

The "Worker's"

first

Seventy

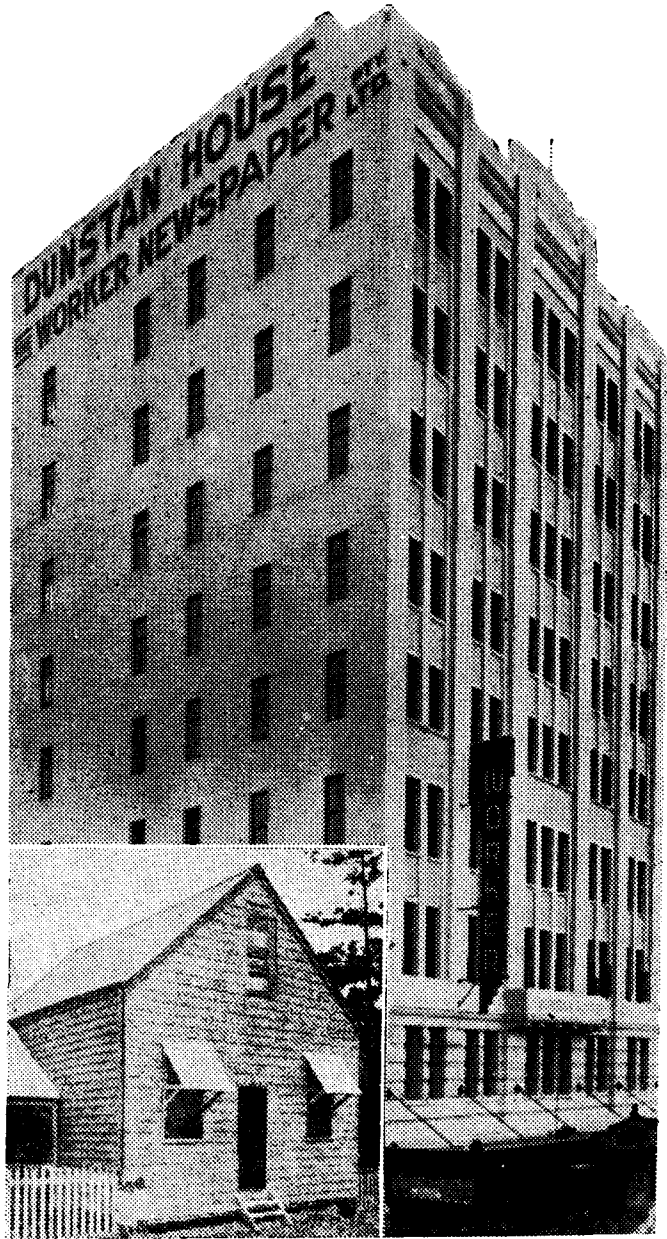
Years

Souvenir

**T**HIS BROCHURE has been published as a souvenir of "The Worker's" 70th birthday, which was celebrated on March 1, 1960. It contains several articles of great historical importance which appeared in the Golden and Diamond Jubilee issues of the journal in 1940 and 1950 respectively, and in others, and a number of cartoons and illustrations taken from some of our earliest issues.

It is confidently hoped that the material in this little souvenir will give younger members of the Australian Labor Movement a glimpse into the days when men, and women, had to suffer extreme hardship in order to lift themselves, and those who followed, from the depths into which they had been thrust by the tyranny and squalor of the times, and to help set Australia as a star among the Democracies.

We hope, too, that these messages from the past will urge those who read them, to strive for the noble aims of the Australian Labor Movement, which include Peace, and the broadest possible meaning of the word, humanity.



This composite picture shows the first home of "The Worker" soon after its establishment in 1890, and the present one, Dunstan House, Elizabeth Street, Brisbane, which is also the Headquarters of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Workers' Union, and Southern District of the Union—the largest District, numerically, in the Commonwealth.

**N**OT MANY newspapers, anywhere, can claim that they have been in existence for 70 years, but the claim is true about "The Worker" whose 70th birthday was celebrated on Tuesday, March 1, 1960.

The world in its fullest meaning, is very different to-day from that of the nineties, when "The Worker" was first published, and the wants of white men are not nearly as distressing as they were in those far off years. Then, it took great human courage for men to form trade unions, and to dream of someday having their own Parliamentary representatives was looked upon as the hallucination of an alcoholic by the enemies of the trade unions and Labor.

Nevertheless, we know that many of the dreams of our pioneers came true, for out of the shearing strike of the nineties emerged one of the grandest examples of brotherhood . . . the Australian Labor Movement.

A number of trade unions were associated in the establishment of "The Worker", but over the years, the other organisations fell away, until the entire undertaking became a task for the Queensland Branch of the Australian Workers' Union . . . an earlier counterpart, as it were, of the "Daily Standard" commenced by many Trade Unions, but after "withdrawals" was kept functioning for years by money poured into its publication by the Queensland Branch of this Union.

Since the day "The Worker" came into the ownership and control of the A.W.U. it has looked back only in retrospect, so to speak, when reviewing some of the battles waged on behalf of A.W.U. members, the A.L.P., and yes, on the side of many trade unions too impoverished to carry on their own campaigns.

To-day, the importance of "The Worker" cannot be measured idly. While other trade unions and A.L.P. journals have been cut back from weekly to monthly publications, and many have disappeared completely from sight because of rising costs and, unfortunately, because the workers thought they were not worth supporting, though they readily bought anti-Labor and anti-union publications, "The Worker" has weathered many storms, some of which were veritable financial cyclones.

To-day, we stand with our roots firmly spread, gripping deeply into the Australian soil, and while we deplore the passing of so many Labor papers, we can thank "The Worker's" presence in the field of reading and political and industrial education to the strength of the Australian Workers' Union and the careful husbanding of our resources by those whose responsibility it was to do so.

Yes, to-day, "The Worker" is right in the front line, ready to do battle at any time for our members and for the Australian Labor Party. This paper will fight those within the Union or the A.L.P. who won't carry out policy laid down; "The Worker" will fight, too, those OUTSIDE who are bent on destroying all that we hold dear.

Communists, Tories, anti-Australians, profiteers, union smashers, fellow travellers . . . they can all count on "The Worker" being their implacable enemy.

In the near future, we hope to see plans for "The Worker" develop and take more definite shape, and before our paper has many more birthdays, we expect to be striding forward towards the next ten years with greater achievements on the record.

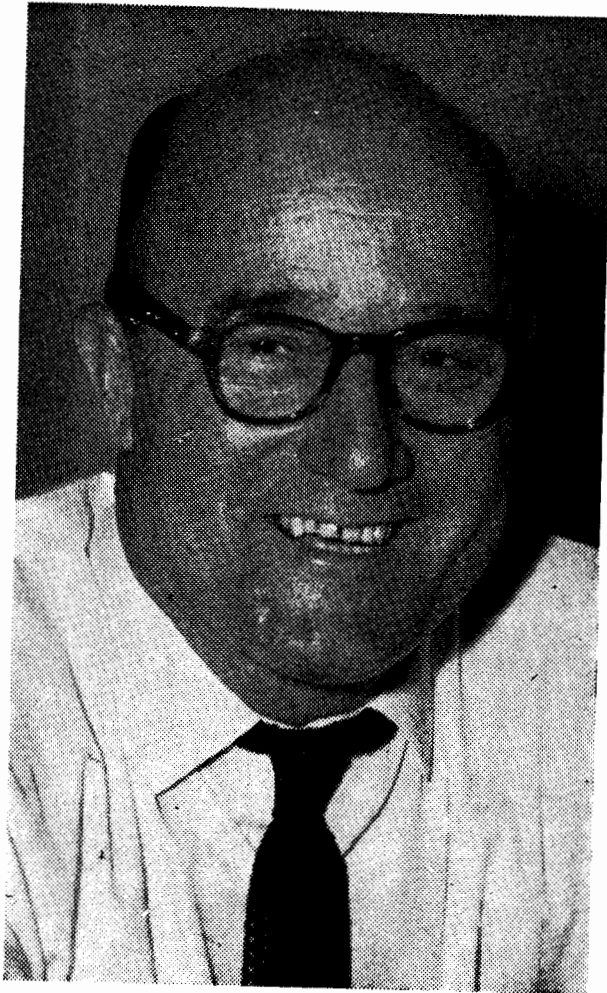
The march of time is relentless. Since "The Worker's" Diamond Jubilee, in 1950, three Chairmen of Directors have passed on. They were the late C. G. Fallon, H. Boland, and R. J. J. Bukowski. Each was Branch Secretary of the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U. and each knew the tremendous power exerted by "The Worker" as a vehicle for official A.W.U. opinion.

No advertiser could "buy" "The Worker", no enemy of the Union or the A.L.P. could expect anything but unrelenting opposition.

"The Worker" had faltering steps in 1890 because it was young; in 1960 it enters the next decade firmly in stride, to carry on the traditions laid down by men of great vision, love of country and their fellow men.

EDGAR WILLIAMS,  
Chairman of Directors and Branch Secretary of the A.W.U.  
G. G. GODING,  
Vice-Chairman and Branch President of the A.W.U.

## CHAIRMAN OF DIRECTORS



**EDGAR WILLIAMS,**  
*Branch Secretary of the A.W.U.*

## BOARD MEMBERS



**W. J. DICKSON,**  
*Southern District  
Secretary.*



**G. G. GODING,**  
*Branch President and  
Central District Secretary.*



**N. WILLIAMSON,**  
*South-Western District  
Secretary.*



**GEO. PONT,**  
*Far Northern District  
Secretary.*

## Careers of "Worker" Board of Directors

*The following short biographies of the Directors of "The Worker" reveal the all round knowledge of Australia, which must be obtained before A.W.U. Officials earn their spurs in the Queensland Branch of the Australian Workers' Union. The five directors named are members of the State Executive of the A.W.U. which is the largest Branch of the largest Union of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.*

### EDGAR WILLIAMS (Chairman)

**B**ORN IN Sydney in 1911, Mr. Cecil Wallace Edgar Williams left school at a very early age and began life's battle without having passed through any University.

He came to Queensland in 1929 where he immediately started to make himself known as one of the really fast shearers in the industry, and he followed this arduous occupation for fourteen years, mainly in the West of the State.

The late Mr. Clarrie Fallon was Branch Secretary when, in 1943, Mr. Williams joined the staff of the A.W.U. as Organiser for the Western District, and he soon made his mark, because he was appointed Western District Secretary, with headquarters at Longreach, four years later.

From 1947 to 1950, Mr. Williams was District Secretary in the West. Following the death of the late Mr. T. B. Ryan, he took over the Northern District (Townsville), which reaches far to the West and embraces the Mt. Isa and Mary Kathleen mining fields.

Mr. Williams remained secretary of the Northern District (second only in size to Southern District), for ten years. Upon the resignation of the former Southern District Secretary (Mr. F. Howman), because of ill-health, he was elected by the Full State Executive to control Southern District, and a Vice-President of the Branch.

Mr. Williams has made something of a record, because his Southern District appointment was recorded as from January 18, 1960, but, following the sudden death of the late Mr. R. J. J. Bukowski, he was up-raised to the Branch Secretaryship as Mr. Bukowski's successor just four days

This period must be always regarded as an extraordinary point of his career, probably without parallel in the A.W.U.

Mr. Williams has taken a keen and active interest in the Australian Labor Party for many years and was a member of the Q.C.E. At the time of his 1960 appointments in Brisbane he was Campaign Director for the State elections at Townsville, having been elected by the affiliated Unions and A.L.P. to the post, to lead Labor's election battle in the North and South Townsville seats.

Mr. Williams was elected to the Q.C.E. by delegates attending the Labor-in-Politics Conventions held at Toowoomba (1953) and Mackay (1956) being among the ten chosen at each Convention from the large number of candidates who nominated . . . an honour not lightly bestowed.

In 1957 Mr. Williams was selected to represent the A.W.U. at the International Labor Organisation conference on metalliferous mining at Geneva, and he toured the United States of America later, for the Union.

He takes a keen interest in all forms of sport and knows the meaning of "front runners" and those that whip in the field, just as well as he recognises a "cobbler" when he sees one.

### G. G. GODING (Vice-Chairman)

**M**R. G. G. GODING, Secretary of the Central District of the A.W.U., is also Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, and President of the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U.

From the day he started working as a youth in the sugar industry until the present, he has been a continuous member of the Union over which today he presides. As a youth and young man he worked mainly in the

—his pastoral experience was gained on sheep and cattle stations and for a short period in shearing sheds. In the days when it was very necessary to fight hard for Union rights and in order to retain industrial conditions in the early depression years, he was a Union Rep. on the jobs. And in case anyone might think his knowledge of the sugar industry came from books, he spent fourteen years at the end of a cane knife as a cutter in the Far North and Central Districts of Queensland.

He launched out as an Organiser for the Union at 31 years of age at Childers in the Central District, and in 1942 became District Secretary stationed at Bundaberg and a member of the Branch Executive. He became Branch President in 1956 and the Vice-President from Queensland on the Federal Executive Council of the A.W.U., shortly afterwards being elected to the Board of Directors of Labor Papers Ltd. (Sydney). There is added interest in the last position mentioned because Mr. Goding holds the 1921-22 Labor Daily Levy which was endorsed by the All-Australian Labor Congress of 1921, and issued by the Queensland Branch. Labor Papers Ltd. was the company which controlled the publication of "The World", the afternoon paper in Sydney (which ceased publication), for which the levy held by Mr. Goding was issued.

Mr. Goding has been a member of "The Worker" Board for many years, and Vice-Chairman for four. He joined the Australian Labor Party when cane cutting, and has been a continuous member ever since, and was a member of the Queensland Central Executive for many years, until 1959. He has been very active in all A.L.P. political campaigns, Federal and State, held over the past 30 years, and has been campaign director in several electorates a number of times. At present he is Secretary of the Bundaberg Branch of the A.L.P. and the Wide Bay Divisional Executive. Although leading a very busy industrial and political life, Mr. Goding has devoted time and energy to the Bundaberg Hospital Board of which he was a member for about nine years. During that time very substantial improvements were made and an

### W. J. DICKSON

**M**R. W. J. DICKSON is Southern District Secretary of the A.W.U. . . . the largest A.W.U. District, numerically, in the Commonwealth.

He was born at O.K. Copper Mines, North Queensland, and is 52 years of age.

After passing scholarship he attended the Brisbane Technical School for three years. He started his working life as a shop assistant, then left for the West of the State. Like most A.W.U. executives he has been through the mill!

In ten years in the outback he worked as a truck driver, station hand, cook, wool presser and fencer, and has been all over Queensland with the exception of the South-West.

He knows well such places as Boulia, Dajarra, Cloncurry, Bedourie, Urandangi, Longreach, Isisford, Ilfracombe, Charleville, Cairns, Townsville, Mareeba and the Atherton Tableland.

In 1938, Mr. Dickson returned to the City and worked for the State Government (pick and shovel) on Howard Smith's wharf. He has been a topman on pile frame, skilled labourer, and driller on the drilling barge which job he occupied when he became temporary Organiser for the A.W.U., commencing these duties in the Allied Works Council project at Cairns.

After 18 months in the Far Northern Area, he was transferred to the Northern Rivers of New South Wales, mostly organising the shop assistants there. After another 12 months, he was transferred back to Brisbane, where he organised the North Side of the City until his appointment as Southern District Secretary on January 23, 1960.

To say that Mr. Dickson knows every inch of Brisbane's network of factories (the owners and managers of most), especially those covered by A.W.U. awards would not be an over-statement. He has worked in every area of the Southern District, and, during the illness of the former District Secretary (Mr. Howman), was described by the late Joe Bukowski as "The Flying Doctor" when he (Mr. Dickson) had to be sent on special missions at short notice. He was stationed for several weeks on one

New South Wales during an industrial disturbance some years ago, sent there by Mr. Bukowski.

He has been a member of the A.L.P. for years (a member of the Q.C.E., also) and helped Labor candidates into Parliament. In his younger days he played League and Soccer, but nowadays, for relaxation, follows the game that has been associated with the Davis Cup.

#### NEIL WILLIAMSON

**M**R. NEIL WILLIAMSON, South-Western District Secretary of the A.W.U., stationed at Charleville was born in Maryborough, Queensland, in 1905, and among the schools he attended were the old Normal School and Brisbane High, and at Gympie, the Christian Brothers' High.

He represented secondary schools at football, cricket and boxing.

For three years he was a clerk in the Taxation Department, but imbued with a desire for the Queensland outback, he went to Charleville in 1925.

He worked throughout Western Queensland as a station hand, fencer, drover, cook, commercial traveller, shearer, woolpresser, bridge and builders' labourer, and in shearing sheds in many parts of New South Wales, verily a proud and enviable record for any Australian to lay claim to.

Mr. Williamson was appointed a temporary Organiser in Winton in 1942 and he officiated in the Longreach, Charleville and Cunnamulla Districts.

He was appointed South Western District Secretary in 1951.

Mr. Williamson has applied himself vigorously to helping Youth Organisations, sporting bodies and amateur boxing.

He is a past chairman of the Charleville Branch of the Bush Children's Health Scheme, and for several years was a member of the Charleville Hospital and Fire Brigade Boards. He is a Justice of the Peace and for years has been an active member of the Charleville Branch of the A.L.P. and a Trustee of the Randolph Bedford Bursary Scholarship Fund. He was a member of the Queensland Central Executive of the A.L.P. and is a member of the Queensland Branch Executive of the A.W.U.

#### GEO. PONT

**M**R. GEO. PONT, who is Far Northern District Secretary, stationed at Cairns, is another member of the Board of Directors whose career is typical of all A.W.U. men who have come up the hard way.

He was born at Blackall 49 years ago when Queensland outbackers were flexing their muscles in anticipation of the approaching years when Labor would govern the State. He worked as a drover, station hand, wool presser, shed hand, lorry driver and at general labouring until after the big strike in 1930. Following that boil up, things became extremely tough for a lot of people, and he went out to Mt. Isa where he worked on the surface and underground for five years.

They were hard times, but they were cutting out an industrial future for Mr. Pont—to be turned later to the advantage of the Union, which draws its experienced and efficient men only from those who have stood up to stress and test.

Because of bad health, Mr. Pont left Mr. Isa and went to Mackay where he worked on the rock drills in the quarry and on the construction of the Mackay Harbour. Later he entered the sugar industry at North Eton.

When he became an Organiser for the Australian Workers' Union his method of travel was per "push bike"—the medium by which many an A.W.U. District was organised in earlier days. Subsequently, Mr. Pont became Secretary of the Western District, stationed at Longreach, and later Secretary of the Far Northern District at Cairns, and it is doubtful if there is a better informed man about this part of Queensland.

In 1950, Mr. Pont was appointed President of the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U. and Queensland Representative on the Federal Executive Council of the A.W.U. in the same year. Last, but not least, he has always been a member of the Australian Workers' Union, and a staunch supporter of the Australian Labor Party.

## TRIBUTES

HERE ARE SOME OF THE TRIBUTES PAID TO "THE WORKER" BY AUSTRALIA'S LABOR LEADERS.

#### FEDERAL OPPOSITION LEADER'S MESSAGE



A. A. Calwell, M.H.R.

**M**Y WARMEST greetings are extended to "The Worker" which for 70 years has carried the message of the Labor Party and the Trade Union Movement to every settled part of Queensland's 688,000 square miles. It has featured the important statements and the inspiring messages of all the Leaders of the forces of progress in those three score years and ten.

Those who carried the banner of freedom on behalf of the toiling masses for liberty, for wage justice and for social betterment have passed in procession, and when their task was done, passed to the beyond.

We are grateful to them all. Fisher, Ryan, and Theodore, and after them McCormack, Forgan-Smith, Cooper and Hanlon on the political front, with McDonald, Riordan and Fallon who played their part too on the political and industrial field, joining the goodly array.

We remember them all. We remember the part which Bukowski played on behalf of the Australian Workers' Union and we do not forget Collings or Bedford, Larcombe, Hynes,

Fihelly, or any of the rest who struggled and laboured earlier and left their mark on the course of Australia's development.

Quite a number of those who edited and contributed to the pages of "The Worker" were my friends, particularly the former editor, John Hanlon, and the present, Jim McCarter.

We live in different days and perhaps television and radio have to some extent supplanted the written and published word for the propagation of ideas. But the need for newspapers such as "The Worker" is as great as ever.

Whatever the changes of recent years and whatever the future may hold I wish "The Worker" well in its next 70 years, and know that it will continue serving the working class of Queensland and the people of Queensland generally.

"The Worker" served the State of Queensland faithfully and well when it was a colony, and it has served Queensland in the same fashion since the formation of the Federation some sixty years ago.

May it continue as it began, and may those who come after us see the successful completion of the work of the Labor Party and the Trade Union Movement, which is to see the establishment of a society based on production for use and not production for profit.

We have advanced along the road to political equality, economic equality and social equality, but we have not won the final victory. That will come as sure as the sun will rise on the Queensland coast.

I wish the controlling Board, the Editor, the staff and all members of the A.W.U. well in their great efforts, and every success in the years to come. With these good wishes go my own personal regards.

Melbourne.

—A. A. CALWELL, Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party.  
1st March, 1960.

## N.S.W. PREMIER'S MESSAGE



R. J. Heffron, M.L.A.

**M**Y SINCERE and fraternal congratulations to "The Worker" upon the attainment of its 70th birthday.

I can think of no more fitting tribute than to quote the words of Abraham Lincoln:—

"Conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are equal . . ."

These words, of course, were used in Lincoln's address at Gettysburg. They applied to the birth of the American nation.

But they so eloquently epitomise the true spirit of Democracy that they may also be applied with equal force to the birth and preservation of any of our freedoms, one of which is the Press.

Particularly is this so in relation to the reason behind creation of "The Worker" 70 years ago because no paper in Australia has done more to foster the great ideal perpetuated in Lincoln's simple but famous words.

"The Worker" has ever been in the forefront of the long and successful fight to improve the conditions of those to whom its name is dedicated.

In its earliest days, it was largely responsible for the formation of the Labor Party in Queensland.

In 1892—not long after the paper commenced publication—T. J. Ryan and G. J. Hall were elected to the Queensland Parliament on the Labor platform.

With J. P. Hoolan and T. Glassey, who declared for Labor and resigned from the Tory Griffith Ministry, they constituted the first distinct Labor Party in the Queensland Assembly.

Three years later, there were 16 Labor men, including Andrew Fisher, in the Queensland Parliament.

The growth of the party since then is history.

Although eminently successful today, there was a time in the long ago when, like so many other Labor newspapers, "The Worker" was in danger of going out of existence.

Tenaciously, it fought to survive, and, in the end, it won the battle.

That it did so, was in large measure due to the efforts of many of the brilliant journalists who filled its columns.

One of these men I remember particularly well—Henry Boote—a great writer who, in the early days of this century, was your Editor.

Later, he became the Editor of "The Worker" in New South Wales.

To such men as Boote, "The Worker" owes its success today.

Let us not forget them as we celebrate the paper's 70th birthday.

Again, I extend to all concerned in its production my heartiest congratulations.

—R. J. HEFFRON, New South Wales Premier and Minister for Education.

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## JOHN DUGGAN'S MESSAGE

**S**EVEREN decades have gone since "The Worker" began what was then a highly formidable mission in fighting for a place in the sun for the toilers of Queensland.

Throughout those long years the paper has done a splendid job, and it is a great pleasure to join with the great band of well-wishers now congratulating "The Worker" on having achieved its 70th birthday.

In these days of syndicated journalism, when the major newspapers of Australia are virtually under monopoly control, and have vast financial resources at their command, the sur-

vival of a journal, particularly if it is a Union one opposed to the principles of monopoly capitalism, is hedged round with difficulties.

It says much for the enterprise, faith and tenacity of the management of "The Worker", and for the talent of a succession of able editors, that the written message of the Australian Workers' Union to its vast membership throughout this State has been maintained continuously over 70 years on such a high plane.

In order to protect the interests and well-being of the worker, it is of tremendous importance that a Union journal should provide reliable and



John Duggan, M.L.A.

factual information, and in this respect "The Worker" has fulfilled its function in a markedly high degree.

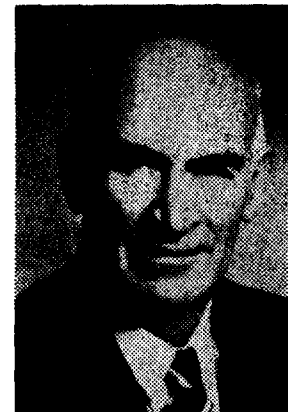
"The Worker" set out its charter in its first issue on March 1, 1890, when it said "it claims the right to work and live for all, and denies to any the right to take advantage of the need of another."

That charter has been honoured in performance over the years.

I wish "The Worker" continued success, and hope its influence for good will continue in the coming years, and that greater benefits for A.W.U. members in particular, and the Labor Movement in general, will distinguish the paper's future years of service in the field of politico-industrial journalism.

—JOHN E. DUGGAN, Leader of the Opposition, Queensland.

## A. R. G. HAWKE'S MESSAGE



A. R. G. Hawke, M.L.A.

**I** AM HAPPY to offer congratulations to "The Worker" on its 70th birthday and also on the wonderful service which it has given through the years to the cause of working class progress in both the industrial and political fields.

"The Worker" has also been a most effective advocate for a true dinkum Australian outlook and in this has provided an effective antidote to the servility of many daily newspapers in their efforts to develop the thinking of Australian people along lines which are certainly not pro-Australian.

The value of "The Worker" to the cause of true democracy in Australia has been outstanding.

In the '90's" the paper played a mighty part in helping forward the industrial and political organising efforts which led to the successful establishment of the all-inclusive Labor Movement as we know it in Australia today.

And who of those of us who were privileged to read "The Worker" during the two military conscription referendums in 1916 and 1917 will ever forget the inspiring articles written by Henry Boote and others against conscription, and the brilliant cartoons. So once again, hearty congratulations and best wishes for the future.

A. R. G. HAWKE, Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party in Western Australia.



## TOM DOUGHERTY'S REMARKS



T. P. N. Dougherty, M.L.C.

I AM VERY pleased to congratulate "The Worker" upon reaching the ripe age of seventy years, firstly, because I am a native Queenslander, and "The Worker" has been known to me since childhood days, secondly, because I had the honour of being numbered among its Board of Directors in the not too distant years that are gone, and thirdly, because it is part of the great institution for good which the Commonwealth knows as the Australian Workers' Union.

Without "The Worker", no one knows how this great State would have been organised from the trade union point of view. Without "The Worker" the framework of Labor would never have been established.

"The Worker" was always the bulwark against destructive elements; it never lagged in its defence of the highest principles of mateship and Australianism; it never failed to take up the cudgels against any foe contemptible enough to bring itself within the scope of "Worker" attack.

Many of our greatest politicians and trade union leaders came to the top because "The Worker" pleaded their cause and supported them. Some of those men later fell by the wayside, but that was because their hats became too small for their heads, and their belief in themselves far out-weighted

their gratitude to the Union or Party which made them.

Some of my greatest friends have been closely allied with "The Worker" and its extraordinary growth, and I hope that in the years ahead the work that they performed will materialise also into greater progress for our "Northern Worker" as it is also officially known.

"The Worker" reaches into the most isolated parts of this enormous State but wherever it goes, those who read it may know that it always champions the case of justice, and as far as the A.W.U. membership is concerned, its pages will always be used to fight their battles and defend their rights.

As a Queenslander and friend, I wish "The Worker" sustained progress in the years ahead, and as General Secretary of the A.W.U. I know that the Union as a whole has in this State, an ally ready to pit itself against anyone or any organisation that would threaten Australian standards and traditions, because THEY are the keystones on which our Union was established.

Sydney,

—T. P. N. Dougherty, General Secretary, Australian Workers' Union.

March 1st, 1960.

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## H. O. DAVIS' MESSAGE

MY CONGRATULATIONS to "The Worker" on completing 70 years of unparalleled service to the Labor Movement, the principles of Trade Unionism and the unceasing fight for the emancipation of the workers of Australia.

First published on March 1, 1890 (Eight-Hours Day), by the efforts of a small band of dedicated and inspired men, "The Worker" has grown, in spite of many vicissitudes, to its present stature as a bulwark against the forces of capitalism—a living memorial to the sacrifices of its founders and supporters, and the ability and loyalty of Australian Labor journalism.

Triumphant over the unrelenting attacks of its enemies—both subversive elements within and vested interests without—it flaunts the banner of Labor, proudly, for all to see and heed.



H. O. Davis

"The Worker", and its counterpart, the "Australian Worker", are the only Australian Labor journals which have continued in production, despite the constant attacks of the capitalistic press!

The history of "The Worker" is the very history of the Labor Movement itself; the same struggle for early existence and its gradual growth in the face of fierce and prolonged opposition until, today, it stands supreme as the vocal expression of the ideals, beliefs and principles of true political and industrial labour.

It has never waited for history to happen! It has made, and is still making, history.

It is the voice of true Labor! Always in the forefront of the fight to maintain and improve the living standards of the worker, it is eternally vigilant against the machinations of the forces of capitalism. Those forces do not rest! But, whilst the virile and urgent voice of "The Worker" continues to be heard, they cannot succeed!

May "The Worker" grow to greater strength in the years ahead. I wish it well.

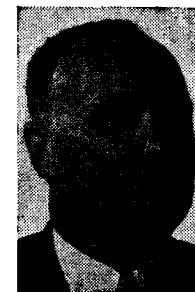
—H. O. DAVIS, Federal President, Australian Workers' Union.

## CLIVE STONEHAM'S MESSAGE

IT IS with great pleasure that I join in congratulating "The Worker" on attaining its 70th birthday. All of us have birthdays but, in the case of "The Worker" it is appropriate that we should recognise this occasion as a very special one. It is timely that we should review the past 70 years, in order to gain that proper perspective in our approach to current and future responsibilities.

Trite it is that I should remind you that we live in a rapidly changing world in which the forces of Labor must be ever vigilant and alert, if we are to retain political leadership of the people. Modern conditions make it necessary that we adapt our methods to meet the times, but our allegiance to the basic principles which guided the pioneers must remain inviolate.

The record of "The Worker" is one of which we are all proud. Many publications have been started and, after a brief glow of brightness on the literary firmament, have passed into oblivion. Not so "The Worker".



Clive Stoneham, M.L.A.

Its roots so deeply embedded in battling the day-to-day problems of succeeding generations of the ordinary people, is it any wonder that this paper has survived and gone on to greater strength?

Voicing the cry for justice, "The Worker" has been to the forefront in many historic fights to right the wrongs that have been perpetrated upon the people by profiteers, exploiters and monopoly controllers.

It is fitting that we should remember those who have passed into history

but who, when actively occupying our present scene, dedicated their efforts to the advancement of Trade Unionism. May we prove worthy successors to them.

From our appreciation of the struggles of the past, we pass to our assessment of the future.

It is good for all Australians to be made conscious of the great progress already made and the almost incredible wealth of resources still awaiting development for the common good. Queensland certainly should have a glorious future, if Labor is elected to govern. I am confident that in the years ahead "The Worker" will retain its prestige and reputation as a prominent advocate in Australia of freedom, equality, humanitarianism and progress.

CLIVE STONEHAM, M.L.A., Leader of the Victorian State Parliamentary Labor Party.

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#### M. R. O'HALLORAN'S MESSAGE



M. R. O'Halloran, M.H.A.

IT IS WITH a deep sense of gratitude and with the greatest pleasure that I tender my good wishes to "The Worker" on its 70th birthday . . . gratitude for the magnificent part played by the paper in the struggle to improve the lot of the under-privileged in taking the truth on political and economic issues to the people throughout the vast State of Queens-

land and beyond, thus contributing in no small measure to the success of the Labor Movement . . . and pleasure at the fact that the journal, which from the modest beginning 70 years ago, has grown in strength and influence until to-day it occupies an honoured place in the homes not only of Queenslanders, but also those in many other parts of Australia who are working for social justice.

—M. R. O'HALLORAN, Leader of the South Australian Opposition.

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#### TASMANIAN PREMIER'S MESSAGE



Eric Reece, M.H.A.

IT GIVES me pleasure, as Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party in Tasmania, to join in congratulating "The Worker" on reaching the venerable age of three score years and ten. All in the Labor movement know of and appreciate the manner in which this journal has fought fearlessly for the rights of the worker and the trade unionist, and for the ideals of the Party during the past 70 years.

"The Worker" has ceaselessly drawn attention to the evils of monopoly, and to the manner in which big business has taken more than its fair share from the pay packet of the average citizen. It has been a continual advocate of the cause of Labor, and in

carrying out this policy it has exercised a great influence upon Australian national thought and made a valuable contribution in the cause of democracy in this country.

No journal in the Commonwealth has consistently given such a forthright denunciation of all forms of community injustice, and while newspapers of the calibre of "The Worker" remain there will always be a voice through which the Australian worker can draw attention to his needs, and express in clear terms his objections to

the many forms of exploitation brought about by the capitalistic system and cultivated by the manipulation of monopolists and big business interests.

Many congratulations to "The Worker" on attaining its 70th birthday, and very best wishes for a successful future in the cause of true democracy, and justice for all who work and produce the wealth of this nation by their physical and mental efforts.

—ERIC REECE, Premier of Tasmania.



"AUSTRALIA WILL BE THERE."



## The "Worker's" Growth

**A**T A TIME when so many Labor journals have been disappearing from the newspaper field—several important ones have gone during the past decade—it is very encouraging to know that the pioneer co-operative Labor journal of Australia, "The Worker" of Queensland, is having its 70th anniversary.

It was in 1891 that Australia's great bush poet, Henry Lawson, wrote "Too Old To Rat",\* published that year in "The Worker". In that memorable work he wrote the lines:

"The fighting, dying 'Boomerang'  
Against the daily Press;  
The infant 'Worker' holding out . . ."

Well, "The infant 'Worker'" grew into a lusty child, and cut its manhood teeth during some of the most dangerous years of our nation's development.

"The Worker" was foremost in the battle for White Australia for it knew that employers preferred coloured, slave labour to whitemen's; it took up the cudgels against the Queensland National Bank and rocked the nation by sensational disclosures which were to bring a safely ensconced Government into the spotlight of scandal. It was not a pretty picture.

The "Worker" fought for the entry of Queensland into the Commonwealth partnership of States, and in the first World War years, it was out in the van in the combat against conscription.

"The Worker" fought with the Ryan Government against the political tyranny of William Morris Hughes, the former Labor Leader and Prime Minister who turned renegade, and sought to dragoon all men of military age into the services for fighting in foreign lands.

Up through the decades, it has consistently supported the cause of freedom of speech and assembly and the Australian Labor Party, and has been instrumental in winning elections by the publication of material which was banned by anti-Labor publications.

Through booms and depressions, the Queensland "Worker" has been tireless in its advocacy for justice, and has not wavered if the fight had to

be carried into quarters where once trusted Labor leaders were strutting the stage as political and industrial apostates.

Carrying out the policy of the Australian Workers' Union to the letter . . . "The Worker" upheld and upholds the highest principles of conciliation and arbitration, but if the battle became more practical in the industrial field itself, "The Worker" was there, putting the case for the men, as for example, the 1956 shearing dispute.

As far as we have been able to ascertain, Dunstan House, Elizabeth Street, Brisbane, is the only place where a complete file of "The Worker" is retained, and many a University student has come to this building for research purposes.

A perusal of old "Worker" files makes absorbing reading, because in them is contained the history of Queensland and much of Australia's.

The first issue of "The Worker", which was published on March 1, 1890, is without doubt a marvellous production, having regard to the conditions prevailing and the miracles of industrial and political reforms that have since been accomplished.

In crystal clear tones that resounded throughout the length and breadth of the land the tocsin of working-class organisation was sounded, and in the same issue, with a clarity that astonishes the most erudite scholars of the age, the draft of a great Industrial and Political Movement was laid down, which is almost without fault or weakness, and which has since been a never-failing guide for all who have followed in the same pathway.

Despite the fact that contributing to the first and other early issues of "The Worker" there were many writers whose names have since been immortalised in the annals of English literature, the official organ of the employing section of those days gave the infant "Worker" but six months to live, and here on this seventieth anniversary those "in apostolic succession" are able to contemplate with some satisfaction that the pompous news organ that expressed that opinion has long since been forgotten; and whilst the names of Francis Adams, of

Top.—S. Burgess, S. Thompson.

Second row.—W. McCoaker, W. Lane, D. Cumming, A. G. Yewen.

Front.—T. J. Donovan, T. W. Crasford, F. Barnes, F. Leysley.



ORIGINAL "WORKER" STAFF OF THE 1890's

\* See page 45

Henry Lawson, of William Lane, of Charles Mackay, and others still shine in the literary firmament, those of their traducers have been long since covered by the thick dusts of oblivion.

The publication of "The Worker" in those memorable and historic days was an inspiration to the down-trodden workers in every trade and calling, and the story of their achievements particularly those of the great pastoral struggles of Western Queensland, is an epic not surpassed in this or any other age of human achievements.

The celebration of our seventieth birthday anniversary has a particular significance because in this issue a new chairman of Directors, Edgar Williams, steps into the picture.

He is the new Queensland Branch Secretary of the Australian Workers' Union, and he succeeds such notable men as the late Clarrie Fallon, Harold Boland, and the last but not least, the late R. J. J. ("Joe") Bukowski.

All of those who have gone before, devoted unflinching attention to "The Worker" though without doubt Clarrie Fallon and Joe Bukowski presided over the Board of Directors during relatively momentous periods.

It was in Fallon's regime that Dunstan House was completed, and in Bukowski's that "The Worker" weathered a particularly violent financial "hurricane" which revealed the strength of the A.W.U. as an impregnable "backstop" and, later, the willingness of bankers to "see the light".

Working men and women in Queensland and Australia have reason to be thankful for the sacrifices made by working-class pioneers in their efforts to build a nation wherein social justice would be on a plane higher than any country in the world, and where the working and living standards would enable men to live in peace and security. Men of vision helped to form the trade unions and the Australian Labor Party, and men of great wisdom were responsible for bringing into being "The Worker".

To-day other States of Australia are forging ahead with their own plans for industrial and political progress, much of them being in conformity with those of Queensland. But in the days when "The Worker" first saw the light, March 1, 1890,

way, and did so for decades until the workers in other States were able to organise in strength.

It was "The Worker" of Queensland which was instrumental in taking the gospel of the toiler into the highways and byways, and carried the battle against the enemies of Labor. It was a lone voice then, but it had brave men behind it, and, thanks to the A.W.U., their fight is commemorated to-day in the modern eight-storied stone building, which stands in Elizabeth Street, Brisbane, and houses "The Worker", the Australian Workers' Union Branch and Southern District Offices, and a host of private tenants.

The story of "The Worker's" progress against unprecedented obstacles and against the unscrupulous scheming of capitalistic and reactionary forces provides one of the finest romances of the age.

Many barriers barred the way to success, but they were surmounted one by one as the industrial and political stalwarts of Labor advanced from goal to goal.

Prior to 1890, papers with strong democratic leanings, including "The Boomerang", a Brisbane periodical, had been denouncing the oppressive conditions under which the shearers and station hands, as well as other classes of workers were being compelled to work in Queensland. But feelings of resentment in regard to intolerable conditions became more and more intense until finally they crystallised into a resolve that the toilers of Queensland must have their own newspaper to champion their cause, and to demand a reasonable measure of justice and freedom for all.

About this time there was much excitement over the employment of non-union shearers, and the necessity for a journal to place before the public the viewpoint of the unionists was recognised.

The first meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on February 14, 1890, the Board consisting of Gilbert Casey (chairman), Albert Hinchcliffe (treasurer), Charles Seymour (secretary), Matt. Reid, and W. Mabbott.

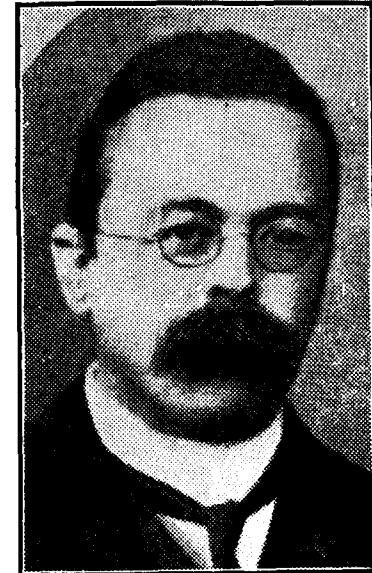
Choice of editor went to William Lane,\* then one of the outstanding

## FIRST EDITOR

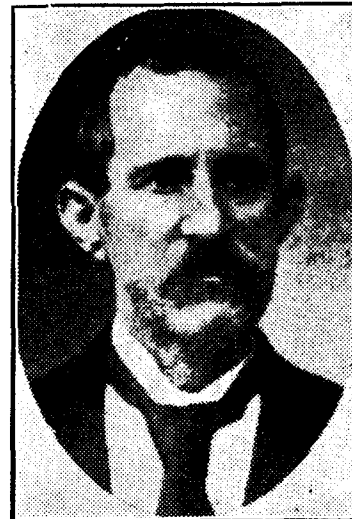


W. Lane

## FIRST MANAGER



A. Hinchcliffe



G. Casey (Chairman), W. Mabbott, M. Reid, members of "The Worker's" first Board of Trustees.

\* Lane later led the trek to "New Australia" in South America ultimately.

figures in the Labor Movement in Queensland who had previously edited "The Boomerang."

The first tasks confronting William Lane were to secure an office and buy the necessary type. Lack of ready cash made it impossible to purchase a printing machine, and in consequence the first issue was machined at an outside printing office.

It was but a tiny sheet, a 16-page demy quarto, the pages being about one-fourth size of the ordinary newspaper page, and this was sold for threepence a copy.

The late "Charlie" Seymour, in an account of the early days of "The Worker", describes how the first issue, after coming off the press, had been carried round to the original office, situated in Wharf Street, and had been folded by the hands of volunteers.

All arrangements had been made for the paper to come out on Eight-hour Day, March 1, but at the last moment the newsboys, for some indefinite reason, refused to handle it. Not to be baulked, however, volunteer workers, using a handcart borrowed from the "Boomerang" office, took copies of "The Worker" and managed to dispose of every available copy, either along the route of the Eight-hour procession or on the Exhibition Ground, where the sports were being held. Many were sold at advanced prices, and it is said that as much as 2s. 6d. was paid for a copy in some cases. "Charlie" Seymour also relates how, when the second issue was brought out, the papers were folded and addressed by volunteers, who humped them in sacks to the Post Office in a heavy downpour of rain, but even this was not enough to dampen their ardour.

Two months later the office was transferred to what is described as a "humpy" in Raff Street. The first year of the paper's life was turbulent in an industrial sense, and towards the end of that year the maritime strike caused an industrial upheaval, which was followed in the ensuing 12 months by the big bush strike.

The late Albert Hinchcliffe (the first Manager, and later Manager of "The Australian Worker", Sydney), in reviewing the history of "The Worker", said the enemies of Labor had declared that the new paper was nothing but an "additional agency for

the stirring up of industrial strife"; but this he emphatically denied, asserting that the early issues showed definitely that every effort had been made to secure a peaceful settlement of industrial difficulties.

Eight months after its first publication "The Worker" was issued fortnightly, its price being reduced to one penny. In March, 1892, the office was moved from Raff Street to a two-storey brick cottage at the intersection of Phillip and Gloucester Streets, and in this building the first printing machine for "The Worker" was installed.

For two years and four months William Lane had edited "The Worker" with ability and good judgment; but towards the end of that time his plans for the setting up of the New Australia colony in Paraguay had taken possession of his thoughts to the exclusion of all else.

The result was his resignation as editor, he having written his last article for "The Worker" in July, 1892. Ernest Blackwell was appointed to succeed him in the editorial chair, and William Lane set sail for South America.

Shortly before this, the paper had been issued as a weekly broadsheet of four pages, and this was being produced entirely by the staff of "The Worker", and by the use of its own plant. Its value as a champion of the cause of the workers was so generally understood that there was a constant demand for further enlargement of the paper. An appeal was made for funds to enable additional plant to be purchased for the production of a paper double the size of the first weekly issue, and after nearly £1,000 had been collected the desired enlargement was effected.

In October, 1892, "The Worker" benefited to the extent of £700 from the will of John Leopold Wratling, a Cairns carpenter—a unique incident in the history of Australian Labor journalism—and this was a material help to the cause of unionism in the struggle that followed.

In consequence of the prevailing depression early in 1893, the Board of Trustees felt themselves obliged, though with the greatest reluctance, to revert to the fortnightly issue and to discontinue the front page cartoon, which then was a popular feature of the paper.

Such a storm of remonstrance was raised, however, that the big bush unions at their annual meetings gave guarantees to cover the initial costs that it was decided to go back to the weekly issue and to restore the cartoon.

Another editorial change took place in September, 1893, following upon the resignation of Ernest Blackwell, who, during his tenure of office, had had the satisfaction of seeing 16 pledged members of the Labor Party returned to the Queensland Parliament. E. Blackwell was succeeded by William Guy Higgs, and "Charlie" Seymour filled the sub-editor's chair.

Charles Seymour was largely responsible for the formation of the Australian Federation of Labor, also, and he was its secretary in 1889, the year before "The Worker" was born.

It was just about this time that "Touchstone's" delightful column of comment on passing events, in which free rein was given to humour and satire, commenced to appear in "The Worker". This continued to be an attractive feature for a number of years.

Under W. G. Higgs' editor-ship "The Worker" made history by a series of trenchant and analytical articles on finance and economics arising out of the great banking crisis of 1893.

During the same editorial regime there was another bush strike of gigantic proportions, during which attempts were made by various devices to trap unionists, and particular efforts were made to incriminate those directly in control of "The Worker".

It was in Higgs' time too, that an attempt was made to bribe "The Worker" into supporting legislation in favour of Tattersall's sweeps. The attempt, however, was frustrated, and although the matter was made the subject of a Parliamentary inquiry, the newspaper was completely exonerated.

Having won a seat in the Queensland Parliament, Higgs resigned the editorship of "The Worker" in April, 1899, and after a brief interval, during which C. Seymour was acting editor, Frank Kenna was appointed to the editorial position in June of the same year.

It was in 1899 that Queensland Labor won distinction by the party

securing the reins of government in the State—the first Labor Government in the world.

Kenna retained the editorial position for two and a half years, when he, too, gained a seat in Parliament and resigned. H. E. Boote ("Touchstone") then took charge as editor and continued in control for nine years.



J. S. Hanlon

In March, 1911, Charlie Seymour succeeded to the editorship and carried on until October, 1915, when the late J. S. Hanlon was appointed. Hanlon held the position for the longest term, from 1915 to 1943, when he succeeded the late Henry Boote as editor of "The Australian Worker" in Sydney. During his editorship Hanlon was a member of the Legislative Council of Queensland and was among those who helped to abolish that Chamber. He was also a member of the Senate of the Queensland University. When he transferred to Sydney, Hanlon was appointed by the Federal Labor Government to the Australian Broadcasting Commission. He died in 1949. When Hanlon went to "The Australian Worker" J. W. McCarter, the present editor, was chosen to succeed him.

The late Jack Hanlon was born near Ballarat (as were Labor Prime Ministers Jim Scullin and John Curtin) and it was a coincidence that he should have been succeeded by the present editor who had been at St. Patrick's College, Ballarat (Jack Hanlon's old school) with a younger brother of his predecessor!

Following Hinchcliffe as manager was Tim Donovan, who succeeded his predecessor also as manager of "The Australian Worker", Sydney, in January, 1926, after something like 34 years on the staff of the Queensland "Worker".

Following the resignation of Mac Ross in 1943 (who became General Manager of "Truth" & Sportsman Limited) the late Jack Moir (Scottish-born), was appointed to succeed, and a son of Clarrie Fallon, C. E. Fallon, became secretary to the company the following year.

About the year 1910, Moir was organiser for the Amalgamated Workers' Association, and no man played a more determined part in placing the A.W.U. in a strong position after the two bodies affiliated. He became secretary at Cairns later.

After Moir's retirement (Jack Moir had a grand industrial history behind him in the A.W.U. and else-

where), D. J. Doyle was appointed and later, the late J. M. Comrie, who occupied the position from April 1, 1953 until his illness—Comrie died after resigning in March, 1956. He had been on the old "Daily Standard" on the journalistic side, and later was publicity officer to the late Forgan Smith when "Forgan" was Premier.



**J. W. McCarter J. A. Ferguson**

The present manager, J. A. Ferguson, who was appointed in 1956, is perhaps the youngest man to occupy the position. He had been accountant for the Company before his elevation to the managership, and served in the Second World War.



**C. G. Fallon**



**H. E. Boote**

## THE FIRST A.L.F. EXECUTIVE, 1890



**Back Row : GILBERT CASEY, W. MABBOTT, M. FANNING,  
J. C. STEWART**

**Front Row : R. MORRISON, CHARLES McDONALD (Chairman),  
ALBERT HINCHCLIFFE**

(CIRCULATION, 14,000

# The Worker.

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATED WORKERS OF QUEENSLAND.

Vol. I.—No. 1

BRISBANE, MARCH 1, 1890.

PRICE—THREEPENCE

## THE EDITORIAL MILL.

This first issue of the *Worker* is not altogether what it should be. A week, for there was little more, is hardly time enough wherein to make all working arrangements for getting out a paper the mere publishing of which is a gigantic task, owing to the tremendous number of subscribers who have to be reached with as yet imperfect means. However, for any shortcomings some forbearance is certainly due. The next number will show a little more what is possible on the *Worker* lines from a literary point of view; and if secretaries, delegates and members generally will lend hearty assistance to the trustees in the work of getting the circulation straightened out, that also will soon be smooth running. Any member of any co-operating society can have his paper sent to his address anywhere on application made through his secretary.

The political attention of the *Worker* will be limited to those questions which closely affect the welfare of the wage-earning masses. It will advocate the measures and reforms agreed upon as desirable at the Labour Congress of Australia, and will comment radically upon any and every proposal tending in the same direction. Neither of the old political parties will have its praise or blame, excepting as they treat the demands of the workers for justice, and all efforts to secure direct representation for organized labor will have its loyal support. It is a journal of the workers, in touch with their thoughts, inspired by their needs. What they want it wants. The way they go it goes. It aims, as all thinking workers aim, at the securing of a happier state of society, which, though not, perhaps, on the same lines, is imbued with just the same spirit as that which imbues society in Bellamy's "Looking Backward." It claims that the worker is entitled to the wealth he produces, that he should be paid fairly, and should be secured fair condition of labour either by the voluntary federation of his fellows or by the irresistible power of the State. It claims the right to work and live for all and denies to any the right to take advantage of the need of another.

From several Australian papers, notably from the *Barrington* and the *Balloon*, in the case of Australian labour has received in calculable aid. Nevertheless, such bright exceptions only make more pronounced the fact that the press, as a body, is owned and controlled by those whose interests as mere profit-mongers are distinctly opposed to the interests of the workers; and that, owing to the commercial nature of all business speculations, no newspaper conducted on ordinary lines is to be permanently relied upon. The

only means for labour to insure itself a free voice and unswerving advocacy is for organized workers to maintain by co-operation a journal which shall be, as the *Worker* is, absolutely independent of and indifferent to, all outside assistance and influence.

The State-aided village settlement agitation has not been much heard of lately, except as floating under the surface of all the progressive waves. But it must be stirred up again. It provides, as no other proposal yet urged in Australia provides, for the settlement of the existing unemployed difficulty without interfering with industry as established, or involving the Government in burdensome and unproductive works. Griffith, who has since come out as a champion of the workers with an impossible profit-sharing scheme—for the courage involved and feeling shown in advocating which, let us give him all credit—refused three years ago even to receive a village settlement deputation. He received, as all Premiers receive, deputations on Sunday lecture stopping, rain catching, ditch-making, and cattle trucking, but for some inconceivable reason would not hear the case for giving the Queensland worker a show on the Queensland lands. This, and the persistent cold water thrown on the proposal in other influential quarters, shows the opposition to be encountered, and the uselessness of asking again until the subject has been thoroughly canvassed, and until working men, willing to settle under State-aided conditions, have been enrolled. Then the question should be carried into politics, and the man who opposes it, be he Griffith or Morehead or McIlwraith, should be remorselessly dowsed. The workers only want work under fair conditions, and Bruce Smith to the contrary, the State must find it for them sooner or later.

State-aided settlement has been carried on with decided success in South America. It is well known that Brazil largely opened the back country that way. A Maryborough correspondent writes that in 1877 he saw it in working order at Buenos Ayres. "Of course," he says, "the main object of the Argentine Government was to make settlements to keep back the Indians by making buffers of the settlers. Each family or party were given tracks of land, farming implements, stock, and rations for at least twelve months, the value of this to be repaid by easy instalments, and the majority of those so settled I believe have done well." This aid to settlement is just what Queensland is asked to give the workers. Are we going to let Spanish-Americans do more to keep back Indians than Anglo-Australians do to keep back poverty?

Besides, State-aided settlement would at once place the immigration question on a basis

congenial to everybody. The Queensland organized workers, in distinct contrast to their Southern fellows, who uncompromisingly demanded, and ultimately obtained, total cessation of State-aided immigration, have very generally declared their readiness to continue immigration on a land-settlement basis. They recognize, and rightly, the desirability of increasing the population of such a new country as this, with its countless acres and its scattered dwellers, only they urge that this increase should not be induced in a manner calculated to reduce wages and to cause loss of employment to those already here. Surely this is most fair! It is patriotic. It is wise. It is unanswerable. It is the more worthy of commendation, because it is evident that immigration as it is must soon cease, whether other provisions are made for increasing population or not.

Talking about population, it is very amusing to notice that every unemployment agitation is met by the bumper governmental statement that it is no part of a Cabinet's duty to find work, and that relief work will under no consideration be started—after which relief works are promptly started and the agitation huzzes out. This is just what the New South Wales Government is doing when it pushes on public works, for all Bruce Smith's wild denunciations of the uncapitalised man and his absurd summarizing of lop-sided newspaper reports.

"Should shopkeepers and small employers of labour be admitted to labour unions?" is a question which usually comes up some time or other in the history of every organisation. It is one of the first questions put into the editorial mill. Upon it, there is little to be said which is not covered by the fact that the most progressive unions only admit those not actually engaged as wage-earners as honorary members. Many societies go so far as to limit even honorary membership, often with no right to vote or hold office, to old members of the craft, and there is strong and growing feeling everywhere that the management of labour unions should be kept strictly in the hands of those whose every interest is identical with that of the members at large. Most societies debate even foremen from active share in society work. At the same time it must not be forgotten that some unions, as the Shearers, Seamen, Carriers, and other floating workers, have been greatly indebted to non-wage-earners whose sympathies have been with them, and whose services have been very great. Such unions are differently situated to the great majority, who having no such necessity do not solicit the friendly aid of outsiders and as a natural consequence find outsiders seeking them only for personal

## Extracts from the First Issue

THE first issue of "The Worker" was a memorable one. In those dim days there were no linotypes; every letter had to be picked out and formed into words, every word placed into sentences, and every sentence into paragraphs, and so on. There were no swift printing machines, only tedious "one-at-a-time" sheets to be passed through the flat-bed printing presses, and when completed to be hand-folded. But the work went on and the first issue appeared as scheduled, but not without incident.

"We have laid the Foundation of Freedom" was the title of one article which appealed very strongly to the workers to support the Australian Federation of Labor . . . the foundation stone, as it were, of the present Australian Labor Party. We reprint that article now, so that readers may digest it.

"Workers," it said, "we are in a young country and upon us rests its future. Climate and union have done a great deal for us, but it has not done all. The fiercest part of the fight, and the one demanding the most coolness, the most courage, and the most intelligence remains to be done. The process of crystallisation, which is slowly coming, will destroy our liberties in increased population if we do not direct it into a proper channel.

"Federation hovers over us in a halo of radiant colours, but let us take care that it does not bring after it rotten carrion and its attendants—the noisome vultures. Upon you, workers, and upon the union which will bind you heart and soul together, rests the realisation of federation's true aim, to win which, men must not remain isolated but must help one another, must not let each trade fight alone its bitter and unequal battle; but must see that every trade helps the others with its best endeavours, giving this help not for selfish self-advantage but because they are workers, because they are brethren.

"We Australians have laid the foundation of the fair structure, Freedom, in our eight-hour system. We have added to it by helping the

dockers to get their tanner. We must and will add to it more and more by having it as our aim to be ever in the vanguard of the army which writes on its standard 'Freedom, Equality, Justice'."

There was another article which read as follows:

"Not until the workman shall tear away the veil of ignorance which covers him with an inexorable pall, can he reap the just rewards of his labour.

"The revolution with which our country is pregnant, and of which the next will see the birth, is a revolution of intellect.

"It grows with the education of the masses. It will attain its zenith when men, not content with blindly following others, will do that for themselves which truth tells them is right, and which intelligence tells them is best.

"Blindly following, now one leader, now another, the worker is played upon by men whose interest it is to hide from him the real position in which he stands, to prevent him from knowing that he is the greatest factor in the history of civilisation."

Then, there was the article about the gospel or organisation. It read:

"The workers of Australia are organising, not by petty trades or in jealous sections, by scores and dozens only, but in great conglomerate masses, by hundreds and thousands and by tens of thousands—and Queensland leads!

"While the men of the South have been talking the men of the North have been doing; have formulated a Federation scheme and are coming together like flood waters that run a banker, like the lightnings of quivering thunder-clouds on a sweltering summer-night.

"The bushman has stretched out his hands to clasp in union with the tradesman of the towns and the dweller by the sea. The miner hesitates, but the miner's heart is as true as his arm is strong, and the miner will not be the last to sign the pledge of industrial brotherhood. The wharf labourers are to the fore and their

near cousins, the seamen, are not far off. The artisan marches in under banners that have borne the brunt of many a bitter battle, and women come also to fight as comrades for early closing and the right to live. With them too, is the huge phalanx of the 'unskilled', which itself is an army, and which can be recruited until it musters well-nigh the entire manhood of the State.

"To all these has the call gone forth to stand together, and to act together, so that the Australian worker may not be wholly an outcast in the Australian land that of right is his; so that he may be able to win and maintain fair conditions of labouring for himself and for his fellows; so that he may be able to secure redress for industrial wrongs through the legislature from which as yet he is almost entirely excluded. And many have answered, and all will answer, for Australian Labor is rousing everywhere and Queensland indeed leads.

"If you doubt it, think that this journal you read has been started and is owned and controlled by the organised and associated workers of Queensland, that its mission is to preach with fearless tongue the gospel of organisation, and to defend the cause of the workers in the wordy skirmishes of the industrial war.

"It is perhaps a little thing to start a paper. Papers are spawned like ova from a fish and with much the same percentage of survival. There are few old business men who have not had more or less experience that way, and with few exceptions they have burnt their fingers.

"Labor papers in the southern parts of the continent, and in Queensland also, have come and gone till infantile mortality seems for them the rule, without even a saving clause.

"Nevertheless 'The Worker' has come and is going to stay—or rather will be as long as it stays the most widely circulated and universally read of any publication in Queensland.

"The associated workers of Queensland, thousands of whom are denied the franchise, all of whom are placed by the property-vote in an inferior position to those whose ability to grab land is accepted by the law-makers as a hall-mark of intelligence, have done

with a few paltry pounds what no 'captains of industry' could do with as many thousands.

"Here is a journal in your hand, which every member of the co-operating societies is reading also, which is produced for him at cost price, which is managed for him by trustees elected by him, which is conducted for him by an editor whose services he can dispense with at any time, and which is circulated for him among thousands of others who are thus brought into touch with the great movement having for its object the elevation of the worker to his rightful place in the industrial world.

"Here is a journal which has already a subscription list of nearly 13,000 assured and prepaid and which when it goes through the continent with its stalwart independence and its bold, free talking will have 20,000 at the very least.

"Here is a journal which before its second issue will have its own office and its own plant, and agents wherever the workers are organised through the Southern Seas. And all this is being done with a capital of barely £100."

[We observe here, that "The Worker" building to-day would be worth a bit more than £100, and the Union's assets colossal.]

The first issue also contained the reminder that Australia did not want the miseries of the Old World brought into our country (a reminder which could well be applied to-day, especially to new arrivals who might desire to bring their feuds with them).

Here is what the article says:

"It is against the conditions which have crushed down our brothers, the workers of Europe, that Australian Labor is marshalling its legions. The Gospel of Organisation is only a form of the universal gospel of discontent.

"It is not good enough to drift on to the slums and the work-house. It is not good enough to build here a nation whose head of gold shall be the private property of monopolists, and whose feet of clay shall be crimson with the blood of ill-paid toilers who suffer and die. It would be better to shake this civilisation to pieces as the Goths and Vandals shook the rotten civilisation of Rome, than to

sights one sees in English cities, than to see our bold, brave, dashing bushmen degraded to the helpless poverty of the once-hardy peasantry of the Atlantic lands.

"Yet the horrible sights have commenced and the degradation is not far off. On Queensland streets Australian girls sell themselves for bread just as English girls do at the Haymarket.

"In this unsettled continent, Australian men who have tried hard to keep going slay themselves in utter despondency for fear of the future. On the plains the bushmen whom no man needs are thickening; in the towns the unemployed gather; purse-proud plutocrats sneer at the complaints of the workers and bid them be thankful if all their labouring gives them enough for bread.

"Are these the conditions which workers desire to see grafted in a new nationality? Will they even lift their finger on behalf of such a nationality? If they are wise, no, ten thousand times, no! It is not good enough. A mere change of name is not the ideal that inspires the Gospel of Organisation.

"For an Australia that would do them justice, what would not the workers do in return? To an Australia that would earnestly endeavour to right their wrongs and to give to each man work, and to every worker his fair share of the wealth produced, how the heart of millions would go out, how the love of a grateful people would encircle it like a wall of fire! This is the Australia that the workers seek. But it is not this Australia that the politicians are after. Their Australia is to be an America of millionaires and misery, a republic of rent-robbery, a democracy of diamonds and destitution and despair; the workers are to be its beasts of burden, and the rich its aristocrats, and there is to be no thought for the helpless, and no sympathy for the poor. Few of them see, like Chief Justice Lillie, that the Australia which is coming must answer the industrial problems if it would root itself in the lives of the people. But they will see it soon if the workers only stand together, if to skilled and unskilled, to men and women, to all

army of the workers, there comes a comprehension of the great issue at stake, and a realisation of the value of organisation."

"The Worker" first came to light on the very day the workers of the Colony (remember we were not then a Commonwealth!) were celebrating Eight Hours Day . . . March 1, 1890.

Referring to the day's demonstration "The Worker" said that it emphasised two facts—that it was absolutely necessary to change the day out of the wet season into the dry, if eight-hour men and women really cared about enjoying themselves; and that it would be most advisable to fix on a week-day instead of on a month day for future celebrations. A Monday holiday was suggested.

The demand for the statute day should be made an integral part of eight-hour demonstration programmes all over the country, said "The Worker", and the eight-hour demonstration idea should be popularised as a means to the inevitable end in every possible way.

"We should have a common Eight-Hour Day for Australia if possible, but for Queensland at least. And we particularly want a day likely to be fine." said the article.

"Why not have Gympie, Charters Towers, Rockhampton, and every other town, great or small, and every group of workers in the country celebrating the jubilee of Labor together?"

As an alternative to a Monday holiday, "The Worker" proposed that the holiday be on a Saturday so as to emphasise Eight-hour men's collective disapproval of late hour shopping.

"Those who are attempting to break the early closing movement might just as well have the gage of battle flung at them early as late," said "The Worker". "This would fling it in a way that would itself be half the battle.

"For the Government would be bound to proclaim as a holiday everywhere a demonstration day backed by Labor everywhere; the weight of the demonstration would soon annihilate all opposition and lend immense impetus to the movement for the



## Poets, Cartoonists, Writers

**R**OUNDABOUT the years "The Worker" was born, and for several decades later (and to some extent, now in 1960), "saying poetry" was always popular among men carrying their swags, in the timber cutters' or the musterers' camps, the mining fields, at station homestead dances or at shearing shed concerts under the old kerosene lamp.

While anyone who could sing, dance a jig, play a fiddle or accordion, or rattle teaspoons in the neck of a bottle to accompany a songster, was sure of a round of applause, it was the "reciter"—the man who told of Australia's history and folk lore in rhyme, sometimes his own efforts, but mostly those of our early poets—who could always touch the strings of people's hearts. They could fire the imagination, for there was a "cause" in what they were doing.

"The Worker" was always a medium through which Australia's poets could express themselves, and they did. Numbered among them was Henry Lawson.

Lawson later blossomed into one of Australia's greatest poets—certainly the most outstanding in depicting in simple language all could understand, the Outback, where he learned the true meaning of mateship, and around which much of his writings were centred.

However, while monuments have been erected to his memory, and his works are frequently quoted, some of his greatest admirers might not know that one of his earliest efforts, published in "The Worker", was brought before the Queensland Parliament.

This verse, written about the shearing strike of 1891 and quoted in the House in July of that year, was entitled "Freedom on the Wallaby". It appeared in the April (1891) issue of "The Worker".

We can do no better than to refer to previous writings on this matter, to describe the occasion, and do so to emphasise the bitterness of the feeling towards anyone who sang the praises of the "underdog".

The politician who objected to the

Wallaby" was F. T. Brentnall, a journalist, and one-time editor of the "Telegraph", a champion of vested interests, who epitomised in a reactionary and vitriolic speech the hostility of the squatters to "The Worker" and the men it represented, and who remained in the Queensland Legislative Council, opposing reforms that have since become the law of the land, right to the day Labor abolished that undemocratic Chamber in 1921.

Brentnall's only claim to fame is that his name remains in the musty pages of "Hansard" as a bitter opponent of Labor and the reforms it introduced, and of the principles of democracy which were so clearly stated and so eloquently championed by the "scum of the earth", as he so bitterly dubbed them during the course of his remarks.

An imposing monument in Hyde Park, Sydney, is one of the nation's tributes to the rebel, Henry Lawson, who, 50 years ago, was a champion of his class and who expressed in verse his objections to the bad industrial conditions of that period.

Brentnall's reference to "The Worker", in which was published "Freedom on the Wallaby", was during a debate on a motion brought before the Legislative Council on July 14, 1891, expressing thanks to all, including the police, military and volunteers, "for the energy and ability with which they executed the services which they were called upon to perform in relation to the suppression of the said attempts to subvert the reign of law and order".

In the course of his remarks, Brentnall, inter alia, said:

I think it is desirable that we should review, at any rate, some of those causes, and then we shall be better able to appreciate the great deliverance the colony has had. I will therefore ask your indulgence whilst I try to point out what has been going on for some time past to bring about the result which was witnessed in February and March last. The Labor Federation of this colony, called by a wider designation, and intended, according to its designation, to com-

tralia—the Australian Labor Federation—was the controlling power of the organised industrial forces of this colony. We must always recognise the fact that all the industrial forces and resources of this colony are not organised; and it is well for the interests of this colony that they are not.

Whilst we would not on our side, I presume, say one word in depreciation of legitimate trade unionism of the good old-fashioned sort—when men, combined for the redress of actual grievances, when they united their strength for the purpose of working out their own deliverance from oppression, we must remember that the old unionism was a widely different thing from this modern unionism with which we have to contend now. The objects were different, the means were different, the essential principles of the two systems of unionism were different; and my object just now is to show you what is the aim of the unionism comprehended within the Australian Labor Federation, which fomented the state of feeling which burst out a few months ago, and necessitated an enormous expenditure of money, as well as an enormous display of physical force.

I have here before me a complete file of the official organ of the Australian Labor Federation. It is very difficult now to get a complete file of this literary production, and I do not think any hon. member could get a file if he offered five guineas for it. It does not go very far back; but it is a serial production which contains a great deal of matter that is of interest to every hon. member of this House and every member of this community; and it is a pity, for the interests of the community, that its circulation is limited almost exclusively to readers who constitute the working men of this colony. Let me indicate the principles of the journal from the very first number which was issued.

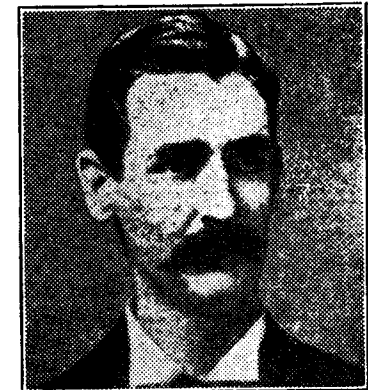
The Honourable Gentleman: Is it "The Worker"?

The Hon. F. T. Brentnall: It is "The Worker"; and I may explain, for the information of hon. gentlemen, that it is the official organ of the Australian Labor Federation. To satisfy you that what I am stating is

"The officers elected for the management of 'The Worker' are the following:—Chairman, G. Casey; secretary, C. Seymour; treasurer, A. Hinchcliffe; editor, W. Lane."

These names, I think, will satisfy you that this is the official organ of the Labor Federation. In the first issue we have the following words:—

"You can take all social injustices and industrial inequalities and vested privileges, and strangle them one by one with your millioned-muscled hands, as Hercules strangled in his cradle the serpents of Juno. Not all at once, but gradually, patiently, slowly, by being thinking men working in harmony with each other for the good of all, and by ceasing to crouch in hopeless apathy within the prison-walls of competition, or to rise spasmodically and disconnectedly in impotent, because only partial, revolt."



Henry Lawson

That is in the very first number. I will now take an issue a couple of months later, and read you another extract. This also refers to the competition—the industrial competition—fostered, as alleged here, by the abundance of capital, one capitalist competing with another, running down prices, and therefore running down wages:

"The State must stop this brutal competition between employers, must put down its foot and make the statute day, which at a stroke would do all that our European and American brethren at this moment ask, and if the State will not do this; if by chicanery and gerrymandering and blacklisting and wire-pulling, the well-to-do classes keep the reins of Government and will not use them wisely; then the State and the well-to-do can blame nobody but themselves if the end is ruin. At any rate, Europe is ripe for revolution and the

My object in bringing these extracts before your attention is that you may see the kind of doctrine that has been taught to these people by their official organ, and, mark you, every member of a union is expected to subscribe to this paper, and if I mistake not the union is charged with his subscription, so that it is compulsory upon every member to take and read the matter which is put in this, their official organ. Going on a little farther to the question of what is State Socialism we read as follows:

"Let it be understood clearly that in supporting loyally the scheme by which the Australian Labor Federation proposes to bring about conciliation between Labor and Capital, no thoughtful worker admits for a single moment that the existing relationship of employer and employed can possibly be made permanent. The power by which one man is able to refuse leave to work to others, to stay production unless it will yield him profit, to tithe the producers of all wealth for leave to live upon the land, which of right should be common to all, is a fundamental wrong, which sooner or later must be extracted by the roots."

That is one of the principles, and I will take you on to another:

"But it is of little use to agree on this or anything else so long as the workers permit themselves to be gerrymandered out of their preponderant share in governance."

You will see competition is to cease, and its cessation is to be accomplished through the agency of legislation:

"Whatever people think of Government as constituted all must recognise that it has considerable authority, and, to a very great extent, can be used for or against any interest. Even William Morris admits this when he contends that Parliament must ultimately be a mere registering office for the legislation of the decrees of the organisation of labour, just as at present it is a mere machine for registering the decrees of the employing classes under the guise of democracy."

So we are working on towards the platform of this Labor Federation. They are desirous that competition should be abolished by means of legislation, and the Legislature is simply to be a power to declare what Labor may decree outside of Parliament.

Now we come to another issue a month later:

"Wherever civilisation goes it carries its disease with it; misery follows as wealth increases and populations grow. It is not that we do not produce enough; it is not that we do not mostly labour enough; it is not that we do not struggle enough; the whole wage system is

misery and want and degradation until we sweep it away. The land that we must live on is held by the rent robber; the machinery which he must use to live is held by the profitmonger; capitalism holds us enslaved at its feet by the possession of the means of living. We are getting to understand this—and the moment we understand it we realise and know that a cure is possible, and that the whole Social and Industrial Movement, commonly called the Labor Movement, is working towards such a cure. The cure is the holding by the State, for the benefit of all, whereby alone employment can be guaranteed to all, and a just division of the common wealth production insured to each."

So that, hon. gentlemen, according to these ethics, everything is wrong. Civilisation is wrong, and wealth produces misery and want. Land ownership is robbery, workers are slaves, and the panacea for all these evils is the ownership by the State of all the land and machinery solely for the benefit of all the people. Socialism is said by "The Worker" to be "The natural sequence of unionism", declaring such things as these—that workers must hold for themselves, through the State, the land and machinery whereby they must live, and all and each have the right to labour and enjoy the fruits of their labour. I will read an extract to show that the system of profit-sharing, which has been advocated by the philanthropists as a remedy for the degradation of a large number of the working classes, is not consonant with the principles of the gentlemen who are running this paper. They disapprove of profit-sharing, and want to have absolute control of everything and therefore they disapprove of the capitalist employer sharing the profits of the employee:

"Clearly, then, the only political action which Organised Labor can take is to directly attack the competitive system, and openly commence a campaign which will not cease until Capitalism—that is, the private holding by a few of the means whereby all must live—is no more. This is the aim of the Labor Movement, and all the petty legislative measures which are nominally granted by capitalistic Parliaments, after being emasculated beforehand, are, at best, only the splashing of its spray. The Australian Labor Federation, as the most progressive body in Australasia, perhaps in the world, cannot do better, if the general council favours political action, than put forward a platform which will draw the line clear and straight between those who are for Labor and those who are against it—which will definitely declare it to all the world what Australian Labor is after, and how it proposes to get it, and will give birth at once to



THE DOG IN THE MANGER.

Here is an early "Worker" cartoon which has its application in 1960.



**THE SIFTING.**

This striking cartoon by Jim Case is as true to-day as it was when drawn more than than 40 years ago.

Could you have anything more injurious to the general interests of this colony than such teaching as that? Can you be surprised that there should be an outbreak of disorder? Can you be surprised that the passions of men should be stirred by this matter, or can you be surprised when men have had this instilled into them, at first month after month, and more recently fortnight after fortnight, by the issue of this paper, and changes are continually being rung upon the same theories and ethics, that the men should rise up and say "We will no longer work except on the terms which we choose; you have no right to any profit, it belongs to us; we have made it by our labour, you never made it?" Was it not virtually stated in the first manifesto issued after the maritime strike broke out: The ships do not belong to the shipping companies: they belong to us, and the Government has no right to allow them to be tied up by the nose. The wonder is that they did not try to take possession of the ships and run them in their own interests, just the same as they wanted to run stations during the late strike; and if they could not work on their own lines they would take care that they should be of no value to anybody else. Thus we have here, primarily, the Labor Federation's object to abolish capital. In the next place, how it is to be done. By political action. We are told the Australian Labor Federation is the most progressive body in Australia, and perhaps in the world. My own opinion is that it went too fast and the pace will soon kill it. I think the late outbreak came too soon for the arrangements of the Australian Labor Federation. But here we have, plainly enough, the object that it is after. Capital is to be abolished and competition is to be abolished. Private production by the employment of capital is to be abolished, and all labour and all property is to be under the control of the State. All legislation is to be dominated by the Labor vote. These doctrines are taught plainly in the extracts which I have just read to you . . . "

After referring to the following extract from "The Worker" in connection with the strike:

from a tree the blue flag is flying; there are meetings, games, and drills regularly; the boys are picking up military evolutions rapidly, and march now like soldiers."

Brentnall said: "I am not going to trouble the House much longer, and I will vary the entertainment slightly:

"Our parents toiled to make a home,  
Hard grubbin' 'twas and clearin'.  
They wasn't crowded much with lords  
When they was pioneerin'.  
But now that we have made the land  
A garden full of promise,  
Old Greed must crook 'is dirty hand  
An' come ter take it from us.  
So we must fly a rebel flag,  
As others did before us,  
And we must sing a rebel song  
And join in rebel chorus.  
We'll make the tyrants feel the sting  
O' those that they would throttle;  
They needn't say the fault is ours  
If blood should stain the wattle."

Henry Lawson. \*

That was written in Brisbane.

I have brought this specially before your attention in order that you may see the agencies that have been at work to produce the result which has evoked from us this afternoon a vote of thanks which, there cannot be a shadow of doubt, will be unanimously accorded to the Defence Force and the volunteers and police who have been called out, and who have obeyed with alacrity the call of duty to put down this insurrection, the outbreak of which cannot give any one of us the least surprise after reading and reflecting upon the extracts I have read.

Those are the influences which have been at work in the western part of the colony, and are at work in other parts, embittering men of the working class against their employers, as tyrants, and fomenting in their minds feelings of hatred and distrust as well as envy. They have worked up those feelings to such a pitch that when the very first opportunity occurred they broke out into open violence.

I have not the least doubt in my mind that the intention was to bring on a general insurrection in the colony; but it was precipitated by the violent action of a section of the strikers who may be regarded as the scum of the country—the ne'er-dowells who wander about, avoiding work as far as they possibly can, and who are not honest shearers or honest labourers. Those are the men who

precipitated the strike. Less than two years ago the editor of this paper from which I have been quoting advocated what he called the "slate" proposal, which meant a two years' truce between Labor and employers of labour. Scales of wages should be fixed, and there should be no interference with those scales for two full years.

A sacred agreement should be made between the two parties that there should be a truce from strikes and labour agitations during that period. A more beautiful scheme has seldom been hatched by the most mischievous agitator. Some people saw through it plainly enough, and instead of listening to the proposal they pooh-poohed it, laughed at it.

They saw plainly enough that it was a mere pretext for the complete federation of labour in the colony, and if possible in the other colonies, so that at the end of that time there might be a sufficiently strong phalanx to insist upon all that I have endeavoured to bring before you this afternoon; the abolition of capital, the control of the Legislature, the nationalisation of land, and the conduct of all industry by the State—such a chaotic state of things. Were that to come about it would mean the absolute ruin of the country. That was the object, and, as I said, the strike came too soon; the plans were not matured, and the forces were not ready. But the drilling went on, and the arming went on; all the military evolutions went on amongst these people, and the intention, no doubt, was, had they not been so promptly put down, to bring about such an insurrection as would have ruined some of us, and perhaps driven us out of the country altogether. Therefore, I think we cannot for one moment hesitate in giving very cordial thanks to those who delivered us from that impending danger.

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Thus, did Brentnall address the Parliament. His words were splenetic, with a vengeance, but when it is realised that in the very year that "The Worker" was published, the Queensland Patriotic League went to the trouble and expense of compiling a special document of 16 printed pages

(printed by Black, Keid & Co., Adelaide Street), containing extracts from the then one-year-old workers' paper . . . it shows how the squatters were becoming fearful of the rising strength of the bushmen and toilers generally.

The idea of the extracts, states the Patriotic League's document, was "to disclose the aims of the 'New Unionism' in Queensland". The headquarters of the Patriotic League was then in the Old Courier Buildings, and the secretary was Arthur Pixley.

However, Henry Lawson was not the only one to come within the scope of condemnation, because others were voicing themselves in the true Australian spirit in "The Worker".

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#### J. P. HOOLAN'S SPEECH

**T**HERE have been countless strikes in various industries in Australia in the upsurge drive by trade unionists and others to win for themselves and their families a rightful place in the community life, and to obtain living standards that befitted the white man, when other methods failed, but undoubtedly the industrial turmoil of the 90's played the most significant part in the growth of the Australian Labor Movement.

Historians invariably find their way back to that period in search of the "beginnings" of Labor industrially and politically in which the Australian Workers' Union played such a big hand.

We mentioned earlier how F. T. Brentnall, a journalist and one-time editor of "The Telegraph", had attacked the strikers of 1891, in a speech on July 14, 1891. Let us now show the other side of the picture and record the speech in the Legislative Assembly made by John ("Plumper") Hoolan, M.L.A., who was the member for Burke. Hoolan spoke a few days before Brentnall did in the Legislative Council. Possessed of strong principles, and a defender of democracy to his fingertips, Hoolan addressed Parliament in defence of the bushmen who had been gaoled. He declared there was a strong feeling in the

public mind that the men were not receiving fair play and that they had been cruelly and unjustly treated while they were being travelled from place to place in charge of officers of the law.

To show that the unionists of the 1891 era had been leg-ironed and chained, he read affidavits to the House. He declared that the trial and imprisonment of the men left an impression on the public mind that would be difficult to eradicate and as long as the men remain imprisoned, there would be a gaping wound that would require great care in the healing. Hoolan's words came true; the public rebelled at the ballot boxes and in rapid time Queensland became the strongest Labor State in the Commonwealth.

Speaking in Parliament on July 10, 1891 (before Brentnall did so in the Legislative Council), J. P. Hoolan said:

"It shows 'the sign of the weakness' on the part of the Brisbane Press when one pressman, with a tiny little publication issued once a month or once a fortnight, was able to completely override them, notwithstanding all their rabid writings and utterances—and writings that have done more to incite this strike than all Lane's writings in 'The Worker'. That they should be so completely at fault, and allow themselves to be driven into a corner in this manner, shows helplessness somewhere; and most decidedly it was the duty of leading men, members of Parliament, and Ministers of the Crown, to try and interfere and stop this matter before it got to the unfortunate state it was in when the military were landed at Clermont.

"There is a very big section of the public of Queensland who consider that they are not represented in this Assembly. A large section of the working public of Queensland are strong unionists; and you must all remember that they have a number of supporters and sympathisers who double the unionists. I can say that truthfully.

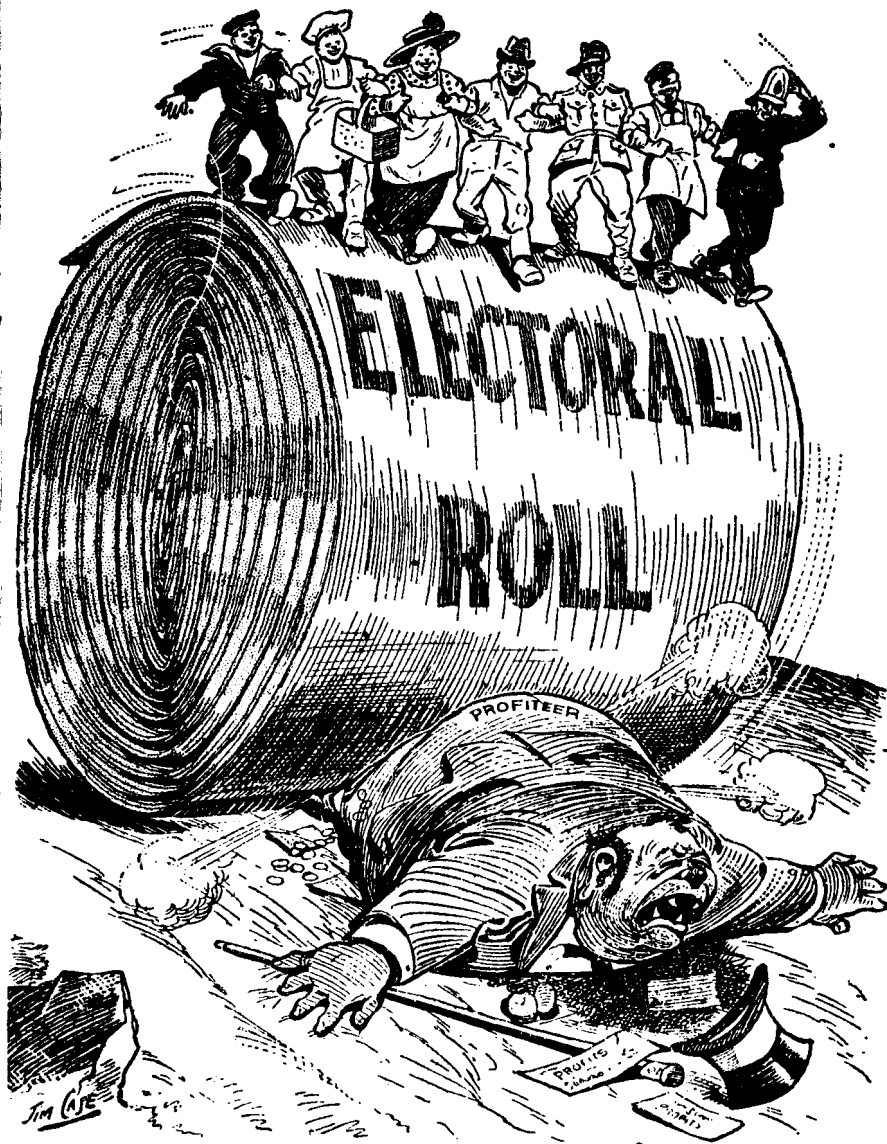
"There is no doubt they aim at being represented in this Assembly, and there is no doubt that they will carry out their aims and intentions—that is, to have better representation than at present. The fact remains.

"It is very easy to stand here and make charges against those prisoners who are now suffering, and I suppose will have to suffer, for what they have done or are supposed to have done. One section of the community claims that they have done nothing; another claims that they are the most outrageous wretches who ever encumbered the earth. They have not made use of those words, but have expressed their views to that effect in a general way.

"One side says it is plain that these men came down to Clermont, advancing in a body, terrorising the district, prepared to take possession of the railway; in fact, to take possession of all the Government institutions, and to administer the law on their own account. I do not believe they had any such intentions. They are spoken of as ignorant, benighted fools. They are not that. We can claim that for them. There is no doubt that they made a demonstration to try and strengthen their own side, but that anything like a revolution was intended I do not believe.

"You know more in Brisbane as to who pulled the wires, but from what I know I do not think they intended anything of the sort. I do not think they would be such fools. They had a few guns, such as a man might put on the stage to make a bit of a display, and that was about all. They certainly went into camp peacefully when the military approached. It is said that they did so for fear of the Nordenfeldt gun; it was no such thing. There were some among them who I do not know; but I am acquainted with a great many of them, and whatever they may be, I do not believe that anything like cowardice reigns in their hearts. I think their own sense of law and order restrained them, and they went into camp peacefully to avoid any collision with the military.

"If they had intended to fight, they could have very easily got away from the Nordenfeldt gun and commenced trouble. It was the good influence of a number who knew they had made enough demonstration and intended to go no further, and the influence brought to bear from outside places, of which probably no one in the Assembly has any knowledge. They have a number of friends throughout



This cartoon by Case was drawn in the grim anti-conscription campaign years of 1916-17. It was cartoons like this, and those drawn by Claude Marquet in "The Australian Worker", Sydney, which helped Labor to win its battle against the then Prime Minister, William Morris Hughes.

the country who have all along done their best to restrain them, and it is unfair to impute motives of cowardice to men who are pulled from behind by their friends and asked to keep quiet so as to gain the public sympathy in order to better their cause.

"There is a strong feeling in the public mind that they have not received fair play, and that they were cruelly and unjustly treated while travelling from place to place in charge of the officers of the law.

"I will now read a little information I have here. This is sworn information, on the oath of a unionist. I suppose hon. members here are not inclined to pay much attention to that, but from my point of view it is just as good as the oath of any other man:

"Six men were kept on one chain for ten days at Augathella night and day, and fourteen men in two cells measuring 7 feet by 8 feet each."

"These are the assertions we want to come at, and see whether they are true or not. When a man allows himself to be arrested quietly by the officers of the law, it is evident that he is prepared to put up with whatever the law may allot him, and has no intention of trying to escape:

"One man named Gavin was suffering from fever and ague, and notwithstanding this fact was known to the police he was still kept in handcuffs at night. This will account for the twenty-one men arrested at Augathella. During the day we were allowed to go to the closet with a guard, but at night we had on a leg-iron and a heavy chain attached to a policeman with a drawn revolver having hold of the end.

"We were handcuffed and leg-ironed travelling in Cobb and Co's coach for two days. During those two days the coach horses kept continually knocking up, and we were placed on horseback at intervals, handcuffed, and our horses bitted to one another. Having to camp out one night, some of the men were leg-ironed together and some handcuffed on a chain."

"I will read a small paragraph from the affidavit of an eye-witness:

"I, George Best, at present of Charleville, in the colony of Queens-

land, shearer, do most solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

"I was present at Augathella on the 30th day of March last past, and in the evening of that day I saw a number of military and police there. I started to go to a camp about eighty yards away from my tent, and when within about ten yards of it I was covered with a rifle, and told that I would be shot down if I moved, as the Riot Act had been read in the camp; I was going to twelve men who were at supper, surrounded by military and police, Captain King and Inspector Stuart being in command.

"Inspector Stuart then called upon a boundary rider and a man named Bartlett to identify some of the men camped there. John McNamara and Latraile, now in Roma jail, were pointed out. Inspector Stuart, covering McNamara with a revolver, called upon him to step out, charging him with committing arson, rioting and conspiracy. When Latraile was coming out the inspector covered him with a revolver, and, as he (Latraile) was not coming quick enough, counted one, two, as a threat to fire.

"Latraile stopped and said: "Fire, that's all you are good for is firing on defenceless men." The Inspector then ordered them to be handcuffed together, saying: "Screw them together like dogs." He repeated this order twice, which was carried out by his men."

"Certainly if these statements are lies they are calculated to do a great deal of damage to the Government, and also to the laws under which we live. If the statements are true, such things ought to be checked; and if not those who gave utterance to them should bear the brunt of them.

"During our confinement in the cells we were allowed out for fresh air by changing places with the prisoners on the verandah, this verandah being only 3 feet 6 inches wide; only the occupants of one cell were allowed out for exercise at a time, and we were confined in these cells for nine days, the air being almost suffocating.

"We started next morning about 10 a.m. for Charleville; after proceeding a short distance the coach got bogged. The men were taken out and ordered to walk about half a mile,

still having leg-irons on. After again getting into the coach and going a few miles further, the coach got bogged again. The men got out and walked for safety, as the horses in the coach were young ones. After the men had walked a short distance I refused to walk any further unless the leg-irons were taken off me; thereupon the police took them off. The whole of the above are facts, and took place in my presence and hearing.

"Until these matters are gone into, there will always be a doubt as to whether or not they were fairly treated. It does not matter what crime a man may commit, he is supposed to be treated humanely while he is in the hands of the officers of the law. These assertions and many others that are agitating the public mind must be cleared up, or there will always be an impression that these men were unfairly treated and brutally treated.

"It is rather a tough job to identify oneself with a prisoner in St. Helena, but one of these men is my particular friend. I do not care if the whole world stands against him; he is still my friend. He was a miner at Croydon in 1887 and he worked very hard to try and put me in the position I am in now. At any rate he behaved like a friend to me, and if I accepted his friendship then, I should be a very poor man if I turned my back upon him now; so I do not intend to do it. I do not know what he has done, but until I know that he has committed some grievous crime against society that would unman him, or until he has forfeited the manliness that was born in him, and which I know he has inherited, I shall believe nothing bad of him.

"The Colonial Secretary says he has gone through the reputations of those men at St. Helena carefully, and has found out their records. He said last night:

"I have gone through them carefully, and have found out the records of those who are in jail, and I can say that the greater number are men who were notoriously in the union camp; and in some instances I know that there are warrants issued for them in the sister colony of New South Wales, for offences committed there. In one

instance a warrant has been issued upon an information laid by the unionists in New South Wales for embezzlement of the union funds.'

"He does not cast any imputations upon those men by saying they were notoriously in the union camp. Surely the hon. gentleman would not so far descend from his pedestal as to cast imputations upon men who are already treated as felons. I suppose in one instance a warrant has been issued upon information, and probably the hon. gentleman is in possession of that information. I do not dispute a word of it; I only say that I know two of those men, and one of them is my particular friend. Until I know more about him, I shall refuse to believe anything bad of him, or that he is guilty of any wicked or heinous crime.

"There is no doubt fires have occurred; but all this outcry about fires in the grass is simply ridiculous. The unionists had a chance of running the whole of the colony into misery from which it could never have recovered, and that is what they would have done if there had been nothing noble in their hearts.

"The man whom I refer to at St. Helena is Alexander Forrester, and I pledge myself, although the Chief Secretary scouted the idea last night, that he could never do anything mean or sneaking.

"I do not intend to say anything bold to-night, or to insult anyone, not that, if I did, I would care if any hon. member resented it, because I suppose I must get used to those things. I will conduct myself in a proper way; but I must state that I would pledge myself to that man as he remains a prisoner of the Queensland Government, at the Island of St. Helena. I pledge my constituency of Burke also to sympathy for him, and that is a very bold thing for any man to do; at any rate I do it, and if they do not like what I say they can reject me.

"The unfortunate prisoners have very few friends who have said a word in their favour; and I think it is the duty of any man to speak in their favour if he has anything to say. It would be very mean for a man, who professed to be a friend, to receive a letter from a distant land and not communicate it to the columns of 'Hansard'.

"It refers to a man named Hamilton, and is as follows:

"You need have no doubt, Jack, as regards Bill Hamilton's character. He is an Australian goldfields' boy, noble-minded, honest to a fault, and one who resents the oppression of the producer by the capitalist. He has more than the average intelligence, and has always, I believe, conducted himself respectably, as his parents taught him to. He is a zealous workman at whatever he tackles. I have known him on Mount Brown to do two men's work. I have also known him on Kimberley to work like a Trojan (if they ever did work), but I am sorry to say with very poor results. Pat Hyland, who used to canvass for you at Tabletop, says he thinks you are acquainted with Bill Hamilton (I doubt it), hence my recommendation as to character.'

"People of the North have only had a one-sided story of what took place in the Western districts, owing to the hostility of the Press. The Press, particularly the Brisbane Press, fiercely attacked the shearers, and by giving a one-sided version of the affair created enemies where they expected to make friends, and caused hostility where they should have used every endeavour to sow the seeds of peace and friendship. Their duty as moderate, truthful and straight-forward journalists was to state both sides of the story.

"It was very unfair to begin an article with a sentence condemning

the strikers as an ignorant lot of men, and then to finish up by abusing them and rating them soundly for what they were doing. According to my idea of journalism, that was thoroughly absurd, and unlikely to effect the object they were supposed to aim at—that was the reconciliation of all parties.

"There is no possibility of bringing about a peaceful state of affairs while the country fancies that the men have been unjustly or improperly imprisoned, or too severely sentenced.

"Those men have a lot of friends, and the shearers and unionists still have a lot of friends: the unionists are a strong body, and it is necessary that a full explanation should be made of the whole affair, and satisfaction given to those who sympathise with them without being participators in or having any connection with the strike.

"I hope, if the Government intend to bring all things to a peaceful conclusion, that they will seriously take into consideration the case of the conspiracy prisoners, and others who have been sent to jail during the late trouble. The imprisonment of those men is making more impression on the public mind than the downfall of the strike or the loss of money. The loss of a bit of money is not a great matter, but where human beings suffer it is a much more serious affair, and there is a sympathy with those men which it will be very hard to eradicate."



THE early "Worker" cartoonists, poets, and writers did not understand the meaning of the word "fear". They knew they were creating something of great value in the cause of the working white man, particularly, and for Australia.

While they fought for the rights of the white man against the exploiter of coloured labour, they did not hate the latter because they understood too well that so many of them had been lured into the slavery of the times. This characteristic has marked the "White Australia" policy and differentiated it from the inhuman laws which have been applied in other countries against coloured races, and rebounded upon white people.

### THE SPIRIT OF THE BUSHMAN

THE slavery days when slavish men  
Scarce claimed to own their very  
soul;  
When battering hordes of tyrant drones  
Begrudged the herd their paltry  
dole;  
When grovelling serfs—afraid to  
think—  
Dared not of "Right" or "Justice"  
dream;  
When word of "might" howe'er unjust  
Was bowed to as the all-supreme;  
When over deeds and very thoughts  
The power of soulless tyrants  
swayed,  
Made men as blocks forget to hope,  
And crouch as whining curs afraid;  
Are passing now!  
The coming dawn  
Shall show the world a glorious  
light.  
The wrongs of years shall be redressed  
And Freedom crush the power of  
might.

Among the earliest cartoonists were Monte Scott, Alf. Ponty, and the prolific Jim Case, who became one of this country's leading artists in the Labor cause. Case, to Queensland, was what Claude Marquet was to the "The Australian Worker", and he emerged from the composing room of "The Worker" itself!

J. A. Stuart, Henry Lawson, Edwin "Ted" J. Brady and Francis Adams were among our earliest versifiers, later ones including such names as Randolph Bedford, R. J. Cassidy, and Henry Boote. The following pages contain some of their works.

If tyrants shall oppose the light,  
Their blood shall wash the stain of  
tears;  
Their groans shall echo to the groans  
of hearts oppressed through slavish  
years.  
But ere the light of hope shall shine,  
Before the tyrants' power is bent,  
Our noblest efforts must be made.  
The bravest of our life-blood spent.

The very best of word and need  
Must greet the first notes of the  
drum,  
And heroes for the cause must bleed,  
Before the glorious light shall come.

—J. A. Stuart.

Barcaldine, 2th February, 1891.

### THE BALLOT IS THE THING

OH, comrades, dear! and did you  
hear the news that's going round:  
The shearer is by law forbid to camp  
on camping ground.  
Unto the chain-gang's clank again  
Australian woods shall ring.  
For they have found a law was made  
when George the Fourth was king.  
It makes the squatters sing, oh, it  
makes the squatters sing!  
This vile old law that once was made  
when George the Fourth was king.

We used to have the notion that in  
Queensland men were free,  
That before the law the squatter was  
the same as you or me;  
But the sturdy bushman now, they  
say, "down to his knees we'll  
bring  
With this old law that once was made  
when George the Fourth was  
king."  
It makes the squatter sing, oh, it  
makes the squatter sing!  
This vile old law that once was made  
when George the Fourth was king.

Then keep your heads, I say, my  
boys; your comrades in the town  
Will help you yet to win a vote and  
put your tyrants down.  
Throw your old guns aside, my boys;  
the ballot is the thing  
They did not have to reckon with  
when George the Fourth was king.  
The ballot is the thing, my boys, the  
ballot is the thing  
Will show these men how long it is  
since George the Fourth was  
king.

—W. Kidston, Rockhampton.

And if you are a railway man I'd  
have you for to know,  
You've got to ask your gaffer where  
your sympathies should go.  
Your heart, your purse, your con-  
science to their keeping you must  
bring;  
Why, it's even getting hotter than  
when George the Fourth was king.  
When George the Fourth was king.  
When George the Fourth was  
king;  
Why, it's getting even hotter than  
when George the Fourth was king.

But keep your heads and tempers,  
boys, your time will come again.  
Remember that your breath has made,  
and can unmake, these men.  
When they've to face the ballot-box,  
it's mighty small they'll sing,  
These men who'd drag us backward  
to the time when George was king.  
It's mighty small they'll sing, my  
boys; it's mighty small they'll  
sing,  
These men who'd drag us backward  
to the time when George was king.

[Julian Stuart was one of the "Conspiracy Prisoners" of 1891, and with his twelve companions served three years' imprisonment at St. Helena. The issue of "The Worker" in which this poem was published also contained William Lane's account of the trial at Rockhampton. Julian Stuart, who was "the baby" of the prisoners, was released in November, 1894, and he married Miss Florrie Collings, a sister to the late ex-Senator J. S. Collings, the former leader of the Opposition in the Senate. Stuart subsequently was appointed editor of the Westralian "Worker", and some years ago, as a result of an accident in the south-western timber district, he died. (The late John Curtin was also editor of the Westralian "Worker" before he became Prime Minister of Australia.) Stuart was a brilliant writer and a versifier of considerable merit, and he did much for the Labor Movement, industrially and politically, in the far western State.]

[The above lines were written by W. Kidston, who, at the time the workers were fighting for their rights in the West, was a keen Laborite and a rebel. Kidston, who subsequently became Premier of Queensland, "ratted" on the Movement when he coalesced with Sir Arthur Morgan; but that need not detract from his fiery lines in 1891 which he desired, as a canny Scot, should be sung to "The Wearing of the Green".]

## FREEDOM ON THE WALLABY

(Written for "The Worker")

AUSTRALIA'S a big country  
An' Freedom's humping bluey,  
An' Freedom's on the wallaby,  
Oh don't you hear 'er coo-ee?  
She's just begun to boomerang,  
She'll knock the tyrants silly,  
She's goin' to light another fire  
And boil another billy.

Our fathers toiled for bitter bread  
While loafers thrived beside 'em,  
But food to eat and clothes to wear,  
Their native land denied 'em.  
An' so they left that native land  
In spite of their devotion,  
An' so they come, or if they stole,  
Were sent across the ocean.

So we must fly the rebel flag  
As others did before us,  
And we must sing a rebel song  
And join in rebel chorus.  
We'll make the tyrants feel the sting  
O' those that they would throttle;  
They needn't say the fault is ours  
If blood shall stain the wattle.

— Henry Lawson.  
Brisbane, May, 1891.

[When "The Worker" was established, Henry Lawson was a member of the staff of "The Boomerang", a weekly paper published in Brisbane to which William Lane was a voluminous contributor. Almost from the first issue of "The Worker" Lawson contributed occasional verse, but most of it was published anonymously and in association with Lane's editorials. When the shearers' strike was precipitated, Henry Lawson devoted his pen to the defence of the men, and it was the above poem published over his name which aroused the ire of the Hon. F. T. Brentnall (mentioned earlier in this book), and which inspired him to the utmost flights of oratory in the Queensland Parliament in his condemnation of "The Worker" and its contributors. It is worthy of special note that during his residence in Brisbane, Henry Lawson wrote the poem, "Trooper Campbell", which is regarded to be, by competent critics, the best Australian ballad that has yet been written.]

## FROM THE SOUTH TO THE NORTH

THERE are anxious, watching faces  
'mongst the workers of the South.  
There's a hope in many bosoms,  
there's a prayer in many a mouth.  
We are waiting for the issues as the  
moments bring them forth.  
And we send a hearty greeting to our  
brothers in the North.

From the dirty, smoky city; from the  
workshop and the mine,  
We stretch the hand of friendship  
'cross the distant border line,  
For we feel the Cause is mighty and  
the truth can never fail.  
If we're true to one another Truth  
and Justice must prevail.

So we watch the battle keenly, count-  
ing out the leaden hours,  
For we know the stake at issue and  
their victory is ours.  
In the name of Holy Freedom, in the  
name of Truth and Right,  
We applaud their noble efforts and  
we'll help them in the fight.

For the sake of wife and mother, for  
the children yet unborn,  
Close the ranks a little longer, leave  
the tyrants' sheep unshorn.  
If the time arrives for action we can  
also go and dare,  
And we have a little money and a  
man or two to spare.  
So I send a friendly greeting o'er the  
border line to you,  
Tell the North to stand together, for  
the South is staunch and true.

—Edwin J. Brady.  
Sydney, April 4, 1891.

[Edwin J. Brady, one of Australia's sweetest singers and without equal, perhaps, as a writer of sea songs and sailors' chancies, was a robust champion of the shearers when the great pastoral strikes of 1891 and 1894 commanded the attention of the world. Brady, who is the author of many works—"Australia Unlimited", "The King's Caravan", "River Rovers", "Bells and Hobbles", "The Ways of Many Waters", "The Land of the Sun"—and many others, was for some time editor of "The Australian Worker", and the above verses, which appeared in our issue of April 4, 1891, were an inspiration to the union men of those days, and they have been extensively quoted ever since.]

## FLING OUT THE FLAG

*FLING out the Flag! let her flap and rise in the rush of the eager air, With the ring of the wild swan's wings as she soars from the swamp and her reedy lair.*

*Fling out the Flag! And let friend and foe behold, for gain or loss, The sign of our faith and the fight we fight, the Stars of the Southern Cross.*

*Oh blue's for the sky that is fair for all, whoever, wherever he be, And silver's the light that shines on all for hope and for liberty, And that's the desire that burns in our hearts, for ever quenchless and bright, And that's the sign of our flawless faith and the peerless fight we fight.*

*What is the wealthiest land on earth, if the millions suffer and cry, And all but the happy, selfish Few would fain curse God and die?*

*What are the glorious Arts, as they sit and sing on their jewelled thrones,*

*If their hands are wet with blood and their feet befouled with festering bones?*

*What are the splendid Sciences, driving Nature with a bit of steel, If only the Rich can mount the car and the Poor are dragged at the wheel?*

*Wealth is a curse, and Art a mock, and Science worse than a lie, Why, they're but the gift of the bloated spawn of the leeches that suck men dry!*

*Nay, brothers, nay! It is not for this—for a land of wealth and woe,*

*That we hoped and trusted all these years, that we toiled and struggled so.*

*It is not for a race of taskmasters and pitiful, cringing slaves,*

*That our strength and skill raised up happy homes and dreamed of fearless graves.*

*It is not for a Cause that is less than all's, that is not for Truth but a lie,*

*That we raise our faces and grip our hands, and lift our voices high,*

*As we fling up the Flag that friend and foe may see, for gain or loss,*

*The sign of our faith and the fight we fight, the Stars of the Southern Cross!*

*As the sky above is fair for all, whoever, wherever he be,*

*As the blessed stars on all shed their light of hope and liberty:*

*So let the earth, this fertile earth, this well-lined Southern Land,*

*Be fair to all, be free to all, from strand to shining strand!*

*Let boy and girl and woman and man in it at least be sure*

*That all can earn their daily bread with hearts as proud as pure;*

*Let man and woman and girl and boy in it forever be*

*Heirs to the best this world can give, equal, fearless, free!*

*Fling out the Flag! Let her flap and rise in the rush of the eager air, With the ring of the wild swan's wings as she soars from the swamp and her reedy lair!*

*Fling out the Flag! and let friend and foe behold, for gain or loss,*

*The sign of our faith and the fight we fight, the Stars of the Southern Cross!*

*Oh! blue's the sky that is fair for all, whoever, wherever he be,*

*And silver's the light that shines on all, for hope and for liberty:*

*And that's the desire that runs in our hearts for ever quenchless and bright,*

*And that's the sign of our flawless faith, and the peerless fight we fight.*

—Francis Adams (1890).

[Francis William Adams, a distinguished English author, was in Queensland in 1890. He was born at Malta on September 27, 1862, and was educated in London and in Paris. In 1882 he migrated to Australia, and in 1884 he published "Henry and other Poems" (London), in 1885 "Leicester, an Autobiography" which was followed in 1886 by "Australian Essays" (Melbourne), and "Poetical Works" (Brisbane), and in 1887 by "Madeline Brown's Murderer" (Sydney). In 1888 there appeared in Sydney "Songs of the Army of the Night," which afterwards went through three editions in London. During his residence in Sydney he was regularly employed on the staff of the "Bulletin." He left Australia in 1890, and contributed Australian sketches to the "Fortnightly Review." During the summer of 1893 he went to live at Margate, England, where, in a fit of depression, he died by his own hand on September 4, 1893. "Australian Life" appeared in 1892, and "The New Egypt" in 1893, after his death; "Tiberius" (a drama) and "A Child of the Age" in 1894, and "Essays in Modernity" in 1899.]

## TOO OLD TO RAT!

*I don't care if the cause be wrong,  
Or if the cause be right,  
I've had my day and sung my song,  
And fought the bitter fight.  
In truth, at times I can't tell what  
The men are driving at;  
But I've been Union thirty years,  
And I'm too old to rat.*



*Maybe, at times in those old days  
Remembered now by few,  
We did bite off in various ways  
Much more than we could chew—  
We paid, in sodden strikers' camps,  
Upon the black-soil flat;  
We paid, in long and hungry tramps—  
And I'm too old to rat.*

*The Queensland strike in 'Eighty-nine  
And 'Ninety's gloomy days—  
The day the opera comp'ny sang  
For us the "Marseillaise";  
The sea of faces stern and set,  
The waiting "bitter cup,"  
The hopeless hearts, unbeaten yet,  
The storm cloud rushing up.*

*The fighting, dying "Boomerang"  
Against the daily Press;  
The infant "Worker" holding out;  
The families in distress;  
The sudden tears of beaten men—  
Oh! you remember that!  
And memories that make my pen  
Not worth its while to rat.*

*I've wept with them in strikers' camps  
Where shivered man and beast;  
I've worn since then the badge of men  
Of Hell!—and London East!  
White faces by the flaring torch!  
Wraith wives!—the slaves of Fat!  
And ragged children in the rain—  
Yes! I'm too old to rat!*

—Henry Lawson.



This drawing reproduced from "The Worker" in the late 90's, reveals that people well knew that coloured labour in the canefields was helping to keep Queensland out of the Federation.



## A.W.U. STORIES RETOLD

Over the years "The Worker" has been fortunate in having men with first-hand experience of the great shearing strikes of the '90's who were able to tell of those events for publication.

One of the most outstanding of these men was the late H. J. Kelly, who died in June, 1948, at the age of 74.

Harry was a regular caller at "The Worker" and related many a grim tale of the sufferings of early A.W.U. men and women, and of the first Labor candidates, who battled their way into the Queensland Parliament, before Federation.

Harry Kelly wrote a number of articles for this paper, and they were always appreciated, especially by the older generation who knew the truth in what he wrote, and by the younger members of the Union who realised that their working and living standards had not been given to them on a platter, but were the result of the combined effort of men who would not bow to injustice, or stretch out an unfair hand against any man.

In this small book we reprint one of Kelly's articles because it makes history. We reprint, too, some of the facts about the A.W.U. contributed from time to time by the late H. French, a regular caller upon the late Clarrie Fallon and "The Worker" and one who knew the story of the early days as did Harry Kelly.

By HARRY KELLY

"In the early eighties, labour conditions were very bad in the west of Queensland. Wages were low, hours were long, and food was bad when the shearers in the Peak Downs district, in 1884, started to organise. Early in 1885 a Shearers' Union was formed in Clermont, and everything was fixed up except its registration. An office was taken, and H. B. Stanley was appointed secretary. What happened subsequently I do not know, but the union collapsed after a very short time.

"The next time I saw Ben Stanley was during the following year in Bourke, N.S.W. He



Harry Kelly

was secretary of one of the two Shearers' Unions there and this is how it happened. The Bourke shearers formed a union in the early part of 1886, and a man named Dixon, the editor of the Bourke 'Watchman', was appointed secretary. In the meantime the shearers at Young had

formed a union under the name of the Tubbill Shearers' Union. They sent up Ben Stanley to form a union in Bourke, but when he got there he found one already started. However, he commenced another one, and for some months the two unions ran side by side, until at length Dixon gave up and let Ben Stanley's union win. I happened to be passing through Bourke with cattle from the Clermont district at the time and saw the two unions operating there.

"But to come back to Queensland. Things were going from bad to worse in the West, mainly on account of the low wages and the competition of coloured labour. The ruling rates were: Station hands from 15/- to 20/- per week, seven days a week; cattle drovers, 20/- to 25/- per week; sheep drovers, 15/- to 20/- per week, with the very roughest of food, mostly damper and salt meat. Sometimes the men would get a tin of "Spare Boy"—golden syrup or treacle.

"Some stations would not even allow their hands to have baking soda or baking powder, and in 1886 Wellshot and Evesham, two of the biggest stations in the West at that time, got their shearing done at 17/6 a hundred.

"The Queensland Shearers' Union was formed in Blacktail at the

## UP FOR VAGRANCY

What May Soon Happen in Queensland



(The above cartoon appeared in "The Worker" in 1899. It showed the lone white man in the dock, and is a striking reminder of the times.)

end of 1886, and in 1887 it was registered. A man named Pennycuik was the first secretary, and later on Bill Kewley was appointed.

"Bill was secretary for about 20 years until he died. He was a great man—one of the best that one could meet.

"Things began to improve a bit for shearers after this. They got back to "the pound a hundred" once more; but the station hands and shed hands were still having a very rough time, so they, with the help of the shearers, formed a union in 1888, and in 1889 they appointed as secretary Henry Bradbury. The union was registered under the name of The Central Queensland Labourers' Union, and the office was in Oak Street, Barcaldine.

"The first shed to shear under the Queensland Shearers' and the Central Queensland Labourers' Union rules was Beaconsfield Station, near Longreach. The shed hands got 30/- a week instead of 25/- a week which they got before the union started. That was on the 1st January, 1889. Of course the station did not give in without a struggle.

"Anyhow the Union was doing well, and all sheds, when they started to shear, used to put up a notice: 'This shed is shearing under Queensland Shearers' Union Rules', and a shearer to engage a stand had to give his Union ticket to the manager of the station as a guarantee that he would turn up to work, and also to prevent the shearer from engaging any more stands in other sheds till he finished. At the start of the shearing the tickets would be handed to the shed chairman, and he would keep them till the shed cut out.

"About this time a Carriers' Union was formed in Barcaldine. A. H. Parnell was secretary. Things were going well for them, when all of a sudden 70 non-union teams belonging to the Bank of New South Wales arrived from Clermont and made their way out to Wellshot, which was shearing at the time. The secretary of the Carriers' Union rushed out to Wellshot and explained the position to the shearers and shed hands.

"The shearers saw the manager of the station and told him that if he was going to employ those non-union carriers they would not shear the sheep.

"The result was that the non-union teams had to go back from where they came.

"Although neither the Shearers' Union, the Labourers' Union, nor the Carriers' Union were affiliated, you can see that they stuck together and looked after each other's interests.

"In 1890 changes took place in the secretaryship of the Labourers' Union. The name was changed to the Queensland Labourers' Union and A. Parnell was appointed secretary for a short time, followed by Tom McGregor, then Lyden Crone, H. O. Blackwell, and then Thos. J. Ryan, who was the first endorsed Labor candidate to be elected to Parliament in Queensland.

"The Queensland Labourers' Union opened branches in Springsure and Roma. Walter Curtis was secretary at Springsure and Ned Murphy at Roma, but neither of these organisations could get a go on, and they had to close down.

"Then the Maritime Strike came on, and the Shearers' Union and the Labourers' Union struck a levy of £1 a member and 10/- a member respectively, which was paid willingly.

"Things went along fairly well till the end of 1890, when the stations notified that they wanted to shear under "Freedom of Contract" system. That meant that they wanted to employ anyone they liked—black, white or brindle—and also pay what wages they liked.

"On January 1, 1891, most of the station hands came out on strike, not over the 'Freedom of Contract' principle, but because of the Chinese employed on the stations. Of course if a station had no Chinese employed the men stayed on.

"The General Strike of 1891 was called on March 15. A number of men were chosen from the Shearers' Union and a number from the Labourers' Union, and they formed a committee to run the strike under the name of the Barcoo District Council—"B.D.C."

"A man named Risley was chairman, and the committee comprised Jack Payne, George Taylor, Dick Wood, Tom Ryan, Jack Murphy, and others I cannot think of at the moment. Things started to get lively in Clermont district. The stations

intended to shear in that district first, and then bring the 'free labourers' up to the Central district.

"Of course a lot of trouble followed in the Clermont district. Union men were arrested every day, mostly on the framed-up charges, like the Clermont riot and the Ebor Creek affair.

"Many of the police and some of the railway men had no time for unionism in those days. The stations had the Government of the day on their side also, and they had soldiers with machine guns chasing the bushmen. They also had a lot of "Calico Jimmys" as majors and captains, and it was lucky they did not shoot all the people in the West. They tried to make all the trouble they could, until a couple of real army officers, Colonel French and Major Des Voeux, came up. As soon as they came they sized up the situation and ordered all the soldiers and machine guns home.

"At the commencement of the strike camps were formed at all the towns in the West, and a line of messengers were stationed 25 miles apart on the billabongs and creeks. This was a voluntary service, as there were no telephones in those days when the 'free labourers' came up to Barcardine Station. The 'free labourers' slept on the shearing board in the woolshed, and the soldiers had their rifles stacked up in a corner. One of the 'free labourers' jumped up and seized a rifle and drove the bayonet through one of his mates, pinning him to the floor. Of course the victim never spoke, and the murderer was taken away to an asylum.

"Strange to say, the only friends the union had in the West were the business people, and they were ready to stand or fall by the unions. When the strike was called off on June 15, 1891, the union owed about £3,000. To their credit every penny was paid off before the end of the year.

"The strike committee ran a paper called 'The Strike Bulletin'. It was written up by members of the union and printed by the 'Western Champion', at that time the leading paper of Western Queensland.

"The next trouble was that which arose in 1894 when the stations reduced the shed hands wages from 30/- per week to 24/- per week.

The stations won for a while, but the men kept annoying them with petty strikes, and they were glad to raise the wages again to 30/-.

"There is no doubt that the A.W.U. has done a wonderful lot of good for all classes, and for bush workers especially.

"Here is an instance: A manager of a station in the Winton district, with 150,000 sheep, was getting £150 per year. When the travelling manager came on his visit of inspection he found that the manager of the station had a daughter about 16 living with them, and because of that the travelling manager knocked off £30 of the manager's salary for his daughter's maintenance, leaving him £120 for managing a station of that size.

"Hundreds of men were arrested during the strike in 1891, and most of them, besides the conspiracy prisoners, got from three to six months' imprisonment in the Mackay gaol, mostly amongst the kanakas. The police used to raid the union rooms nearly every other night.

"At the latter end of 1891 the Shearers' Union and Labourers' Union decided to amalgamate with branches at Charleville, Longreach, and Hughenden, and to hold a delegates' conference every year. The branch at which the conference was held was to be the head office of the union for that year. In May, 1892, the first conference was held in Charleville, and three branches were formed under the Amalgamated Workers' Union of Queensland, the Charleville branch with E. Brennan secretary, the Longreach branch with W. Kewley secretary, and the Hughenden branch with W. C. Curtis secretary. The number of members at that time was: Charleville, 2,500; Longreach, 2,800; Hughenden, 800; making a total of 6,100.

"There are some public national benefits in Australia for which the A.W.U. was primarily responsible, and amongst them is the establishment of the 'White Australia Policy.'

"The Queensland shearers struck the first effective blow at coloured labour at Kensington Downs in October, 1888, by refusing to shear under a shed overseer who employed Chinese labour every chance he got.

"The station sued the shearers for damages, and the case cost the Queensland Shearers' Union between seven and eight hundred pounds. The next station held up was Aramac. The same man was being put over the shed, but the shearers objected and refused to start at all until the station got another overseer. The shearers camped on the creek at Aramac for about three weeks, and when they put another man over the shed as overseer the men went to work.

"This happened at the beginning of January, 1889; and again at Barcardine station another Chinese employer was going over the board as overseer. The men stood out for three or four weeks, and camped on the Alice River till the station put another man over the shed. Most of the union men kept the boycott going until the end of the 1891 strike.

"The Queensland Shearers' Union and the Queensland Labourers' Union, it may be mentioned, had in their



This is the famous shearing strike camp tree, at Hughenden, which was a reminder of the 1891 strike until it was destroyed by fire in 1944. "United We Stand, Together We Fall" was cut into the wood.

rules—"No Chinese or Japanese, or South Sea Islanders, or other coloured races be allowed to join the union."

"Another great benefit for which the public may thank the A.W.U. is its grand hospital system. When the Queensland Shearers' and the Queensland Labourers' Union started in Queensland the hospital systems were awful. If a person were sick he or she had to get a letter from a committee man to gain admittance to a hospital, except in case of accident, and so the Queensland Shearers' Union passed a motion 'that all hospitals admit a member of the union on his ticket; if not, all moneys subscribed by union members be sent to hospitals that did so.' All the hospitals in the West agreed to that, except Barcardine, which hung out for some years, and that institution was in a very bad way financially till it did agree.

"So the A.W.U. members were the prime movers towards getting our grand hospital system—one of the best in the world.

"Of course the hospitals in those days were run by the employers and their class, so they started a new dodge. Every donor of one pound became a governor of the hospital, and the managers of the stations began to collect the subscriptions from the station hands and nominate what governors they liked.

"But the unions soon woke up to that move, and passed a motion that all moneys collected be sent to the union secretary, who would send the money to the hospitals entitled to it and nominate the governors at the same time.

"Another public benefit brought about by the A.W.U. is the Adult Franchise. In those early days when the union started, only men of mature age and sound judgment, according to the boss, were allowed a vote. A person had to be six months in residence in the one place, and had to get a J.P. to sign his claim. As soon as he left town to look for work he was promptly knocked off the roll.

"One Quarterly Revision Court knocked off the roll in Isisford 150 men at one time, and still they put the Labor man in.

"The union started a political organisation right away, under the



name of The Bushmen's Parliamentary Association. The tickets were 2/6 each. The Bushmen's Parliamentary Association was subsequently merged with the Workers' Political Organisation, known as the W.P.O.—now the A.L.P.—and Labor members were always told to work for Adult Franchise, and eventually they got it.

"In the early part of 1892 the then sitting member for the Barcoo—Frank Murphy—owner of Northampton Downs, died, and Thos. J. Ryan, the secretary of the Queensland Labourers' Union, stood for the seat against Mr. W. H. Campbell, the owner of the 'Western Champion', which stood in the station interests.

"Of course the stations thought it was a walkover for Campbell, as all the men had scattered over the country looking for work. But they came back from New South Wales and from the far ends of Queensland. Some of those men travelled hundreds of miles mostly on horseback but many on foot, to record their votes and send the first endorsed Labor man to Parliament.

"Those were the days! Those were the men!"

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Thus wrote Harry Kelly for "The Worker" in 1940—twenty years ago. It is not hard for outbackers to visualise the events, and the surroundings.

What scenes at those shearing sheds! There were always men leading packhorses arriving or leaving the various sheds. The roads were scarred by waggon wheels and Cobb & Co. coaches. Often after shearing, a race



E. G. THEODORE, who was the first A.W.U. President in Queensland after the amalgamation. He later became Premier of Queensland and Federal Treasurer.

meeting would be held by the shearers and shed hands themselves, the proceeds frequently going to the local hospital or some charity!

Charity from those who were battling for more justice from employers and Governments!

And what sheds they were! Take a few of the names which were published in "The Worker" for May 6, 1899 (many large sheds existed in the 1920's). The number of sheep to be shorn and the number of shearers and "rousabouts" (nowadays classified as shed hands) make romantic reading.

Here are but a few to conjure with: Manuka—

110,000 sheep, 30 shearers, 27 rousabouts;

Kynuna—  
120/150,000 sheep, 40 shearers, 30 rousabouts;

Oondooroo—  
130,000 sheep, 40 shearers, 40 rousabouts;

Bowen Downs—  
370,000 sheep, 70 shearers, 50 rousabouts;

Wellshot and Coombe-Martin—  
375,000 sheep, 100 shearers (60 Wellshot, 40 Coombe-Martin), 100 rousabouts;

Marathon—  
200,000 sheep, 50 shearers, 40 rousabouts;

Vindex—  
130,000 sheep, 50 shearers, 60 rousabouts;

Isis Downs—  
150,000 sheep, 64 shearers, 50 rousabouts;

Corinda—  
150,000 sheep, 40 shearers, 50 rousabouts;

Corona—  
160,000 sheep, 56 shearers, 40 rousabouts;

Northampton Downs—  
180,000 sheep, 58 shearers, 60 rousabouts;

Terrick Terrick—  
180,000 sheep, 50 shearers, 40 rousabouts.

Adelong and Irvingvale sheds were the only ones listed that shored 10,000 sheep and less; the lowest of the others named were two at 20,000, one at 23,000, several between 23,000 and 45,000, the rest ranging from 80,000 to 375,000 sheep for shearing!

No wonder the birth of the Australian Labor Movement came, really, from these localities, because they were little townships in themselves for weeks in a year, and they had to provide their own entertainment, and political and industrial discussions.

Now, let us recapture some of the colour and effervescence of the times, as related in "The Worker" by the late Harry French, in a series of graphic articles which appeared from time to time.

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By HARRY FRENCH

"AFTER the strikes of the nineties, much bitterness was evident in the industrial movement in Queensland. Work was scarce, and the outback tracks and billabongs were crowded with men, carrying their swags, or as it was generally called by the men themselves, 'humping bluey', in search of work.

"Kanaka labour was manning the sugar fields, and in some instances kanakas were introduced on the sheep stations. Chinese were overrunning the properties, ringbarking and repairing fences. Some were being taught to shear.

"In addition to scarcity of work the employers had a secret mark on the reference, and as each man had to produce a reference to secure a job this was used very effectively against the good unionist, or agitator, as we were called in those days. A man's reference would read O.K. as to his work, etc., but on handing it in he would be told:

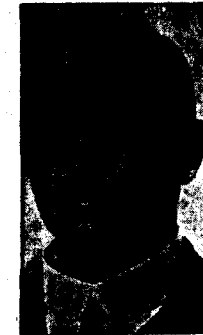
"'Sorry, full-handed.'

"Yet, perhaps, five or six would be put on immediately after, and then would come the same answer:

"'Sorry, full-handed,' as another 'agitator' would hand in his reference.

"The late William Kewley, secretary of A.W.U. in Longreach, advised us to carry no reference. This was done. Meetings were held at sheds and on the roads and references burnt. In the end we won employment without carrying that death warrant.

"The union was very active in winning better conditions and in securing the nomination of Labor candidates for the Legislative Assembly. As with great foresight and after bitter experience of the strikes, our leaders



T. J. RYAN, who led Labor to victory in 1915 and became the first of a long, unbroken line of Labor Premiers.

realised to do any lasting good for the people they would have to amend the bad old laws of privilege and make fresh ones, introducing the measures so necessary.

"Tim Ryan, a shearer, won the Barcoo, the seat afterwards held by a namesake, the illustrious T. J. Ryan, Labor Premier of Queensland. Bundaberg was held by Labor—a great sugar centre those days and worked by kanaka slave labour.

"I recall the Tory Press of Queensland reiterating that if Labor's demand for the abolition of this kidnapped kanaka labour were granted, that the 'Grass would grow in the streets of the sugar towns of Queensland.'

"How false were these prophets we all know to-day.

"The A.W.U. was busy forming workers' political organisations—now the A.L.P. Branches. In Brisbane the A.L.F., with Casey, Hinchcliffe, Matt. Reid and others were all working hard for the return of Labor members, under the guidance of the A.W.U.

"The mainstay, financially and otherwise, of all these activities was the A.W.U. Many of the craft unions of the day were numerically small, and some were barred by their constitution from taking political action. The A.W.U. was the first union to realise industrial and political action was necessary to arrive at the state of progress we have to-day.

"The union has had some great leaders—men who could plan ahead; men who early realised that the union, to be effective, must be Australia-wide and not confined to one State.

"The conditions we have to-day were won by the unions the very hard way. Organisers were barred from meeting their members on the job. I have seen our organisers ordered off station properties and forced to camp on the road alongside.\* Every weapon was used. The sheep kings, with very few exceptions, treated men as serfs. Wooden bunks in tiers in the huts for sleeping in, no baths, no lavatory accommodation. No butter on the table, 10lb. flour, 12 lb. meat, 2lb. sugar, ½lb. tea, pinch tartaric acid and soda was the ration scale; sometimes a tin of treacle called under many names, mostly bullock's joy or squatter's purge. If you wanted jam you paid for it. Potatoes or onions, if asked for, meant the sack as a dangerous agitator—the same applied to butter.

"Hours were from starlight to starlight. Drinking water was not supplied at the huts and had to be drawn from a creek, nearby, contaminated by animal and perhaps human waste.

"Wages for shed and station hands ranged from 15/- to £1 per week. Holidays, nil.

"Men working for Shire Councils or Divisional Boards and railway contractors found their own tents and camping gear. If the nearest water was many miles away, that is where they would have to camp; but they would have to be on the job at starting time and leave at knock-off time.

"I have worked on a railway construction job myself and spent over three hours daily travelling backward and forward from work. On top of this, each man had to pay 3/6 for a shovel to work with. Why they never asked payment for the pick is still a mystery to me.

"I remember 14 of us going to a shed in the 'Fisher Country', as all the country from Surat to St. George was called—Fishers owned practically all the stations. We arrived a few days before the sign-on, with tucker bags empty. It was my first time in the St. George district and the shed was on a slight rise on the bank of a creek, with the men's huts below it.

\* This was done, also, in the 1956 shearing dispute and A.W.U. leaders were fined.

"On arrival we had to dispute possession with a sow and litter of pigs, which had been living there since shearing, judging by the state of the hut and accumulated filth on the ground floor. The hut walls were 4in. round saplings, trimmed here and there with an axe, and the wind whistled through pretty well—one thing, those old-time huts never lacked ventilation.

"Bunks were in tiers of three, made of dressed wooden slabs about 10 to 14 inches wide, no mattress, etc. That was the sleeping accommodation provided. The dining room was in the centre of these sleeping huts—just long wooden tables and wooden benches to sit on.

"Cooking utensils comprised camp ovens and a few sheets of galvanised iron making a galley.

"In other places a baker's oven was built alongside the galley, and many a good meal was provided under difficult conditions by the old-time shearers' cooks.

"Plates, cups, etc., were all tin-ware, and mostly very rusty. There were no safes, no gauze on doors or windows. Everything was open to the flies and dust. There were no glass windows, but wooden shutters.

"In the later nineties and early in 1900, when the daddy of all droughts was raging, the flies all through the West were like bees round a honey pot, dropping into tea, on meat, into soup. A man had to fight the flies for everything he ate. 'Barcoo Spew' (not a very elegant name) was prevalent. This was caused by the flies, and was severe, the fits of vomiting lasting for weeks. Very few men escaped these attacks.

"But the sanitary accommodation was the worst of the lot. In some instances an open pit was provided with two saplings across for a seat. In many cases there was not even this primitive attempt at sanitation, but men were expected to use the trees (if any) or the banks of the creek, from which the water supply for drinking and cooking was drawn. Small wonder that typhoid fever was keeping the western hospitals full.

"One station on Eastern Creek, in the Gulf Country, had a private cemetery with more graves than the town-



ship some 40 or 50 miles away. Every year there would be an outbreak of fever and several more men would cross the Great Divide.

"Finally there was an outcry and this place was cleaned up. This was another case of absentee ownership. Local managers could not get any money for improvements in living conditions for the workers.

"In passing I would mention the country hospitals. In those days it was a point of honour that every shearer contributed £1 and each rouseabout 10/- to the local hospital or the nearest one to the shed in which he was shearing or working, sometimes 150 to 200 miles away. In addition to this, at the cut-out a concert and races would be held. Most men then had horses as a means of travelling, as the motor car was a rarity in the back country. It was per boot with bluey up or saddle and pack horse for the toilers.

"A worker, who had contributed perhaps £5 or £6 and helped to raise more by participating in races and concerts, if he had occasion to use the hospital through severe illness in the slack of the year, when his earnings were exhausted or running low, would suffer the, to-day, incomprehensible insult of having a card over his cot bearing in inch-long black letters the word 'Pauper'.

"Feeling ran red hot over this unnecessary humiliation of decent, clean-living, hard-working men. The A.W.U. took a hand. Representation, and in many cases, control, of the administration of hospitals was won.

"The boycott had to be used in one or two instances before this despicable snobbery and vindictiveness was finally overcome.

"At one stage the outback tracks were covered with men looking for work, mostly with Matilda up, and some with horses. Work was slack all over the State, and as the squatters had advertised they would provide travellers with flour, tea, sugar and meat, if they would travel looking for work (a paying proposition for them as labour was carted to their door). Many left the towns and cities and flooded the western labour market.

"In addition there was a big overflow of Chinese labour from the diggings, as many thousands of these had migrated to Queensland following on the alluvial strikes of gold, some phenomenally rich. As some of these diggings petered out the Chinese labour was naturally exploited by the employers. Naturally, we were very bitter when we found them doing ringbarking, fencing, dam sinking and burr cutting, work at which the bushman was generally employed in the off season.

"Looking back, I have long realised the Chinese were not to blame, as 10/- to 15/- a week, with their mat of rice thrown in, was a fabulous wage to them, used as they were to getting from 4/- to 10/- per month. Many were brought here and exploited by their own countrymen, and the State Government, I believe, received a poll tax of £1 per head.

"I found, however, on talking to many of these unfortunate slaves, that they were men of principle and were prepared to put up a fight for themselves, though many were bitter against us, as they had been harried and forcibly ejected from some of the diggings by the prospectors, who were as fine a body of men as could be found anywhere on earth.

Under the conditions described above the Wool Kings thought it was a great opportunity to smash the A.W.U., as they sensed and feared its growing power, industrially and politically.

"Machines had been invented, though they were a long way from perfect, and used to burn a blister all over the palm of the hand. Many stations installed them and we, naturally, had to use them or go workless.

"The Pastoralists' Association installed what they called a Machine Shearers' School in Brisbane. Here, after recruiting labour, principally from the Downs, where they always seemed able to procure Free Labour, as they called it (we called it scab labour), they would give these chaps from three to six days' instruction in machine shearing. Then came the oyster.

"They would issue each recruit with a 10/- ticket in what they termed the Machine Shearers' Union, and send him out to a shed.

"Needless to say they had pens allotted and generally sent from four to six to each shed. These so-called M.S.U. members paid nothing for their tickets and were merely tools for the pastoralists to smash the A.W.U., as with the A.W.U. broken and such docile and craven labour as their M.S.U. members, conditions, which were still pretty rotten but which the Union—A.W.U.—was bettering every day, would retrograde again to as bad or worse than before.

"Drastic action was necessary and the Union took it.

"We refused to shear with M.S.U. men, and as a show of tickets was only taken after roll call and these M.S.U. discovered, many were the strikes. Then would come the usual prosecution of our members for breach of agreement, and many were the fines collected and many good men were victimised. However, as the Union had proved before, neither gaol nor starvation would break our members.

"Of course, the old continuous 'Gov.' was in power and threw all its weight behind its friends and financial backers, the employers. Nothing was too paltry or too vindictive to be employed against anyone who sympathised with the Union. I will mention one of many incidents to show the petty meanness of some of our by-gone law makers.

"At a shed where I was rep., a 64 stand shed, with newly-installed Wolseley machines, on calling for a show of tickets we found six men were holding M.S.U. tickets. First we tried by moral persuasion to influence the men themselves. We appealed to their sense of manhood

and fair play. Failing there, we appealed to their selfish instincts, pointing out how the A.W.U. would protect them and how much the pay had been bettered and how the primitive conditions had, and were still being improved.

"We failed again, as they were really despicable skunks, who thought more of a smile and an empty pat on the back from a boss than the mate-ship and help of their fellow workers.

"We then interviewed the manager of the station and tried to reach an agreement with him, but it was useless; although a manager he was one of those bitter union and Labor haters. On being told we would not shear with them he smiled gleefully and rapped out:

"Well, take the bloody consequences!"

"We did!"

"We were prosecuted for breach of agreement and 58 of us fined £5 or 14 days. Though we were all financial, this being the second cut that season for most of us, and the third for some, we decided to take it out and not to pay the fine, much to the disgust and anger of the Magistrate, who was stated to have said he would have made the alternative much more if he had known.

"However, we were lucky. Cobb & Co's. coach came past only twice a week; the nearest gaol was nearly 300 miles away. So we were kept there in the two small cells and on the verandahs. The sergeant in charge and his wife were both Labor sympathisers and we were treated as honoured guests. The lady herself was a wonderful cook and excelled herself in supplying us wonderful meals and smokos. Her husband supplied up with cards, cribboards, draughts, etc., magazines, books, and the usual country weekly. I believe to feed us they only received 1/6 a day and in those days police pay and conditions were pretty rotten. There was no Police Union and no Labor Governments.

"On serving our sentences and being released, we all decided to pool our £5 fine and purchase our good friends, the sergeant and his wife, a piano, as we found out this lady could play and had no piano, and two

suites of furniture. They demurred at taking it but we compelled them.

"Then came the despicable paltriness of those in power. The sergeant was transferred to the Never Never, among the sand hills on the South Australian border.

"As he was getting on in years and had served half a lifetime in the outback and was due to return shortly and moreover a sufferer from blight, I think this episode shows how bitter and small were our opponents.

"However, our good friends stored their furniture and went out there and put in over 12 months. The sarge. then resigned on the grounds of ill health. They lived for many years in the South and enjoyed the friendship of all those who came in contact with them, including many of their former prisoners, because whenever any of us visited the city we never failed to call and see them, as they were a grand old couple.

In Longreach after the strike things were as bad as they could be. The union office was broke, the men were all the same, work was scarce and the outback tracks were crowded with men, all seeking work. The committee, headed by John ('Snowy') Payne, afterwards Labor member for the Mitchell, till his death some years ago had practically decided to suspend operations temporarily as there was no money and the prospect of any coming in till the following season was very remote.

"Paddy Langston said to John Payne: 'Give me some books of tickets and I will get down the river and see what I can do.'

"On being told there was not enough money to pay his tucker bill while travelling, he replied:

"Damn the money! Give me the tickets and you can talk about tucker bills after I come back; but keep the doors open."

"His offer was accepted, and Paddy loaded his pack horse and started down the Thompson.

"I was only in my mid-'teens those days, and, as all youths, very enthusiastic. I travelled with Paddy down through Jundah, calling at every station and camp on the way. Paddy never failed to hold a meeting, and

wherever men were financial he always sold union tickets.

"There was no need to talk of compulsory unionism, as the men who made our union were lion-hearted white men. We went as far as Thargomindah, and here I secured a job at 30/- per week, fencing on a Hackett property.

"However, Paddy touched the Barcoo, and then went across through the 'J.C.' This place, got its name from one of our tough old pioneers, John Costello, who cut his initials on a tree at the crossing when he was driving his herd of cattle farther out in search of new country. Paddy touched the Diamantina, turned and went back to Longreach.

"He had sold between five and six hundred tickets. A great achievement, considering the lack of work.

"In talking to Paddy after, he told me he only met four 'whitewings' on the whole trip. 'Whitewing' was one of the names for free labourers, as they called themselves. We had a much shorter and more appropriate name for them.

"Before telling of the many devious methods our opponents used to try and defeat us I must mention the prospectors as grand a body of men and unionists as ever trod this earth of ours.

"These men penetrated into all classes of wild and then unknown country, suffering thirst and starvation in their search for gold, tin, opal, sapphire, copper, wolfram and other metals. Many of these men who opened most of our mines and our alluvial gold deposits, our opal and sapphire fields were early members of our Union, as they would, when broke, take a job on a station till they earned another stake to take up their prospecting again, and also, many of our victimised early members followed prospecting as a means of livelihood.

"In the early days of our Union I never remember meeting a prospector who was not a unionist and Labor man, and many a time I was indebted to them for a feed and was put on to a patch of alluvial where I could make a few bob to carry me on my way.

"Many of these grand men have now passed across the Divide and very few are able to follow their calling.

"But Queensland owes them a debt of gratitude, for they pioneered this country, as their strikes caused many prosperous towns to spring up, land to be thrown open, railways to be built, and in doing so they left behind them a record of clean, straight, white men who fought to better conditions for us all to-day, actions which may well be emulated by those following in their footsteps.

"As each electorate was held and Labor strength grew we found it harder and harder to keep Labor men on the roll. Our members were enthusiastic and those who managed to get on the roll let nothing stand in their way when it came to voting.

"Men swam flooded rivers and creeks, tackled dry stages and lost wages for a week or more, as they would walk perhaps 100 or 150 miles to reach a polling booth.

"Many suffered loss of their jobs, but nothing deterred them. I have seen them sacked and been sacked myself when the votes were counted, as the boss always knew how we voted though the ballot was supposed to be secret.

"I remember an incident on Emu Dilla Station, an outstation of Milo, in the Warrego district. We were shearing there and the new election was being held for the seat. After Bowman had appealed against the stacking of the ballot boxes at Bonna Vonna and other stations, our case was proven and Bowman should have been awarded the seat, but we had to fight it again although hundreds of forged votes for Hood, the pastoralist, were proven to have been stacked in the station ballot boxes. The day before the new election the manager issued his phrase:

"'Any man who votes for Bowman to-morrow gets the sack.'

"All the men were unionists and Labor, but only 13 of us were on the roll when we went to vote, and 13 of us were told next day to roll our bluey and get. We were paid off without any reason being given, but we knew.

"We had voted Labor.

"I could relate hundreds of cases of a similar and rotten nature.

"There was another case where there were 16 votes on a station and no more within 50 miles. Yet when the votes were counted there were 22 supposed to be cast for the Tory candidate and six for the Labor man, and those six were sent on the track next day.

"I remember a very amusing incident at a small two-hotel township down the Thompson River from Longreach. It was polling day. There were only about 10 votes in the town and about 12 or 13 to come from the station near. A school teacher—a Government servant—was poll clerk, and when the votes were counted the vote was: Kerr (Labour), 22; the Tory candidate—nil.

"'Hell,' exclaimed the schoolie, 'This means the sack for me, as I should have voted Tory, but I thought I was safe, as I thought someone would vote Tory. Now I am in a stew.'

"After some discussion among the boys, old Saddle Strap, an old-timer even in those days, said: 'Give me a ballot slip and I will fix it up.'

"This he did, voting for the Tory candidate and making the vote 22 to 1. It must have got through because when the election was well over the local weekly recorded 22 to 1 for that booth!

"To mention the conditions of labour and rates of pay prevailing 40 years ago in the timber industry I will take two pine mills in the Brisbane Valley, and these were typical of the industry all over the State.

"To start with, the hours of labour were from 7 a.m. till it was too dark to see to use the saw, not even a ten-hour day; no holiday or half-holiday; no accommodation, but supply your own tent or build your own humpy out of waste. Very rarely was a full hour allowed for dinner.

"The rates of pay were: Benchmen, 6/6 to 7/6; engine-driver, 6/-; tailer-out, 5/- to 6/-; handle-man or roller man, 3/6; yardmen, docking, stripping and loading pine, 3/6 to 4/- per day, and tucker yourself. Pine fallers were paid 4d. per hundred super feet, find your own axes, saws, tapes, etc., and cut all snigging tracks

through the scrub for the bullocks to snig the logs out. It was mostly bullock teams those days, with an occasional horse team.

"The engine-driver did not have to be a certificated man, as the safety of the workers was a very minor consideration.

"The A.W.U., on taking control and organising the industry, bettered conditions amazingly by negotiation with employers and by strikes where necessary and by Arbitration Awards. But never did the Union call a senseless strike or let the men down.

"I have seen men who were afraid to be seen sitting near an agitator during the lunch hour. If he were so placed he would immediately get up and seek another position, so great was the fear of the boss.

"Conditions in most country mills were very primitive. Everything was done by brute strength. There were few, if any, mechanical aids; no cranes, no mechanical feeds on the bench. I have seen all hands in the mill swinging on a flitch which came off the breaking down frame on its back. We would kneel on one edge and grasp the other, and rock it till we could turn it on the skids to bring it on to the No. 1 bench.

"In those days 4 inches of heart were deducted from every sound hardwood log up to 80 inches girth, excepting red stringy bark, which was subject to a deduction of 6 to 10 inches, according to the various mill owners. If a log showed a pipe of say, six inches, generally a square of 9 x 9 inches would be docked from the faller, in some cases only 8 x 8 inches would be taken, and then again in others 10 x 10 inches would be deducted.

"A faller in the bush had to slave all day to earn enough to keep just above the bread line at 4d.

"These coolie conditions prevailed until the A.W.U. broadened its constitution to take in saw-milling, and I would ask my fellow members of the A.W.U. in this branch of industry to

compare the conditions prevailing to-day with those at the time the grand old union took control. With your sick pay, holiday pay, your much shorter hours, accommodation provided at country mills; with your union to prevent your victimisation.

"Another body of men who were the victims of rank exploitation and coolie conditions were the navvies and construction workers on the railways as they were being built in the early days. Nearly all our early railways were built by contractors, as it was not till the voice of Labor was heard in increasing strength in our Parliament that the day labour construction was brought into being. Most of the contractors were nigger drivers.

"I think Jack Laracy, Organiser, from the Hughenden office of the A.W.U., closed now for many years in the reorganisation of districts, was the first man to really try to do something for these workers. It was before the A.W.U. covered them. At their own request he enrolled some hundreds of them, when the line was being laid from Hughenden with the object of finally linking Cloncurry with Townsville.

"The conditions and rates of pay were as bad as in any industry; 4/6 to 6/- per day prevailed, and as I mentioned the worker found his own camping equipment and camped on the nearest water to his work, walking backwards and forwards to his job in his own time.

"In dry times in the North-western portions of the State this water was really unfit to drink, but it had to be used, and on the plain country firewood was as scarce as diamonds. He had to buy the shovel to work with, 3/6 being the usual price paid. As nearly all these men travelled per boot carrying their swags, or else by coach to their jobs, the shovels that were left behind, when a man was sacked or left the job fed up and disgusted with rotten conditions, amounted to a nice profit to the contractors."

# A.W.U. HISTORY

IT WOULD be impossible to mention the history of "The Worker" without mentioning the Australian Workers' Union because without the latter the former would never have come into existence.

It was the pioneers of the A.W.U. who were instrumental in keeping "The Worker" in circulation during its early months of life, and it has been the money contributed by members of the A.W.U. that the newspaper has been kept alive ever since.

Incidentally, it was the financial aid from the A.W.U. which was largely responsible for keeping "The Daily Standard", Brisbane, functioning long after other Unions had withdrawn from the tremendous cost of production field and it was A.W.U. money which was the financial strength of such Labor journals as "The Echo" (Ballarat), "World" (Tasmania), "The World" (afternoon daily, Sydney), and the Westralian "Worker" (once edited by the late John Curtin)—all of which have gone into oblivion.

Hundreds of thousands of pounds paid out by the A.W.U. were lost over the years in those ventures, mainly because the workers would not support their own publications. However, in the process, the battle for the Australian Labor Party was won, and our native land given a standard of freedom and living not equalled elsewhere in the world.

Without doubt, the Australian Worker's Union has no parallel in the Southern Hemisphere, and to-day is the industrial colossus astride the nation from East to West, searching out employers who would, through their avarice, destroy what has been built, and the employee who would equally try to smash the standards which have been so hardily won.

There are some employers who still live in the past, and there are some workers who would, to use an old-time term which has lived through the decades, readily "scab" on their mates.

In briefly re-telling the story of the A.W.U., the only sure method is to rely on the A.W.U. historians themselves, and there is no more quoted authority than the late W. G. Spence,

the first General President of the Australian Workers' Union.

The first meeting of the Shearers' Union, which was the immediate forerunner of the Australian Workers' Union, was held in the golden city of Ballarat in 1886. It did not come by chance. It was held as the result of a newspaper advertisement, and not more than a mile from the historic spot where the Eureka miners fought their battle against tyranny at the Stockade.

The meeting took place in Fern's Hotel, on Saturday, June 12, 1886; and although several attempts had been made to get men together in various districts, none met with the success as the gathering over which W. G. Spence presided, with David Temple (President of the Amalgamated Miners' Association), acting secretary pro tem.

The object of the union at that date became:

- (1) To protect the rights of shearers throughout Australia;
- (2) To secure a fair rate of wage by the adoption of prices suitable to the circumstances of the several colonies and districts;
- (3) The adoption of just and equitable agreements between employers and employees.
- (4) To make such arrangements as will prevent undue loss of time in travelling to sheds to ensure the carrying out of agreements;
- (5) To protect members against exorbitant prices of rations.

At the first meeting of the A.W.U. held in Ballarat on June 14, 1886, a set of rules similar to those operating in the Amalgamated Miners' Association was drawn up, and David Temple was installed as the Union's first secretary.

The meeting place was in a tiny back street close to the Adam Lindsay Gordon cottage (preserved by the Ballarat Botanic Gardens).

The late W. G. Spence, M.H.R., points out in his History of the A.W.U. (he was the author of "Australia's Awakening") that long before that time there was evidence of similar unions existing in Queensland and New South Wales, and Spence himself says that as far back as in

1874 an effort was made to establish a Shearers' Union in Queensland. An attempt was also made in the Peak Downs district, about the same time, but for some reason or other both of these attempts failed.

Right up till 1912, from its commencement in 1886, the A.W.U. was practically a Shearers' Union. It had members in every State, but it was not until the 1912 conference, when it was amalgamated with that wonderful organisation of North Queensland—the A.W.A.—that the character of the Australian Workers' Union may be said to have assumed its present outstanding feature of one big union for all classes of workers, no matter what their occupation or sex.

History reveals that it was in 1888 that the first conference of shearers was held, at Echuca, in Victoria, on the Murray River. In 1890, an amalgamation was made with the General Labourers which had until then catered for shed hands and bush workers. There was a strong demand for the setting up of what would have amounted to one big union.

In 1905, delegates from Queensland, Western Australia, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia first conferred, and from that point onward, membership in any Branch of the Union in any State meant membership throughout Australia, without any additional payment.

In 1913, the Amalgamated Workers' Union of North Queensland came into the A.W.U. bringing the sugar workers, railway and road construction, timber and sawmilling, metalliferous mining, and water and sewerage workers. Next year, in Victoria, the Rural Workers of that State joined in, as did the U.L.U. and the U.L.U. in South Australia. Later, other State and Federal Unions joined the A.W.U.

Prior to its amalgamation with the A.W.A., perhaps the most important factor in the establishment of the A.W.U. was the affiliation of the then existing Queensland unions under a scheme of industrial federation, which was drawn up by William Lane, one of the founders and the first editor of the Queensland "Worker", and which was adopted by nearly every organisation in the colony in 1890—a memorable and most important year in the industrial history of Australia.

The impetus behind this desire for a closer, or a wider, organisation of workers may be found in a manifesto which was issued about that time by the officials of the newly-formed Australian Labor Federation.

"The workers of Australia are organising not by petty trades or in jealous sections by scores and dozens only, but in great conglomerate masses by hundreds and thousands and by tens of thousands. While men of the South have been talking, the men of the North have been doing and have formulated a Federation and are coming together like flood waters that run a banker . . . The bushman has stretched out his hands to clasp in union with the tradesmen of the towns and the dweller by the sea . . . To all has the call gone forth to stand and act together . . . And many have answered, for Australian Labor is rising everywhere, and Queensland is leading."

There is no doubt that in the late eighties and the early nineties the great economic pressure exerted by the squatters on the unorganised workers was primarily responsible for the establishment of the Shearers' Union in the various colonies.

In those days the shearer was little better than a slave. The employer dictated his terms and he was the sole judge as to their fulfilment. The employee had no say. Systems of wholesale robbery of the shearers were practised almost universally. Contracts practically bound men as prisoners to the job, and "deductions" and fines were imposed at the discretion of the bosses, most of whom were unscrupulous and dishonest to an unspeakable degree.

There was no limit to the amount of fines and penalties exacted. If the sheep were shorn badly in the opinion of the boss, he could refuse payment for a whole pen full. He could even send a most competent man away as being incompetent, if he desired to rob him of his wages, and was unscrupulous enough.

Even these arduous, unsatisfactory conditions might have continued without alteration until much later than 1886 had not the squatters in their greed over-reached themselves. Entering into an agreement amongst themselves, they decided to reduce the then ruling rate and a general cut of 2s. 6d. per hundred was decided upon.

This was associated with a secret understanding amongst themselves in regard to the employment of Chinese, and although the practice of employ-

ing coloured aliens in the industry was condemned, the fact that two years before Federation there were no fewer than 24,000 coloured aliens in Queensland indicates to what extent the malpractices of the squatters were winked at by those in authority.

The determination of the squatters to reduce the wages of the pastoral workers, together with the employment of Asiatic and non-union labour, was without a doubt primarily responsible for the great pastoral upheaval of 1891.

The Australian Labor Federation, which was supported by the pastoral workers at a meeting held on January 11, 1891, decided to back up the Western labourers in resisting the proposed reductions, and when the Shearers' Union met later on, although they were not yet then affiliated, they were prepared unanimously to stand behind their mates in the shed.

At Meteor Downs the shearers stood out until the shed hands were paid their union rates. The shearers at Logan Downs and Wolfgang followed suit, and it was estimated, by the end of 1891, over 10,000 shearers and shed hands were involved in the struggle.

This was the year of the pastoralists' fight for their so-called "Freedom of Contract", and it was one of the bitterest industrial conflicts ever waged in this country. It was a marvel that unionism lived through that memorable and eventful year, but it did, and the workers came through it determined to control not only the conditions in their own district, but to invade the "sanctum" of the bosses by sending their own representatives to Parliament.

After the shearers had successfully withstood the violence of the authorities and had stood unflinchingly before the soldiers with their gatling guns and artillery, and after the whole of their strike leaders had been arrested and 13 of them sentenced to three years' imprisonment on a trumped-up charge of conspiracy, the shearers of Western Queensland dramatically replied by electing one of their number—a shearer named T. J. Ryan—to Parliament as the first officially endorsed Labor candidate in Queensland.

That was in March, 1892, and it was but the precursor of many

another great triumph on the political field for the down-trodden workers in the years that followed.

The great pastoral strike of 1891 was followed by a still more savage conflict in 1894, but by that time the bush workers, the shearers, and the shed hands, with the support of the town and city workers, were impregnable, and from that day to this they have gone forward from one success to another until they have to-day successfully and indelibly stamped upon the statute books the fundamental principles of the Labor Movement.

In 1894 there were further savage repressions and imprisonment of the strike leaders, and, in some instances, men who were innocent of any wrongdoing, and who later occupied the highest seats of honour in the country, were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, some of them to periods of 10 and 15 years.

In the case of William Hamilton, who was arrested in 1891, he was subsequently returned to Parliament and became Minister for Mines, and eventually President of the Legislative Council of Queensland.

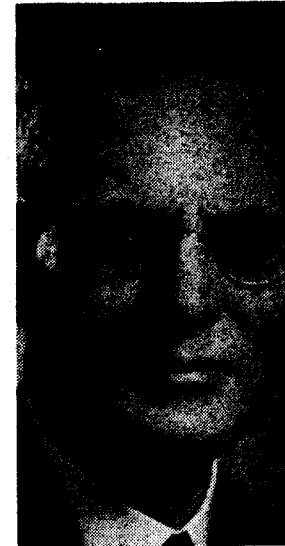
In the case of George Taylor he was afterwards elected to Parliament in Western Australia, and he subsequently became Colonial Secretary and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Both of these decent and honourable men were savagely sentenced to three years' imprisonment for "conspiracy" in 1891, and each of them served the full term of his sentence at St. Helena.

On the contrary, some of Queensland's "leading" citizens, who profited by the banking manipulations which led to scandals of the gravest kind, were allowed to go unscathed, and were able to hold on to some of those gains! No imprisonment for them!

The progress and development of the Australian Workers' Union, generally speaking, was steady and steadfast, with occasional reverses, until the year 1912, when a proposal was made that there should be an amalgamation throughout the various States with other organisations of a kindred character.

Up to this the A.W.U. had been primarily a pastoral union, and meanwhile there had grown up in North Queensland an organisation which was all-embracing and strong, and which



JOHN CURTIN, former Prime Minister of Australia, who was at the amalgamation conference.

catered for workers who were not associated with other organisations.

After many months, and perhaps years of negotiation in some instances, a conference was called in 1912, and it was decided that a referendum of workers should be taken on the amalgamation question.

This was completed, and on January 19, 1913, at an amalgamation conference that was called, it was announced that the amalgamation principle was acceptable to no fewer than 18,417 members of the A.W.U. and 3,335 members of the A.W.A. Only 24 members of this progressive North Queensland Union cast their votes against the proposals.

Here was unanimity indeed, and at the conference which met in Sydney to draft the Constitution there were representatives of the Carriers, the Federated Timber Workers, the Fell-mongers, and others, some of which had not taken a plebiscite vote of their members but which were evidently just as enthusiastic to see the proposal brought to fruition.

W. G. Spence, who at that time was General President of the Australian Workers' Union, presided over the Amalgamation Conference, and he had with him as vice-chairman, the late E. G. Theodore, who was

president of the Amalgamated Workers' Union of North Queensland, and W. McCormack, who, too, was afterwards Premier of Queensland.

It was also worthy of note that the late John Curtin, former Prime Minister of Australia, was one of the representatives of the Federated Sawmill and Timber Yard Employees' Union; and, although Theodore moved his inclusion on the committee to draft the Constitution, it was thought that as his organisation had not taken a ballot on the proposal he should give place to one that had.

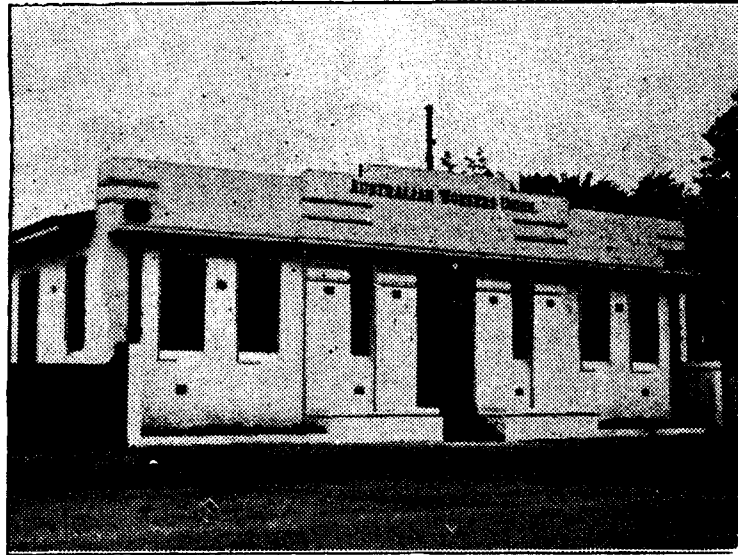
The conference sat for seven days, and although there was an enormous amount of detail to be attended to and provided for, the conference, to all intents and purposes, adopted the rules of the Australian Workers' Union with certain provisions for Queensland in regard to districts and other matters of a more or less local character.

One of the features remarked upon by Chairman W. G. Spence when the committee's report was adopted was that in the formation of the Queensland branch the geographical boundaries of the State were not rigidly followed, and that some of the northern districts of New South Wales were included.

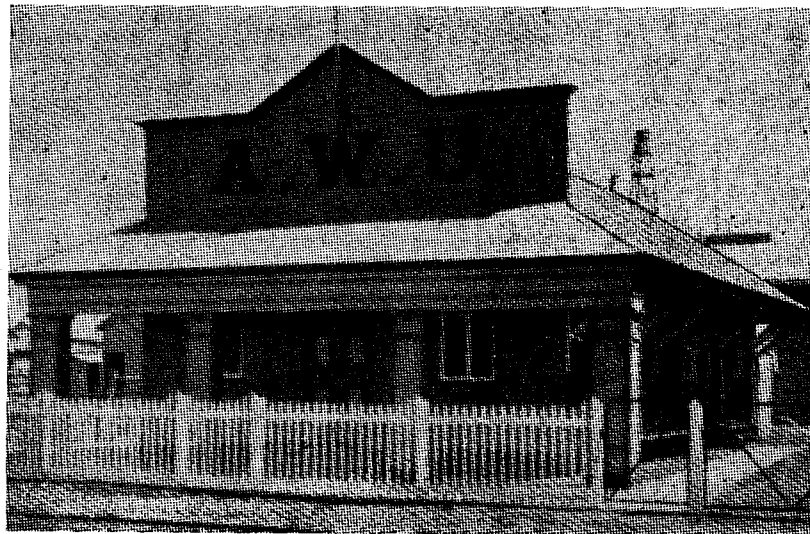
This was in keeping with the truly Australian outlook and traditions of the A.W.U., which, from its very commencement in 1886, had never followed slavishly the geographical boundaries of any colony or State in setting up its branches or districts.

At the conclusion of the conference the president said "a big step had been taken . . . the welding together of workers with common interests apart from their calling—a step which was a marked departure from the narrower operation of purely craft unionism and one fraught with great possibilities for the future." He further said that this amalgamation "would lessen the risk of industrial troubles because employers would be more circumspect in dealing with a vast body of 100,000 organised workers than they would with isolated organisations. The amalgamation, making as it would for peace, could also make for industrial improvement of those interested; whilst in the political sense it would wield a considerable force."

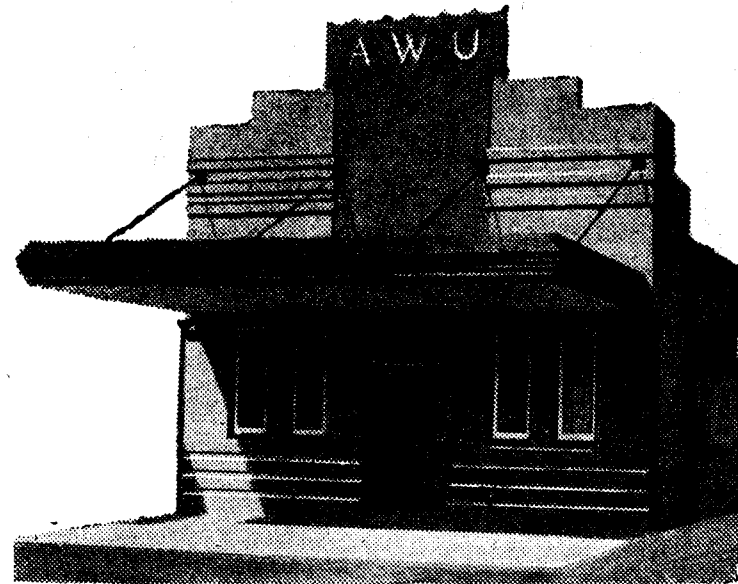




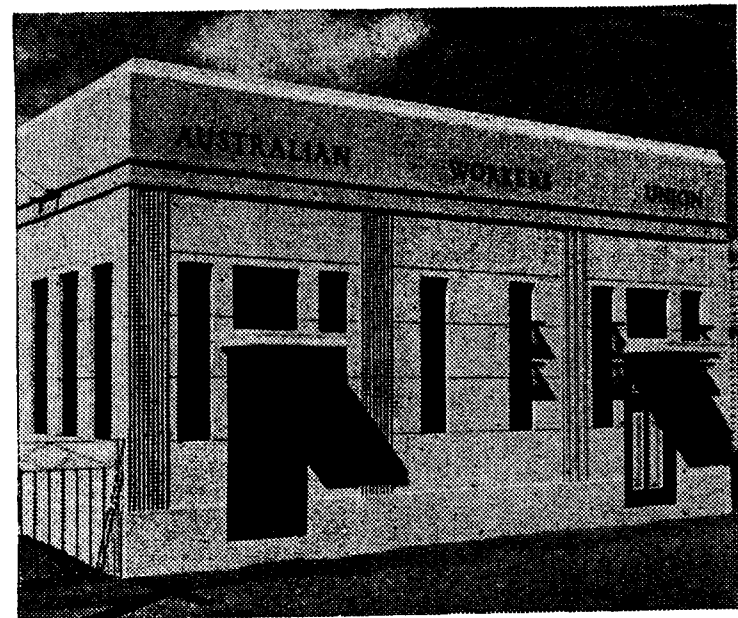
*A.W.U. Office, Charleville*



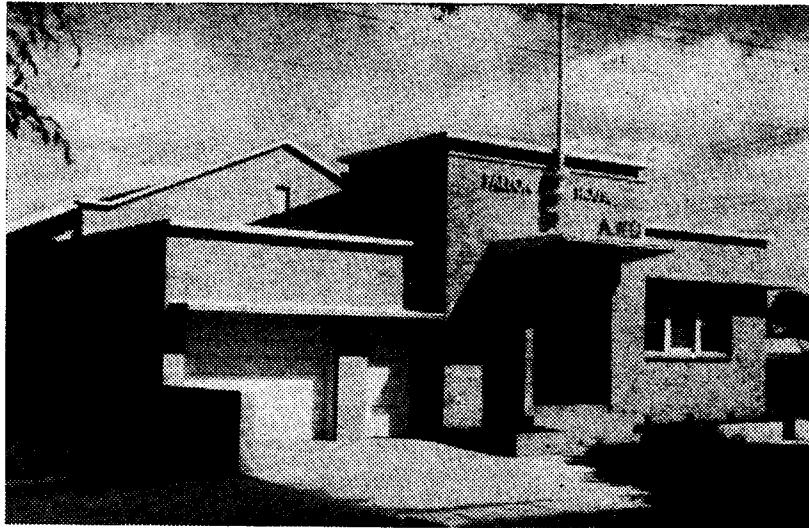
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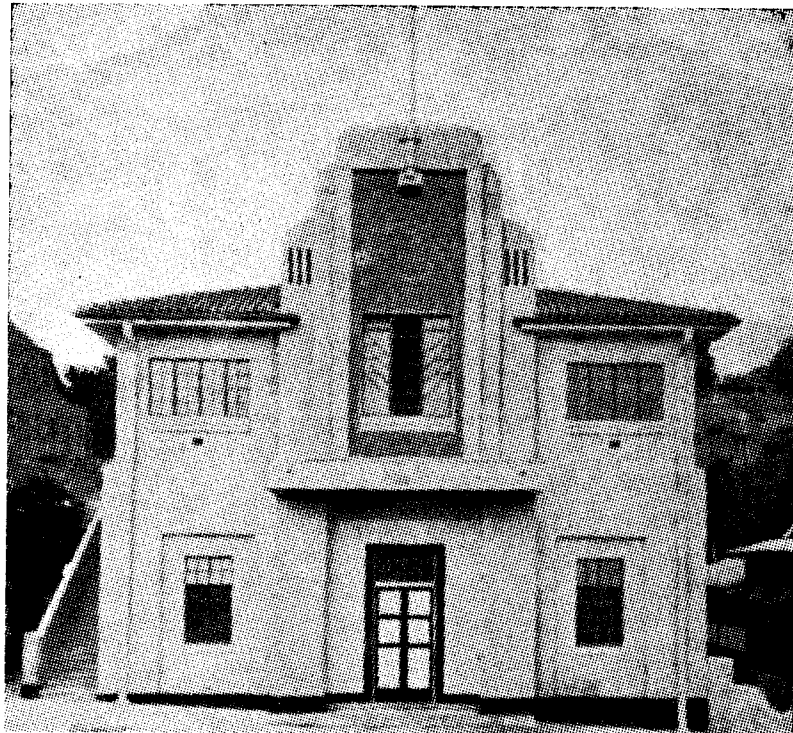
*A.W.U. Office, Ayr*



*A.W.U. Office, Cairns*



*A.W.U. Office, Bundaberg*



*A.W.U. Office, Townsville*

The conference recommendations were adopted at the A.W.U. Convention which followed almost immediately, and by the Annual Conference of the A.W.A., which was held a few weeks later at Rockhampton; and, to all intents and purposes, the A.W.A. then went out of existence, having merged with the other organisations to form what has been known ever since as the Queensland Branch of the Australian Workers' Union.

How great was the development both politically and industrially even the far-sighted vision and prophetic voice of W. G. Spence would hesitate to indicate, but suffice it to say that in less than two years following the first Delegate Meeting of the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U. in Brisbane a Labor Government was returned to power in Queensland.

When the amalgamation took place, and just prior to the first Delegate Meeting, the workers of this State of Queensland were not only the lowest paid but they also worked the longest hours, and they had by far the lowest standard of living in Australia.

The first president of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Workers' Union was the late E. G. Theodore. Dave Bowman, M.L.A., was vice-president and returning officer, and the first secretary was the late W. J. Dunstan, who had been a very prominent figure in the A.W.U., both in South Australia and in Western Australia.

Dunstan was appointed to the newly-formed Board of Trade and Arbitration in 1925, and he was succeeded as Branch Secretary of the Queensland Branch by the late W. J. Riordan. In turn, Riordan went to the Industrial Court Bench in 1933.

Looking at the list of delegates to that first Delegate Meeting of the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U., one sees the name of John Dash, at that time a representative of the Northern District. Another representative of the Far North was the late W. J. Riordan, and yet another (Southern District) was the late G. W. Martens, a former member for the Herbert.

Dash has always been revered in memory by old-time Labor and A.W.U. stalwarts because he was right in the thick of all negotiations

for amalgamation and, as secretary of the Western Workers' Association, he attended the first amalgamation conference at Townsville in 1910.

W. J. Riordan was the second Branch Secretary of the A.W.U. He was succeeded by C. G. Fallon (after whom the Bundaberg District Office building is named). Then came the late Harry Boland, who had been a tower of strength in Far-Western New South Wales before he entered Queensland. (Harry had been a shearer and was widely known around Nyngan, Bourke, and Cobar), and then came the late Joe Bukowski.

Bundaberg has been the starting point for a number of top A.W.U. officials, and it was there that C. G. Fallon began as a temporary organiser in 1921. Two years later, he was put in charge of the Central District Office at Rockhampton, and twelve months later was transferred to Mackay. His outstanding ability was quickly recognised because he became Northern District Secretary at Townsville in 1928, and when W. J. Riordan was appointed to the Industrial Court in 1933, Fallon became Branch Secretary.

In a special article in "The Worker" in 1948, the then Branch President, Harry Boland (who succeeded Fallon following the latter's sudden death, and who, himself, died unexpectedly), pointed out that during his occupancy of the Branch Secretaryship, Clarrie Fallon had held the following positions in an honorary capacity:

- Chairman, Queensland "Worker" Board (17 years);
- Chairman, "Daily Standard" newspaper (six years, until the affairs of the company were wound up);
- General President, Federal Executive, Australian Labor Party (six years, from which position he resigned);
- General Secretary, Australian Workers' Union (two years, from which position he resigned);
- President, Queensland Executive, Australian Labor Party (a position which he occupied for 17 years);
- Member of the Queensland University Senate for a number of years;
- Chairman, Labor Papers Limited (six years).

In addition, Fallon had been requested to attend the Geneva Labor Conference on at least two occasions and had been invited to become a



**H. Boland**

Federal Industrial Commissioner for Queensland by the then Minister for Labour (E. J. Holloway, M.H.R.). He directed many Federal and State political campaigns.

Harold Patrick Boland died suddenly at 9.15 p.m. on Wednesday, July 23, 1956, at his home at Tingalpa, Brisbane. He had a meritorious career in the A.W.U. and was with the former Branch Secretary, Clarrie Fallon, when Fallon died suddenly in Sydney in March, 1950.

Harry Boland, who had had more than 46 year's membership of the A.W.U. was a product of the old school of unionism and refused to look upon anything political with assurance unless it had the Labor tag. He always strove to keep Labor's differences within the four walls of the Party, and made history when he refused to join five other Queenslanders who had been elected by the Q.C.E. to attend the famous "Hobart Conference" of the Federal A.L.P., not long before the "split". Had not Harold Boland attended that conference as a Queensland delegate (the others met elsewhere) the meeting might have become a shambles, with no credit to Australian Labor. At the time (and until his death), Harry Boland was President of the Queensland Central Executive, and will always be remembered for honouring the trust placed in him; his companions will not.

Harold Boland was born at Gooloogong, in New South Wales. Some of his relatives were pastoralists; the Bolands were among the earliest set-

tlers on the Lachlan River. He lived at Nyngan as a young man and his children were born in that town. After working at various bush occupations he became an official of the A.W.U. in the then Central District of New South Wales—mostly organising "per bike". He transferred to Queensland in 1923. At different stages he was Organiser in the Southern District at Gympie, Western District Secretary at Longreach, Organiser in the South-West District, and later in the Far Northern District. In 1939 he became Far Northern District Secretary at Cairns and held that post until 1947, when he transferred to Brisbane as Branch President when the then Branch President, W. H. Edmonds, was elected to the Federal Parliament as the Representative for Herbert. Harold Boland was a personal friend of such A.W.U. stalwarts as the late Senator John Barnes, Arthur Blakely, Ted. Grayndler, Jim Scullin, Frank Lundie and Jack McNeil, and knew Jack Curtin. At the time of his death he was the oldest A.W.U. official (though in his early sixties), and was a member of only two organisations—the A.W.U. and the A.L.P.

Harry Boland was one of those big-hearted men who travelled the out-back stock routes, seeking A.W.U. adherents, and wherever he went he preached the story of Labor as only those who lived in those days could teach it. He taught his children as the unionists and Labor men in those days taught their children to be true Australians and Labor followers, and he never lost his ingrained desire to build Australia as the early Laborites and A.W.U. men wanted it built.

When R. J. J. Bukowski died at 58 years of age, he was the third Branch Secretary in ten years to have passed away suddenly, emphasising that the stresses of the position undoubtedly take a terrific toll even of the strongest men, and no one could say that Fallon, Boland or Bukowski had been men of anything but fine physical bearing. They had stood up to the physical wear and tear of organising years, but the constant demand of office life coupled with the highest possible responsibility, undermined their stamina and health. Like Harry Boland, R. J. J. Bukowski died at home—he was found dead by his wife in the early hours of January 20, 1960.

He was born at Mt. Morgan in 1901 and had a Christian Brothers education at Rockhampton and Brisbane. He worked as a prospector, miner, drovers' cook, fencer, timber getter, etc., and at one stage went to New Guinea after minerals. Turning to the canefields of the North, he fought Communists there and anywhere he encountered them, and that meant he was a "tough nut" to crack.

There was no man with a better all-round knowledge of Queensland and its industries, primary or secondary, and this was invaluable in his position as Branch Secretary.

His A.W.U. history started (officially) in 1934, when he became a temporary Organiser. He was stationed at Ayr where he "cleaned up" the Communists. When he was appointed "full-time" at Ayr, he organised the "wide open spaces", pastoral, mining—anything. From Ayr, he was transferred to Bundaberg as Central District Secretary, and in 1941, became Southern District Secretary in Brisbane.

Southern District leaped ahead under his secretaryship, and he became Branch President in due course.

When Harry Boland died, Joe Bukowski was elected to the Branch Secretaryship, and to the other top posts usually held by the Branch Secretary, such as President of the Q.C.E. and Federal Union positions.

Under Bukowski's guidance, the Branch made some of the most momentous industrial gains in the history of the Union. No trade union office in the Southern Hemisphere has such a large or more capable industrial office staff, and there is a possibility that no Union anywhere, handles as many different types of awards and industrial agreements as the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U. which has its headquarters in "The Worker" building.

It is to be hoped that in the years to come, which are fraught with danger and difficulty, the workers of Queensland will profit by their previous industrial and political history, and that every milestone as it is reached will mark another epoch of achievement as great as, if not greater than that which has just been passed.



**R. J. J. Bukowski**

In connection with the growth and development of the Australian Workers' Union, with its 200,000 members in the various States of the Commonwealth, it is much more than a coincidence that the Queensland Branch, with 80,000 members, is by far the strongest branch of the organisation in Australia, and its sphere of influence, both industrially and politically, is very great indeed.

Situated with its headquarters in Brisbane, the Queensland Branch, with its district offices and officials in every important centre in the State, and its organisers constantly in touch with members in every town and district, is able to function in a most expeditious and efficient manner; and there is practically not a member, however far distant or isolated, who cannot be immediately contacted by the Branch Secretary from his office in Dunstan House, whenever the occasion demands it, if not directly, at least through some representative or official of the Branch.

The remarkable efficiency of the Queensland Branch may not perhaps have been visualised by our early pioneers, but it is safe to say that not one of them did not foresee the development of such an organisation in a somewhat similar form which would be the universal protector of

all who were in need, and which would stand beside them in their industrial and economic difficulties and work steadfastly and energetically towards the realisation of that great objective of the movement they loved, which is both the inspiration and the hope of the world.

In Queensland there are the Far Northern District Secretary at Cairns (Geo. Pont), and five Organisers.

Townsville, is the headquarters of the Northern District (K. Costello, secretary), where there are seven Organisers.

G. G. Goding, Central District Secretary, is at Bundaberg (he is also Queensland Branch President), where there are four Organisers.

In the West, the District Secretary, Geo. Burns (Vice-President of the Queensland Branch), is stationed at Longreach, and there are four Organisers at that centre.

In the South-West, we have Neil Williamson, the District Secretary, who is stationed at Charleville and is assisted by five Organisers.

The largest District in Queensland (and Australia), numerically speaking, is Southern, the headquarters of which is Dunstan House, Brisbane, where W. J. Dickson is the District Secretary (also Branch Vice-President). There are seven Organisers attached to this District.

In the Branch Head Office alone there is a secretarial-typiste staff of seven, and four Industrial Officers constantly probe the laws of the State, analysing agreements and awards of the Court, negotiating under the Branch Secretary's direction, and preparing new cases. It is an enormous never-ending function, but it spells the highest protection for every A.W.U. member in the State. A man or woman may not need assistance, ever, in a job, but should he or she do so, it is the proud boast of the A.W.U. in Queensland that any member will have the whole of the A.W.U. organisation behind him if necessary.

No other trade union organisation in the Southern Hemisphere has such an array of industrial talent, and possibly, no other trade union organisation in the world handles so many different awards and industrial agreements.

In all Districts there are office staffs, while 40 motor vehicles are on the road, continually plying the distant and city routes in the service of the membership.

There are A.W.U. offices at Mackay and Mt. Isa. There are rented offices at Rockhampton, Ingham and Innisfail.

All this represents a huge outlay of capital.

Besides the properties in the country areas of the State, the A.W.U. owns "Dunstan House", "Bowman House", "Radio House", and very valuable city land in Brisbane.

History will never allow it to be forgotten that this mighty machine developed out of the protests of men in the '90's who refused to bow to the tyranny of their overlords whose friends were the "blackbirders" of the Pacific, and who preferred Asiatic slave labour to that of white men! Those pioneers realised that their cause would be aided immeasurably if they established a newspaper of their own and supported it!

They realised that their industrial battles would be utterly useless if they could not secure representatives in Parliament.

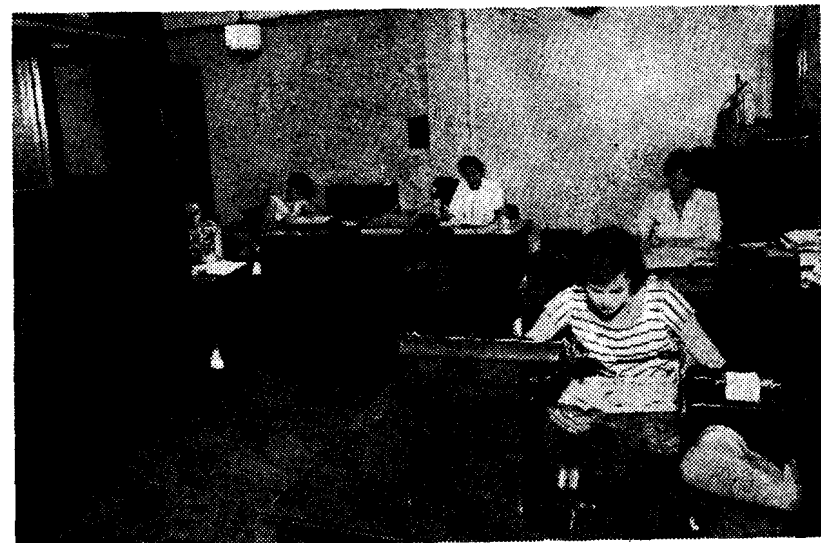
So, using more or less "rule of thumb" methods, they set about that job, and in Queensland, laid the main plans for an Australian Labor Party which came into its own as a fully fledged Government for the first time in 1915, and carried on undefeated until 1929.

After three years in Opposition, Labor came back into its own in 1932 again, and remained in power until renegades once more showed that broken trusts pay for the time being and Labor was defeated.

Thus, from 1915 until 1957, with a three-year-break only . . . A.L.P. Government, backed all the way by the Australian Workers' Union (and championed by "The Worker" until the gauntlet was dropped) reigned for 37 years. During that time the rest of the Commonwealth was given a pattern, industrially, politically, socially, and domestically to follow, and some States which had the guidance of Labor Government profited by the example set up here in the North. Undoubtedly, the success of the Australian Labor Party Governments in Queensland was due almost entirely to the prestige and power of the Australian Workers' Union.



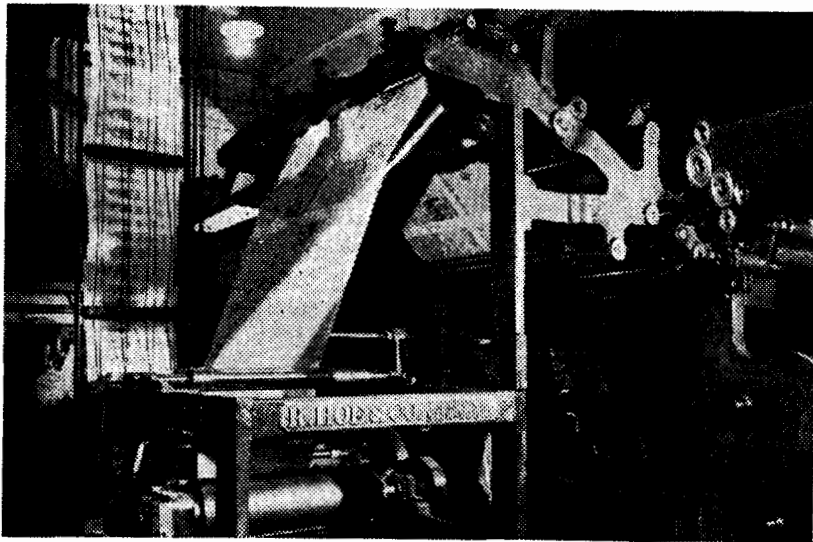
*Group of "Worker" "Old Hands". From left to right (number of years service in parentheses); V. Core, overseer (31 years); I. J. Robertson, compositor (42 years); V. Magee, storeman (20 years); N. St. Clair, binding department (32 years); V. O'Callaghan, head machinist (28 years); P. Croke, head of publishing department (50 years).*



*Section of Office Staff.*



*Section of Linotypes and Composing Room.*



*Rotary press showing "Worker" going through the machine and emerging as a printed paper.*