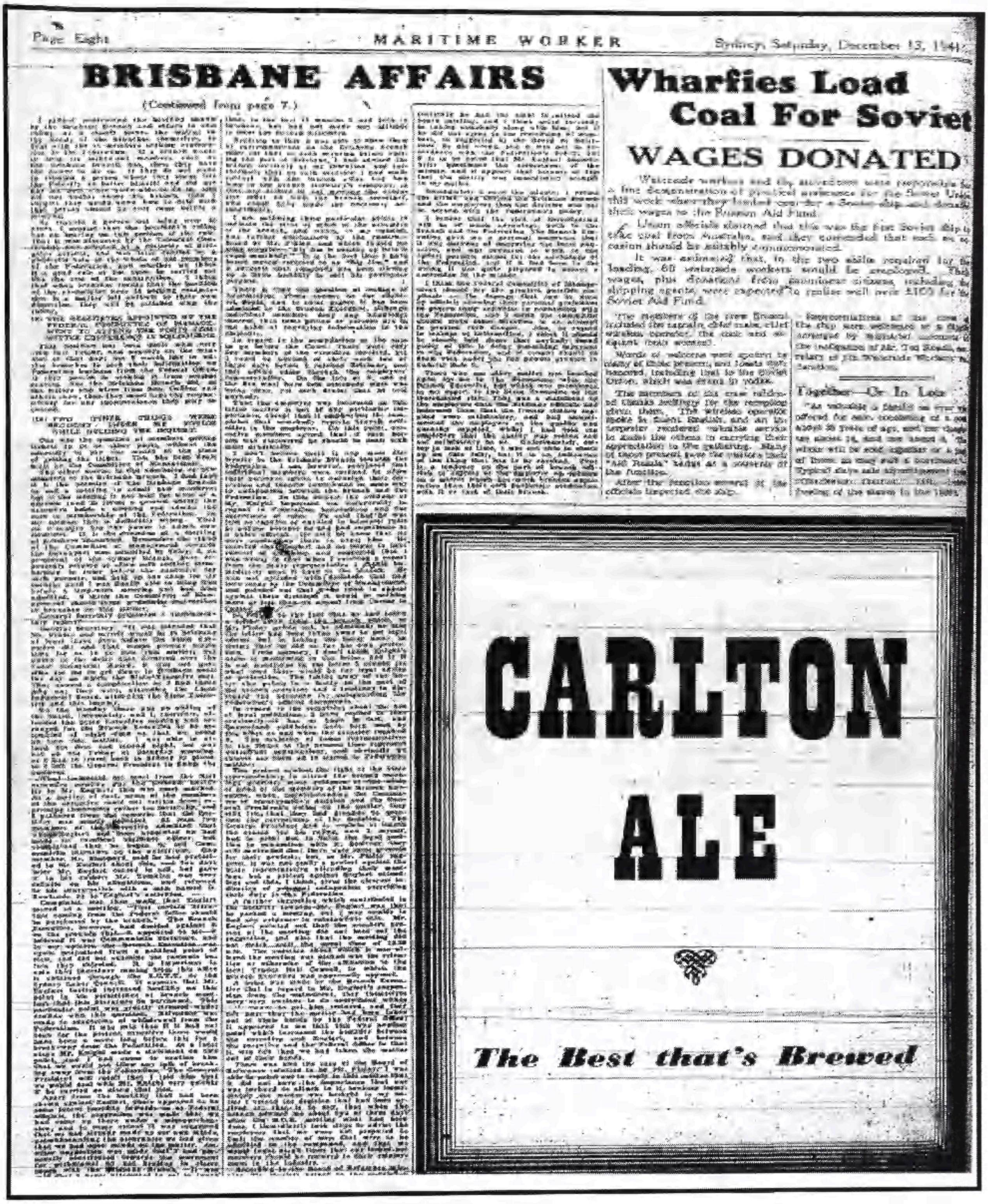
Picture 21:
Page 7 - Dec. 1941.



Page Eight MARITIME WORKER Sydney, Saturday, December 13, 1941

BRISBANE AFFAIRS

(Continued from page 7.)

Wharfies Load Coal For Soviet

WAGES DONATED

Waterside workers and the stevedores were responsible for a fine demonstration of practical assistance for the Soviet Union this week when they loaded coal for a Soviet ship and donated their wages to the Russian Aid Fund.

Union officials claimed that this was the first Soviet ship to take coal from Australia, and they contended that such an occasion should be suitably commemorated.

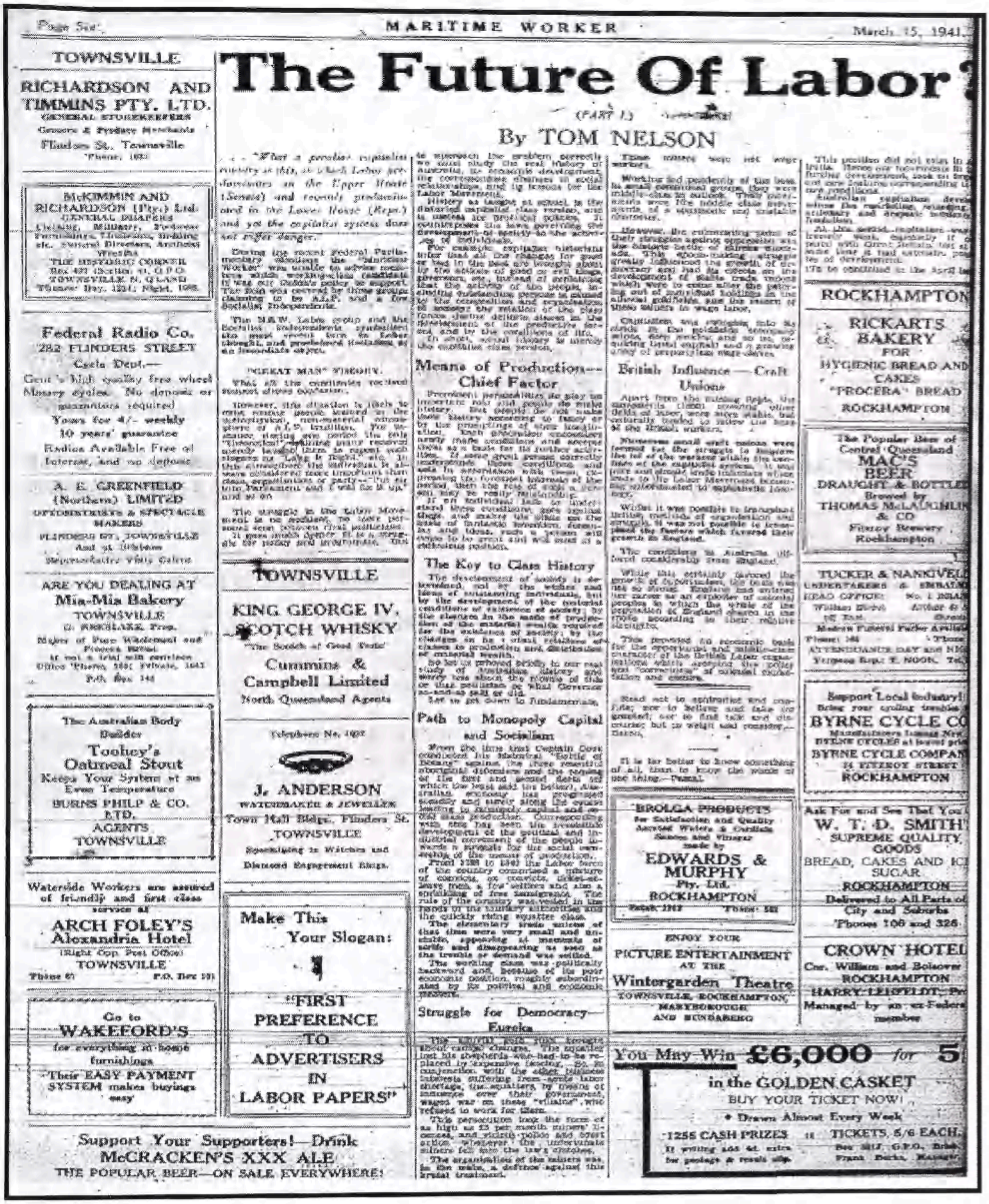
It was estimated that, in the two shifts required for the loading, 60 waterside workers would be employed. Their wages, plus donations from prominent citizens, including the shipping agents, were expected to realise well over £100 for the Soviet Aid Fund.

Together—Or In Lots

CARLTON ALE

The Best that's Brewed

Picture 22:
Page 8 - Dec. 1941



The Future Of Labor?

(PART 1.)

By TOM NELSON

. . . "What a peculiar capitalist country is this, in which Labor predominates in the Upper House (Senate) and recently predominated in the Lower House (Reps.) and yet the capitalist system does not suffer danger.

"GREAT MAN" THEORY.

Means of Production—Chief Factor

The Key to Class History

Path to Monopoly Capital and Socialism

Struggle for Democracy—Eureka

British Influence — Craft Unions

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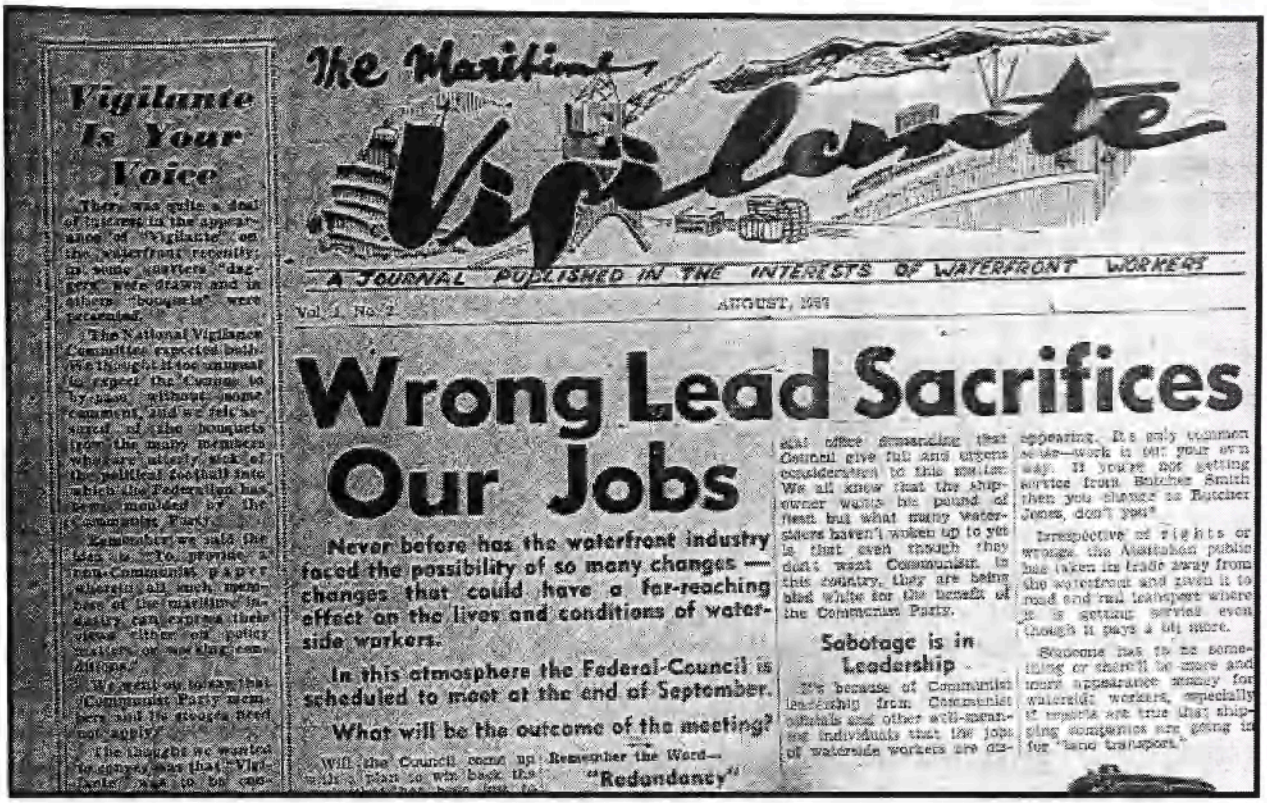
Picture 23:
The Future of Labor? - March 1941.



The Maritime Vigilante

A JOURNAL PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WATERFRONT WORKERS

Vol. 1, No. 2 AUGUST, 1957

Vigilante Is Your Voice

There was quite a deal of interest in the appearance of "Vigilante" on the waterfront recently; in some quarters "daggers" were drawn and in others "bouquets" were presented.

The National Vigilance Committee expected both. We thought it too unusual to expect the Comms to by-pass without some comment, and we felt assured of the bouquets from the many members who are utterly sick of the political football into which the Federation has been moulded by the Communist Party.

Remember, we said the idea is "To provide a non-Communist paper wherein all such members of the maritime industry can express their views either on policy matters or working conditions."

We went on to say that "Communist Party members and its stooges need not apply."

The thought we wanted to convey was that "Vigilante" was to be con-

Wrong Lead Sacrifices Our Jobs

Never before has the waterfront industry faced the possibility of so many changes — changes that could have a far-reaching effect on the lives and conditions of waterside workers.

In this atmosphere the Federal Council is scheduled to meet at the end of September.

What will be the outcome of the meeting?

Will the Council come up with a plan to win back the

Remember the Word— "Redundancy"

that office demanding that Council give full and urgent consideration to this matter. We all know that the shipowner wants his pound of flesh but what many watersiders haven't woken up to yet is that even though they don't want Communism in this country, they are being bled white for the benefit of the Communist Party.

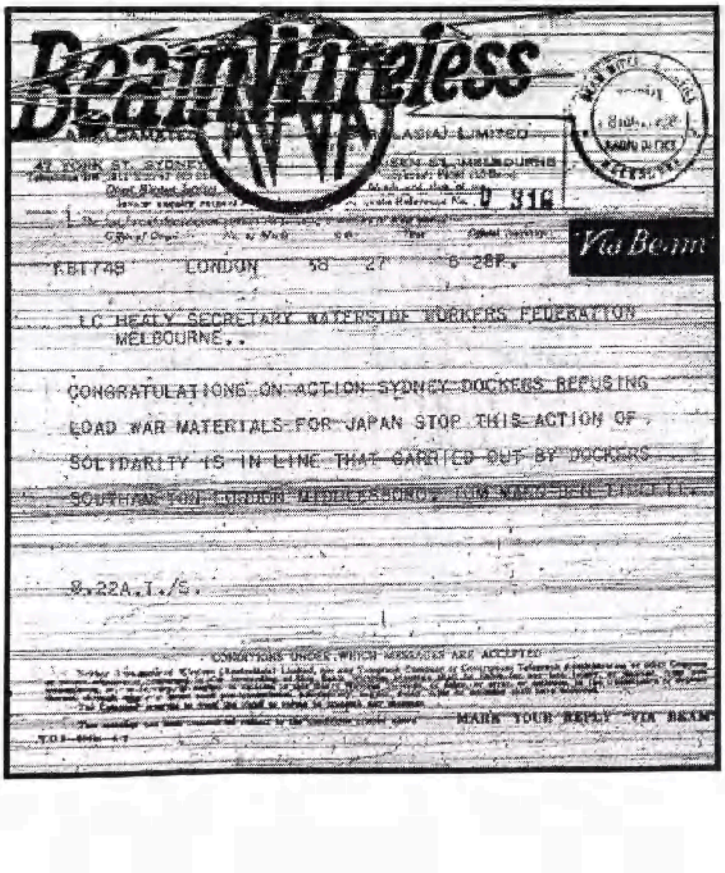
Sabotage is in Leadership

It's because of Communist leadership from Communist officials and other well-meaning individuals that the jobs of waterside workers are disappearing. It's only common sense—work it out your own way. If you're not getting service from Butcher Smith then you change to Butcher Jones, don't you?

Irrespective of rights or wrongs the Australian public has taken its trade away from the waterfront and given it to road and rail transport where it is getting service even though it pays a bit more.

Someone has to be something or there'll be more and more appearance money for waterside workers, especially if reports are true that shipping companies are going in for "land transport."

Picture 24:
Masthead from the *Maritime Vigilante* - August 1957.



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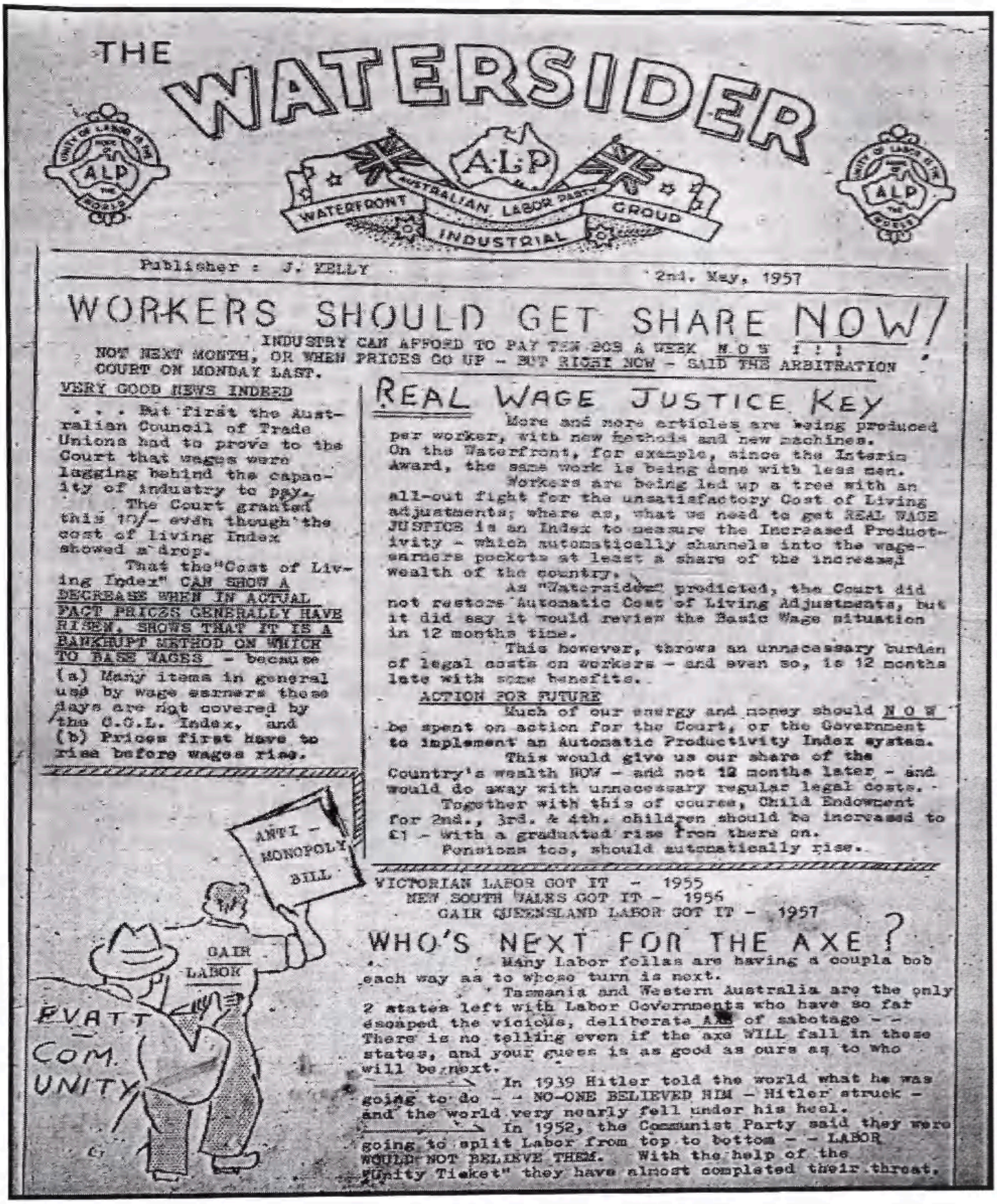
CONGRATULATIONS ON ACTION SYDNEY DOCKERS REFUSING LOAD WAR MATERIALS FOR JAPAN STOP THIS ACTION OF SOLIDARITY IS IN LINE THAT CARRIED OUT BY DOCKERS SOUTHAMPTON LONDON MIDDLESBORO TOM MANN BEN TILLETT.

8.22A.T./S.

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH MESSAGES ARE ACCEPTED

MARK YOUR REPLY "VIA BEAM"

Picture 25:
Telegram from British union leaders Tom Mann and Ben Tillet.
Maritime Worker - June 1938



THE WATERSIDER

A.L.P

WATERFRONT AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY INDUSTRIAL GROUP

Publisher : J. KELLY

2nd. May, 1957

WORKERS SHOULD GET SHARE NOW/

INDUSTRY CAN AFFORD TO PAY TEN BOB A WEEK N O W ! ! ! NOT NEXT MONTH, OR WHEN PRICES GO UP – BUT RIGHT NOW – SAID THE ARBITRATION COURT ON MONDAY LAST.

VERY GOOD NEWS INDEED

. . . But first the Australian Council of Trade Unions had to prove to the Court that wages were lagging behind the capacity of industry to pay.

The Court granted this 10/- even though the cost of living Index showed a drop.

That the "Cost of Living Index" CAN SHOW A DECREASE WHEN IN ACTUAL FACT PRICES GENERALLY HAVE RISEN, SHOWS THAT IT IS A BANKRUPT METHOD ON WHICH TO BASE WAGES – because

(a) Many items in general use by wage earners these days are not covered by the C.O.L. Index, and

(b) Prices first have to rise before wages rise.

REAL WAGE JUSTICE KEY

More and more articles are being produced per worker, with new methods and new machines. On the Waterfront, for example, since the Interim Award, the same work is being done with less men.

Workers are being led up a tree with an all-out fight for the unsatisfactory Cost of Living adjustments; where as, what we need to get REAL WAGE JUSTICE is an Index to measure the Increased Productivity – which automatically channels into the wage-earners pockets at least a share of the increased wealth of the country.

As "Watersider" predicted, the Court did not restore Automatic Cost of Living Adjustments, but it did say it would review the Basic Wage situation in 12 months time.

This however, throws an unnecessary burden of legal costs on workers – and even so, is 12 months late with some benefits.

ACTION FOR FUTURE

Much of our energy and money should N O W be spent on action for the Court, or the Government to implement an Automatic Productivity Index system.

This would give us our share of the Country's wealth NOW – and not 12 months later – and would do away with unnecessary regular legal costs.

Together with this of course, Child Endowment for 2nd., 3rd. & 4th. children should be increased to £1 – with a graduated rise from there on.

Pensions too, should automatically rise.

VICTORIAN LABOR GOT IT – 1955
NEW SOUTH WALES GOT IT – 1956
GAIR QUEENSLAND LABOR GOT IT – 1957

WHO'S NEXT FOR THE AXE ?

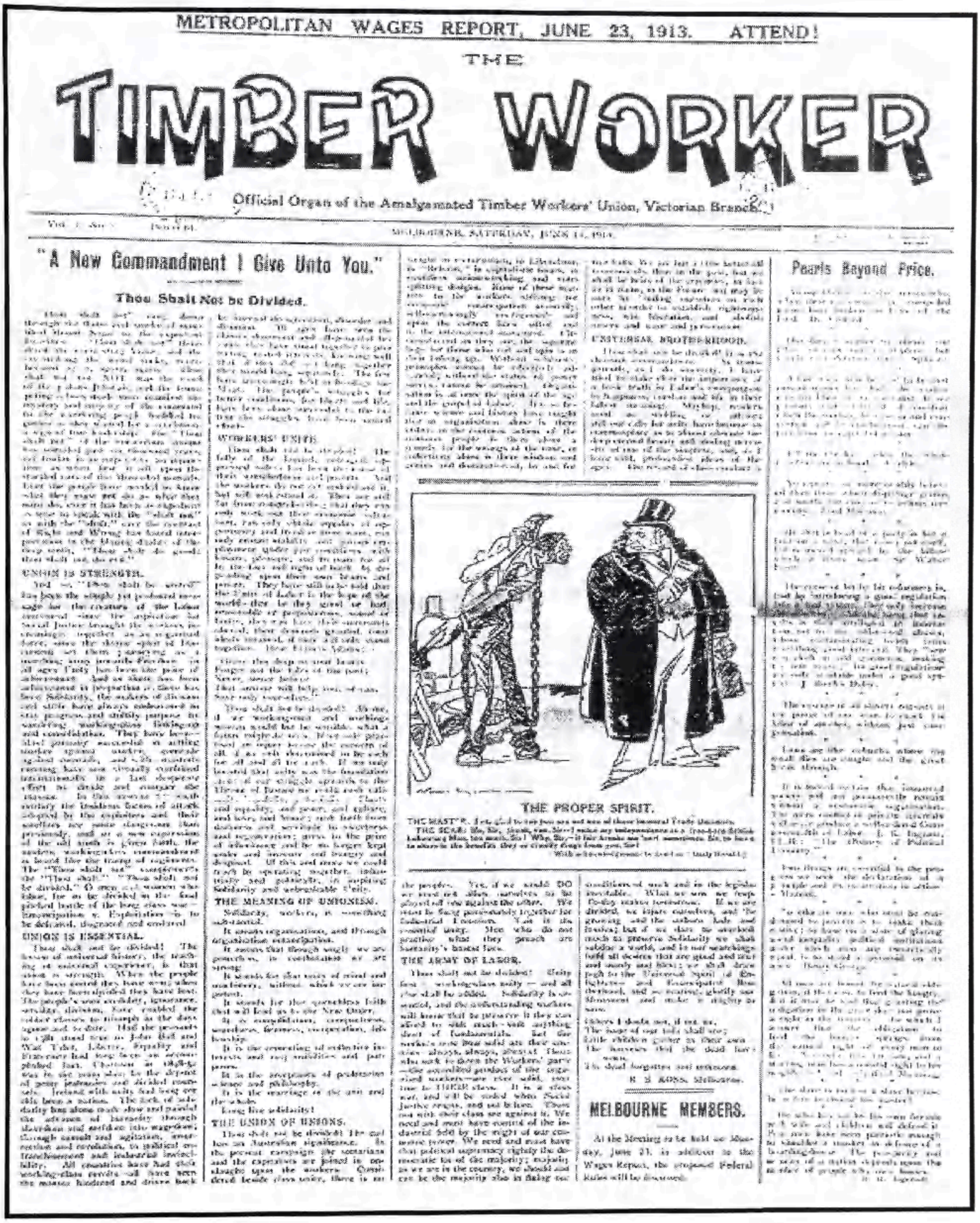
Many Labor fellas are having a coupla bob each way as to whose turn is next.

Tasmania and Western Australia are the only 2 states left with Labor Governments who have so far escaped the vicious, deliberate AXE of sabotage – – There is no telling even if the axe WILL fall in these states, and your guess is as good as ours as to who will be next.

——> In 1939 Hitler told the world what he was going to do – – NO-ONE BELIEVED HIM – Hitler struck – and the world very nearly fell under his heel.

——> In 1952, the Communist Party said they were going to split Labor from top to bottom – – LABOR WOULD NOT BELIEVE THEM. With the help of the "Unity Ticket" they have almost completed their threat.

Picture 26:
Watersider - May 1957.



METROPOLITAN WAGES REPORT, JUNE 23, 1913. ATTEND!

THE

TIMBER WORKER

Official Organ of the Amalgamated Timber Workers' Union, Victorian Branch.

"A New Commandment I Give Unto You."

Thou Shalt Not be Divided.

UNION IS STRENGTH.

WORKERS' UNITY.

THE MEANING OF UNIONISM.

UNION IS ESSENTIAL.

THE UNION OF UNIONS.

UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

THE PROPER SPIRIT.

THE ARMY OF LABOR.

Pearls Beyond Price.

MELBOURNE MEMBERS.

At the Meeting to be held on Monday, June 23, in addition to the Wages Report, the proposed Federal Rules will be discussed.

Picture 27:
Timber Worker - June 1913.

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