

# SHOOT THE BOLSHEVIK! HANG THE PROFITEER! RECONSTRUCTING AUSTRALIAN CAPITALISM, 1918-21

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*I have just lunched with W.S. Robinson. . . He is deeply pessimistic about the future of Australia—and the present too! —and apparently would like to see many people hanged.*

Theodore Fink to Keith Murdock

7 June 1921<sup>1</sup>

ON EVERY COUNT, the war of 1914-18 brought major changes to Australian economic life. The transfer of shipping to war purposes, and its sinking by German raiders, meant that by 1917-18 the total volume of overseas shipping which entered and cleared Australian ports was less than half that in 1913.<sup>2</sup> This disruption to imports and exports led to increased prices and to substantial levels of unemployment: from a base figure of 1000 in 1911, the cost of living had risen to 1362 in 1918 while real wages had fallen to 932.<sup>3</sup> Although the total volume of industrial production rose only slightly, there were important changes within the manufacturing sector. For example, Broken Hill Proprietary commenced its iron and steel making at Newcastle on the eve of the landing at Gallipoli, thus providing another, and perhaps stronger, reason for claiming that Australia was born as a nation on 25 April 1915. Rural production suffered from export difficulties and drought, as well as from labour shortages, before its marketing arrangements were reshaped under government direction. The workforce was disrupted when 400,000 men (30 per cent of the males aged between eighteen and forty-five) joined the armed forces. The transition from war to a totally unexpected peace clearly presented great problems of economic management.

But these economic disruptions could not be separated from the political upheavals provoked by the war—both at home and abroad. Government intervention in primary industries brought farmers together to provide an organisational basis for the Country party. Unemploy-

ment and falling real wages led to a number of major strikes, the most important being the Great Strike of 1917 which spread from the New South Wales railways to involve nearly 100,000 workers throughout Australia. Attempts in 1916, and again in 1917, to introduce conscription for overseas military service split the Labor party, and Australia generally, into two warring camps. Rebellion in Ireland and revolution in Russia added to the political consciousness of Australian workers. The combination of these economic and political problems promised Australian capitalism its severest testing yet.

In contrast to contemporary bourgeois economics, political economy has always been distinguished by its recognition that problems of economic management are never cut off from politics. Marx's 'Critique of Political Economy' (*Capital*) went further by conceptualising the nature of those politics as a class struggle between wage-labour and capital. He showed that capital is a special form of ownership which is maintained through varying combinations of violence and ideas. Of course, this power relationship (capital) does not exist for its own sake. Rather it enables capitalists to take some of the labour power of the working class for their own use. Class struggle occurs over the right to control the workers' labour power, and is therefore not confined to particular and spectacular events like strikes or revolutions, but is present in every act of production within capitalism, continuing every hour of every day.

From the standpoint of the capitalist, the two essential features of the class struggle are:

1. The need to reproduce the situation in which people are obliged to sell their labour power in return for wages, that is, to submit to expropriation. This essay discusses this need in relation to:
  - (a) preparations for counter-revolution (violence);
  - (b) anti-Bolshevik propaganda (ideas).
2. The need to increase the rate of expropriation of labour power, or at least to prevent its decrease. The essay discusses this need in relation to:
  - (c) the use of State apparatuses against strikers (violence);
  - (d) the production of the anti-profiteering campaign (ideas).

In sum, the essay first discusses the preservation of capitalist property relations before examining how the rate of expropriation was maintained or expanded.

While the class struggle can be studied at any moment of capitalism's existence, there are sound reasons for picking out 1919 for special attention. The immediate post-war period gave rise to many of the forces which shaped Australia for the next fifty years: the Country Party, the RSL, the Communist Party and the Greene tariffs—one could fairly claim that modern Australia was spawned in 1919. More important the attempts to put Australian capitalism back together again in 1919 laid bare features of the class struggle for which it is often impossible to find quotable evidence.

Before exploring the four areas of the class struggle set down above, two disclaimers need to be made:

—the examples provided are not the full range of instances available, a fuller treatment would permit the introduction of many more instances of each of these four;

—the four areas chosen are not the only ones available. Here again a fuller treatment would include tariffs, soldier settlement, the Country Party and Imperialist rivalry.

As presented in this essay, capitalism assumes a somewhat fragmented appearance; in a full-length book, the exact inter-connections could be spelled out, more fully.

### The Need to Maintain Capitalism

Prime Minister Hughes announced that there would be a second conscription plebiscite on the same day as news arrived of the Bolshevik revolution. From this moment onwards both sides reshaped their arguments about the war around their respective images of Bolshevism. The labour movement gave critical support and looked anxiously to Russia as the starting point of a new world order. This response was neatly put by Maurice Blackburn, editor of *Labor Call*, who told the 1919 Victorian Labor Conference that while 'the great bulk of them were in sympathy with the Russian revolution...the methods of the revolution might cause a considerable difference of opinion'.<sup>1</sup> This reserve over methods in no way lessened Blackburn's enthusiasm for the revolution, whose third anniversary he celebrated in an a lyrical editorial.<sup>5</sup> To the left of Blackburn, groups such as the One Big Union were even more fulsome in their endorsement of Bolshevism and worked towards a similiar system of soviets in Australia.

Thus, well before the war ended in November 1918, Australian capitalism perceived a new threat: international communism. On 23 January 1919 an editorial in the *Industrial Australian and Mining Standard* claimed that 'there is now proceeding throughout the Commonwealth a huge, subtle, and most sinister agitation to undermine the foundations... of society...'. Eight months later, a *Bulletin* editorial compared the situation to the Commune of 1871.<sup>6</sup> Whilst Bolsheviks were seen as the embodiment of disorder, there was widespread agreement that it had been the war which had loosened society's bonds. With a typical flourish, the Prime Minister paraphrased thousands of editorials when he declared in his election policy speech: 'The burning blasts of war have shrivelled, blackened, and destroyed the world we once knew'.<sup>7</sup>

A major source of disruption had been the removal of over 300,000 Australian troops from the capitalist relations of production for periods ranging up to four years. The question was: would they return to the pre-war situation or would they follow the example of so many European soldiers and throw in their lot with the Bolsheviks? Unlikely as it seems to us today after more than fifty years of the RSL, in 1919 returning soldiers were not looked on as a total blessing by the capitalists.<sup>8</sup> Any

inkling of Bolshevik influence brought forth swift retaliation as in the case of the so-called 'mutiny' on H.M.A.S. *Australia*.<sup>9</sup> A major problem facing the capitalists was how to reproduce the wages system for the bulk of the returning AIF. This did not simply mean finding employment for them. More important, it involved the re-establishment of all those physical and ideological disciplines essential for the purchase of labour power and for its profitable exploitation. In addition, the workers who had remained in Australia were showing signs of restiveness with the existing relations of production. The One Big Union gained support and the A.L.P. adopted a socialisation objective in 1919. Ideological and physical restraints had to be reproduced and expanded for these workers as well.

Brisbane's Roman Catholic Archbishop, J.J. Duhig, noted that 'injustice to labour on the part of capital is so severely condemned by the Scriptures that it needs no human words to emphasize its perfidy'. Ineffable dread was not sufficient to dissuade labour from its antagonism to capital, and His Grace was obliged to spend a good deal of his 1919 Lenten Pastoral urging the workers to replace their Bolshevism with sobriety and thrift.<sup>10</sup> The fundamental requirement was the maintenance of the private ownership of the means of production. In the practical situation of 1919 this meant the preparation of counter-revolutionary strategy and tactics; and engaging in the struggle for ideological hegemony.

#### *Preparations for counter-revolution*

When the Fisher Labor government introduced the War Precautions Act early in 1915, the party's more progressive members condemned it for making 'martial law supreme over civil law'.<sup>11</sup> This was no exaggeration, and the War Precautions Act became the main legal weapon in capitalism's fight for survival, providing a legal cover for the emergence of an open bourgeois dictatorship. Offences under the Act included:

Exhibiting the red flag.

Advocating action calculated to prevent the production of warlike material for purposes connected with the war.

Making statements prejudicial to recruiting.

Tearing down recruiting posters.

Exhibiting disloyalty or hostility to the British Empire.

Making statements likely to cause disaffection to His Majesty.

Publishing or printing matter which had not been previously submitted to the Censor.

Printing matter in such a way as to suggest that the omissions indicated had been due to the action of the Censor.

Having in possession prohibited publications.

Making false statements likely to prejudice the judgment of voters in connection with military service referendum.

Disturbing referendum meetings.

Showing, in printed matter, alterations made by the Censor.<sup>12</sup>

As the Solicitor-General, Sir Robert Garran, later noted: 'The regulations were mostly expressed widely to make sure that nothing necessary was omitted, and the result soon was that John Citizen was hardly able to lift a finger without coming under the penumbra of some technical offence against the War Precautions Regulations'.<sup>13</sup> These regulations remained in force until the signing of the Peace Treaty in July 1919, when they were mostly duplicated by other specific laws.<sup>14</sup> The War Precautions Regulations allowed the authorities to open and seize mail passing through the Post Office: the evidence of these activities rests today in the 'Suspected Persons' files in the Australian Archives.<sup>15</sup> Telegrams were copied, virtually as a matter of course.<sup>16</sup> The government's intelligence network was nothing if not thorough.

Well before the end of fighting in Europe made it harder for the authorities to use the law against political dissenters, a pattern of semi-official anti-subversive agencies was set up. When the Defence Department's Special Intelligence Bureau suggested the establishment of 'Propaganda and Intelligence Bureaux', Acting Prime Minister, W.A. Watt, presided over a meeting of 'picked citizens' to prepare a scheme for propaganda and for intelligence work.<sup>17</sup> The leading industrialist and erstwhile organiser of the Deakinites, Herbert Brookes, took charge and formed the Australian Defensive League, later known as the Australian Protective League.<sup>18</sup> Brookes kept in touch with F.C. Urquhart, the Queensland Police Commissioner,<sup>19</sup> and with M.H. Ellis<sup>20</sup> who supplied him with information about the dangerous condition of Queensland.<sup>21</sup> Brookes paid agents to infiltrate the Melbourne Trades Hall, the One Big Union, the Victorian Railways Union and the Victorian Police Department.<sup>22</sup> In Queensland, Urquhart had planted a police spy, Richard Brown, in the One Big Union movement,<sup>23</sup> and had someone inside all the executive meetings of the red-flag marchers.<sup>24</sup>

One of the most substantial pieces of evidence of counter-revolutionary preparations for the post-war period refers to a conference held on 18 January 1919, when the Chief of the General Staff, the Inspector of Police in New South Wales and the acting Chief Commissioner in Victoria met to consider the Bolshevik threat. They agreed 'That arrangements should be made quietly for the rapid increase of Police Forces by enrolment of additional and special constables, and by preparation of lists of suitable citizens in every police district...'. The Chief of the General Staff warned that, in the initial stages of any outbreak of Bolshevism, the Army could not be relied upon for any more than

(a) military material;

(b) small groups of picked men with machine guns, and

(c) a few aeroplanes with improvised bombs.

Cabinet approval for recommendations (a) and (b) was obtained three days later.<sup>25</sup> Because Australia's peace-time army has never been very large, volunteers have acquired an important role in all counter-revolutionary planning, as can be seen from the report just quoted. In addition, there were countless appeals to the so-called 'middle-class' to get or-

ganised. *Smith's Weekly* led the way with weekly articles on what it called 'The Leaderless Legion', and even published a 'Coupon' which asked people to sign their names and addresses beneath the statement 'I am prepared to support an organised middle class'.<sup>26</sup>

Far more important was the actual organisation of para-military forces. During the red-flag riots in Brisbane on 23 and 24 March 1919, an anti-Bolshevik Society was launched at a mass meeting of ex-soldiers.<sup>27</sup> A week later, Lt Keith Murray told a Bundaberg meeting that a vigilance committee had been formed in Brisbane and was backed by people with money; £15,000 was available 'tomorrow if needed'.<sup>28</sup> On 6 April 1919, the R.S.S.I.L. organised a returned soldiers' army of 2,000 in Brisbane which was divided into suburban units.<sup>29</sup> During the July riots in Melbourne, the Mayors of Coburg and Brighton called meetings to enlist special constables.<sup>30</sup> Although documentary evidence is not available, it is possible that the 'White Guard', under the command of General White, was formed at this time. In Perth late in 1920, General Sir Talbot Hobbs declared that returned soldiers there were organised, ready and willing to deal with any seditious challenge.<sup>31</sup>

One of the tactics employed to quell the three days of riots in Melbourne, 19-21 July 1919, was the calling of a parade of ex-servicemen in the gardens opposite Victoria Barracks in St Kilda road. Here the men were formed into their old platoons and drilled by their sergeants, while their Generals walked from section to section urging the men to uphold law and order. This is a particularly significant event in regard to the need to reproduce constantly the relations of production. Many of the returned soldiers had not yet returned to work. Others were out of work because of strikes. All had been outside the capitalist relations of production for some time because of their war service. This meant that they had been free of the day-to-day adjustments demanded by the very fact of working for wages. To make up for the loss of work discipline, the discipline of the parade ground was called upon. This emergency measure revealed a good deal about the system whose 'normal' functioning it momentarily replaced.<sup>32</sup>

Whenever soldiers clashed with 'Bolsheviks', their efforts were cheered on by the press. The Brisbane *Courier* enthused over the soldiers who attacked the offices of the Labor party's *Daily Standard* under the headlines of 'Exciting Street Scenes' and 'A Lesson in Respect'.<sup>33</sup> Whenever such soldiers came before the courts, the sentences passed on them were the lightest possible. After the red flag riots in Brisbane, thirteen 'Bolsheviks' were sentenced to the maximum of six months for carrying red flags. Three anti-Bolsheviks were charged with crimes including the attempted shooting of a policeman, but were acquitted or merely fined.<sup>34</sup> At Ararat, six soldiers pleaded guilty to a charge of common assault after they had tarred and feathered an ex-Labor member of parliament whose anti-Boer War poem had been reprinted in 1915.<sup>35</sup> In sentencing the men, 'His Honor [Judge Williams] said he was very sorry to see the young men in the position they were. He intended to deal as leniently

with them as possible, as the accused had acted under great provocation ...'.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, from the few files which are open and accessible, it is clear that Australia's state apparatuses were fully geared to deal with any possible insurrectionary movement. Police spies and paramilitary bodies backed up the alerted organs of class repression — the courts, the police and the armed forces: there was no doubt in the minds of capitalism's ruling strata that political power was preserved through a gun barrel.

### *The Struggle for Ideological Hegemony*

Bourgeois ideologues were particularly keen to combat the near-universal sympathy for the Bolsheviks that existed within the Australian labour movement, which was itself far more militant than usual and hence open to revolutionary influences. In addition, Bolshevism had to be explained to the bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie. Inevitably, the anti-Bolshevik propaganda intended for these classes became mixed up with that directed towards the labour movement. In general, anti-Bolshevik material portrayed Bolsheviks as dehumanised, disloyal and destructive. Binding all these together was their threat to property. Frequent references were made to soap as a cure for Bolshevism,<sup>37</sup> with an overseas article reprinted here describing Trotsky as 'Dirty, unkempt, with coal black nails, a ragged collar, and hair which suggested that it had not been combed for a year...'.<sup>38</sup> An editorial in Perth's *Sunday Times* identified Bolshevism as 'the refuge of the unfit, the hope of the loafer and the gin-case orator...'.<sup>39</sup> An essential part of this style of argument was the continuous allegation that Bolsheviks regarded women as national property and had abolished celibacy in the interests of class equality by setting up bureaux of free love staffed by the daughters of the middle-class for the pleasure of the lowest social elements.<sup>40</sup> Far from being crude misrepresentations, such charges appealed to that sense of decency which the bourgeoisie associated with their own dominance, and to which 'the better type of worker', and especially his womenfolk, were encouraged to aspire. By picturing Bolsheviks as unwashed, bourgeois ideologues played upon the just demands of the working class for improved living and working conditions. Dismissing such propaganda as 'irrational' misses the whole point of how capitalism has tried to identify itself with all that is wholesome and moral.

The quest for horrible ways in which to present Bolshevism led several writers to compare it with the 'Spanish Flu' epidemic as a terror of equal proportions. One noted that, in the past, epidemics of disease coincided with moral and social upheavals: just as today 'the mysterious physical poison of influenza' appeared at the same time as 'a vast deluge of moral and physical poison, under the name of Bolshevism'.<sup>41</sup> The magazine, *Soldier*, carried this seemingly more light-hearted piece:

Bolshevik pneumonia is a disease of the brain...[and] is a great danger in crowds, where pieces of red rag become impregnated with anti-billhughes

gas inhalant, causing a violent irritation of the articulatory glands, which produces a sneezing effect, and makes the sufferer appear to be talking Russian.<sup>42</sup>

Ridicule was especially effective because it depended on an identifiable if concealed rationality. Ideas attacked in this way were disadvantaged from the start by being cut off from their intellectual bases; they are thus defined as insane, ludicrous and bizarre. The main aim of political satire is not to gain converts, but to reinforce the certainty of the converted, and to approve the use of violence against those ridiculed because they are beyond the reach of logic. To understand what was meant by 'Disloyal' it is necessary to realise what it meant to be 'British' and what the 'Empire' meant. All three were well explained during a 1915 series of War Lectures given for the public by professors at Melbourne University. Germany was not condemned outright; rather its vices were seen as virtues mishandled because Germans lacked the one essential virtue of being 'British'. According to the Classics Professor, T.G. Tucker, 'British' was 'a universal virtue which, if carried out to the full, would supersede all the law and prophets, and render all government injunctions and prohibitions unnecessary and all social codes futile...'.<sup>43</sup> Just as the Empire did not stop with political and economic considerations, so too did it extend beyond the ethical into personal relationships and daily habits. In a contrast of British and German ideas, the Professor of Physiology, W.A. Osborne, claimed to recognise the deficiency of the German 'in his table manners, and his conduct of war, in his literary criticisms and in the formalism which constricts his educational system, in his person, in his home and in his morals'.<sup>44</sup> Frederic Eggleston bore witness that 'The Empire is not merely a racial or a national fabric—its strength is that it performs for its citizens and for the world generally certain indispensable social and ethical services'. Its maintenance was 'the hope of progress towards more justice in human relationships, and away from the barbarism and tyranny of the past...'. Eggleston endorsed the view of Empire as a law of social gravity by calling it 'a stabiliser of contending forces' since its 'gigantic system of freedom and peace...[was]...not enjoyed by the Empire alone', but extended all over the world.<sup>45</sup>

Bolshevism had betrayed this grand design by making a separate peace with Germany early in 1918. Sinn Fein had stabbed the Empire in the back with its Easter Uprising in 1916 and its subsequent rebellion. The links between atheistic communists and Papists were obvious once the common denominator of their 'Disloyalty' to the Empire was recognised, as it was by men like Herbert Brookes, a leading political and business figure, who decided in 1918 to devote half of his waking life, backed by his considerable fortune, to the Protestant cause because 'Everything we hold dear for our children's sake is at stake. The genius of England, Scotland and Wales for freedom, justice and fair play is challenged, is endangered'.<sup>46</sup> Brookes financed a weekly paper, the

*Vigilant*, and a group of Loyalist Leagues throughout Australia to oppose the 'Bolshevism' of Mannix and his crew. 'Loyalty', like 'Disloyalty', extended far beyond considerations of international politics. From their very beginnings in 1918, the propaganda of the Loyalty Leagues was specifically anti-Bolshevik, for as their Victorian secretary assured Brookes, 'the Bolshevik and the Sinn Fein organisations are out against all constituted authority and primarily their method is the murder of the wealthy people and confiscation of their possessions'.<sup>47</sup>

From this definition of 'Disloyalty' it was no distance to deciding that Bolshevism was the unchaining of Anarchy with its watchword 'Destroy!' And the target of this destruction was capital, in place of which, a prominent parson claimed, Communism would put theft, plunder, chaos, collapse and destructive revolution.<sup>48</sup> To Sir Henry Braddon, past-President of the Employers Federation, 'the communist's main desire was to wreck society, in the hope of securing something for himself in the scramble'.<sup>49</sup> At a time when the dominance of capital was so blatantly threatened, there was little point in always concealing what capitalism was trying to defend. Consequently, its propagandists were often surprisingly frank in their defence of private property as the cornerstone of civilisation. The despised ethic of materialism took the place of appeals to freedom, reason and morality in more than one sermon.

Anti-Bolshevik material was directed almost entirely against domestic Bolsheviks even when the news item dealt with events in Europe. Though not always referred to openly, the consistent charge against Bolshevism was its attack on property. According to an editorial in the *Industrial Australian*, 'The appeal of the Bolsheviks...is exclusively addressed to the cupidity and ignorance of the "have-nots"...They are out to expropriate, to ruin, to destroy every man who owns a cottage or "uses a tooth brush"'.<sup>50</sup> For the *Brisbane Courier*, Bolshevism was an attack on 'political equality, the freedom of speech, the law and order, the security of life and limb, and the control of individual possessions...the workman's cottage, not less than the rich man's mansion...'.<sup>52</sup>

When the New South Wales Presbyterian weekly editorialised against the Bolsheviks it made perfectly clear its equation of 'social order' with the defence of 'private property in the soil and in the means of production'.<sup>53</sup> This near-explicit distinction between productive and non-productive property was very unusual and occurred only because the leader writer had just been quoting from Soviet documents. Further indication of the 'defence of property' theme was provided in the reassuring articles in *Punch* and the *Bulletin* that the Australian workers possessed too many household Gods to go Bolshevik.<sup>51</sup> Anti-Bolshevik propaganda was designed to provide an ideological defence for the private ownership of productive property.

### Maintaining the Rate of Exploitation

The reason for securing capitalist relations of production is not for any intrinsic sense of power. It is so that the expropriation of surplus

value can continue at as great a rate as the workers are prepared to tolerate, or are incapable of resisting. The testing ground for the rate of exploitation is initially the point of production where disputes arise continuously over issues such as the length of tea breaks, sojourns to the toilet and the speed of production generally. From here they can be reproduced as struggles over wages, or they can erupt in their own right. Wages and conditions are really two faces of the one coin since both determine the rate of exploitation of labour power. Capitalists necessarily depend on the apparatuses of the state to make sure that the rate of exploitation is maintained. The state does this by providing capitalists with a range of legally violent sanctions and ideological defences. Some of the specifics of these are the object of our enquiry for the rest of this essay.

#### *Governmental strike breaking*

When strikes occur the real relations of production are broken, although not destroyed. For as long as workers refuse to sell their labour power there can be no expropriation, no surplus value, no capital accumulation, no profits, no bonus shares. Since the withdrawal of labour power hits at the very basis of capitalism, the Commonwealth government's belief in 1919 that insurrection would grow out of a strike<sup>55</sup> was sound enough, even if its reasoning was fallacious. It was obliged to confront strikers with state violence, extra-legal as well as legal. The single most important fact to recognise is that there were more days of strikes in 1919 than in any other year in Australian history till the 1970s. In 1919, the total days of strikes amounted to 6.3 million. By contrast, the two years—1917 and 1929—which come closest to the 1919 record, totalled only 4.5 million each. Yet 1919 cannot be artificially isolated from the years around it. To appreciate fully the capitalists' concern at this time, it would be necessary to consider the continuing militancy from 1916 onwards. Other writers have discussed particular strikes in detail and they need not be repeated here.<sup>56</sup> Instead, this segment will concentrate on the essential features of capitalism's responses—open violence and legal repression.

Like so many disputes in the post-war period, the 1919 Fremantle strike had its origins in circumstances which predate 1919. There had been a strike at Fremantle in 1916 which left wharf labourers working for about 25 shillings a week in 1919—a sum which was less than a third of the basic wage. The West Australian government at first tried to break the 1919 strike by using scabs glorified with the title 'Nationalist Unionists'. Pickets fought to keep these gentlemen off the wharves, and the government decided to erect barricades behind which the scabs could work in safety. Naturally the barricades had to be erected by scab labour, and to this end the Premier himself led a contingent of his political supporters from Perth to Fremantle on the morning of Sunday, 4 May.

Their procession was delayed by a barrage of missiles and when

they assembled they were soon driven back until mounted police intervened to hold the line. The pickets regrouped and drove the scabs and their police protectors back once more. Finally, the Premier agreed to take his supporters back to Perth and not to attempt to work the wharves that day. There had been thirty-three casualties — twenty-eight police and seven pickets. Strike meetings promising further physical resistance to the scabs and the police were held in Fremantle and Perth on Sunday afternoon. The fears of the bourgeoisie were well captured in the editorials of the *West Australian* for Monday and Tuesday. Instead of the usual demand for a strong hand against the workers, there were pleas for moderation by the government and for compromise by the ship owners. Perth, the newspaper reasoned, was two days sail from the nearest reinforcement of Commonwealth troops. The strike was settled on the Wednesday, in the strikers' favour.<sup>57</sup> The state apparatus, through the Premier, had organised the bourgeoisie into an assault on the strikers. When this failed the police were called in. When this failed the local state apparatuses were forced to compromise because they were too far from the aid of the army. The Fremantle battle is a most instructive case study of the state as the repressive arm of the capitalists, because it shows both its essential nature and the limitations which it faces.

Open extra-legal violence of the type shown at Fremantle is less successful than the violent sanctions inherent in laws. To this end, the Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1920 brought in amendments which all limited the workers' room for legal manoeuvre. The definition of striking—already illegal—was extended to include unreasonable refusal to accept employment on award terms which meant that it was a crime to strike for improved conditions. The Arbitration Court was given power to alter awards before they expired, that is, to cut into existing standards. A reduction in the standard hours of weekly work henceforth required the deliberations of three judges, not one, which was designed to hamper Higgins. Amendments to the Immigration Act permitted the exclusion or deportation of anarchists, revolutionaries and other trouble-making strike leaders who had not been born in Australia.<sup>58</sup> All these moves were designed to disorganise the working class whilst simultaneously organising the employers around the state apparatuses.

The immediate necessity for further strengthening the capitalists' hand arose from the steep rises in the cost of living in 1919 and 1920. After an enormous leap in 1915, costs were relatively stable for the next three years. But in 1919 and 1920 they rose by about 15 per cent each year.<sup>59</sup> Under the procedures established in 1912, these price increases should have been translated into wage increases. Consequently, the employers argued openly for an end to the assumptions underlying the Harvester judgement. Their representatives on the 1920 Royal Commission into the Basic Wage, hastily submitted a minority report which called explicitly for an end to the system by which the basic wage was tied to the cost of living: in practice, this meant a cut in real wages.<sup>60</sup>

The concern which this Royal Commission caused the bourgeoisie was evident on every hand, especially after its report appeared. Herbert Brookes, President of the Board of Trade, wrote to a colleague: 'We feel here that we are dwelling on the edge of a volcano now that the Basic Wage Commissioner's report has been published'.<sup>61</sup> The government was so perturbed that the Nationalist Party caucus met three times in one week to discuss their attitude.<sup>62</sup> Although a substantial part of the recommended increase in the basic wage was granted, and real wages were higher than in any year since 1900,<sup>63</sup> Australian capitalism was saved from the full force of the Basic Wage Royal Commission because the workers' power to fight was being undermined by unemployment in excess of 11 per cent,<sup>64</sup> and by changes to the industrial laws.

Employers' attitudes towards working class militancy changed as the relative fortunes of each class rose and fell. In general, capitalists moved from tremulous conciliation in 1919 to outright aggression by 1921. W.L. Baillieu was so 'frightfully disturbed about the Socialist and Bolshevik outlook'<sup>65</sup> that, on 26 February 1919, a letter from him appeared on the front page of the Melbourne newspaper, the *Herald*, which he owned. Baillieu suggested that Hughes should call for cooperation between Labor and Capital as part of the Peace settlement; in particular, he sought consultative councils of employers and workers. The scheme was enthusiastically taken up by other capitalists and by various state apparatuses,<sup>66</sup> but was rejected by the labour movement.

Once the returned soldiers had shown themselves to be anything but Bolsheviks, and the election results had demonstrated the safe political temper of the population at large, the bourgeoisie felt confident enough to adopt more aggressive tactics. Throughout 1920, the major problem facing the Commonwealth government was how to get rid of Mr Justice Higgins<sup>67</sup> whom they rightly feared would grant a forty-four hour week and increased margins. As a High Court judge, Higgins had life tenure, but his Presidency of the Arbitration Court was due to expire in 1922. The capitalists could not afford to wait two years,<sup>68</sup> and so their agents amended the industrial system in ways so offensive to him that he took no new cases after September 1920, preparatory to quitting the Arbitration Court entirely in the following June. The awards that he brought down in the final months of his Presidency were quickly watered down by his successor, Mr Justice Powers. In 1925, Powers wrote to the Attorney-General asking for a knighthood and specifically mentioned his blocking of the Basic Wage Royal Commission's findings, his restoration of the forty-eight hour week and his cutting of 12/- per week off fitters and turners' wages:

All these were very unpleasant duties but necessary in the interests of the Commonwealth...Imagine for 11 years refusing requests to increase the basic wage...Where men have families of more than two it is hard work to insist on them getting only the basic wage...<sup>69</sup>

Powers unavailingly pleaded that such devoted public services, and the

worry which they had caused him, more than warranted the reward of a knighthood.

Even the replacement of the independently-minded Higgins with the totally lick-spittle Powers could not satisfy the capitalists' needs, as they encountered the post-war depression in 1921. Their solution was to 'abolish the Arbitration Court for a period',<sup>70</sup> a solution to which Hughes was tempted.<sup>71</sup> Under the leadership men such as BHP's retired managing-director, G.D. Delprat, a Single Purpose League was established with the aim of abolishing compulsory arbitration.<sup>72</sup> Most political representatives of the capitalists preferred to fight the class struggle within the confines of a state apparatus (the Arbitration system), rather than have to slog it out in open conflict. To this end, the Commonwealth spent a good deal of its energies in the 1920s devising means of stacking the legal deck in the employers' favour.

#### *Producing the 'profiteer'*

So far, numerous instances showing the immediacy of class struggle have been presented. These illustrate the economic, political and social features of the post- Great War period, and simultaneously serve as the necessary prerequisite for an investigation of the production of an ideological defence of the rate of exploitation, namely, the 1919-21 campaign against the elusive 'profiteer'. For a particular piece of ideology to be understood correctly, it must be reinserted into the social practices through which it developed. Our analysis of this particular instance of ideological production will be organised under four headings:

1. The governments' anti- profiteer campaign;
2. The etymological and social origins of profiteering;
3. Profiteering's congruence with longer-standing ideological defences of capitalism;
4. The dominance of the manufacturing fraction at the political level.

#### THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN

The campaign against the profiteer was woven into every political activity. Long before its first public endorsement by the Prime Minister tied it to anti-Bolshevism, 'profiteers' were presented as the root cause of Bolshevism.<sup>73</sup> Anti-profiteering legislation was enacted in each of the five mainland states; and it was the central argument advanced for the alteration of the Constitution to give the Commonwealth government temporary power over prices.<sup>74</sup> According to the leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, Frank Tudor, profiteering was the 'most vital question' of the 1919 election;<sup>75</sup> his party had moved several censure motions and amendments on the question.<sup>76</sup> The Inter-State Commission prepared twelve reports on wartime price-fixing and profiteering.<sup>77</sup> In 1919, Hughes wanted to set up a Royal Commission and, in 1920, a Court of Commerce, to investigate and deal with the problem, but was frustrated by opposition from within his own government.<sup>78</sup>

The Victorian government appointed a Royal Commission in August, 1919, which prepared five reports before the end of the year.<sup>79</sup> Much of this investigative work was a surrogate for hard action, but the need for so many diversions is a testament to the depth of public concern at the rising cost of living.

#### THE ORIGINS OF PROFITEERING

So what was a 'profiteer'? There are two possible answers. First, there is the definition used by the framers of legislation where a typical form of words alleged that 'profiteering' was the charging of:

A price far in excess of the amount which might reasonably be claimed (after due allowance for abnormal conditions), having regard to the ratio of profit customarily asked or expected by fair traders or dealers in the case of a like article or commodity prior to the 31st day of July, One thousand nine hundred and fourteen.<sup>80</sup>

What this meant in practice was almost always vaguely defined. Indeed, vagueness was central to the campaign. The reason for this deliberate imprecision will be clear once a different way of defining profiteering is employed. This definition will not be a dictionary-style one, but one derived from the reasons for the production of this particular piece of ideology. This second definition is the crux of this final segment of the essay.

Before proceeding, it is important to point out that this segment is not concerned with the truth of allegations about profiteering. That would require another essay entirely. What concerns us here is the ideology of 'anti-profiteering', not the practice of profiteering itself. There are two ways of pursuing the origins of the 'profiteer' as an ideology. One is to trace the appearance, spread and adaptation of the word in question. This approach has value, but largely only in so far as it elucidates the second method of pursuit, namely, the identification of the exact social practices with which 'profiteering' was expected to cope. Though 'profiteer' first appeared during the wars of the 1790s the word fell into disuse, and did not regain currency until the latter half of the Great European War.<sup>81</sup> For example, it was not used in 1915 when it would have enabled politicians to avoid circumlocutions such as 'the rapacity of the cornerers of food supplies' and 'the takers of high profits'.<sup>82</sup> 'Profiteering', as an expression, started to become popular in 1917. One measure, *The Times Index*, shows it having a fitful existence of fewer than a dozen mentions in 1917 and not really becoming a major heading until 1919. Its first appearance in the Caucus Minutes of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party was on 2 August 1917, and it was sprinkled through parliamentary debates in 1918.<sup>83</sup> *The Argus Index* lists three references for the last third of 1918 and then no more until July 1919, when Hughes promised to shoot the 'profiteer'. Certainly, speakers in the Victorian parliament of late 1919 remarked upon its novelty, as well as upon its recent ubiquity. One member claimed that

profiteer had replaced the pre-war term 'speculator',<sup>84</sup> while another noted that it had 'become a household word...used in every part of the globe'.<sup>85</sup> From even this fleeting examination of the re-emergence of the word 'profiteer', it is clear enough that it was the product of a particular conjuncture. To define 'profiteer', it will be necessary to locate the features of that conjuncture in more detail than the preceding three segments have done already. Nonetheless, it remains a partial account.

Briefly, the most important single feature was that the cost of living in Australia had risen by 62 per cent between 1913 and 1920, while wages had increased by only 51 per cent. More particularly, between March 1919 and January 1920, the wholesale price index rose by nearly 20 per cent.<sup>86</sup> One line of descent from these facts to the ideology of 'profiteering' was spelled out in Hughes' policy speech where it was argued that 'profiteering' and industrial unrest both arose from the 'lack of wealth' for which the cure was more production, but this could come only from industrial peace, and so a Royal Commission into the Basic Wage was to be established since wage demands were caused by price increases.<sup>87</sup> Or, as Hughes put it in his speech to the House of Representatives on the Constitution Alteration Bill:

So we see that these three things—industrial unrest, the high cost of living, and the scarcity of raw materials and other necessities, that is to say, of wealth—are intimately related one to the other. Each reacts on the others. Each is the cause of both the others, and an effect of both the others. The high cost of living helps to cause industrial unrest; industrial unrest is fatal to production, and helps to cause the high cost of living. The scarcity of necessities contributes to the high cost of living, and to industrial unrest, and so on in a vicious circle, and in and out through the warp and woof runs the trail of the profiteer, who takes unfair advantage, for his personal greed, of the abnormal and unsettled condition of the world.

Despite the web which Hughes wove, he did not leave matters at this confused aetiology, and within another two paragraphs he had selected a determinate cause: 'So we come back again, by whatever road we travel, to the central problem of all—the problem of industrial peace'.<sup>88</sup>

Victoria's Premier, Lawson, was even more explicit when he introduced his Necessary Commodities Control Bill. Noting the impact of war on production, he argued that lower production had resulted in shortages which the 'greedy' take advantage of, before stressing the need for increased production through industrial peace, that is, no strikes.<sup>89</sup> E.W. Greenwood, MLA for Boroondara, and acknowledged spokesman in the Legislative Assembly for the commercial fraction, defended his fellow traders against allegations of criminal profiteering with an attack on 'another crime against any community which is as serious, and that is the number of strikes which are occurring'.<sup>90</sup> So, as well as defending capitalists from charges of profiteering by segregating capitalism from 'profiteers', the 'anti-profiteering' campaign was a stalking horse for intensifying legal attacks upon the working classes' defence of their real wages.



To sum up: the purpose of all bourgeois ideology is twofold—to help defend the property rights of the Capitalists, and to assist in their expropriation of surplus value. ‘Anti-profiteering’ did both simultaneously at a time when property rights were under pressure from Bolsheviks, and when inflation was undermining real wages, thus forcing the proletariat into increased demands. The need for a target other than the capitalists themselves was consequently very much in evidence. ‘Profiteering’ was presented as a very special category of economic activity, and despite its name did not refer to the normal practice of making a profit, but was presented as something external to the normal functioning of the capitalist system. The ‘profiteer’ supposedly exploited the capitalist just as much as he exploited the worker or the parson’s widow. In Premier Lawson’s words, ‘There are black sheep in every flock, and we are introducing this Bill to get at the black sheep’.<sup>91</sup>

#### CONGRUENCE WITH LONGER-STANDING DEFENCES

Attacks on ‘profiteers’ fitted into both populist objections to capitalism, and into the Marshallian school of economic thought. This was not because disembodied ideas fitted together, but because all three ideas were part of the mystification of capitalist relations of production. The persuasiveness of ‘anti-profiteering’ was partly due to its ability to reproduce such widely accepted propositions as populism, and marginal utility, in a concrete situation. Broadly speaking, populism assured the endorsement of ‘profiteering’ by the labour movement, and marginal utility by the Right. Necessarily difficult to define, the pre-eminent characteristic of a populist appeal is its rallying of the overwhelming majority of the people into an undifferentiated alliance against a tiny handful of enemies. Profiteers temporarily took over from the ‘money power’ in Labor’s rhetoric.<sup>92</sup> Typical was the pre-election advertisement headed ‘The People’s Manifesto’ which pictured ‘The strong right arm of every honest man and woman’ using their franchise to write: ‘Down with the Profiteer!’—where else?—in the sky.<sup>93</sup> Tudor’s endorsement of ‘profiteering’ as the ‘most vital question of the present election’ did not signify his satisfaction with the way the Nationalists proposed to deal with it, and a special Federal Labor Conference in October 1919 declared that ‘the referendum proposals...are merely intended to mislead the electors’.<sup>94</sup> Yet neither did Labor’s firmer resolve to end profiteering extend to ending profit-taking as such, no matter how fondly this may have been desired by the party’s more radical spirits. Although the Labor leaders expanded the definition of profiteering to include a large body of well-known capitalists, Labor’s plan for them stopped well short of their expropriation.<sup>95</sup>

The relationship between the ideology of ‘profiteering’ and the ideology of marginal utility was less direct than it was for populism. Despite one member’s attempt to remind the Victorian Legislative Council that ‘the Law of supply and demand is inexorable’ against Sir Frank

Clarke’s ‘never-ceasing astonishment’ at its ‘apparent failure’,<sup>96</sup> the contribution of the marginal utility school to ‘anti-profiteering’ was not at the level of articulate debate, but rather in the way in which marginal utility presented price as being determined solely in the processes of distribution. ‘Profiteering’ was seen as a dislocation of this natural process which required Government intervention to restore. Even Bruce Smith, that paragon of *laissez faire*, supported the Constitutional Amendments because he believed that ‘profiteering’ resulted from ‘the hysterical condition of the people’ which prevented them from seeing the true value of commodities to the extent that they actually revelled in paying exorbitant prices.<sup>97</sup> Marginal utility thinking also assisted in making ‘anti-profiteering’ more amenable to the interests of the manufacturing fraction of the bourgeoisie, precisely because it concentrated on prices being determined in the realm of distribution, and not in production.

Showing something of the connections between ‘anti-profiteering’, and populism and marginal utility analysis, reveals the nature of Marxist intellectual history which treats ideas, not as disembodied figments that move from brain to brain across the centuries picking up footnotes as they go, but on the contrary, as being in need of constant reproduction through social practices. Consequently, there is no such thing as a Marxist history of ideas, since ideas cannot have a history: it is the relationship of ideas to social practices which has a history.

#### POLITICAL DOMINANCE OF THE MANUFACTURING FRACTION

One of the important things to note about the anti-profiteering campaign was that it received the endorsement of segments of the state apparatuses. One might almost go so far as to say that it was produced there. Although most ideology was then produced outside the state apparatuses in Australia, ‘anti-profiteering’ became an official ideology of the capitalist state. It was not a wild left-wing protest. To appreciate why this was the case, it is essential to consider which fraction of the dominant capitalist class was dominant at the political level around 1919-1921. Although it cannot be proven in the space available here, there are very strong reasons for arguing that the manufacturing fraction was temporarily dominant. Since ‘profiteering’ had its direct impact on the purchaser, while its most obvious beneficiary was the retailer, manufacturers were better able to hide behind the notion of the ‘profiteer’ than was the commercial fraction, which was by far the most outspoken in its opposition to the whole campaign. The future Prime Minister, S.M. Bruce, made the distinction between the various fractions of the capitalist class perfectly clear in a long letter to Hughes in which he (Bruce) expressed his strong support for dealing harshly with the ‘profiteer’:

The great primary industries I would leave unfettered...the secondary industries we should also leave alone...In respect to the distributing traders

and middlemen, I say that immediate action should be taken and that these traders, who are only the servants of the Nation as a whole should be made to carry on their operations on the lines of a reasonable return to them and a fair deal to the people—their masters.<sup>99</sup>

A discussion of tariffs could show that their introduction indicated that the manufacturing fraction was dominant. This is given further confirmation by the nature of the ideology—'anti-profiteering'—that was endorsed by the Commonwealth sectors of the state apparatuses; not to mention Hughes' warm relationship with manufacturers such as W.S. Robinson.<sup>100</sup> The special interest of the manufacturing fraction against 'foreign profiteers' was momentarily recalled by Greene in the second reading speech of his Tariff Bill,<sup>101</sup> and more concretely by the New South Wales Labor Attorney-General, E. McTiernan, when BHP's Delprat called to obtain 'exemption from Price Fixing for new industries', and 'had a very sympathetic reception'.<sup>102</sup> Once the alarm of 1919 abated, even the manufacturing fraction was anxious to disentangle itself from 'anti-profiteering' and to get on with the business of making 'big profits' which were once more defended as 'indispensable to industrial progress'.<sup>103</sup>

Dominance by the manufacturing fraction at the political level was not universal throughout the States of the Commonwealth. Tasmania's Legislative Council rejected anti-profiteering legislation entirely, and Victoria's Control of Necessary Commodities Bill—a weak affair to start with—was amended almost beyond recognition in committee, and one Councillor claimed at the outset that he could not recall 'a Bill coming into this House in regard to which honourable members had so little belief'.<sup>104</sup> As Theodore Fink explained to Keith Murdoch, '...a Profiteering Court has been created in Victoria, which will go into the retail price of sardines, but leave gas, meat, oil, and all the big things of life severely alone; in fact, there will be complete immunity to any group that subscribes £1,000 for Hughes' fighting funds. The Labour gibes are quite true'.<sup>105</sup>

So it is important to realise that the 'profiteer' was not merely a defensive ideology for capitalism as a whole but was more suited to the fraction of the bourgeoisie which was dominant at the Commonwealth political level; namely, the manufacturers. Even at moments of greatest alarm, the bourgeoisie cannot completely forget its internal divisions. Acute contradictions between classes do not result in an automatic decrease in the contradictions within classes, since the one can intensify the other as the various fractions scramble to survive, and/or prosper.

### Conclusion

To appreciate fully the class repression which grew out of the Great War, it is necessary to recognise the intimate relationship that exists between class struggle, Imperialism and war. Imperialism is the final stage of capitalism, monopoly capitalism; in its efforts to survive, Imperialism necessarily generates wars abroad and reaction at home.

Thus, the demands of war were not separate from the requirements of class struggle. Political, industrial and ideological repression increased during and after the Great War because of the changed nature of capitalism. Naturally, there were peculiarly Australian contours to this striving for reaction at home. The working class had been smashed during the strikes and lockouts of 1890—1894, until it was left with virtually no independent organisation—industrial or political. It is not generally recognised how complete this destruction was. The rebuilding did not even commence until the late 1890s and most of it took place in the decade after 1902. In organisational terms, the working class then outstripped its opponents—with the powerful exception that the Imperialists still had all the state apparatuses, such as arbitration tribunals, police and army. (Capitalism does not have a party, it has the state). In the war years, these state apparatuses were updated to outflank the recent organisational gains of the working class. And the state apparatuses organised around themselves a series of voluntary bodies recruited from the bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie. The war was not an 'excuse' used by the Imperialists to tighten the screws on the working class. The economic laws which produced the war were simultaneously driving Imperialism to more open forms of dictatorship, and eventually to fascism.

### NOTES

- 1 N.L.A. MS 2823/46.
  - 2 Colin Forster, 'Australian Manufacturing and the War of 1914-18', *Economic Record* 29 (November 1953), p. 216.
  - 3 Ian Turner, *Industrial Labor and Politics* (A.N.U. Press, Canberra, 1965), p. 252.
  - 4 *Labor Call*, 8 May 1919.
  - 5 *Labor Call*, 11 November 1920.
  - 6 *Bulletin*, 21 August 1919.
  - 7 *Argus*, 31 October 1919.
  - 8 See my 'The Social Character of the New Guard', *Arena* 40, pp. 81-2.
  - 9 Robert Hyslop, 'Mutiny on H.M.A.S. *Australia*', *Public Administration* 24, 3, pp. 284-96.
  - 10 *Freeman's Journal*, 20 May 1919.
  - 11 *Labor Call*, 20 May 1915.
  - 12 Ernest Scott, *Australia During the War* (Angus & Robertson, Sydney 1936), pp. 145-7.
  - 13 Sir Robert Garran, *Prosper the Commonwealth* (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1958), p. 222.
  - 14 G. Sawyer, *Australian Federal Politics and Law, 1901-1929* (M.U.P., Melbourne, 1956), pp. 166-7, 195-6.
  - 15 See, for example, Australian Archives, CP 447/2, SC 292.
  - 16 For example, A.A., CP 447/3, SC 5(1).
  - 17 W.A. Watt to W.M. Hughes, 30 May 1918, N.L.A. MS 1538/133/4.
  - 18 N.L.A. MS 1924/17, and Rohan Rivett, *Australian Citizen* (M.U.P., Melbourne, 1965), p. 57.
  - 19 H. Brookes to F.C. Urquhart, 12 February and 28 June 1919, N.L.A. MS 1924/1 6219, Letter Book, pp. 48, 78.
  - 20 H. Brookes to M.H. Ellis, 29 March 1920, N.L.A. MS 1924/1/6219, Letter Book, p. 143.
- Ellis told the 1949 Victorian Royal Commission into Communism that his career as an anti-communist student began in 1918 at the request of the Commonwealth Directorate of War Propaganda. Cited in V. Rastrick, *The Victorian Royal Commission on Communism 1949-50* (M.A. Thesis, A.N.U., 1973), p. 128.

- 21 Hume Cook recorded that Hughes claimed in 1930, that he had been so fearful of a radical uprising in Queensland, towards the end of the war, that he had dispatched rifles and machine guns, concealed in piano (!) and furniture cases, to loyalist elements there. N.L.A. MS 601/3/76; my thanks to Peter Cochrane for this reference. Kevin Fewster drew my attention to a file on T.J. Ryan's alleged disloyal associations, in which the conservatives' fear of a radical 'conspiracy' to seize power in Queensland late in November 1917 is spelt out. A.A., B 197 2021/1/270.
- 22 N.L.A. MS 1924/17.
- 23 Constable A.E. Shersby to E.G. Theodore, 25 March 1919, Gall Papers, Q.S.A., cited in T. Botham, *The Red Flag Riots: Conservative Reactions* (B.A. Hons Thesis, A.N.U., 1975), p. 10n.
- 24 A.A., CP 447/3, SC 5 (1).
- 25 A.A., CP 447/2, SC 294.
- 26 *Smith's Weekly*, 12 July, 9 August and 'Editorial', 22 November 1919.
- 27 *Courier*, 24 March 1919.
- 28 *Courier*, 2 April 1919. It is more than probable that the organisation had been established before the red-flag riots, and that it in fact engineered them. See F.C. Urquhart to H. Brookes, 23 February 1919, N.L.A. MS 1924/1; and A.A., CP 447/3, SC 5(1), Capt. Stable to W.A. Watt, 9 February 1919.
- 29 *Courier*, 7 April 1919.
- 30 *Argus*, 23 July 1919.
- 31 *Western Argus* (Kalgoorlie), 16 November 1920, cited by Tony Baker, *Hugh Mahon's Expulsion from Parliament* (B.A. Hons. Thesis, A.N.U., 1967), p. 19.
- 32 *Argus*, 24 July 1919.
- 33 *Courier*, 26 March 1919.
- 34 *Courier*, 21 May 1919; *Worker*, 10 April 1919.
- 35 *Labor Call*, 14 January 1915.
- 36 *Ararat Advertiser*, 12 February 1920.
- 37 *Punch* (Melbourne), 2 January 1919 and *Australasian*, 5 July 1919.
- 38 *Freeman's Journal*, 20 March 1919.
- 39 *Sunday Times*, 13 April 1919.
- 40 *Messenger*, 23 May 1919; see also *Nationalist Speakers Handbook*, No. 1 (Melbourne; probably printed 1919), p. 34, and *Triad*, March 1920, pp. 44-6.
- 41 B. Hoare, *The Two Plagues* (Progressive and Economic Association, Melbourne, 1919), pp. 1-2; see my 'The Spanish Influenza Pandemic in Australia, 1918-19', in Jill Roe (ed.), *Social Policy in Australia, Some Perspectives, 1901-1975* (Cassell, Melbourne, 1976), pp. 131-47.
- 42 *Soldier*, 14 February 1919.
- 43 *Melbourne University in War Lectures*, (George Robertson, Melbourne 1915), pp. 5-6.
- 44 *ibid.*, pp. 70-71.
- 45 *ibid.*, pp. 29, 32, 34.
- 46 Cited in R. Rivett, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-71.
- 47 E.D. Patterson to H. Brookes, 8 March 1920, N.L.A. MS 1924/21.
- 48 Captain Thos. W. White to W.M. Hughes, N.L.A. MS 1538/118/5 and *Messenger*, 23 May 1919.
- 49 T.E. Ruth, *Playing the Game*. (Constable, Sydney, 1925), p. 221. Later in this sermon, Ruth defended capitalism by pointing out that even Christ 'had a treasurer in his little company', but forgot to say that his name was Judas Iscariot.
- 50 Sir Henry Braddon, *Essays and Addresses* (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1930), pp. 178-9.
- 51 *Industrial Australian and Mining Standard*, 23 January 1919.
- 52 *Courier*, 18 March 1919.
- 53 *Messenger*, 23 May 1919.
- 54 *Punch*, 23 January 1919, and *Bulletin*, 3 April 1919.
- 55 A.A., CP 447/2, SC 294.
- 56 G.E. Caiden, 'The strike of Commonwealth Public Servants in 1919', *Public Administration* 21, 3 (September 1962), pp. 262-74; and 22, 3 (September 1963), pp. 295-9; John Iremonger *et al.*, (edd.), *Strikes* (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1973), pp. 51-127; Julius Roe, *Companies, Prices and Pressures: The Broken Hill Strike 1919-1920* (B.A. Hons. Thesis, A.N.U., 1974); and Ian Turner, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-202.
- 57 *West Australian*, 5-8 May 1919; *Daily News*, 5 May 1919; and *The Fremantle Wharf Crisis of 1919*. (*Westralian Worker*, Perth, 1920); B.K. de Garis, 'An Incident at Fremantle', *Labour History*, 10 (May 1966), pp. 32-7.
- 58 G. Sawyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 195-6.

- 59 D.B. Copland, 'The Economic Situation in Australia, 1918-1923', *Economic Journal* 34, 1, (March 1924), pp. 32-51.
- 60 C.P.P., 1920-1, IV, pp. 589-590.
- 61 H. Brookes to Mr White, 6 December 1920, N.L.A. MS 1924/1/6219, Letter Book, p. 241.
- 62 N.L.A. MS 213/12/1; see also Cabinet discussions, N.L.A. MS 1538/155/1.
- 63 D.B. Copland, 'The Trade Depression in Australia in Relation to Economic Thought', *A.A.A.S. Report* (1923), p. 574n.
- 64 A.A., C.R.S. A 457/P 303/4.
- 65 T. Fink to K. Murdoch, 2 April 1919, N.L.A. MS 2823/50.
- 66 The Australian Chamber of Manufacturers held a Special Conference on 'Profit-Sharing and Co-partnership' on 15 August 1919, N.L.A. MS 1924/15; W.A. Watt to W.M. Hughes, 22 March 1919, A.A. C.R.S. A2/1920/763.
- 67 It should not be assumed that Higgins was a traitor to his class. His differences with Hughes were over the best tactics for preserving capitalism. He was particularly opposed to Hughes' willingness to give in to strikers in order to gain some short term advantage. As one of Gramsci's 'organic intellectuals', Higgins was concerned to maintain the rule of law. See H.B. Higgins, *A New Province for Law and Order* (W.E.A., Sydney, 1922), pp. 78, 85-6, 93.
- 68 See, as examples, Hughes' outburst in C.P.D., H. of R., 91, 28 April 1920, p. 1532; the letter from the general manager of Adelaide's Municipal Tramways Trust claiming that Higgins had 'prostituted his position as a judge'. W.G.T. Goodman to W.M. Hughes, 6 May 1920, N.L.A. MS 1538/136/9; *Argus*, editorials 24 February and 17 March 1920.
- 69 Chas Powers to L. Groom, 16 April 1925, N.L.A. MS 236/2/851-4. Sir Owen Dixon, CJ, remarked that it was not until he heard Powers, J. deliver a judgement on Constitutional law that he, Dixon, fully grasped the meaning of *ultra vires*.
- 70 *Courier*, 21 December 1920, cited by Glen Lewis, *A History of the Ports of Queensland*. (University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1973), p. 321.
- 71 Cabinet Minutes, 13 April 1920, N.L.A. MS 1538/155.
- 72 P. Mawson, *A Vision of Steel* (Cheshire, Melbourne, 1958), pp. 216-19.
- 73 *Messenger*, 11 April 1919; *Smith's Weekly*, 1 March 1919; Rev. E.N. Merrington, 'The Greatest Australian Interest', *Australian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy* (1923), p. 54; cartoons in *Smith's Weekly*, 6 July 1919 and *Bulletin*, 3 July 1919. *Smith's Weekly*, 27 September 1991, ran a doggerel 'The Bolshveer and Profitik'.
- 74 B. Berzins, 'Symbolic Legislation: Nationalists and Anti-Profiteering', *Politics* 6, 1 (May 1971), pp. 42-52; Conrad Joyner, 'W.M. Hughes and the 'Powers' Referendum of 1919: A Master Politician at Work', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 5, 1 (May 1959), pp. 15-23.
- 75 *Argus*, 6 November 1919.
- 76 Patrick Weller (ed.), *Caucus Minutes, 1901-1949* (M.U.P., Melbourne, 1975). vol. 2, 1917-1931, pp. 81, 85, 93-4, and 102.
- 77 C.P.P., 1917-19, V, pp. 77-502.
- 78 A.A., C.R.S. A2 1919/3638; T. Fink to K. Murdoch, 25 August and 20 September 1919, N.L.A. MS 2823/51.
- 79 V.P.P., 1919, II, pp. 373-437.
- 80 *ibid.*, p. 374.
- 81 *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1973); and *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences* (Macmillan, New York, 1954), vol. 11, pp. 492-5. The pursuit of 'keywords' for historical investigation is rare in English speaking countries, and especially so in Australia. This reluctance is grounded in the positivist approach to sources which treats the written word as 'the fact' and is hence incapable of interrogating its historical status. Some guidance can be obtained from R. Williams, *Keywords* (Fontana, London, 1976), and Lucien Febvre, *A New Kind of History* (Harper and Row, New York, 1973), pp. 208-67. Australian 'keywords' worthy of investigation include the inter-changeability of pal, mate, cobber and digger; home (referring to England); and suburban (in its derogatory cultural sense).
- 82 P. Weller, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, 1901-1917, p. 406, and *Daily Standard*, 13 August 1915.
- 83 Ernest Scott claimed that its first recorded mention in the Commonwealth parliament was not until 17 April 1918, see his *op. cit.*, p. 653; cf. *N.S.W. P.D.*, 71, 20 June 1918, pp. 234 and 242 where it is used in passing puzzlement.
- 84 *V.P.D.*, Leg. Council, 153, 19 November 1919, p. 2432. Some years earlier, another Councillor observed: 'When a man enters into a speculation in a business way he is on a higher plane than a man who merely bets'. (*ibid.*, 114, 27 September 1906, p. 1759).

- 85 *V.P.D.*, Leg. Ass., 153, 28 October 1919, p. 1975.
- 86 Copland, 'The Trade Depression in Australia in Relation to Economic Thought', *A.A.A.S. Report* (1923), pp. 573-4, 563.
- 87 *Argus*, 31 October 1919.
- 88 *C.P.D.*, H. of R., 90, 1 October 1919, p. 12845. See also *Home* editorial, September 1920.
- 89 *V.P.D.*, Leg. Ass., 153, 21 October 1919, pp. 1803-4.
- 90 *V.P.D.*, Leg. Ass., 153, 28 October 1919, p. 1969.
- 91 *V.P.D.*, Leg. Ass., 153, 21 October 1919, p. 1812.
- 92 See my 'Glory without Power', in John Playford & Doug Kirsner (edd.), *Australian Capitalism* (Penguin, Ringwood, 1972), pp. 365-7.
- 93 *Worker* (Brisbane) 27 November 1919, and editorials for 2 October, 13 November and 4 December 1919.
- 94 *ALP Special Conference Report*, 1919, pp. 10-12.
- 95 *Q.P.D.*, 123, 22 October 1919, pp. 1494-1507.
- 96 *V.P.D.*, 153, 25 November 1919, p. 2559 and 11 November 1919, p. 2186.
- 97 *C.P.D.*, H. of R., 90, 2 October 1919, p. 12949.
- 98 M. Dobb, 'The Trend of Modern Economics', in E.K. Hunt & Jesse G. Schwartz (edd.), *A Critique of Economic Theory* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1972), pp. 39-82.
- 99 S.M. Bruce to W.M. Hughes, 17 October 1919, N.L.A. MS 1538/136/1.
- 100 W.S. Robinson, *If I Remember Rightly* (Cheshire, Melbourne, 1967), pp. 80-96. The Hughes papers are full of long letters from 'W.S.' who presumably collected most of the £25,000 gratuity which Hughes received in 1920.
- 101 *C.P.D.*, H. of R., 91, 24 March 1920, p. 704.
- 102 Diary entries, 2, 13 and 15 November 1920, N.L.A. MS 1630/15.
- 103 *Industrial Australian and Mining Standard*, 27 July 1920.
- 104 *V.P.D.*, Leg. Council, 153 19 November 1919, p. 2437.
- 105 T. Fink to K. Murdoch, 20 January 1920, N.L.A. MS 2823/51.